

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

AD-A245 458



ation is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson 2, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

2. REPORT DATE 1991	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Final
------------------------	---

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Comparison of the Media Coverage of the Vietnam War to the Media Coverage of the Invasions of Grenada and Panama: A Question of Legacies	5. FUNDING NUMBERS 1
---	-------------------------

6. AUTHOR(S) Mark Hillel Samisch

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) The University of Maryland	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
--	--

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) HQDA, OCPA ATTN: SAPA-ZDP Pentagon, Wash D. C. 20310-1504 POC (703) 695-4660/3405	10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER
---	--

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES POC is MAJ W. M. Darley, DSN 225-4460/3405

DTIC
SELECTE
S D D
FEB 03 1992

12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT: A "Approved For Public Release. Distribution Unlimited."	12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE
---	------------------------

13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) This thesis examines the contention that the media coverage of the Vietnam War affected the way reporters covered the invasions of Grenada and Panama. A content analysis was made of three major newsmagazines -- Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report -- comparing media coverage during the years 1965, 1967, 1969, 1983, and 1989/90. The study seemed to indicated that a majority of the media coverage from all three conflicts included unfavorable rhetoric directed at the wartime actions of both the government and the military. Similarly, only a few of the articles analyzed contained any form of favorable rhetorical bias. The amount of judgmental bias contained in the coverage of the Vietnam War, the Grenada invasion, and the Panama invasion also remained relatively constant from conflict to conflict. More importantly, the judgmental bias was neutral. Although media coverage of politico-military action during war is similar from conflict to conflict, the character of media coverage during Grenada and Panama cannot be attributed to the military/media relationship of the Vietnam War.
--

14. SUBJECT TERMS Mass media; newspapers; public opinion; public relations; public affairs; magazines; press; journalism; Panama; Grenada; Vietnam.	15. NUMBER OF PAGES 119	16. PRICE CODE
--	----------------------------	----------------

17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT SAR
---	--	---	-----------------------------------

52 1.81 123



COMPARISON OF THE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE VIETNAM WAR
TO THE MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE INVASIONS OF GRENADA AND PANAMA:
A QUESTION OF LEGACIES

by

Mark Hillel Samisch

Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School
of the University of Maryland in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
1991

Advisory committee:

Professor Kathy McAdams, Advisor
Professor Steve Barkin
Professor James Roche

Accession For	
NTIS	CRA&I
DIC	TAB
Unannounced	
Justification	
By	
Distribution	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Avail. and/or Special
A-1	



ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: Comparison of the media coverage of the Vietnam War to the media coverage of the invasions of Grenada and Panama: a question of legacies

Name of degree candidate: Mark Hillel Samisch

Degree and Year: Master of Arts, 1991

Thesis directed by: Dr. Kathy McAdams, Professor,
College of Journalism

Statement of the problem

Did the media coverage of the Vietnam War affect the way reporters covered the invasions of Grenada and Panama?

Method

A content analysis of three major newsmagazines -- Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report -- compared media coverage from the years 1965, 1967, 1969, 1983, and 1989/90.

The result

A majority of the media coverage from all three conflicts include unfavorable rhetoric directed at the wartime actions of both the government and the military. Similarly, only a few of the articles analyzed contain any form of favorable rhetorical bias.

The amount of judgmental bias contained in the coverage of the Vietnam War, the Grenada invasion, and the Panama invasion also remained relatively constant from conflict to conflict. More importantly, the judgmental bias was neutral.

Conclusion

Although media coverage of politico-military action during war is similar from conflict to conflict, the media coverage of Grenada and Panama cannot necessarily be attributed to any relationship that may have been established between the military and the media during the Vietnam War.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Chapter I Introduction.....	1
Chapter II The Relationship Between the Press and the Politico-Military Establishment.....	11
An Historical Cross Section.....	11
The Growth of the Adversarial Relationship.....	15
The Other War During Vietnam.....	26
Politico/Military-Media Relations.....	44
Conclusions and Research Questions.....	67
Chapter III Methodology.....	70
Periods studied.....	71
The Content Analyzed.....	73
Testing for Bias.....	77
Chapter IV Findings.....	80
Favorable Rhetoric by War.....	81
Favorable Rhetoric Combined.....	84
Unfavorable Rhetoric by War.....	85
Unfavorable Rhetoric Combined.....	88
Judgmental Political Bias by War.....	89
Judgmental Political Bias Combined.....	92
Judgmental Military Bias by War.....	93
Judgmental Military Bias Combined.....	96
Vietnam References.....	97
Articles Analyzed by Magazine by War.....	98
Favorable Rhetoric by Magazine by War.....	99
Unfavorable Rhetoric by Magazine by War.....	101
Judgmental Political Bias by Magazine by War.....	102
Judgmental Military Bias by Magazine by War.....	103
Chapter V Conclusions.....	104
Appendix A Sample Code Sheet.....	110
References.....	111

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study, which originated prior to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, began as a glance into the past to see if there was some sort of relationship between the media coverage of the Vietnam War and the subsequent media coverage of the invasions of Grenada and Panama. Because a majority of the research for this project took place in late 1989 and early 1990, research on the Persian Gulf War was not included. Yet, it is certainly puzzling that from the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 to the war in the Middle East in 1991, the media and politicians/military authorities apparently still have not worked out their differences.

The year 1991 found the United States once again engaged in world conflict, with its politico-military establishment poised against an opposing government and its armed forces. Although the circumstances leading up to, during, and after America's involvement in the Middle East were different from those in Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, and Central America, a conflict of a different sort reared its perpetual head -- the acrimonious relationship between

the media and the government/military.

The main point of contention throughout each conflict has been the same -- that the government and the military prohibit journalists from telling the American people the whole story. On the other hand, representatives of the politico-military establishment argue that they allow the media to get as much information to the American people as possible, without placing U.S. servicemembers at risk. More importantly, this ongoing feud continues to surface no matter how much time, effort, and money is spent trying to reach a common ground.

Both the U.S. Defense Department and the media have dedicated countless man-hours attempting to devise a working association that will suit one another's needs. Public affairs officers within the defense establishment are given extensive training in the fine art of communicating with the media. Workshops directed at teaching all echelons of the military on how to "get along" with reporters are routine throughout different branches of the armed forces. Additionally, journalism academicians, media elite and top Pentagon officials have even been invited to help devise, coordinate, and implement strategies for facilitating media coverage in times of war. Yet controversy instead of cooperation seems to be the watchword when viewing media-

military relations.

Some have called the media "adversarial" in their approach to political-military coverage. Still others view journalists as maintaining the role of watchdogs on Washington and the Pentagon. But it does not matter whether the relationship is antagonistic or merely incredulous, there is still little doubt that the media's rapport with the government and the military is plagued by a disagreement, especially during times of crises.

According to defense columnist Fred Reed (1991), "Much ink is being shed about the relationship between the military and the press, and the various remedies that have been put forward" (p. 62). But Reed continues by saying, "The military, deep down inside, just doesn't think anyone has any business asking questions or knowing anything the military doesn't want to tell" (p.62). If the majority of journalists covering the defense establishment agree with Reed's assumption, it is certainly possible that media coverage of military operations could reflect unfavorable bias. More importantly, and central to this thesis, if this apparent oppositional force between the media and the military was established during the Vietnam War, it is also possible that subsequent coverage of politico-military action is based upon a relationship forged during the 1960s

and 1970s.

However, journalists such as Reed may not be merely "shooting from the hip." More specifically, hollow optimism coupled with continually positive pronouncements by wartime officials often do more harm than good for the image of the politico-military establishment. For instance, during Vietnam, the press briefings presented by the military's headquarters in Saigon came to be known as "The Five-O'clock Follies," since announcements were often at odds with what reporters observed in the field. As a result, military and government representatives lost credibility among the media.

Nevertheless, the fundamental question that beckons is why does such a relationship exist? Or, even more central to this study, if there is an adversarial link between the media and the politico-military establishment, has it carried over from relationships established between journalists and government/military authorities during past wars and invasions?

Comparisons between the Vietnam War and America's subsequent military ventures are commonplace in both broadcast and print media. Whenever U.S. military forces are called upon to carry out governmental policies, the media invariably drum up the phrase, "No more Vietnams." It almost seems as if the media believe they have a duty to

parallel all politico-military action in the post-Vietnam era to the decision-making and the deeds of administrations and the military that functioned during the Vietnam experience.

Eight years after the Vietnam War came to a close, as U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines embarked upon Operation Urgent Fury on the island of Grenada, cries of Johnsonian diplomacy and reflections of Vietnam appeared in news broadcasts and in print. Although the decision to restrict the media from the first few days of the conflict infuriated journalists, the defense establishment was successful in keeping the unpleasant images of war from the American public.

Applying lessons learned from the Vietnam experience, the media blackout was thought to be in Washington's and the Pentagon's best interest. But cries of censorship and arrogance became the norm in the media coverage of the Grenada invasion. While it is understandable that the media would be upset by the audacity of politico-military officials, harkening cogitations of America's former politico-military performance in Vietnam shows the media may have had a lingering axe to grind. In the same respect though, the mere decision to censor the media highlighted a left-over military axe as well.

Fifteen years after the last Americans left Saigon, President Bush's decision to oust Manuel Noriega and his Panamanian dictatorship by using U.S. troops in Operation Just Cause once again attracted the media to conjure up images of the protracted conflict in Vietnam. The tactics of Noriega's Panamanian Defense Forces were likened to the hit and run style of the black-suited guerrilla forces in Vietnam known as the Viet Cong. The media seemed to brandish the Vietnam analogy by emphasizing the fact that, just as U.S. troops had controlled only the major cities in Vietnam, and not the countryside, U.S. troops in Panama took control of Panama City, but Panamanian Defense Forces owned the countryside. Moreover, it seemed as if this analogy was no coincidence, since the resemblance hinted directly at the possibility of a protracted quagmire that the Vietnam War became in the minds of many people.

During America's latest military endeavor in the Persian Gulf, as U.S. troops were "drawing the line in the sand" in conjunction with Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the comparison to Vietnam-era decision making was again being made. There were innumerable analogies made by the media that included comparing the Tonkin Gulf Resolution of the 1960s to the U.N. Resolution of the 1990s, comparing President Bush's installment-plan for troops and

equipment in the Gulf to Lyndon Johnson's gradual buildup of forces in Vietnam, and comparing the morale of the modern all-volunteer armed forces to the draft-filled force of the 1960s (Wilson, 1990). And of course, there was the ever-present comparison of media-military relations in Vietnam to the relationship between journalists and soldiers almost two decades later.

Historical analogies in themselves are by no means wrong. Much can be learned through the study of past actions. And interpretations of current affairs often become clearer after historical scrutiny. However, when these analogies drive the mindset and the eventual products of the "Fourth Estate," the picture that is painted for an impressionable American public could possibly become tainted. More specifically, if journalists continually compare the circumstances, decision-making, and the personalities of institutions involved in an historical event to later phenomena, whatever peculiarities of the treatment of the earlier event could affect the journalistic treatment of later events.

Hence, it seems very possible that historical biases may transcend the years. And, if the descriptions, the photographs, and the overall images of one generation's journalistic biases can arouse and affect future

generations, the resulting media coverage could be inaccurate. As such, the media could be doing a disservice to the American public, and could unduly influence support for or against the issue at hand and the participants involved.

In looking at the effects of undue influence on public support, Maj. Frederic J. Chiaventone (1991), an instructor with the Army's Strategic Defense committee says:

Two of the most powerful institutions in American society today are the military and the media. Each has within its power the capacity to shape the course of present and future events for the good or ill of the society at large (p. 64).

Alarminglly, there are those who would say that a majority of the media focus primarily upon the negative stories associated with military crises. If this is true, once again the question to be asked is has this negativity been so powerful that it has actually been contagious throughout three separate military conflicts? And, as Chiaventone contends, if the media have such a vital influence on "society at large," the ramifications of unfavorable coverage of politico-military decision-making could be disastrous for the target of the media's discourse.

With this in mind, it is not surprising that many veterans of America's longest war in Vietnam reflect critically upon the media and especially upon the coverage

of the military during war. After all, the graphic stories and photos in America's newspapers, magazines, and on televisions during the 1960s and 1970s were certainly sensational, but representative of only one portion of the war.

Part of the problem may be related to the economic motives of the media. "So deep is the fascination in war and all things pertaining to it...that a paper has only to be able to put up on its placard A GREAT BATTLE for sales to mount up" (Knightley, 1975, p. 85). Thus, as Knightley suggests, the degree of sensationalism in a story may be the greatest "influencer" over how the media approaches wartime coverage. Noting an incident in Vietnam where a U.S. officer ordered his men to abort an attack because the enemy were using women and children as shields, Robert Elegant (1981) said, "Neither my colleague nor myself thought the incident worth reporting" (p. 75). This type of selective news judgment demonstrates the absolute subjectivity involved in news selection. More importantly, completing Elegant's reflections, he added, "...if the 9th Division had killed the civilians we would have filed copiously" (p. 75).

War correspondents have received a great deal of fame in the past. The Ernie Pyles, the Neil Sheehans, and the Peter Arnetts would probably be inducted into the reporter's

hall of fame, if there was such a thing. But even with the notoriety, newsmen cannot shed the mystique that they often communicate sensational, negative reports when covering governmental decision-making and military action during war.

Keeping that mystique, or perception in mind, the purpose of this study is to determine if there are similarities in the media's coverage of the Vietnam War, the Grenada invasion and the Panama invasion; and, to determine if those similarities -- if there are any -- can be attributed to media-military relations during Vietnam.

Chapter 2

The Relationship Between The Press and the Politico-Military Establishment

In analyzing the association between the media and the U.S. military, it is crucial to look at the background for this relationship. Historical works list dozens of examples illustrating how both the media and the politico-military establishment have treated one another. In this study a succinct summary of their relations dating back to the early nineteenth century is presented. Then, the focus of the research turns to the 1960s, 70s and 80s, and specifically, the Vietnam War, Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada, and Operation Just Cause in Panama.

I. An Historical Cross Section

Throughout American history, the relationship between the press and the government has been characterized by an oppositional standpoint. Factions representing polarized viewpoints have continuously been at odds with one another. However, historically speaking, this negative relationship

has not always been as completely apparent as it is today. Press coverage of crises involving U.S. military forces prior to the Vietnam War may be remembered as uncritical and even supportive. But journalists did not always concur with government policies or with military actions. In fact, the relationship between the government and the press has perpetually been marked by dissension.

A. Pre-Vietnam relations

Censoring information deemed vital to national security is not a new trend in the Department of Defense. Heise (1979) asserts that "The American government's efforts to keep military operations secret began with the Revolutionary War" (p.54). The press, which began to accompany armies into the field during the first half of the nineteenth century, found that military combat assessments did not always match their own. Thus, even the early war correspondents discovered that they were at times shunned by the military and by their own government. In fact, Heise says, "it became almost the habit of officers to handle disagreeable journalists with the riding whip" (p. 54).

With the invention of the telegraph, Civil War journalists found an expedient medium for disseminating the war news. However, the administration in Washington felt

there was a need to censor information coming from the battlefield. Consequently, the government took control of the telegraph wires (Heise, 1979).

During World War I, George Creel was appointed to head the committee on Public Information. Creel's responsibility placed him in an extremely powerful position where he could and did propagandize the war effort (Heise, 1979). The media, which at that time were heavily dependent upon the assistance of the government, were forced to disseminate their accounts through a political sieve. A strict military classification system coupled with an arduous screening process resulted in a sanitized view of the American war effort. While the press were forced to live with this relationship, they did so grudgingly.

Immediately prior to World War II, Roosevelt named Byron Price as the nation's Director of Censorship. Price developed a code of wartime practices for the American press which outlined the parameters for censorship of the war news. According to Heise (1979), the principles on which Price's code is based are as follows:

Voluntary censorship [where the press should restrict its own dissemination] must deal only with questions involving security.

The Office of Censorship must never base a request on any security consideration which may be questionable. The danger to security must be real, and must be backed by a solid and reasonable explanation.

The code must avoid any interference whatever with editorial opinion.

The code must never be influenced by non-security considerations of policy or public needs.

The code must make no requests which would put the press in the position of policing or withholding from publication the utterances of responsible public officials.

The code must make every effort to avoid multiple censorship and on no account must withhold from the American public any information which has been greatly disseminated abroad.

The code must operate openly, advising of every request made of the press (p. 56).

Unlike Creel, Byron Price did not muster hordes of propaganda to sway public opinion. Nonetheless, Heise (1979) declares that the press still did not appreciate Price's actions because of his underlying restrictive intentions. Even though the term "security" was narrowed to only those areas that could prove detrimental to military operations, the notion of withholding "embarrassing" information lived on.

In the Korean conflict, President Harry Truman adopted a security classification system that enabled the government to cover up both personal and political mistakes (Heise, 1979). This system allowed all federal agencies free reign to censor any material deemed to be "top secret," "secret," "confidential," or "restricted." Such a repressive security

classification system was unpopular with the press, since journalists were obviously prohibited from obtaining a vast amount of information.

Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and Richard M. Nixon later imposed limits upon the classification system which served to speed up the declassification process and limit the number of agencies authorized to classify material. The intention, of course, was to eliminate the unnecessary cascade of overly classified paperwork. In other words, there was an effort to liberate information which was not genuinely vital to the protection of national security. Still, Heise noted that in 1979 the magnitude of classified defense information was so great that it "equates to 2,297 stacks, each as high as the Washington Monument" (p. 58).

II. The Growth of the Adversarial Relationship

From the 1920s to the 1950s, the government was able to manage the news and subsequently quell much of the criticism by the press. Without the high-tech advancements of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, media images of our world wars were often staged and were never immediate. This allowed the

government to parlay its own support. Hence, it is not surprising that veterans of both World War II, Korea, and Vietnam have viewed journalism's role as almost treasonous in the latter conflict. In fact, according to Steele (1985):

Not long ago, General Maxwell Taylor, reflecting on the causes of the American debacle in Vietnam, contrasted the press reporting of that conflict with journalism in the grand struggle in which he had earlier fought. Newsmen in World War II, he recalled, 'felt they were American citizens and that their country was sacred' (p. 707).

While General Taylor's ideals for journalists may apply to some World War II reporters, some would argue that only the tight grip which the government held over the media in World War II kept journalists so loyal. In fact, the research suggests censorship of war news in the 1940s allowed Washington to paint its own rendition of the campaign abroad.

A. A Question of Loyalty

At certain times throughout history, news reports were printed that did conflict with the government's management of its affairs. However, when journalists ventured outside the spirit of the government's prescription for publishable information, they were often monitored closely, reprimanded, and they were even publicly portrayed as unpatriotic

(Steele, 1985). According to Hammond (1988), during Vietnam:

...information officers would keep records of all instances of exaggerated or erroneous reporting. If a correspondent continued to be irresponsible, the command would forward a copy of his transgressions to Washington...The MACV office of Information would also develop a 'hardhead list' of reporters it considered 'worst cases'(p. 322).

Still, even though reporters were threatened with being labeled as traitors, Steele (1985) proposes that "in World War II, no less than in the Vietnam conflict, a sense of civic reporting did not ensure uncritical reporting" (p. 783).

B. Press vs Government: A Polarity of Missions

Zeidenstein (1983) reports that the adversarial relationship between the press and the government is based upon the polarity of their respective missions. The idea that the press is a "watchdog," which is projected from the spirit of our own First Amendment, inherently leads to the type of investigative journalism and duplicity in government that provides the basis for the discord between the press and the government. In fact, Zeidenstein (1983) suggests that "the news media's responsibility is to penetrate [governmental] secrecy, to report as much as it can, every day, regardless of how much its revelations may unbalance

the delicate process of policymaking" (p. 346).

By examining what the White House perceives as recurrent types of bias, and by looking at four of the media's own proclaimed tenets, Zeidenstein (1983) determined that there are four journalistic values and beliefs that contribute to one or more forms of media bias. They are:

- (1) That government officials are deceitful.
- (2) That in the past the media itself was guilty of condoning ill-advised military intervention.
- (3) That network television news in particular places undue emphasis on reporting conflict and controversy.
- (4) That television deliberately tries to promote a need for social reform (p. 350).

Some would say that media biases may be justified by the government's manipulation of the press, and by Washington's historical abuse of the veil of national security. A prime example of the government's attempt in composing its own score came by way of the "Five-O-Clock follies" in Vietnam. During military-run press briefs, reporters were offered a sterilized view of daily military actions. In one of the most famous revelations concerning the government's use or abuse of national security classifications, the "Pentagon Papers" case certainly stimulated media biases.

Nonetheless, the conflict that seems to infect press-

government relations cannot be blamed upon either party. Simply put, the press, relying upon its First Amendment right to act as a watchdog, exposes the subjects of media stories in a revealing, almost naked light. Hence, political duplicity, which was magnified in the 1960s and 70s because of the decision making behind an unpopular war and an unscrupulous administration, merely served to fuel the dissonance between government officials and the press.

Mercer et. al. (1987) remark that, by its very nature, journalism places reporters in a precarious position when it comes to political and/or military coverage. Although the press is supposed to be a conduit of information, its other responsibilities include serving as a vehicle for dissent and acting as a watchdog over authority (Mercer et. al., 1987). Thus, a journalist's role should be that of an information provider so that people know what is being done in their name and at their expense; and so they can decide whether or not to support the decisions of their leaders.

Politico-military action is often the subject of frequent media attention. This is not surprising since much of the public's tax dollars are consumed by government and military spending. Mercer et. al. (1987) point out that even though the media serve as the main link between the government and the governed, "sensationalism and triviality

simply undermine the moral efficacy of the claim that the public has a right to know" (p. 3). Thus, with leaders such as Richard Nixon at the helm, whose legacy was to support a perception among journalists that governments can never be trusted, political coverage does tend to lose some of its discretion and literally attacks public authorities.

Researchers agree the relationship between the press and the government is one that is often co-dependent. Journalists and government representatives, as groups, frequently rely upon each other for success in their respective jobs. War correspondents require access to defense information to satisfy their own reporting needs. And, in the same respect, government affiliates, whether they are agencies or individual representatives, often find their reputations dependent upon positive press coverage. Since there is this symbiotic relationship, it is not surprising that both entities are sensitive to the accuracy and amount of disseminated information.

A study by Clotfelter and Peters (1974) looked at just how the military perceives the fairness of the media. They determined that military officers cannot be categorized as homogeneous in their attitudes about the media. Although some would infer that, across the board, "the military perceives the media as their major domestic enemy" (p. 332),

the attitudes of service members must be analyzed separately.

For instance, officers who associate frequently with civilians believe that television news treats the military more fairly than do officers with less frequent non-military contacts (Clotfelter et. al., 1974). Furthermore, those respondents who suggested that servicemen were more dedicated to the nation than were civilians, and that civilians were too soft, viewed the media unfavorably. Thus, Clotfelter and Peters' (1974) findings suggest that the shared oppositional stance may be a result of a lack of association between members of the politico-military establishment and those members of the civilian sector.

A study conducted by Orwant and Ullman (1974) determined that Army officers during the Vietnam era held less favorable attitudes toward the media coverage of Vietnam than did civilians. Military officials were almost 14 percent more inclined to suggest that the media should seek the Army's permission before publishing stories about American operations in Vietnam. Also, when compared to civilians, military respondents felt more strongly that there was a lack of credibility in civilian media coverage of the war.

The United States Department of Defense (DoD) has made

a number of attempts to appease its relationship with the media. Although much of its effort may appear to be clouded in rhetoric, the "Principles of Information" that guide the Defense Department seem to be straightforward and balanced:

It is the policy of the Department of Defense to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, Congress and members representing the press radio and television may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy. Requests for information from organizations and private citizens will be answered responsively and as rapidly as possible. In carrying out this policy, the following Principles of Information will apply:

1. Information will be made fully and readily available, consistent with statutory requirements, unless its release is precluded by current and valid security classification. The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act will be supported in both letter and spirit.
2. A free flow of general and military information will be made available, without censorship or propaganda, to the men and women of the armed forces and their dependents.
3. Information will not be classified or otherwise withheld to protect the government from criticism or embarrassment.
4. Information will only be withheld when disclosure would adversely affect national security or threaten the safety or privacy of the men and women of the armed forces.
5. The Department's obligation to provide the public with information on its major programs may require detailed public affairs planning and coordination within the Department and with other government agencies. The sole purpose of such activity is to expedite the flow of information to the public: propaganda has no place in Department of Defense public affairs programs (U.S. Department of Defense, 1988).

Even with such enlightened principles, the negative relationship still exists. The reason might be that civilian and military media specialists operate with very different objectives in mind. In fact, some military commanders admit they don't want to deal with journalists; and there are some within the media who claim that anyone in uniform is an "absolute liar, cheat, and no good swine" (Center for Law and National Security, 1984, p. 79).

The civilian media's first and foremost objective is to relay to the taxpayer just where, when, how, and why his money is being spent. However, there is one, simple problem. According to a Center for Law and National Security report (1984), the First Amendment is more concerned with allowing access to coverage of the government than it is with the actual veracity of reporters.

One of the government's main contentions is that the press conducts its business without regard for the welfare of U.S. or allied troops. The Center for Law and National Security reported that former Secretary of State George Schultz has even said that the press is "not on our side" (p. 81). Of course, interpreting what Schultz meant by "our side" is another story. More specifically, the press may believe "our side" stands for the American people. On the other hand, Secretary Schultz presumably meant "our side" to

signify the interests of America's politico-military establishment.

The Center for Law and National Security (1984) quoted the Deputy Washington Bureau Chief of the Wall Street Journal, Walter Mossberg, as saying:

There is a natural and perverse tendency in any organization or institution in the government to deny to the people who are paying the bills the knowledge of everything that goes on. In the Defense Department and, to some extent, the State Department, they have a very convenient device for doing that: national security (p. 83).

Mossberg also believes that the very nature of military operations, more so than any other government undertaking, is intrinsic to the public's right to know. However, military action frequently involves political decision making that can place officials in an embarrassing light. And, it is at this specific time that the government is so often accused of employing its umbrella of national security and its freedom to define that term.

The Center for Law and National Security (1984) notes that the Navy's Chief of Information, Commodore Jack Garrow, said he believes the following:

While today there are more professionals in the press corps than ever before, there are also many more people among the mass of journalists who are not trained or educated, who do not have good common sense, who do not understand military operations, and who do not know what appropriate behavior means (p. 86).

At least some military officials feel that civilian journalists have jeopardized the success of military operations. Consequently, the Department of Defense has acted cautiously in dealing with its civilian counterparts. As a result, the "our" in Secretary Schultz's statement represents the adversarial stances of both the press and the government. In simple terms, the press feels that the public has the Constitutional right to know what its government is doing. Conversely, the government feels that to protect the freedom which serves the public's Constitutional rights, it must be selective and even wary of how civilian reporters cover military operations.

C. The Credibility Gap

The relationship between military and media factions has become so antagonistic that the term "credibility gap" was born out of media frustration with the government's penchant for secrecy and the Johnson administration's persistent attempts to manipulate the reality of the events that occurred during the Vietnam War (Turner, 1985). Turner notes that, "The roots of the term are obscured, but that it first emerged in Saigon to describe the 'Five O'clock Follies,' as the press briefings there were called" (p. 140). Always concerned about its appearance, the

military made an attempt to enhance its "credibility" by only allowing officers with public relations and combat experience to face the media during the "Follies" (Hammond, 1988).

While the origin of the term "credibility gap" can be traced to the Kennedy/Johnson administrations, both political and military policymakers and those charged with carrying out those policies continue to be linked to that dubious term. Hence, the words "credibility gap" have become more than a mere testament to the bitterness which existed between the press and the military/government in 1965 -- It represents the cultivation of the adversarial relationship.

III. The Other War During Vietnam

The disparity between the government's accounts and the media's perceptions of Vietnam proved to be bacteria that eventually would sicken public support (Turner, 1985). Moreover, to some government officials, the media's picture became even more credible than were military intelligence estimates. Turner (1985), quoting Harry McPherson, a speech

writer for President Johnson, explains:

It is particularly interesting that people like me -- people who had some responsibility for expressing the presidential point of view -- could be so affected by the media...like everyone else who had been deeply involved in explaining the policies of the war and trying to understand them and render some judgment, I was fed up with the 'light at the end of the tunnel' stuff (p. 220).

A. The Management of the Press

The Johnson administration clearly sought to establish a rapport with the media, although the effort appears to have been more a pacification measure than a sincere attempt at cooperation. For instance, officials compiled a briefing book to give formulated answers for the persistent questioning of U.S. goals, purpose, and conduct of the war (Turner, 1985). Additionally, the Department of Defense initiated a public relations program dubbed 'Operation Candor' to improve press relations in Vietnam. According to Turner (1985), each of these efforts seemed to fall short of their intended purpose, which was to strengthen Washington's hand in pursuing its policies in Vietnam.

Browne (1964) alleges that U.S. reporters in Vietnam faced a genuine crisis -- both the Saigon government and Washington only appreciated their presence when they reported favorable stories about both the host government and about the U.S. role in Vietnam. Thus, reporters were

caught in a delicate situation, not only with the South Vietnamese, but with their own government as well.

Southeast Asian leaders felt, as did their American counterparts, the press was a political and psychological tool that should be rigidly controlled (Browne, 1964), and experienced foreign correspondents were quick to recognize this fact. Browne (1964) concludes that:

Unfortunately, many American officials shared the Saigon government's view that all press reporting from this country should be positive. [Thus], sins of dishonesty by the Vietnamese were compounded by U.S. officials" (p. 5).

Since American bureaucrats were trying to build confidence in a persistently unstable government, negative news stories were either repudiated, delayed or even censored, according to Brown (Browne, 1964).

In contrast, General William Westmoreland (1990) states that "Vietnam was the first war ever fought without censorship" (p. 29). He adds that "without censorship, things can get terribly confused in the public mind" (p. 29). Nonetheless, Browne (1964) found that "time and again correspondents were told by American authorities that U.S. information channels were kept plugged to avoid diplomatic friction with the Vietnamese government" (p. 6).

Ironically, the more that Washington and Saigon did to build up the South's waning credibility the more skeptical the

press corps became about official statements (Browne, 1964).

B. The Adversarial Relationship Expands

As skepticism of government veracity mounted during Vietnam, so did the adversarial nature of the association between politico-military factions and the media. Referring specifically to this antagonistic relationship, Willenson (1987) says,

Something had begun to happen that shaped journalism not only in the war zone but in the United States ever afterward. That was the creation of a climate of skepticism of an arm's-length relationship between officials and the press (p. 169).

The claim that journalism has been shaped "ever afterward" suggests the hypothesis that the Vietnam War may have, indeed, left a legacy within the media. Moreover, due to the "arms-length" relationship, this legacy is undoubtedly more negative than positive.

Willenson's (1987) premise is that reporters felt betrayed by the government because of the drastic disparity between the loftiness of official rhetoric and the grim realities of our Vietnam experience. This disparity was in direct contrast to the press-government association coming out of World War II, because journalists of the 1940s and 1950s had felt that they were part of the establishment (Willenson, 1987). But that unity dissolved when it became

apparent that the reports coming out of Southeast Asia were riddled with conspicuous errors.

The TET Offensive, during which communist forces made an all-out nationwide attack, exacerbated the credibility gap. It served as a concrete evidence that reporters could use to dispel Washington's claims of a "light at the end of the tunnel." Many journalists and media elite who had remained neutral were finally forced to speak out and to write against the actions of the administration.

Commentators such as Walter Cronkite, David Brinkley, Frank McGee and Howard K. Smith became less objective and much more personal in their interpretations of the course of the war (Columbia Journalism Review, 1968). And "CBS News correspondent Mike Wallace observed in a special television report that the raids had 'demolished the myth' that allied military strength controlled South Vietnam" (Hammond, 1988, p. 345).

This new-found opposition had been "waiting in the wings" for some time. For at least two decades prior to TET, a revolution of sorts was brewing among reporters. At the Columbia Journalism Review (1968), editors advise:

The TET Offensive in February put major national news organizations and journalists on a collision course with a national war policy as never before. Newsweek (March 1968) offered the second overt expression of editorial opinion in its history, questioning both the vision and the honesty of the administration (p. 2).

C. The Body Count

To determine why the body count had such an impact upon the relationship between the media and the military/government, U.S. strategy in Vietnam must be examined. The top operations officer at the Military Assistance Command in Vietnam Lt. Gen. William Depuy devised a war of attrition to annihilate the human pipeline from North Vietnam which fed the guerrilla war in the South. Referring specifically to the attrition strategy, U.S. News & World Report (1969) claims:

First, they want to chop up and push back enemy main force units that threaten South Vietnam's major cities. Next, U.S. planners seek to weaken North Vietnamese forces sufficiently so that the South Vietnamese Army can handle them alone. Finally, if the war simply drags on, the U.S. Army is to convince Hanoi that even a closed, communist society cannot sustain its current level of losses indefinitely (p. 24).

On the surface, this scheme seemed to be fairly sound. However, the supporting pillars of this strategic plan crumbled under a bombardment of illogical casualty reports. Thus, Depuy's strategy of attrition, better known as the body count, laid the groundwork for much of the public's and the media's opposition to the war. In effect, Depuy's "killing machine" mentality brought the integrity of our military and our government into serious question.

A quick review of the total casualties of four major

offensives from January to February 1968, shows that the ratio of enemy killed in action to allied killed in action was 27 to 1. Furthermore, in a series of press releases dispensed by the Military Assistance Command in Vietnam, casualty statistics reported for the months of May through June 1969 proclaimed 4,516 enemy killed in action verses 179 U.S. killed in action (U.S. Army, 1969).

However, it appears that civilian observers were inclined to doubt the accuracy of the military's accounting and reporting system. In fact, as stated in U.S News & World Report (1969):

In Washington, both supporters and critics of President Nixon's Vietnam policies know that the casualty rate could become the key factor in determining the speed and conditions of a U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. Everyone... is well aware that "casualties" and "controversy" are closely linked (p. 23).

Miller (1989), a former press officer for the U.S. Army in Vietnam, remarks that he always wondered about the accuracy of the reporting system -- especially when helicopter pilots would return with precise body counts after their aerial missions. He notes that this was very questionable since a pilot's count was mainly taken from atop the jungle canopy. Miller (1989) also reflects upon one operation in the Mekong Delta where there were obviously "gross untruths" about the body count.

Everhart (1973) says that it really is no wonder that reporters discounted the casualty statistics, because the reporting system manifested such blatant fallacies. And, Emery and Emery (1988) corroborate Everhart's accusation by stating rather emphatically what they believe to be the ulterior motives of our government:

In Vietnam the central problem was not only that the military deliberately falsified information, but also that it more often withheld information detrimental to continued belief in the eventual success of U.S. policies and established elaborate statistical counts to justify the policies of the White House and the Pentagon (p. 475).

Ironically, combat commanders seemed to understand the importance of providing accurate, objective tactical accounts. In an after-action-report on the Cambodia operations of the 25th Infantry Division (U.S. Army, undated), one commander provides a testament to the problems of error-free reporting:

[There was a] problem of timely, accurate, updated reports. All operations in Cambodia received high level attention. Part of this attention was manifested in a number of different reports submitted at different times, but all requiring accuracy and timeliness ... These figures, in the absence of any information to the contrary, were recorded as an official count ... at the end of the operation, there was considerable disparity between the figures held by division and those held by each brigade.

The body count, according to Hammond (1988), was one of the main statistics in showing the press the success of U.S.

forces.

At a background briefing for the press, for example, Secretary of Defense McNamara drew upon enemy casualty rates to demonstrate that the introduction of U.S. troops into South Vietnam had resulted in marked progress (p. 207).

However, the strategy of using "death statistics" to illustrate victory and then inflating those reports may have done more harm than good to the American cause in Vietnam.

D. The Question of Objectivity

Sheehan (1988) says that "reporters in Vietnam were forced to choose between the reality of what they saw in the field and the image of victory that higher echelons pushed on them and the American public" (p. 315). Needless to say, the contradiction between media coverage of the war and the military's version incited bitter conflict.

Of the illusive concept of objectivity, Emery and Emery (1988) state:

This safe non-interpretive style was bitterly criticized [in the Vietnam era] because it assumed reporters are unemotional, free of subconscious predispositions, and because straight reporting of complex events often omit a good deal of truth (p. 217).

If this particular statement is an accurate commentary on the philosophy of objectivity, then, when put to the test of "truth," any writing would be tough to evaluate. In Vietnam, this notion seemed to hold especially true in the

objective attempts of many war correspondents.

Mills (1985) notes that even military correspondents assigned to Stars & Stripes covered stories so subjectively that at least one, Bob Hodierne, was referred to as a traitor.

In August 1961, Army Specialist Bob Hodierne was on assignment covering combat actions against the North Vietnamese. In his reporting, he highlighted the killing and maiming of U.S. soldiers, which deviated from the subtlety of the Military Assistance Command in Vietnam's guidance concerning the reporting of friendly casualties. Hodierne further described the plight of the U.S. soldier when he illustrated, in rather figurative terms, the retrograde actions and the fatigue of the fighting units. For instance, he used phrases such as, "the company straggled back; chewed up and chewed up again; no one wanted to go -- they just wanted to be left alone;" and "men who were really scared and on their own."

Apparently, Hodierne was the type of journalist who 'wrote it like he saw it.' Ironically, before sending him on this assignment, his editor instructed him to cover the action like a civilian reporter (Mills, 1985).

A comment by the United States Army in the Republic of Vietnam was released soon after Hodierne's article was

published. A spokesperson for the command stated that such journalistic slander was "devastating to the morale...of all soldiers...and of tremendous aid and comfort to the enemy" (Mills, 1985, p. 95).

Emery (1973) alludes to this issue of sensationalized, subjective reporting in his criticism of Harrison Salisbury, a New York Times editor:

Salisbury was extremely critical of the United States activities in Vietnam, and his reports frequently contradicted military press releases... The public was critical of Salisbury's reports, feeling that they hurt the morale of Americans in Vietnam; but at the same time, they brought the credibility of the Pentagon into serious question. Claims of the military were no longer taken at face value (p. 521).

In times of war, criticism of the political-military decision making process is not something that should be seen as inherently wrong. But the effects of sensational reporting produced by some news organizations should not be taken lightly. As Miller (1989) points out, there were many times when U.S. fighting men felt like they were winning the war for their country, only to be disheartened by some reporter who took it upon himself to merely distort the issues.

E. Censorship

According to Miller (1989), the military authority

in Vietnam instilled censorship with some purpose. However, the military's public information regulations imposed restraints on publicizing material that might have been of interest to the American people. The only problem was that this same information would definitely have been of interest to the enemy.

Specific censorship included bans on publishing information concerning the numbers of American or friendly casualties; photographing American dead and wounded was restricted to military photographers who were documenting the war for the military archives; and, there was a complete listing of vocabulary prohibitions for the media -- for example, napalm was termed "selective ordnance" and "search and destroy" was known as "search and clear" (Miller, 1989).

Miller (1989) reports that the USARV Press Office offered the civilian press corps all the facts as it received them. This simple confession seems to give evidence that censorship and the subsequent propagandizing of events were not always on the military's press agenda.

Journalists are often caught in the middle of intense tugs-of-war between the public and the government. Politicians undeniably desire support on their high profile issues, while the public needs the media to act as a voice for its internal dissent. The Vietnam War, which captured

journalism's attention for 15 years, served as a national tug-of-war that placed the media in a predicament of loyalties. But, as the government pulled harder on its side of the rope, reporters grew more skeptical of the politico-military portrayal of the events in Southeast Asia.

As journalists became less supportive, Washington, in turn, became more restrictive. Showalter (1976) explains that during war expressions of freedom are directly proportional to the stress upon political decision-making authorities. As a result, increased stress produces an escalation in restraint.

However, with all of the government's efforts to limit the publication of negative news concerning the Saigon government and of America's role in South Vietnam, the media, often using disgruntled government sources, embellished their own version of the story.

F. A Question of Legacies

Stein (1983) reports that a study conducted by the University of Southern California School of Journalism sought to determine whether our Vietnam experience actually changed journalism in this country. The panel, which included 85 journalists, military officers, academics, authors, and former government policymakers, concluded that

the government's disinformation campaign during Vietnam "fed the growing mistrust between American public servants and the press corps" (p. 9).

In direct testimony to the legacy left by the war, one panel member said that "the mistrust has carried over into the post-Vietnam period" (p. 9). Moreover, it was proposed that the government has adopted a "fortress mentality" in its handling of the media.

Recalling their Vietnam experiences, Pulitzer Prize winning journalists William Tuohy and Seymour Hersh professed that repeated deception by government officials and by officers in the field forced the media into an investigative role. In fact President Johnson's press secretary, George Reedy, observed that "Vietnam may have changed the press much more than public attitudes" (p. 9). His premise is that the uniqueness of guerilla warfare prompted a more probing media. As a result, investigative journalists provoked continual confrontation as the war trekked on.

Herring (1983) contends that the media earned an extremely negative relationship with Washington because of what administration officials viewed as biased coverage. Additionally, Herring (1983) advises that future politico-military authorities may rely upon the Vietnam experience of

a discordant press-government relationship when censoring information about other military operations. He says:

I can assure you that top U.S. military officials, some of whom probably served in Vietnam, will press for censorship in some form. They will certainly get support from a conservative administration in Washington; perhaps from a liberal administration as well (p. 20).

Herring (1983) even affirms that the media were used as a scapegoat for the loss of the war. But, Herring (1983) goes on to say that, although the media obviously had an impact upon public support, the cost of the war in terms of lives and money was paramount to our eventual withdrawal.

Comparing public support during the Korean War to support during Vietnam, Herring (1983) notes:

The trend in popular reaction to the Korean War, from initial support to disillusionment, correlates almost exactly with Vietnam and in each case there is a direct correlation between the growth of opposition and the increase in casualties (p. 20).

Herring (1983) also indicates that nations other than the United States have used the U.S. media's influential role during the Vietnam era as a scapegoat for their own censoring of military actions. And, he concludes that journalists operating in a democracy during a national security crisis may be forced with a painful dilemma -- specifically, that "a free media can undermine the government's credibility, weaken its military position...and aid and abet its enemies" (p.20).

In a post-Falklands War study conducted for the British Ministry of Defence, Mungham (1985) used politico-military/media relations in Vietnam as a yardstick for measuring more recent press-government relations. Although the British press and military played a minimal role in Vietnam, the ministry felt that studying the news management of this era could provide some useful lessons and possibly uncover some legacies.

Mungham's study, titled the Cardiff Report, analyzed five separate areas of press government relations. They are:

- (1) The determinants of and character of the relationship between different agencies of government, the media, and the various branches of the armed forces involved in Vietnam.
- (2) The nature of the arguments within and between government departments about how to present the conflict, and the proper relationship to establish with the media in times of armed conflict.
- (3) The relationship of the different U.S. armed services with the media.
- (4) The media's accommodation to the military; what was the role of the war correspondent as defined by media personnel? Did these definitions change as the conflict evolved and deepened?
- (5) The effects of the media coverage on U.S. public opinion and morale, and its consequences for the political support the U.S. government sought from other countries.

The report does not elaborate upon its conclusions, but it does offer some lessons. One of the major and most

obvious lessons learned from the study was that extensive television coverage has a critical impact upon the relationship between the media, the government, the military, and public opinion in times of war (Mungham, 1985). In fact, the prevailing opinion states that the media, namely television, was critical in rallying the opposition against the politico-military establishment. And, as Mungham (1985) points out:

[Vietnam] was the first war to be covered extensively by television, and raised in an especially pointed way, the complex relationship between the media, the government, and the armed forces in war conditions (p. 16).

With the advent of satellite technology, the media gained wider and more immediate dissemination capabilities. Hence, government officials were driven to "enlighten" the public with official versions of the war (Mungham, 1985).

However, government rhetoric about Vietnam simply fueled the antagonism between journalists and official representatives. Furthermore, advancements in communications technology just compounded this relationship as news gathering and distribution became more intrusive (Mungham, 1983).

As Mungham (1983) points out, it is easy to see why the adversarial relationship between the government and the press manifests during military crises:

The social and political issues concerned in news

gathering and in the management of news, become most acute in times of armed conflict when national interests are seen to be at stake. Under circumstances such as these, the relationship between government ministries, the armed forces and the media is subject to severe and often contradictory pressures and strains.

Vietri (1987) points out that Vietnam has been called "The television War" (Mandelbaum, 1982), "The living room war" (Arlen, 1982), and "The uncensored war" (Hallin, 1986). But what were journalists really trying to convey in their coverage of Vietnam? Could it have been the persistent controversy over the body count and the atrocities of this war? Or was it the unglorified human frailty of the soldier caught in the middle of a foreign policy struggle? Or maybe they were trying to show how a government is not always as righteous as it would like for people to think it might be.

At any rate, our Vietnam experience may have left a legacy to American media. According to Herring (1979):

To carry the 'never again' syndrome to its logical conclusion and turn away from an ungrateful and hostile world would be calamitous. To regard Vietnam as an aberration, a unique experience from which nothing can be learned, would invite further frustration (p. 272).

Hence, discerning if and to what extent such a legacy might exist in the media is important to the ideals of objective military-media relations. After all, if both the media and the politico-military establishment can gain anything at all from studying the relationships that were established in

Vietnam, the outcome can only mean a more enhanced understanding of each other.

IV. Politico/military-media relations after Vietnam

As already mentioned, the correlation between the civilian media and the U.S. military/government during Vietnam could be characterized as antagonistic. More specifically, American journalists perceived that the military consistently and intentionally tried to mislead the media concerning its operations in Vietnam. And in turn, the armed forces sensed that the civilian media were out to get them.

A. A Cold War Between the Military and the Media

Although America's withdrawal from Vietnam in April 1975 marked the end of the war for U.S. servicemen, their memories followed them home. Maybe even more important though was the impression left with the American public by the media's portrayal of soldiers as "baby killers" and as "searchers and destroyers." In effect, the 'war of words' that had, to some extent, polarized the press and the politico-military authorities during Vietnam may have

continued to fuel a Cold War between the military and journalists at home.

Many senior Army officials feel that the media were not fair in their coverage of Vietnam. But they are quick with the caveat that the military was often to blame for inconsistencies in poor media coverage and that many officers acted upon rumor in their distrust of the media.

The former Chief of Army Public Affairs, Gen. Charles Bussey (1990) says:

I don't think that there is any question that Vietnam exacerbated the existing [military-media] relationship...There are many senior officers at the lieutenant colonel and colonel level that will tell you that they hate [the media].

However, Bussey (1990) adds that when pressed into identifying specific instances that may justify their feelings, a majority of officers refer to second-hand information concerning media transgressions. He uses the analogy of a fishing story to explain that each time a Vietnam veteran reflects upon the size of the media's atrocity in Vietnam, the story grows larger and larger. Then, as Bussey emphasizes, "The perception [or misperception] becomes the reality."

Still, Bussey (1990) does acknowledge that our Vietnam experience prompted a more alert and keener 'watchdog'. In fact, he admits that the Vietnam War gave rise to much of

the investigative nature of journalists in the post-war period. But, he also contends that there were "occurrences on the homefront, such as Watergate, that helped to feed the conflict and keep it going."

In response to the military-media relationship that emanated from Vietnam Donald Maple (1990), Chief of the Army's Command Information Division, proposes that:

[The military] changed considerably...We determined better ways to organize the media, which, in a sense, meant that we could place some control over what the media did...The media was free to roam in Vietnam which resulted in a lack of control.

Maple notes that this "control" does not imply that the Department of Defense changed its policies in an effort to censor the media; policy changes were merely adopted to better facilitate the media's understanding of an event. Consequently, post-Vietnam policies incorporated more military public affairs resources to be deployed with the media.

According to Turgeon (1990), in the late 1970s the American fighting man was viewed as a "symbol of American frustration and inhumanity towards man." Not surprisingly, Turgeon (1990) says that "to be held up by liberal [journalists] as the guilty party caused a lot of bad feelings."

Unfortunately, the antipathy was not isolated solely to

the military and the press. Many veterans felt that the distorted news presented by the press caused the estrangement between themselves and the American public as well. Maple (1990) believes that the bitter emotions borne out of press-military wartime associations resulted in a more "sharply focused adversarial relationship." Maple explains:

There is no question in my mind that Vietnam-era servicemen believed that media reporting from Vietnam hurt the war effort...Many officers did not like or trust the media, [because] they felt that the media was out to make the military look bad. [Moreover] the media always felt an adversarial relationship with the military, because they were trained in journalism schools that the government is their adversary and that they should not trust the military.

Turgeon (1990) believes that the post-Vietnam/pre-Grenada period merely accented "the generally bad interpersonal relations between the media and military public affairs [representatives]" in Vietnam. He proposes that there was no "common cause" between the Department of Defense public information structure and the civilian media, and that the problem stemmed from the innate mistrust that had earmarked the unfavorable press-military relations at the end of the war.

Echoing Turgeon's remarks, Bussey (1990) suggests that:

There was a Cold War between the press and the military after Vietnam. And I think that just about anybody who

[was working DOD public affairs or for the media] at that time would point to that, because of the aftermath of Vietnam. The point that I would have trouble with is coming out and saying that [the media] was as bad as we say they were, or that the military was as bad as they said we were...I think the truth is somewhere in between and that there were extremes on both sides.

Referring to the 1980s, Turgeon (1990) maintains that "... the Cold War is over." However, one only needs to look at the blackout in Grenada to see that the association between the media and the military was still inhospitable.

B. The Media Blackout in Grenada

In the aftermath of our Vietnam experience, the discordant relationship between the press and the government continued to smolder. This relationship came to a head in October 1983 when journalists were prohibited from covering the first few days of the U.S. military intervention into Grenada.

Schoenfals and Melanson (1985) propose that "The Defense Department, partly because of its conviction that the media had hurt the war effort in Vietnam...was behind the ban" (p. 156). Similarly, Grossman (1989) reports that the news media perceive that the military's lingering hostility toward the press was evident in the reporting prohibitions during the coverage of the Grenada Invasion. But she also admits that "there is no documentation to prove

or disprove this allegation" (p. 15). Nonetheless, a type of "Cold War" apparently existed between the press and the military, until it came to a head in 1983.

According to Turgeon (1990) "the guise of national security was used to explain the blackout in Grenada." In spite of this claim he admits that, in reality, the military did not get organized well enough in advance to allow for the civilian media to be on hand. To put it bluntly, "We just screwed up," he confesses.

Albeit that the military may have been unprepared to handle the media, there are those who believe that the media was blackballed from the beginning. Maple (1990) says that, in his opinion, "The Joint Chiefs of Staff never even considered the media at first." And Turgeon (1990) admits that prior speculation about joint coordination problems between the different services may have led to the media embargo. In fact, referring to the commander of all forces during the operation, Sheehan (1990) explicitly says, "I think that Admiral Metcalf was worried that he was going to fail in Grenada." Hence, Sheehan proposes that senior military officials did not want reporters anywhere near the island until they were confident that U.S. forces were in command of the situation.

Whatever the justification for keeping journalists off

of the island for three days, the decision to employ the embargo certainly aggravated the relationship between the politico-military establishment and the media once again. Bussey (1990) credits the media quarantine with acting as a catalyst for more intensive, investigative reporting because:

...there was a feeling that people in government were just doing things wrong...So I think there was more vigilance, and if you happened to be in uniform you were going to catch the brunt of it.

Restraints upon the free press yielded a media which became suspect of politico-military discourse, and the debate over Constitutional protections outlined in the First Amendment amplified. As a result, government and military decisionmakers were forced to recognize that public funding for military action warrants timely and accurate media coverage of just how the taxpayers money is being spent. But as handling of the Grenada Operation indicates, the option for "national security" outweighed the concern for media access/public support.

Reflecting on the aftermath of the press-government confrontation surrounding Grenada, Alexander Angelle (1990), former public affairs specialist with the Army-Air Force Center for Low Intensity Conflict, points out that media access and public support must be considered as interrelated. Comparing the Vietnam era's inconsistent flow

of information from the government to the American people to an information embargo in Grenada, Angelle (1990) contends that, just as in Vietnam, reality can be drastically distorted. He asserts that, especially in limited conflicts, the Department of Defense must be able to "articulate the actions of our armed forces within the context and goals of U.S. foreign policy" (p. 51). But, first and foremost, Angelle says:

Public affairs practitioners should plan and execute programs conducted as part of a coordinated approach to foster public support by providing wide media access to the areas affected by [our military operations] (p.56).

The bottom line, according to Angelle (1990), is that without a concerted public information campaign, politico-military officials will not gain understanding nor support for a U.S. mission. Subsequently, the credibility of governmental action will become critically questioned and public support, invaluable to military success, will deteriorate.

C. The Sidle Commission

In response to the outcry over the media prohibitions surrounding Operation Urgent Fury, General John Vessey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, established a media-military relations panel to answer the following question:

How do we conduct military operations in a manner that safeguards the lives of our military and protects the security of the operation while keeping the American public informed through the media? (Sidle, 1985a, p.23).

In his personal account of the conduct of the panel, retired General Winant Sidle repeatedly reflects upon the press-military relationship during the Vietnam War. In fact, he declares that the antagonistic relationship between the Vietnam-era's press and military has built a basis for current and possibly future relations. Specifically, Sidle (1985a) says:

[The military] must set aside any prejudice against the media even though some is well-founded, particularly on the part of those officers and enlisted men who recall the all too often negative or misleading coverage of Vietnam... (P. 29)

Still, Sidle (1985a) suggests there is a co-dependency between the military and journalists. He goes so far as to say military leaders must ensure their own public affairs officers should not only act as representatives of the government, but they should also act as representatives of the press. He affirms:

If the public affairs officer accepts this aspect of his job, he will consider the reporters covering his command as his clients, not just a group of men and women who are trying to cause problems (p. 29).

The spirit of Sidle's argument points toward genuine compromise and trust in the dealings between civilian and military press representatives. But, based upon the still

all too clear images of our Vietnam experience, neither side seems to be able to dismiss all of their grudges.

Sidle (1985a) prescribes four rules for enhancing politico/military-press relations. The first rule is the armed forces must accept the media as conduit for the military story. This is not to suggest the civilian press should be used as a medium for Department of Defense propaganda. In fact, this first rule suggests quite the contrary. Cooperation and mutual service are at the basis of this recommendation. In other words, by working together to tell the complete truth, both sides may develop a more positive approach to the relationship.

The second rule states the military needs to emphasize concrete results, instead of exaggerating about future successes. More specifically, the defense establishment should be wary of making unequivocal predictions about unfinished actions. Invariably, the military speculates about some grandiose program which ultimately develops terminal problems. As a result, the media often find it necessary to challenge Department of Defense claims.

The third, and perhaps the most important principle, is the government should admit its mistakes without reservation. Mistakes are much less likely to become problems if the accountable agency merely accepts

responsibility. In this way, the press cannot allege any cover-ups, and any mistakes usually become less noteworthy.

The last rule for enhancing press-government relations is for military representatives to get to know and understand the civilian media that are responsible for covering their respective commands. Sidle (1985a) concludes that "Showing honest interest in the reporter almost always results in more complete coverage of the command" (p. 30).

D. Attempt at Military-Media reconciliation (1984-1989)

Sidle's four rules for bettering the affiliation between the media and the military/government closely resemble what many corporations have done to work with activist or pressure groups on certain high profile issues. More specifically, the members of the Sidle Commission recognized that a problem existed involving far reaching consequences for the reputation of the government and for the interests of the media. Thus, the major players in the Department of Defense realized that working with, instead of against, the media is critical to gaining and maintaining public support. Unfortunately, as Sidle (1985b) reflects upon the "what ifs" concerning Grenada, "... if the [Commission's] recommendations had been in place and fully considered at the time of Grenada, there might have been no

need to create our panel" (p. 2).

But the important question concerns whether or not the military learned from what many regard as a decision-making debacle concerning the blatant act of censorship in Grenada? Or maybe better said, were the Sidle Commission's comments and recommendations used merely as a temporary pacification effort that "looked good on paper?"

According to Turgeon (1990), the quality and competency of an all-volunteer force has consistently given rise to decreasing fears about media exposure. Thus, it has been easier in the post-Vietnam era to incorporate the progressive framework of the Sidle Commission. Also, in comparison to the 1960s and 1970s, military public affairs practitioners appear to understand more of what the press means to society. Although this point cannot be scientifically correlated to the Commission, it is implied throughout the recommendations that journalists and PA specialists need mutually to understand each other.

In the ensuing years after Grenada and the Sidle Commission, leaders representing the pinnacle of both the media and military became involved in genuine efforts to foster mutual understanding about each others responses to significant events. For example, Bussey (1990) explains that in 1985 the Army's Chief of Staff, Gen. John Wickham,

and the Executive Editor of the Washington Post, Ben Bradlee, collectively worked on erasing misperceptions about their respective institutions. According to Bussey (1990), it was "amazing to see just how well both sides respected each other...You could tell that we all felt that this was a step in the right direction."

Echoing one of the Sidle Commission's recommendations that "programs should be enlarged to improve military understanding of the media via public affairs instruction in service schools and colleges, to include media participation when possible" (Sidle, 1985b, p. 5), Ben Bradlee offered his personal services as well as the services of his entire editorial staff (Bussey, 1990). Subsequent to his offer, Bussey (1990) reports that Gen. Wickham also involved much of the Army's senior leadership in media-military discussions by complying with the similar Commission proposal that the armed forces should "seek improved media understanding of the military through more visits by commanders and line officers to news organizations" (Sidle, 1985b, p. 5).

Bussey (1990) maintains that from 1984 to 1989 the entire defense establishment made considerable headway in establishing rapport with the media by designing seminars which allowed for face-to-face interaction. If nothing

less, this candid exchange allowed both sides to hear each others views. But, as Bussey (1990) suggests, "More importantly, it may have even facilitated a mutual respect for each other as living, breathing, imperfect individuals."

The positive steps taken by both the media and the military reflect somewhat of an attempt at reconciliation in the post-Grenada period. However, this is not to suggest the civilian media and the Pentagon became cohorts in any way. Gen. Sidle (1985a) even reasoned that:

An adversarial -- perhaps politely critical would be a better term -- relationship between the media and the government, including the military, is healthy and helps guarantee that both institutions do a good job. However, this relationship must not become antagonistic- an 'us versus them' relationship. The appropriate media role in relation to the government has been summarized aptly as being neither that of a lap dog nor an attack dog but, rather a watch dog (p. 32).

However, Bussey (1990) alleges that there are still media personnel that feel that "by getting in the [government's] knickers" they are doing their job. In the same respect though, he admits that when the military has a problem, it bristles at the fact that the media insists on extensive coverage. But, speaking as the former top Army public affairs officer, Bussey concedes the bottom line: "...we still can't accept that it is not news when you pick up your mission and carry it out flawlessly; the news is when you blow it."

In essence, it appears that the Sidle Commission's (1985b) initiatives have not been completely overlooked. One of the most significant recommendations originating from the commission states:

When it becomes apparent during military operational planning that news media pooling provides the only feasible means of furnishing the media with early access to an operation, planning should provide for the largest possible press pool (p. 4).

The Department of Defense has consistently used pooling as a viable device for dealing with a literal "army" of media. Turgeon (1990) claims that "the sheer number of media overwhelms the military," and because of their numbers, "they're [eventually] going to get their way." However, it appears that the hierarchies of both the media and the government feel that pooling may be the best determination at the outset of military conflict.

Bussey (1990) says that, after Grenada, the media became committed to ensuring that the idea of pooling worked. He says:

[The media] even came to us and asked us to exercise the pool for training exercises...From then on, to the credit of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ASDPA), he used the pool to show off the professionalism of the armed services. In other words, the use of the pool not only allowed the media to gain access to military operations, it also offered the military the opportunity to illustrate its talents first-hand to the media.

According to Bussey (1990), Ben Bradlee even suggested

that "he did not want to be responsible for the deaths of young Americans, because of the media's insistence to be part of the first wave." Hence, if the government could justify keeping journalists out the conflict area for an extended period of time, the media elite would acquiesce.

Thus, it seems the impressions left by the Sidle Commission have been somewhat effective. In fact, the importance that public affairs decision-making played in our last military engagement offers credence to this point. Bussey (1990) even stated that the decision to mobilize the pool in Panama "reflected that officials were attuned to the Sidle Commission's recommendations and [they] were determined not to let another Grenada happen."

E. The military-media relationship in the Panama invasion

In December 1989, the media and the military/government were once again forced to "work together" during combat situations. This time, the politico-military decisionmakers fell back upon the Sidle Commission's recommendations to ensure arrangements for media coverage were satisfactory to all. Yet, Turgeon (1990) says the Sidle Commission's recommendations -- specifically pooling -- were followed too well in Panama. In fact, there is agreement among many military officials that DOD public affairs authorities

overreacted by deploying the media pool from the United States, instead of simply mobilizing the media that were already in Panama. Turgeon (1990) contends "the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs was so worried about public support that he ignored the Vice President's advice" and mobilized the pool anyway.

Maple (1990) adds that, while the Sidle Commission's guidance was viable in Panama, it was not operationalized very well. In Turgeon's (1990) opinion, this may be due to an ongoing credibility problem that public affairs officers are faced with inside of their own institution. He maintains the rest of the military generally perceive military public affairs specialists as belonging not just to the armed services, but to the media as well. In fact, he notes that public affairs contingencies were left out of the operational planning in Panama. Turgeon (1990) professes that "The Southern Command [the operational headquarters for Operation Just Cause] told us to stick our public affairs plan in a safe and forget about it, because it might cause leaks."

In specific reference to the Panama invasion, Maple (1990) says that the result of activating a press pool to go to a warzone where media were already present has merely compounded any perpetual difficulties between the media and

the military. Moreover, he submits that the effect of the disorganization has simply reinforced press suspicions about the governments handling of the media.

In a review of the media pool in Panama, Hoffmar (1990) denounces the decision-making authorities at the highest levels of the Department of Defense for what he views as "excessive secrecy." In fact, he specifically states that "unless the Defense Department's leaders are prepared to extend [trust to the media] in hot war situations, the pool probably will be of little value" (p. 1).

It appears that Hoffman is in agreement with both Turgeon and Maple in respect to the criticism surrounding the untimely deployment of a stateside pool versus the use of on-ground media already in Panama. Specifically, Hoffman (1990) declares that "The result of all this was that the 16-member pool produced stories and pictures of essentially secondary value" (p. 1).

Although Hoffman directs much of the blame at the civilian hierarchy of the defense establishment, the military public affairs authorities in Panama have not gone without his censure. Hoffman (1990) alleges that Southern Command public affairs representatives attempted to find "story ideas" that resulted in little more than a supporting cast to the lead stories which had been missed in the

initial hours of the invasion. Additionally, an inconsistent flow of information to pool members coupled with serious problems in communications hardware in the Southern Command and at the Pentagon, yielded considerable delays in the dissemination of civilian print pool coverage. Not surprisingly, the steady array of obstacles led to suggestions that Washington was once again manipulating the media to convey or protect its own political interests.

Hoffman (1990) argues that ineffective leadership among the public affairs elite yielded insurmountable barriers for the success of the media pool. Moreover, he contends that there were inexcusable blunders in the staffing of the public affairs plan for the Panama Invasion. Hoffman (1990) reports that the Joint Staff had forewarned the Southern Command to be prepared to handle a media pool in the event of a major deployment. However, public affairs authorities in Panama apparently did not maintain a viable plan for handling a major contingency operation. As the Pentagon tried to research and devise a plan, the bureaucracy and inflexible routine that so often looms in large organizations struck once again -- the coordination of proposed guidance among relevant officers, better known as staffing, destined the invasion's public affairs plan for failure.

In reviewing the decision to use the media pool in Panama, it seems that deploying reporters from Washington was an illogical and senseless mistake. So, what is the justification for making such a decision? Hoffman (1990) reports, "It appears that a key reason for this decision was what [Secretary of Defense] Cheney later described in an interview as a 'desire to avoid being criticized for not using it' in the Panama invasion" (p. 2).

With nearly 1,200 registered journalists (this is more than twice the amount in Vietnam at any one time) vying for coverage of the action in Panama, it is relatively simple to hypothesize that the media must have had some influence on the military. In fact, according to a study conducted by the Center for Army Lessons Learned (U.S. Department of Defense [DoD], 1990), the media reports emanating from Panama had an impact not only on the morale of soldiers, but on their families as well.

The research team's findings indicate most of the military participants generally agree the media should be praised simply because they provide an essential link between service members and their families who must follow the events through the eyes and ears of reporters. Furthermore, positive coverage within the theater of operations served to motivate the troops as well.

Conversely, the study (U.S. DoD, 1990) determined the credibility of the Defense establishment was undermined because of rumors and confusion caused by interpretations of media reports by the soldiers on the ground. The best example of the effects of the media were revealed in interviews conducted with commanders and soldiers who had access to radios and televisions during the actual conduct of the fighting/mop-up operations. One commander even referred to television as "key" in both raising and lowering the morale of his soldiers, depending upon the gist of the coverage (U.S. DoD, 1990).

Interviews indicate that inaccurate attribution seemed to discourage morale more than any other negative media influence. For instance, the 82nd Airborne Division, which is probably America's most familiar fighting force, received much of the credit for the actions and achievements of other lesser known units. As one commander saw it, when his soldiers realized that the media was honoring the 82nd with other unit's successes, their spirits took a definite beating (U.S. DoD, 1990).

Interestingly, prior to the actual deployment of soldiers to Panama, the media already had an impact upon the future fighters of Operation Just Cause. Explicitly, soldiers were led to believe that they were going on just

another training exercise, while the media informed the nation that Panama was about to become the locus of American military interest. Apparently, soldiers who had been placed on alert tended to believe CNN reports even above those of their own commanders (U.S. DoD, 1990).

While it appears that media coverage certainly had an impact upon the morale of those involved with Operation Just Cause, simply arranging for the housing, feeding, and communications network for the army of reporters impaired not only the morale, but the mission of public affairs authorities in Panama. In fact, the senior public affairs officer in the Southern Command reported that it was three or four days after the initial invasion before he could actually concentrate on his primary public affairs mission (U.S. DoD, 1990). In other words, he was forced to divert his attention from the military mission so that he could take care of the health, welfare and morale of hundreds of media personnel.

In direct respect to the media's influence on mission accomplishment, a senior enlisted soldier said:

...We still had a mission to do, but we had to be on our tiptoes, we had to watch what we did, we had to watch what the soldiers said, especially with all those cameras...We went into a village, and, God, there must have been 30 or 40 cameras...We had to pull all our troops back and put them in a nice, little pretty position because [the Chief of Staff of the Army] and CNN was coming down. So it took away from our real mission, just so we could be there and look pretty

(U.S. DoD, 1990).

Even with experiences such as this, it is refreshing to discover that by this time at least some senior military leaders understood the importance of the free media in a democratic society. As one colonel was quoted as saying:

...get a lead on the press, take them with us, get them there up front. If we're doing something wrong and stupid, then God dang it, it's the American people's right to know that. It's their sons and daughters that are going to war, and it's their right to know. I don't think we have to violate H-hour secrecy and all that, but the days of closing off the war zone to the press are over with (U.S. DoD, 1990).

In sum, the invasion of Panama once again exposed the adversarial relationship between the military/government and the media. However, the impact the media can have and the power it can wield in military operations was certainly never realized more than when U.S. soldiers finally took down the Commandancia in Panama City and found four television sets sitting in front of Manuel Noriega's desk...each one was tuned into a major network back in the United States.

V. Conclusions and Research Questions

In the final analysis of just how much and in what way the military public affairs establishment reacted to this country's experience in Vietnam, it simply appears that no single consensus will be reached. While some experts believe that the military learned its lessons in dealing with the media in Vietnam, others feel that Vietnam was unique, and that many other influences have played important roles in policy decisions.

Nonetheless, there is some agreement that reflections upon Vietnam-era relations have and will eternally crop up. In fact, philosophically speaking, many believe that Vietnam will always be the case on how the conduct of war ought to be or how it ought not be. Moreover, when looking at any of the images of recent military conflicts, it is extremely hard not to meditate upon the recollections of our longest and most controversial war.

Although politico/military-media relations during Vietnam were often tense, there has been a major effort at the highest levels of both institutions to work together. It almost seems that as our country matured out of the 1960s and 1970s, so did the relationship between the military and the media.

The insight of the former Chief of Army Public Affairs

offers the best testament to where we have been, where we are presently, and where we should always be:

If both the military and the media wanted to continue to hurl insults at each other based upon misperceptions that occurred 25 years ago, we could forever discourage any rapport. I think that we need to deal with each other as professionals, each of whom has an existence based in the Constitution. We both have a legitimate function in our society, and sometimes the execution of those functions, done diligently, will bring us into conflict (Bussey, 1990).

Ultimately, although America has fought the crux of its battles in jungles, in towns and in villages, the open press and politico-military authorities have often been engaged in battles as well. And, it seems ever more apparent that the battle-lines may never have concluded. Moreover, allusions to Vietnam are rampant in the discourse of post-Vietnam conflicts. Consequently, it appears quite possible that both the media and the military may be using Vietnam as a frame of reference in their association with one another.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The previous discussion of the media's relationship to the politico-military establishment during the Vietnam War, during the Grenada invasion, and during the Panama invasion leads to the following research questions:

Question 1: Did the Vietnam War produce a new era of adversarial journalism?

Question 2: Did the Vietnam experience negatively affect the media's coverage of Grenada and Panama?

Question 3: In covering politico-military affairs, do journalists use the Vietnam War as a reference point?

In determining why it is important to study the effects of the Vietnam War on media-military/government relations, one simple question needs to be asked -- Do journalists use pre-conceived ideas or biases in covering stories? The answer to this question may seem fairly basic, i.e. journalists are human too, and as such they can't help but maintain some amount or form of bias. But, in covering news of such immense proportions where words can either maintain or sway public opinion merely by the way they're phrased, it is important to chronologically review certain instruments of the media to check for bias, prejudice, or lack of objectivity. By researching news coverage of three successive U.S. politico-military ventures, journalistic trends in the war reporting of Vietnam, Grenada, and Panama may be uncovered. And if trends are discovered, the media, the politico-military establishment, and the public can use any additional insight to enlighten their own views on war reporting and on media-military/government relations. Ideally, findings can then serve as the basis for "quality control" among journalists.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Two main goals were established for this comparative study of newsmagazine coverage of the Vietnam War, the Grenada invasion, and the Panama invasion: (1) One primary goal was to provide an indication of how magazine coverage of politico-military action during the Vietnam War compared to magazine coverage during America's two subsequent military ventures in Grenada and in Panama. (2) The other key goal was to see if and how often the latter magazine coverage in Grenada and in Panama referred to the Vietnam war era or may have used that era as a source for future bias.

Using an analysis of magazine content subsequent to and including Vietnam yielded chronological data on media attitudes toward U.S. military ventures during the Vietnam War and in the post-Vietnam era. According to Berelson (1952), "Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (p. 18).

The data base for this study consisted of a content analysis of articles from three major news magazines --

Time, Newsweek, and U.S News & World Report. Specifically, articles on Vietnam from the year 1965, the year 1967, and the year 1969 were compared to articles on Grenada from Oct. 1983 - Jan. 1984 and to articles on Panama from Dec. 1989 - March 1990.

A. Periods studied

The study focused on three separate years in the 1960s because each one reflects a different era of media coverage in Vietnam and at home. More explicitly:

1. The year 1965 represents the first year that U.S. ground troops were sent into Indochina. This year marks the first time that the military transformed from an advisory role to a publicized role of actual combatants. This is significant because as troop strengths and missions increased, so did the extent of coverage.

2. The year 1967 saw the anti-war movement steer into full swing. As the war unofficially entered its thirteenth year of U.S. involvement, the media honed in on American protests.

3. The year 1969 was the year that the Nixon administration began the systematic withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam. And, maybe more importantly, in the year after the first TET offensive, support for America's

longest war rapidly eroded.

Timeframes for Grenada and Panama were selected because press coverage of the two conflicts was densest during these periods. Unfortunately, the quantity of magazine coverage of these two conflicts was much less extensive in comparison to coverage of Vietnam. This was obviously due to the brevity of the two latter operations. In fact for both the Grenada and Panama invasions, weekly magazines covering only two and one month respectively were analyzed. Still, each magazine massed enough exposure during the four to seven week period following each of the military operations to communicate a general pulse from the content of its articles.

Since the representative sample of Vietnam-era articles spanned three years, and the Grenada and Panama conflicts lasted just weeks, the size of the original pool of magazine articles from 1965, 1967, and 1969 was reduced. First, instead of scanning an entire year's worth of articles per periodical, each was scanned in six month intervals. This produced 233 articles. Then, by coding every third story out of the original sample of 233, the sample was further reduced. This yielded 74 total Vietnam-era stories that were included in the final analysis. These articles were coded with 56 articles from the Grenada/Panama time period

(35 from the time period covering the Grenada invasion and 21 from the Panama invasion. Again, the size of the pool of articles was severely limited due to the brevity of the military operations).

Articles that were written as merely verbatim transcripts of high-level briefings or question and answer sessions with government or military officials were not included in the sample study, since the content of these types of stories did not reflect the journalistic views required by this research. This type of article was easily recognized by a brief editorial, prefacing statement or introductory paragraph.

B. The content analyzed

Funkhouser (1973) best describes why the use of news magazines is appropriate for studying media characteristics as a whole:

Although news magazines are not cited as primary sources of information by most people, it seems likely that their content reflects the nationwide content of the prominent news media - television and newspapers. That is, if television and newspapers were presenting abundant material concerning ecology (or drugs, or whatever), the news magazines probably would be doing so also (p. 64).

It should be noted that Funkhouser (1973) analyzed the same three news magazines that were chosen for this study.

However, the objective of his research was to determine the

key public issues of the 1960s, and had nothing to do with media legacies...or did it? Funkhouser discovered that, from 1960 to 1970, news magazines gave more coverage to the Vietnam War than to any other issue. And, they ranked the war as the single most important issue of the entire decade.

Content analysis may be used to examine how sources of communication, i.e. news magazines, compare in their attitudes and discussions about key topics. It is suggested that a content analysis of news magazines over a period of time is particularly useful for examining journalistic trends or styles.

In this content analysis, examples of rhetorical and judgmental bias in the coverage of the Vietnam War were compared to similar types of bias in the coverage of Grenada and Panama. Bias is defined as the reporter's application of either negative, neutral, or positive preference to any political, military, social, legal or economic issue.

Rhetorical bias is defined as any attribution, adjective and/or adverb that exhibit the journalist's personal feelings about the way something was said or done. For example, using the word "snapped" to attribute a statement has an unfavorable connotation; and the word "said" has a neutral connotation.

Other examples of phrases that show adjective or

adverbial bias are "empty-handed policy", "tinny-sounding rhetoric", and "surprisingly rash."

Some statements of rhetorical bias are as follows:

1. "And, so last week, with Lyndon Johnson stage-managing the high drama from the wings, Gen. William C. Westmoreland, resplendent in an immaculately pressed uniform, his chest ablaze with six decks of combat ribbons and citations, stood at the speaker's rostrum of the House of Representatives to address a joint session of Congress" (Newsweek, May 8 1967).

2. "With the serendipitous discovery in Grenada of large Cuban arms stockpiles and documents disclosing secret military agreements between Grenada's former leaders and Cuba and the Soviet Union, the mission, which both Reagan and many Grenadians insisted be called 'a rescue' rather than 'an invasion,' seemed easier to justify...Some of those documents were released last week with considerable fanfare" (Time, November 14 1983).

3. "There is an aura of scary smugness about Bush these days, a schoolboyish delight in saying, as he did to reporters about the Malta summit, 'I knew something you didn't'" (Time, January 1 1990).

To refine the data, categories for favorable, neutral, and unfavorable attribution/adjectives/adverbs were

collapsed yielding either low, moderate, or high instances of rhetorical bias (i.e. 0 instances = low; 1-2 instances = moderate; 3-12 instances = high).

Judgmental bias refers to entire statements or passages that reflect a reporter's subjective interpretation and may consequently contain more bias in latent content than statements containing rhetorical bias.

Some examples of judgmental bias are:

1. "The present turn of events is related to one simple fact: War in Vietnam as now being fought is being lost -- and lost fast...The U.S., deeply involved, faces the choice either of accepting defeat or of making a major effort to avoid defeat" (U.S. News & World Report, August 2 1965).

2. "Moreover, if the safety of U.S. citizens were the primary motivation, a far more limited, and far less inflammatory, rescue and evacuation mission could have been attempted...But if a straightforward rescue mission had been the goal, there then would have been no need, and no opportunity, to wrest control of the island from its Marxist strongmen" (Time, November 7 1983).

3. "If the American occupation of Panama turns out to be long and even a little bloody, if the light at the end of the tunnel keeps receding, Bush could pay a steep political

price for Operation Just cause" (Newsweek, January 1 1990).

In this study, a Likert Scale with five responses ranging from 1 for very favorable to 5 for very unfavorable was used. Five responses were offered instead of three (1 = favorable, 2 = neutral, 3 = unfavorable), because it was felt that more responses would be less intimidating.

C. Testing for bias

In relation to coding, the best solution and most reliable method for determining the surface and underlying meaning of communications is to code both the manifest and latent content of written works (Babbie, 1989). In this study, to detect latent content, certain words, phrases, statements, and passages were coded either "favorable" -- pro politico/military affairs -- "neutral" -- neither for or against politico/military affairs -- or "unfavorable" -- against politico/military affairs. For edification, politico/military affairs relates to anything said by a government/military representative, government and/or military policy, or any action taken by a government/military agency.

Additionally, manifest content was analyzed by simply counting references to Vietnam in the articles covering Grenada and Panama. Examples could be the word "Vietnam";

references to Vietnam era politics from the Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, or Ford administrations; references to the anti-war movement and public opinion in the 1960s/70s; and any mention of adversarial journalism or of a negative relationship between the press and the government/military.

To ensure coding reliability, four individuals -- one male Vietnam veteran, age 62, two female civilians, ages 59 and 25, and one active duty Army officer, age 32 -- coded sample articles from each of the three news magazines represented in the study. Coders were given instructions based upon the operationalized definitions of rhetorical and judgmental biases as already explained. (A sample code sheet is at Appendix A.)

There are many advantages of using content analysis for this particular study. First, information from the 1960s can be compared longitudinally with information from the 1980s/1990s. Second, this method saves time and money, because all resources are located in one place -- the library. Third, content analysis is fairly safe, because the data source -- the magazines -- are quickly and easily obtained. Fourth, working with paper instead of people is an unobtrusive way to conduct research. And fifth, studies using content analysis are usually reliable, since the source of the data is consistent. However, this particular

advantage can also be viewed as a weakness since the source of data is limited, i.e. in this case to magazine articles. Another disadvantage relates to validity problems, which is also due to limitations of the communication form. Still, as Berelson (1952) and Holsti (1969) point out, reliability can be expected with simple forms of content analysis, but the more complex the category being studied, the more unreliable content analysis becomes.

Chapter 4

Findings

In looking at the final analysis of the 130 articles from Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report, one point becomes rather clear: media coverage of the politico-military establishment in times of military crises remains relatively constant. In fact, as the statistics in Tables 1 and 3 illustrate, journalists expressed less than 10 percent difference in communicating favorably and unfavorably about government and military pursuits in Vietnam, in Grenada, and in Panama.

The first research question this study set out to test was whether or not Vietnam produced a new era of adversarial journalism. Although the differences between conflicts seem relatively inconsequential when looking at the data in Table 1, it appears that with a steady decline in instances of favorable rhetorical bias, there may be some support for the premise that the media coverage of conflicts subsequent to the Vietnam war was more adversarial. However, after further analysis, and specifically after calculating instances of moderately favorable citations throughout all three conflicts, a more discerning picture becomes evident.

TABLE 1

Instances of favorable rhetorical bias by war

	Vietnam	Grenada	Panama
% of stories receiving highly favorable ratings based on 3-12 favorable attributions/adjectives/adverbs per story	16% (n=12)	14% (n=5)	10% (n=2)
% of stories receiving moderately favorable ratings based upon 1-2 favorable attributions/adjectives/adverbs per story	1% (n=12)	26% (n=9)	43% (n=9)
% of stories receiving no favorable ratings based upon 0 favorable attributions/adjectives/adverbs per story	68% (n=50)	60% (n=21)	47% (n=10)

More specifically, since there is a steady drop in the instances of favorable words, phrases, or statements from the Vietnam War to the invasions of Grenada and Panama, it might be assumed that positive coverage of military ventures

has declined since the 1960s/70s. But when observing the sizable increase in moderately favorable coverage, coupled with a systematic drop in coverage that contains no favorable attributions, adjectives, and/or adverbs, it is easier to see that positive media coverage may not have diminished.

In assessing stories from the Vietnam-era, the data in Table 1 seem to indicate that most journalistic accounts of the war did not hold much in the way of favorable rhetorical bias. After looking at stories that include anywhere from 1-12 instances of positive attributions, adjectives, and/or adverbs, the results show that less than 33 percent of the 74 Vietnam articles studied contained favorable bias. While this particular result demonstrates the media's non-favorable tendencies during Vietnam, over one-half of the journalists covering the Panama invasion gave the politico-military establishment highly favorable or moderately favorable remarks. In Grenada, 40 percent of all passages surfaced favorable bias.

Successive comparisons of the findings in Table 1, yields data which question whether an adversarial relationship between the media and government/military emanated from Vietnam. With favorable rhetorical bias rising from Vietnam to Grenada to Panama, and instances of

non-favorable bias in articles decreasing from conflict to conflict, there may even be some foundation for just the opposite of the first research question observed in the study.

Therefore, in reference to this study's second research question -- Did media-military relations in Vietnam affect coverage in Grenada and Panama -- the growth in favorable rhetorical bias in the latter conflicts raises the question: Did the Vietnam experience possibly assuage some of the adversarial feelings between the press and the government/military?

TABLE 2

% of favorable comments in all three conflicts combined

"Highly favorable"	"Moderately favorable"	"No favorable"
3-12 instances of favorable rhetorical bias per story	1-2 instances of favorable rhetorical bias per story	0 instances of favorable rhetorical bias per story
15% (n=19)	23% (n=30)	62% (n=81)

Nonetheless, on the whole journalists appear to be especially conservative in their praise of the politico-military establishment during times of military crises. After combining the analysis of all three conflicts, 62 percent of the 130 articles analyzed contained not a single word that coders considered to be favorable to either the government or to the military. Moreover, only 19 stories incorporated a large number (3-12) of favorable comments.

TABLE 3

Instances of unfavorable rhetorical bias by war

	Vietnam	Grenada	Panama
% of stories receiving highly unfavorable ratings based upon 3-12 unfavorable attributions/adjectives/adverbs per story	47% (n=35)	54% (n=19)	48% (n=10)
% of stories receiving moderately unfavorable ratings based upon 1-2 instances of unfavorable attribution/adjectives/adverbs per story	31% (n=23)	29% (n=10)	38% (n=8)
% of stories receiving no unfavorable ratings based upon 0 instances of unfavorable attribution/adjectives/adverbs per story	22% (n=16)	17% (n=6)	14% (n=3)

Looking at and comparing favorable comments about politico-military actions in Vietnam, Grenada, and in Panama comprises only half of the investigation behind how the media treats politicians and servicemembers during military

crises. The other half must search for unfavorable commentary as well.

Table 3 may not be the most efficient illustration of the media's opposition in print to America's interventions in Vietnam, Grenada, and Panama. Still, a significant point can be ascertained from the existing data -- all three sets of statistics confirm that roughly one-half of the journalists covering each of the three conflicts convey a large number of unfavorable rhetorical biases in their works.

The data from Table 3 do not indicate any particular pattern concerning the media's unfavorable coverage from the Vietnam War, to the Grenada invasion, to the Panama invasion. But when looking merely at unfavorable ratings, without the added caveat of highly or moderately, the instances of unfavorable media coverage increases throughout time. Hence, once again there does appear to be some positive support for this study's research question concerning the Vietnam era engendering adversarial journalism, and the Vietnam experience affecting later politico-military coverage.

Yet, after further examination, the data in Table 3 also provides additional evidence that does not support the first research question. The analysis indicates nearly a

ten percent drop in the amount of media coverage that contains not a single word that reflects unfavorable communication relating to the government or to the military. This corresponds to the data in Table 1. Yet, even though the findings have yielded some conflicting results, there is enough information in Tables 1, 2, and 3 that holds support for the intent of the original research.

TABLE 4

unfavorable rhetorical bias in all 3 conflicts combined

"Highly unfavorable"	"Moderately unfavorable"	"Not unfavorable"
3-12 instances of unfavorable rhetorical bias per story	1-2 instances of unfavorable rhetorical bias per story	0 instances of unfavorable rhetorical bias per story
49% (n=64)	32% (n=41)	19% (n=25)

After combining the statistics on unfavorable rhetorical bias in each of the three military actions, again the data seem to advocate that journalists offer an overall adversarial blemish to media coverage of military crises. Similar to the data in Table 2, which held that almost twice as many stories written on all three crises contained no favorable rhetorical bias as compared to stories considered favorable, articles containing unfavorable rhetorical bias outnumber those articles without any unfavorable comments over four to one.

TABLE 5

Judgmental political bias by war

	Vietnam	Grenada	Panama
% of articles receiving an unfavorable rating of 4-5 on a Likert Scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	38% (n=28)	40% (n=14)	29% (n=6)
% of articles receiving a neutral rating of 3 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	50% (n=37)	57% (n=20)	57% (n=12)
% of articles receiving a favorable rating of 1-2 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	12% (n=9)	3% (n=1)	14% (n=3)

As the figures show, media coverage of both Vietnam and Grenada contained almost identical amounts of politically unfavorable bias. During each conflict, almost one-third to one-half of all articles maintained unfavorable judgmental

bias towards Washington.

However, the trend for journalists covering the Panama invasion seems to be substantially different. Less than one-third of the entire coverage of Panama was thought to be politically unfavorable by coders. This fact, coupled with the results reflected in the numbers of politically neutral and politically favorable articles, show the media coverage of the Panama conflict is filled with the least criticism of governmental action.

When analyzing the statistics for neutral political bias, it can be seen that a majority (50 percent or greater) of media coverage during Vietnam, Grenada, and Panama was neutral. But in Grenada, the negative/neutral commentary nearly reached 100 percent. Moreover, during the Grenada invasion, unfavorable political bias was the highest, and favorable political bias was the lowest. But this could, of course, be in response to the media ban that the politico-military establishment placed on the media in the opening stages of the conflict.

Judging from the number of articles deemed politically favorable, journalists covering the invasion of Panama found Washington's decision-making more praiseworthy than during any of the other three conflicts. Since the invasion took place in the post-Sidle era, this could offer some support

for the idea that enhanced communications between the media and governmental authorities may have softened some of the acrimony.

Although the difference between laudatory political comment in Vietnam and Panama was minimal, it may be far more important to note the rise in positive political media coverage between the 1983 invasion of Grenada and the 1989/90 operation in Panama.

TABLE 6

Judgmental political bias combined in all 3 conflicts

"Favorable"	"Neutral"	"Unfavorable"
% of articles receiving a favorable rating of 1-2 on a Likert scale	% of articles receiving a neutral rating of 3 on a Likert scale	% of articles receiving an unfavorable rating of 4-5 on a Likert scale
10% (n=13)	53% (n=69)	37% (n=48)

Summarizing all four tables on judgmental political bias, they illustrate that journalists tended to generally withhold political applause or offer negative political comment during America's interventions in Vietnam, Grenada, and Panama.

Even though a majority of the political media coverage was neutral, the fact that only 1 in 10 articles manifested any support for political endeavors seems meaningful. And, while this fact may not overtly support the concept of adversarial journalism, it may give credence to the impression of an ongoing feud between Washington and the media.

TABLE 7

Judgmental military bias by war

	Vietnam	Grenada	Panama
% of articles receiving an unfavorable rating of 4-5 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	15% (n=11)	11% (n=4)	10% (n=2)
% of articles receiving a neutral rating of 3 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	76% (n=56)	83% (n=29)	71% (n=15)
% of articles receiving a favorable rating of 1-2 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	9% (n=7)	6% (n=2)	19% (n=4)

The number of articles coded as unfavorable to the military remained relatively constant from Vietnam to Panama. In fact, the data reveals only a five percent variance among the three conflicts. Again, the original research question concerning the possibility of Vietnam-era media-military relations producing adversarial emotions from

the media covering Grenada and Panama appears diametric to the findings.

The gradual withdrawal of militarily unfavorable assertions from Vietnam to Grenada to Panama merely pads the antithesis. Or, more specifically, that the relationship of the media to the politico-military establishment has improved. This upholds the notion that the perception may not be the reality when it comes to the relationship between the press and politico-military authorities.

The statistics in Table 7 exhibit a definite trend among journalists. Almost equivocally, the media treated the military in Vietnam, Grenada, and in Panama with a neutral pen. In each conflict, less than one-fourth of the articles were either favorable or unfavorable to the military. This singular fact seems to dispel the myth that the media lambasted the military in Vietnam, and continued to criticize the military in its subsequent ventures in Grenada and in Panama.

Favorable military bias virtually mirrored the trend of favorable political bias throughout all three conflicts. Still, media coverage of the Grenada invasion consistently shows the media to be less judgmentally favorable to politicians and to the military. The coverage in Grenada was less rhetorically favorable as well.

As stated earlier, the blackout imposed upon the media may be the cause for the contention in print. However, the timeframe between the 1983 Grenada invasion to the 1989/90 Panama invasion must have bolstered the politico-military establishment's image among journalists. As Tables 6 and 7 illustrate, Washington enjoyed almost five times more positive coverage in Panama than in Grenada, and the military in Panama enjoyed more than three times the amount of favorable coverage compared to the military in Grenada.

TABLE 8

Judgmental military bias combined in all 3 conflicts

"Favorable"	"Neutral"	"Unfavorable"
% of articles receiving a favorable rating of 1-2 on a Likert scale	% of articles receiving a neutral rating of 3 on a Likert scale	% of articles receiving an unfavorable rating of 4-5 on a Likert scale
10% (n=13)	77% (n=100)	13% (n=17)

When merging all three conflicts and then testing for military bias in the media, the evidence reveals that journalists handle the military with almost complete neutrality.

As in Table 7, the figures in Table 8 overwhelmingly disprove the common myth that soldiers and journalists are foes. While the figures do not express an intimate relationship between the media and the military, there is no substantial evidence of an adversarial relationship either.

TABLE 9

Instances of the word Vietnam or Vietnam-era references

Grenada	Panama
23	5

At face value, 23 instances of reflections on Vietnam in Grenada may seem consequential. However, while it appears there may have been extensive use of the word Vietnam and Vietnam-era reflections, over 50 percent of those instances came from only two stories. Moreover, the limited number of reflections on the Vietnam War during Panama seems to challenge this study's third research question that looked at whether journalists covering politico-military affairs after Vietnam, use that war as a reference point.

Nonetheless, when post-Vietnam stories are combined, 25 percent (n=14) of the articles from both Grenada and Panama mention something about the Vietnam experience -- 31 percent (n=11) from Grenada exhibited manifest content concerning Vietnam, and 14 percent (n=3) of the articles from Panama did the same.

TABLE 10

of Articles Analyzed by Magazine and War

	Time	Newsweek	U.S. News & World Report	
1965	10	7	6	
1967	9	8	5	
1969	6	7	16	
<u>Vietnam totals</u>	25	22	27	= 74
Grenada	17	12	6	= 35
Panama	9	7	5	= 21
<u>totals of all three conflicts</u>	51	41	38	= 130

TABLE 11

Instances of favorable rhetorical bias by magazine and war

		Time	Newsweek	U.S. News
<hr/>				
% of stories receiving highly favorable				
ratings based on	Vietnam>	24%	23%	4%
3-12 favorable		(n=6)	(n=5)	(n=1)
attributions/	Grenada>	18%	17%	0%
adjectives/adverbs		(n=3)	(n=2)	(n=0)
per story	Panama>	0%	0%	40%
		(n=0)	(n=0)	(n=2)
% of stories receiving moderately favorable				
ratings based on	Vietnam>	24%	14%	11%
1-2 favorable		(n=6)	(n=3)	(n=3)
attributions/	Grenada>	24%	33%	17%
adjectives/adverbs		(n=4)	(n=4)	(n=1)
per story	Panama>	33%	57%	40%
		(n=3)	(n=4)	(n=2)
% of stories receiving no favorable				
ratings based on	Vietnam>	52%	64%	85%
0 favorable		(n=13)	(n=14)	(n=23)
attributions/	Grenada>	58%	50%	83%
adjectives/adverbs		(n=10)	(n=6)	(n=5)
per story	Panama>	67%	43%	20%
		(n=6)	(n=3)	(n=1)
<hr/>				

Each of the three newsmagazines involved in this study maintained fairly consistent biases and judgments throughout

all three conflicts. For instance, a majority of Times's articles on Vietnam, Grenada and Panama contained no favorable rhetorical bias, in addition to high instances of unfavorable bias. And, the analysis of Newsweek's and U.S. News & World Report's articles yield nearly the same results. The only major diversion is apparent during the invasion of Panama, where U.S. New & World Report articles exhibited a considerably larger percentage of rhetoric -- both favorable and unfavorable -- than either of the other two magazines.

Judgmental analysis by magazine and by war resulted in roughly the same picture as Tables 5 and 7. More specifically, all three magazines were, for the most part, politically and militarily neutral. Although, Time was more apt to be politically unfavorable than the others.

TABLE 12

Instances of unfavorable rhetorical bias by magazine and war

		Time	Newsweek	U.S. News
% of stories receiving highly unfavorable ratings based on 3-12 unfavorable attributions/adjectives/adverbs per story	Vietnam>	56% (n=14)	41% (n=9)	44% (n=12)
	Grenada>	59% (n=10)	42% (n=5)	66% (n=4)
	Panama>	44% (n=4)	14% (n=1)	100% (n=5)
% of stories receiving moderately unfavorable ratings based on 1-2 unfavorable attributions/adjectives/adverbs per story	Vietnam>	16% (n=4)	50% (n=11)	30% (n=8)
	Grenada>	29% (n=5)	33% (n=4)	17% (n=1)
	Panama>	44% (n=4)	57% (n=4)	0% (n=0)
% of stories receiving no unfavorable ratings based on 0 unfavorable attributions/adjectives/adverbs per story	Vietnam>	28% (n=7)	9% (n=2)	26% (n=7)
	Grenada>	12% (n=2)	25% (n=3)	17% (n=1)
	Panama>	12% (n=1)	29% (n=2)	0% (n=0)

TABLE 13

Judgmental political bias by magazine and war

		Time	Newsweek	U.S. News
% of articles receiving an unfavorable rating of 4-5 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	Vietnam>	44% (n=11)	32% (n=7)	37% (n=10)
	Grenada>	41% (n=7)	50% (n=6)	17% (n=1)
	Panama>	56% (n=5)	14% (n=1)	0% (n=0)
% of articles receiving a neutral rating of 3 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	Vietnam>	32% (n=8)	55% (n=12)	63% (n=17)
	Grenada>	53% (n=9)	50% (n=6)	83% (n=5)
	Panama>	44% (n=1)	57% (n=4)	80% (n=4)
% of articles receiving a favorable rating of 1-2 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	Vietnam>	24% (n=6)	13% (n=3)	0% (n=0)
	Grenada>	6% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)
	Panama>	0% (n=0)	29% (n=2)	20% (n=1)

TABLE 14

Judgmental military bias by magazine and war

		Time	Newsweek	U.S. News
% of articles receiving an unfavorable rating of 4-5 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	Vietnam>	14% (n=3)	27% (n=6)	7% (n=7)
	Grenada>	12% (n=2)	8% (n=1)	17% (n=1)
	Panama>	11% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	20% (n=1)
% of articles receiving a neutral rating of 3 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	Vietnam>	84% (n=20)	50% (n=11)	89% (n=24)
	Grenada>	82% (n=14)	84% (n=10)	83% (n=5)
	Panama>	78% (n=7)	86% (n=6)	40% (n=2)
% of articles receiving a favorable rating of 1-2 on a Likert scale with 1-2 being favorable, 3 being neutral, and 4-5 being unfavorable	Vietnam>	2% (n=1)	23% (n=5)	4% (n=1)
	Grenada>	6% (n=1)	8% (n=1)	0% (n=0)
	Panama>	11% (n=1)	14% (n=1)	40% (n=2)

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Whether the relationship is referred to as adversarial, oppositional, acrimonious, or just plain negative, there is still a popular belief that the media and the politico-military establishment during the Vietnam War simply did not get along. And, as this study's first research question set out to test, the feelings associated with that discordant relationship are also felt to have carried over to the next generation of military conflicts.

There is clear evidence to suggest that journalists and politico-military authorities have not enjoyed an amiable relationship in the past few decades. In this study alone, unfavorable rhetoric directed at the wartime actions of the military and the government exceeds the amount of favorable commentary. Similarly, only a few of the articles analyzed contain any form of favorable rhetorical bias. Thus, it would be logical to conclude that media coverage of military crises from Vietnam to Grenada to Panama has consistently been less than favorable. However, while this conclusion partially withstands a test against a content analysis for rhetorical bias, it does not hold up when tested against an

analysis of judgmental bias. Hence, this study does not manifest any overt tendency by the media to discredit or defame the military or the government based upon the supposed adversarial relationship established during Vietnam.

What this study does uncover is a general propensity by the media to use rhetoric as a tool to emphasize or sensationalize certain points, but not to such an extent as to skew the overall treatment of the subject. In other words, when the government launches the military, the media is inclined to be somewhat disdainful, but tacitly neutral. To summarize one of the better analogies for this situation, the former Chief of Army Public Affairs, Winant Sidle (1985a) suggests that, when covering military operations, the media acts, and should continue to act, like a "politely critical watchdog." And based upon the findings in this study, apparently the Sidle Commission's efforts have made a definite impact upon military-media relations. In fact, the aspirations of the Sidle Commission have, in effect, met Grunig's (1984) "two-way symmetric" model of public relations in that both the military and the media have tried to change the way they "jointly orient" to each other.

However, the similarities in the findings from Vietnam to Grenada to Panama may offer support for the notion that

the media's relationship to the politico/military establishment may not even have as much of an effect on coverage as the pressures associated within the journalism profession itself. More specifically, organizational pressures sometimes lead reporters to succumb to an even more significant affiliation known as "pack, herd, or fuselage" journalism.

According to Crouse (1973), this type of journalism means that, after awhile, journalists that cover the same stories tend to "believe the same rumors, subscribe to the same theories, and write the same stories" (p. 8). To support this phenomenon, Crouse (1973) contends that, for instance, deviations from wire service releases are not conducive to a reporter's or an editor's career because the resulting story would be different than the story told by a majority of the other news media. Thus, it is "accepted practice" to run with the pack when it comes to wire service copy.

An infamous example of "pack journalism" surfaced during a critical phase in the Vietnam War. As Braestrup (1977) points out, during coverage of the TET Offensive, even if correspondents reported the story a certain way, wire service copy often held more credibility among editors, and thus overruled all other reports. Braestrup (1977) says:

...an AP or UPI story, coming off the news tickers

before anything else, heavily influenced big-league editors and producers on the "tilt" of a given event, even if they later received contrary advice, or a contrary account from their own staffman (p. 32).

Since many of these "big-league" editors rewrote stories based upon the same wire service copy that their competitors received, the dispatches that told the pivotal story of "TET" to the American public were mostly confined to the views of isolated AP/UPI reports.

The consistent similarities in the coverage of Vietnam, Grenada and Panama illustrate that "pack Journalism" may have been predominant throughout the coverage of each conflict. Thus, in reference to this study's second research question, too many conflicting findings do not allow for a definitive assertion that the Vietnam experience affected the subsequent coverage of Grenada and Panama. However, the closeness in statistical data from each conflict does lend support for the idea that pack journalism may have transcended the years. Furthermore, when the analysis is broken down by magazine, the parallels do even more to exhibit that the media covers the same story with similar biases.

In looking at whether journalists use the Vietnam War as a reference point when covering politico-military affairs, it becomes difficult not to infer that a legacy may exist among defense reporters. The findings in this study

uncover a conspicuous amount of Vietnam reflection in the coverage of Grenada and Panama. Yet, after considering all of the evidence, there is simply not enough proof to declare that the media of the 1980s and 1990s use the Vietnam experience as the "measurement" for politico-military coverage.

In a recent interview with the Office of the Chief of Army Public Affairs, a defense correspondent for Scripps Howard News Service, Peter Copeland, was quoted as saying:

If you spend three or four days with troops, a lot of your Hollywood-Vietnam myths about the Army will be shattered (U.S. Army, 1991, p. 8).

Copeland's phrase "Hollywood-Vietnam myths" may be the best synopsis for the general misconceptions that are associated with the media's relationship to the government and to the military. Representatives of the media and members of the politico-military establishment frequently offer too quick of an evaluation of each others character. Just as journalists sometimes join the "pack" or the "herd," politicians and members of the armed forces who have had little association with the media join the bandwagon of media thrashers. The result, of course, is the appearance of an adversarial relationship that may not be based in fact nor reality. And, as the findings in this study seem to indicate, the reality suggests that in times of war there is

a neutral relationship between the media and the politico-military establishment, and relationships are not necessarily carried over from conflict to conflict.

Hence, probably the most provocative suggestion of the findings from this study is that media coverage of military affairs is actually objective, rather than tainted negatively towards the defense establishment. While this certainly seems to be contradictory to what one may expect from military-media relations, the three major news magazines -- Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report -- treated the armed forces neutrally during the Vietnam War, the Grenada invasion, and in Panama.

This surprising conclusion certainly warrants further study in that it offers a paradigm shift from traditional perceptions about the relationship between the politico-military establishment and the media. But even more tantalizing is the intimation that media-military relations during the Vietnam War may have conceivably reversed a negative trend in the relationship between journalists and members of the armed forces. Unfortunately, the adversarial relationship which seems to be carved into the minds of many of those associated with the focus of this study, will probably continue to uphold and support the maxim -- perception often becomes the reality.

APPENDIX A

Sample Code Sheet

* ID PUB MO YR FA NA UA POL MIL V VE

* ID = # of article out of 130

PUB = # corresponding to publication; i.e., 1 for Time,
2 for Newsweek, and 3 for U.S. News & World report

MO = month article was published

YR = year article was published

FA = # of instances of favorable rhetorical bias

NA = # of instances of neutral rhetorical bias

UA = # of instances of unfavorable rhetorical bias

POL = Likert Scale rating for politically judgmental bias

MIL = Likert Scale rating for militarily judgmental bias

V = # of instances of the word "Vietnam" appearing in
Grenada and Panama articles

VE = # of instances of Vietnam-era references appearing
in Grenada and Panama articles

Coders were given the same criteria for rhetorical and
judgmental biases as are outlined in chapter 3.

REFERENCES

- Angelle, A. (1990). U.S. Armed Forces Public Affairs Role in Low-Intensity Conflict. Military Review 70(1). (pp. 51-60).
- Arlen, M. (1982). The Living Room War. New York: Penguin Books.
- Babbie, E.R. (1989). The Practice of Social Research. California: Wadsworth Inc.
- Berelson, B. (1952). Content Analysis in Communication Research. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press.
- Braestrup, P. (1977). Big Story: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington. Boulder CO: Westview Press.
- Browne, M.W. (1964). Vietnam Reporting: Three Years of Crisis. Columbia Journalism Review, 3-4, Fall. (pp. 6-9).
- Bussey, C. (1990). Interview with the former Chief of Army Public Affairs, Nov 21, University of Maryland, College Park, MD.
- Center for Law and National Security (1985). Conference Report on U.S. Military Operations and the Press. Political Communications and Persuasions, Vol. 3, No. 1. (pp. 69-93).
- Chiaventone, F.J. (1991). Ethics and Responsibility in Broadcasting. Military Review, August. (pp. 64-76).
- Clotfelter, J. and Peters, G. (1974). Mass Media and the Military: Selected Ratings of Fairness. Journalism Quarterly 51, Autumn. (pp. 332-334).
- Columbia Journalism Review 7 (1968). Vietnam, Vietnam: Spring. (p. 2).
- Crouse, T. (1973). The Boys on the Bus. New York: Random House.

- Elegant, R. (1981). How to Lose a War: Reflections of a Foreign Correspondent. Encounter, 57, no.2. (pp. 73-90)
- Everhart, W.M. (1973). Coverage of the Vietnam War. Master's Thesis, University of Utah.
- Emery, M. and Emery, E. (1988). The Press and America. New York: Prentice-Hall Inc.
- Emery, E. (1971). Press in Vietnam Quagmire. Journalism Quarterly 38, Winter. (pp. 521-).
- Funkhouser, G.R. (1973). The Issues of the Sixties: An Exploratory Study. Public Opinion Quarterly, 37. (pp. 62-75).
- Grossman, P. (1989). The Future of Field Press Censorship: Is There One? Unpublished paper for the U.S. Army War College studies program.
- Grunig J. and Hunt T. (1984). Managing Public Relations. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Hallin, D.C. (1984). The Media, the War in Vietnam and Political Support: A Critique of the Thesis of an Oppositional Media. The Journal of Foreign Politics, 46 (pp. 2-24).
- (1986). The Uncensored War. New York: Oxford University press.
- Hammond, W.M. (1988). The Military and the Media. U.S. Government Printing Office. No. 80001. Washington D.C.
- Heise, J. (1979). Minimum Disclosure: How the Pentagon Manipulates the News. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Herring, G.C. (1979). America's Longest War. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- (1983). Media Not to Blame for U.S. Defeat in Vietnam. Editor & Publisher, 30 July. (pg. 20).
- Hoffman, F. (1990). Review of the Panama pool deployment-December 1989. Department of Defense Report, unnumbered.

- Holsti, O.R. (1969). Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities. Reading Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publication Co.
- Knightley, P. (1975). The First Casualty. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.
- Mandelbaum, M (1982). Vietnam: the television war. Daedalus, 111, Fall, (pp. 157-158).
- Maple, D. (1990). Interview with the Chief of Command Information, Office of the Chief of Army Public Affairs, 19 November. Pentagon, Washington D.C.
- Mercer et al. (1987). The Fog of War: The Media on the Battlefield. London: W. Heinemann Ltd.
- Miller, A. (1989). Interview with a former United States Army Republic of Vietnam Press Officer, University of Maryland, November 7.
- Mills, N. B. (1985). The Vietnam Experience: Combat Photographer. Boston: Boston Publishing Company.
- Mungham, G. (1985). The Eternal Triangle: Relations between Governments, Armed Services and the Media. Army Quarterly & Defense Journal, 115, (pp. 7-21).
- Orwant, J.E. and Ullman, J. (1974). Pentagon Officers' Attitudes on Reporting of Military News. Journalism Quarterly, 51, Autumn, (pp. 463-469).
- Reed, F. (1991). Press-Military Conflict Won't Go Away. Navy Times, March 25. (P. 62).
- Salisbury, H.E. (1985). Vietnam Reconsidered: Lessons from a Lost War. New York: Harper Torch Books.
- Schoenfals, K. and Melanson, R. (1985). Revolution and Intervention in Grenada. London: Westview Press.
- Sheehan, N. (1989). A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam. New York: Vintage Books.
- (1990). The Politics of the Vietnam War. Lecture to GVPT 479 class, November 6, University of Maryland, College Park, MD.

- Showalter, S.W. (1976). America Magazine Coverage of Objectors to the Vietnam War. Journalism Quarterly, 53, Winter. (pp. 648-688).
- Sidele, W. (1985a). The Military and the Press: Is the Breach Worth Mending? Army, February. (pp 22-32).
- (1985b). Report by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Media-Military Relations Panel (Sidele Panel). Department of Defense report, unnumbered.
- Siebert, F., Peterson T. and Schramm W. (1956) Four Theories of the Press. Urbana: University Press.
- Steele, R.W. (1985). News of the Good War: World War II News Management. Journalism Quarterly, 62, Winter. (pp. 345-356).
- Stein, M. (1983). What the Vietnam War taught the Press. Editor and Publisher, February 19. (pp. 9-10).
- Turgeon, R. (1990). Interview with the Executive Officer of the Plans and Policy Division, Office of the Chief of Army Public Affairs, 19 November, Pentagon, Washington D.C.
- Turner, K.J. (1985). Lyndon Johnson's Dual War: Vietnam and the Press. Chicago: The Chicago Press.
- U.S. Army (1969). Press Release files of the Public Information Office, Military Assistance Command Vietnam, July.
- U.S. Army (undated). Operations files of the 25th Infantry Division - Cambodia Operations.
- U.S. Army (1991). Q & A. Public Affairs Monthly Update, August. p. 8.
- U.S. Department of Defense (1988). DoD Directive 5122.5, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) 4 Aug.
- U.S. Department of Defense (1990). Operation Just Cause: Center for Army Lessons Learned Study. Memorandum for the Chief of Public Affairs. Department of Army Report, unnumbered.

- Vietri, L.T. (1987). Vietnam: an interdisciplinary perspective. College Park, Md., The Center for Instructional Development and Evaluation.
- Westmoreland, W. C. (1990). Continuum. Omni, August. (p. 29).
- Willenson, K. (1987). Getting The Bad Press. The Bad War. (pg. 168). New York Books.
- Wilson, G.C. (1990). Dealing with Saddam in the Shadow of Vietnam. The Washington Post, December 2. (p. C1-C2).
- Zeidenstein, H.G. (1983). White House Perceptions of the News Media Bias. Presidential Studies Quarterly, 13, Summer. (pp. 345-356).