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***Future Visual Coverage of U.S. Women in Combat:
Gatekeeping, Hierarchy of Influences, and Ethic of Care***

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***Future Visual Coverage of U.S. Women in Combat:
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Dedication

To my Grandmother, Charlotte Marie Bradley Miller

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***Future Visual Coverage of U.S. Women in Combat:
Gatekeeping, Hierarchy of Influences, and Ethic of Care***

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Two grounded theory studies found that photo editors and producers were intent on publishing graphic photographs of women in combat at first opportunity after women are fully incorporated into U.S. Armed Forces combat units in January of 2016. However, the studies showed their hesitation upon seeing the images for the first time, and that they re-viewed their prior intentions with latent patriarchal influences. Both studies showed that concern for the audience holds such a powerful influence over editors that it deserves its own category in the extra-media level of the hierarchy of influences, rivaling other extra-media forces. The theories of gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences helped explain journalists' editing processes, with the feminist and moral theory ethic of care adding strength to the individual level of the hierarchy of influences. Interviews in the first grounded theory study included 17 visual editors and producers of various newspaper, broadcast, and online U.S. media companies. The second study included a different set of 20 editors/producers who participated in a think-aloud procedure involving photographs with graphic depictions of women in combat. While the interviewees in the first study said their intent was to treat women the same as men in their editing of graphic war photography, there was some hesitation when participants in the second study responded to the images of women in combat.

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Introduction

Americans have only seen photographs depicting women in limited military participation, but soon that could change. After Barack Obama's second presidential election in 2012, Then-Defense Secretary Leon Panetta lifted the Pentagon's 1994 ban on women fighting in U.S. military combat forces. Effective January of 2016, women will be fully integrated into combat units (Bumiller & Shanker, 2013). As a result, women could soon be working "officially" in these modes, which means they could finally be photographed doing so.

Women in the U.S. military have already fought unofficially in combat (Bumiller & Shanker, 2013) and without sanction of military policy (CNN Staff, 2013). While the 1948 combat exclusion (Holland, 2006) that restricted women from the frontline infantry was reinforced in 1994 (Secretary of Defense Memo, 1994), women were still often equally at risk as men because they were in the vicinity of danger in war zones (Martinez, 2013). More than 150 women died in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars by summer of 2013 (Washington Post, 2013; Chris, Good, & Martinez, 2013), and 160 by 2014 (Washington Post, 2014). There are still more than 200,000 active duty women, 14.5 percent of the entire force (CNN Staff, 2013), with many somehow ending up under fire.

Though these U.S. military women have already been unofficially participating in combat, their real level of participation has remained visually under the radar, since it was not typically photographed. Audiences have rarely seen images of the U.S. military

women who participated in the recent wars in the Mid-East. That level of participation is evidenced only when there is an article on a particular female soldier and/or rehabilitation, or when injured women are photographed living with their injuries after war. One typical example: U.S. Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), who has been photographed at public events, standing and walking on prosthetic legs.

As Duckworth's prostheses suggest, women were not actually kept in safe, non-combative situations during the recent Middle East conflicts, even though visual representation of their work is scarce. This is also evident from the list of deceased military women on the Center for Military Readiness site (CMR), which displays information on how they died (2014). It reveals that women were killed by IEDs, in suicide bombings at check points; by explosions, while traveling in Chinook helicopters under fire, while flying in refueling planes, when and wherever enemies attacked, and while captured as prisoners. Even if they were originally operating in support roles, clearly on some occasions women found themselves in combative situations. While women were not "officially" participating in hand-to-hand combat or regularly assigned to exchange fire with the enemy in combat units, in fact they were doing so. Yet photographs of these events typically have either not been made available or do not exist.

When women are officially integrated into those combat units in January of 2016, however, the profile of women in the military is likely to change. Women will more likely be photographed in combat, even if they are photographed under controlled supervision. Editors and producers -- and then their audiences -- may soon begin to see

women beyond the typical auxiliary roles they have been photographed in so far, as both military and non-military media photographers will more likely have access to female soldiers in combative military roles.

This unprecedented visibility of women in the U.S. military could lead to a shift in how women are viewed visually and metaphorically, even beyond the military settings. The media and audience may or may not be ready for this new age of war and military photography. But photo editors, as well as media and web producers may soon have to grapple images of women in combat, and audiences will bear witness. Therefore, it is worth learning now how editors feel about working with these new photographs of women in combat and how they predict that they will use them.

Because this will be a whole new way of portraying women, we don't know whether these gatekeepers will do the same, at least initially. Being able to see the news however, even if it is sensitive, facilitates the public's ability to make decisions in a democratic society. It is also important for the nation to see the true role of women in the military and their real contribution to society. Depicting women in leading military roles will contribute to women's economic and professional advancement in society as a whole. Feminist theory suggests the history of that particular effort has been dismal. The question is, have the U.S. media learned how important it is to contribute to the understanding of women's real contributions? Have its professionals been given the reins to compensate for the deficit of real and respectful depictions of women by publishing at first opportunity?

Background/History

IMAGES OF WAR

The first images of war were recorded more than 35,000 years ago as drawings on cave walls (Perlmutter, 1999). Man against nature was the first subject matter, but about 10,000 years ago, as resources became an issue, drawings began to show man fighting against man (Perlmutter, 1999). Art displayed war imagery in painting and sculpture, until wood engravings allowed reproduction in early newspapers during the mid-1400s. Photographic representation of war was soon to follow, with the invention of photography in 1826 (Newhall, 1964), and no time was wasted in getting the camera to battlefields.

Disputes over how war efforts should be visually reported and presented were of immediate concern starting with the first photographs from battle (Cassidy, 2006) during the Mexican-American, the Crimean, and the Civil Wars. Cameras were first used in photoreconnaissance during the Civil War, when cameras were attached to and lofted by hot-air balloons to reveal enemy positions. Mathew Brady and his associates produced images of the Civil War, working to give a more truthful and balanced account to combat romanticism of that war (Franklin, 1994). They have also been used to garner support for wars. For instance, during WWII, images of fallen US soldiers were not generally released by the military. The first image of dead U.S. soldiers from that war were seen

when George Strock's photo was published, when it was deemed necessary for Americans to assess the costs of war, shortly before America bombed Hiroshima. The photo garnered support for America's involvement in the war and ended the prior censorship on photographs of dead U.S. soldiers, except that faces were still to be kept hidden for soldiers' and families' privacy ([Cubillos, 2015](#)). Life magazine's editorial at the time presented its argument for showing such images for the first time since Pearl Harbor, saying the magazine ran the photo because: "The reason is that words are never enough. The eye sees. The mind knows. The heart feels. But the words do not exist to make us see, or know, or feel what it is like, what actually happens. The words are never right." (Life, 1943). On the opposite end of the spectrum, and returning to a containment of America's emotions in more recent years, it was commonly known that even the caskets of dead Americans were not to be photographed for the duration of the Iraq War. That ban was not lifted until President Obama came to office in 2008.

Governmental control over images of war has been an issue especially since the Vietnam War. The press was blamed (Schanberg, 1991) by the government and it promoted the idea that photographs coming into America's living rooms during that war had an effect on the war's outcome. That has since been refuted, and it has been found that there is no real evidence of any war being stopped, at least immediately, because of any certain photograph (Perlmutter, 1999). The Eddie Adams photo of Vietcong prisoner Nguyen Van Lem being shot by South Vietnamese General Laon did not necessarily jar the audience suddenly into a certain frame of mind. Unlike the older theory of

“hypodermic needle” effects (Shoemaker, Tankard, & Lasorsa, 2004), it could be that the photograph had an overall and longer lasting “sleeping effect” (Davidson, 1983) on the support for, and opinion of, the Vietnam War. It could also be that it added to other photographs as and a whole, they had an influence on eventual overall thinking about the war. Perlmutter (1999) argued that support for the war actually increased at the time that the Adams photo published, and did not wane until after President Johnson ordered a pullback later that year. However, the media was still blamed for the loss of that war (Schanberg, 1991) and may have answered in recent decades by being too submissive to the military and the government, so it would not be perceived as anti-American or unpatriotic.

The controversy has not been restricted to control over war images. There has also been controversy about the control over women in images. Considerations for both photographs of war and the representation of women go far beyond the goal of using “the best picture,” as usual. There are many intricacies to consider even with the simplest of subjects, let alone when considering images of war. My own experience editing during the Iraq War was that I often wondered how to follow that dictate to run the best picture, when there were so many considerations. Even with a career as a photojournalist behind me, it was my first war to edit, and I found it difficult to know at times what the best path to informing well would be. There were not many U.S. women in the images to need to consider, but I worried that there would be, and wondered how the publication of them could play out.

IMAGES OF WOMEN IN WAR

When there were fewer women in war combat situations, their lack of visual representation was not considered to be much of an issue. For instance, 16 women died in the Vietnam War (CFMR) out of the 7,000 women who served. Likewise, only 250 women are known to have fought in the Civil War. Those female Civil War soldiers were in disguise, and there is little record of their participation. But some accounts of those women have noted their bravery and determination. In *They Fought Like Demons* (Blanton & Wike, 2002), one comrade-in-arms said, “it seems very strange that a woman could endure the hardships of the soldier” (Blanton & Wike, 2002, p. 11). One pictorial rendition of women in the Civil War shows Sarah Edmonds riding down a road on a horse as she waves the American flag (Righthand, 2011). Still, most people are totally unaware of the women’s participation in that war, just as they are unaware of women’s real participation in history.

Yet women have been known to participate on as high a military level as men throughout history; consider Joan of Arc, for example. There were scholastic arguments for and against women’s participation in the military as far back as 1236 by Aristotelian writers Ptolemy of Lucca and Giles of Rome in response to Aristotle’s proposal that women be allowed in the military (Blythe, 2001). In “Republic,” Plato said that women have the “rightful opportunity to share in every task...men and women will take the field

together” (Blythe, 2001, p. 243). The earliest evidence seems to be 330 BC depictions of men and women dueling or sparring together. There are also renditions of women involved in other war activity, such as a German woman following her man to battle in a 1520 engraving (Harrington, 2009).

The first photographs of women in war show them only as nurses and helpers after battle (Harrington, 2009). Some of the earliest mentions of women’s participation in the 1900’s was found in modern U.S. newspapers in 1901, buried on inside pages, with a slight mention of the U.S. Army Nursing Corp (McEntee, 2013). Early photographs of women in the military in American newspapers were found in *The New York Times*, when the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corp. (WAAC) was formed in 1942, although it was extremely minimal (McEntee, 2013).

Coverage at that point was not only marginalizing, but also trivializing and humiliating. For instance, one article in the *Dallas Morning News* talked about the WAAC women’s panties and “underthings” included in their uniforms, and talked about them as if they were children. *The New York Times* showed an image of the WAAC director, Oveta Culp Hobby, but she was first noted in the title as someone’s wife. While one of the photographs showed her talking at eye level to someone taking notes, a second photograph showed Hobby inactive and unexpressive at her desk, with men in uniform standing over her desk as if they were in charge (McEntee, 20013). Photographs of women entering military academies for the first time in 1976 displayed similar frivolity,

deriding their intrusion into the man's world, with gender negative headlines in the *Dallas Morning News* such as: "Swish of Skirts Kills AF Tradition" (McEntee, 2013).

Women were shown in auxiliary positions during WWII, when they filled men's jobs in factories and flying planes, but it was always noted that this was an exceptional time, and that when the war was over, these women would return to their rightful feminine roles at home (Bullock Museum, 2013, Austin, Texas). An Army-Navy Screen Magazine film shows women flying planes and calls them "little girl pilots," who were "afraid to get their hair wet" as the film's narrator also reaffirmed that they were only temporarily in those positions (Bullock Museum, 2013).

Images in the press today are generally less demeaning. Still, the only photographs of women in recent wars, or any U.S. wars of the past, have portrayed them in such auxiliary roles. The true participation of women has been hidden. Most photographs available for editors to consider for placement in the news, especially during the Iraq War, were images of destruction after the fact. This could be partially due to access, as it was rare even to see images of men in combat. Finding photographs of a woman actually in battle in a war zone or on the front line would be difficult, because such photographs were not permissible, even if access to the women was possible.

Part of the access problem has to do with the numbers of women involved. Female personnel make up less than 15 percent of the U.S. military, a smaller percentage of the force than men, so then it is not surprising then that there are fewer photographs of women. Only a very small percentage of even male soldiers actually engage the enemy

during front- line combat. It is even more rare to encounter a woman in a combat support role, possibly discharging her weapon downrange with the infantry. “To have someone there (a photographer) in that very moment to document that momentous occasion as it happens, is even further remote,” said award winning military photographer Stacy Pearsall in a separate phone interview about this study in 2014.

As war photographer Michael Kamper said, also in an early interview for this study in February of 2014, if he and the other editors have not seen images of women in combat, then they still do not exist. Pearsall agreed, saying in an email that these images are still like “a unicorn and at this point probably do not exist.”

Only on rare occasions have women previously been photographed while injured in the vicinity of a war zone, as when Jessica Lynch was rescued in Iraq in 2003. Those few images were offered to media with patriarchal overtones and purposes (Howard, 2004), and with restrictions from real access, so that to this day, images of the injured Lynch are limited. This is problematic because as Bock found (2012), controlling physical access to news is “tantamount to controlling the narrative” (p. 715).

A Google search today will yield few images of Lynch. Photographs of U.S. females in recent wars typically show the women in training for the military, working with equipment such as tanks and armor, or on patrol with their fellow male soldiers. The new ruling to infiltrate women into battle means it will be possible to photograph women further in the field. Even though women may not be signing up in large numbers for combat roles (A.P., February 25, 2014), those few who do could be photographed more

heavily and/or more strategically. We may finally see women in action beyond typical auxiliary roles of repairing equipment, standing guard or on patrol with male troops. We may actually see them actively taking part in the planning of battle and war. We may see them aggressively commanding and/or shooting and killing enemy combatants. This means we may also end up seeing some of these women being wounded, maimed, and/or killed themselves.

The probable new images of women operating in more combative military roles may conflict with the traditional notion of women as life givers and nurturers (Welter, 1966). Audiences may see women in modes of heightened aggressiveness and command. Women are more likely to be seen in graphically disturbing depictions that involve injury and/or death, or sexual trauma, possibly extreme. A single image could reflect all of these ingredients -- aggression, atypical roles, graphic content with injury/death, and sexual trauma. Such a powerful vortex of new visual messages about U.S. women would present a complicated array of issues for photo editors and media producers to consider.

PHOTO EDITING

It has been said that editors use photographs to back up written words and provide authenticity, and that they use photographs according to well established procedures (Taylor, 2000). The photographs they use come to them in various ways: they may have been assigned by the photo editor to match stories, or may come from news agencies on

contract to provide images to a media company. Occasionally, unsolicited images may appear from independent photographer/reporters. My own experience at the photo desk at a mid-sized newspaper in the Southwest was that our photographs first came across on the Merlin software system. The material from several contracted news agencies would funnel through that one port so that I could view 3,000 to 6,000 images in one spot. I would then reach out to other agencies not regularly funneling into our system to make sure I had seen every photo possible from around the world. From my review in the early afternoon, I would take my choices for the front page and inside pages, the web, and even photo galleries to the news meeting at 3 p.m.

The images came from the war in various ways. The war photojournalists can work independently or be contracted by a news company to cover a certain area of war. News agencies also funnel photographers' work to media outlets for preview and for purchase, often to match a story in the news. Editors and producers also make choices in what they ask their own staff of photographers to cover. Additionally, photographers make initial choices on the scene of the news and edit what they have photographed there in camera, or on their laptops. The news agencies subsequently make more choices from what photographers have provided, as intermediaries to the media companies, which, in turn, make another set of choices.

Fahmy (2005) asserts that some of the procedures in the processes of making, procuring, and presenting photographs can cause war photography to present a certain point of view. The bias can result in part because "photographs carry weight" themselves

(Fahmy, 2005, p. 382) and because people believe that photos are objective representations of reality (Sontag, 1977). Further, the few photo news agencies in business control the selection of photographs available to the media (Fahmy, 2005) before media editors/producers make their own selections. The continually narrowing chain of source options influences any ultimate presentation, resulting in a “framing” of the information. Fahmy contends that American media tend to present an American-favored point of view (2005).

Framing refers to the inclusion or exclusion of information in a presentation (Entman, 2007), which can affect the audiences’ understanding of issues (Rodriquez & Dimitrova , 2011, Lakoff, 2004). Framing is often illustrated by showing, or describing, how the frame of a camera includes or excludes visual items in the scenery in front of it. However, framing usually addresses words, sound, and other material as well. There are two types of frames: one in which a person stores a ready-made map in their minds for processing information, and another that is the resulting character of messages the mind perceives because of how messages are presented (Entman, 1991). Both meanings for framing result reflect a certain point of view. Schwalbe said “The media can subtly but powerfully shape public perceptions and opinion by how they frame of story” (Schwalbe, 2006, p. 268) with words and graphic indicators in design. The same is true with what is included or excluded in news and war photographs.

There are other specific ways visual presentations are affected, beginning with the decisions to pursue particular news items or stories in the first place. There, images are

preconceptualized, before they are ever assigned in the newsroom (Bock, 2008), as managers make decisions regarding technologies and types of journalists available to do the work. They consider who has the best skills and what will be the best technological format for formulating the story package, and also, who has the right amount of time on their schedule, as well as other practical considerations. The journalist then preconceptualizes information given to them when planning how to get the work done. Once on the scene of a news event or ongoing story, photojournalists' orientations, both physical and mental, affect decisions as they decontextualize and then recontextualize the information they perceive into photographs (Bock, 2008) that tell a certain story from their point of view.

It is important to understand how material is recontextualized yet again for audiences when photo editors, page designers, and online producers make decisions about placement, words, and design, all of which will also affect what the audience perceives. As the process continues, "Each recontextualization informs the next iteration" (Bock, 2011, p. 711).

Some of the forces affecting a photojournalist's message have to do with the type of technological equipment they have and how they negotiate their environment to work and get images (Bock, 2011). This helps explain how a photograph begins to carry a message before it is even sent through the gatekeeping process to the photo agency or media outlet. There, editors will begin to recontextualize the image again, as they make sense of materials they receive and make choices for their audiences (Bock, 2011).

Images are even preconceptualized, before they are ever assigned in the newsroom and then again in transmission to the photographer, who will imagine how to make the photograph. As one of the participants in Bock's study said "you have to pre-decide how you're going to do it before you can leave the building or the meeting, or you won't make your deadline" (Bock, 2011, p.710). This goes back to the idea of the photographer making initial editing choices, which begins to frame news images.

Producers and the audience must have the same ideas about conventions and knowledge, especially in visuals, for the message to translate (Scott, 1994). There must already be a "learned pictorial schemata in order to interpret the visual" (p. 257). In other words, people can be locked in to what they have experienced seeing before. This is because we can only understand through what we already know. For example, Scott describes isolated tribal people who had never seen photographs. When they looked at photographs for the first time, they were unable to recognize the information on that two-dimensional visual representation (Scott, 1994). Pictures have to be read, and the ability to read them is an acquired ability (Goodman, 1976). In other words, it takes time for audiences to build their knowledge and visual capabilities, and when they see something different, it can take time to adjust. Photo editors must be sensitive to this.

The simple gatekeeping that David Manning White described (1950) has become much more complicated. No longer is a photograph a simple representation, and no longer do we think that audiences will or should believe photojournalism just because "seeing is believing" (Graber, 1996 p. 87). Bissell's study references decisions by photo

editors in a more personal way. Bissell found that editors' decisions can sometimes be based on personal beliefs, race, and culture (Bissell, 2000).

Some of these processes help define how decisions can be influenced in journalism, including in the editing of photographs of war imagery. Several communications theories apply. This study will first feature the communication theories of gatekeeping and the hierarchy of influences. Then it will discuss ethic of care, an ethical and moral theory within feminist theory, to show how it coexists with the other two communication theories.

Theoretical Foundation

GATEKEEPING

Gatekeeping is one of the first communication theories established. It was inspired by a model for food distribution by psychologist Kurt Lewin (1947), who described factors that influenced gatekeepers of the nation's food distribution. Lewin said that if you want to change society's processes, it means changing the gatekeeper(s) (Lewin (1947)).

David Manning White then applied Lewin's theory to journalism (1950), showing how gatekeeping works in a newsroom and how a journalist's experiences could influence his attitudes and choices (Cassidy, 2006). Initially the study was fairly straightforward, as it described how the "winnowing down" process of gatekeeping determined the outcome of what the public was exposed to (Bissell, 2000b, p. 82). However, gatekeeping has become much more complicated (Cassidy, 2006; Shoemaker, Salwen, & Stacks, 1996), especially now with an expansion to multiple gatekeepers that includes new online producers and new media outlets, including individual self-generating citizen journalists with audience participation and interactions (Boczkowski, 2004a; Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996).

White's 1950 version of gatekeeping was criticized immediately for its oversimplistic model; some scholars preferred Lewin's earlier theory (Gieber, 1959). They thought more variables were involved, such as pressures from routines and deadlines. Brown (1979) thought White made gatekeepers look more independent than they really

are. In fact some people have come to think of the gatekeeping role as obsolete (Williams & Delli Carpini, 2000). However, others see an opportunity for greater gatekeeping refinement and growth, as White's original gatekeeper from 1950 has morphed into a longer chain of multiple gatekeepers (Berkowitz, 1990).

VISUAL GATEKEEPING

So far understanding the use of photographs by gatekeepers has not been a priority in research (Zelizer, 2005). Also, because visual understanding has been assumed to be innate, there has been a lack of respect for, and an underestimation of the power of visuals (Graber, 1996), which can account for less focus in this area. However, there are reasons why visual gatekeeping deserves more attention.

In addition to attracting attention to and making a news product attractive (Graber, 1990), visuals can add information to news (Graber, 1996) or even carry the message. Visuals often reinforce information, while they can also enhance recall and memory (Katz, Adoni, Parness, 1977; Zillman, Gibson & Sargent, 1999). Images increase ethical reasoning (Coleman, 2006), and because visuals carry affective information (Zillman, Gibson, & Sargeant, 1999), they can affect cognition (Morris, Woo, & Singh, 2005).

Those are some of the reasons why visual gatekeeping should be addressed. In addition, the current change in media operations has had some impact on visual

storytelling results. Because changes in media have blended journalism roles in and outside of the newsroom, many more journalists are acting as visual gatekeepers. This new gatekeeping is often administered with less experience, as roles are stretched and people multitask beyond their training and experience. Yet there is a need for informed visual gatekeepers whose experience, education, sensitivity, and sensibilities ensure good judgment in transmission of news information (Silcock & Schwalbe, 2010). These visual gatekeepers are needed to maintain journalistic standards of news judgment, operations, and audience awareness at a high level. This is especially true as the authenticity of images is increasingly being questioned. The visual gatekeeper, or photo editor (and now often producer), now must work to insure ethical transmission of photographic information because of digital manipulation capabilities, as the burden of telling the truth of the news now “falls heaviest on photojournalism” (Newton, 2001, p.5). Because digital manipulations can untraceably change the meanings of original photographs, it is important for practitioners as well as researchers to understand technology and how it can affect outcomes. Therefore, knowing how visual equipment works, as well as the “agency of photographers” (Bock, 2008, p. 48), is imperative.

EXPANSION OF GATES

In short, the theory of gatekeeping has expanded. Not only has the Internet provided more places for news to be consumed, it has also turned the gates “into little more than screen doors” (Roberts, 2005, p.2), or even revolving doors. Information now flows back to the

media company from an interactive audience, and then out again to the online audience. While some feel “the gatekeeper is dead,” others have found new roles for gatekeepers, including “crowd gatekeeping” (Dale Cressman of Brigham Young University, as quoted by Silcock & Schwalbe, 2010, p.5) through audience-to-audience collaborations on sites like Digg and Twitter. People recommend topics to each other on these sites and become their own crowd gatekeepers (Silcock & Schwalbe, 2010). New platforms also publish or transmit news with interpretation (Singer, 1997; Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996). While journalists may still retain some traditional gatekeeping roles online, their role has expanded to include making sure there is a gathering place for interaction (Singer, 2006).

A multi-gated model by Bennett (2004) showed four news gates: 1) technology, 2) organizational news gathering routines, 3) economic constraints, and 4) information and communication technologies. Now there is also a reverse gate, as online sites provide the content for traditional print products (Singer, 2006, p.276). Essentially, gatekeeping has become more of a group effort (Singer, 2006).

FUTURE GATEKEEPING

With gatekeeping becoming more complicated than ever, there is a need for research and education. Training citizens early on may be the best way to guide future understanding of journalist and gatekeeper roles. Silcock & Schwalbe (2010) say scholars need to reconceptualize the gatekeeper and redefine its role to help educators prepare students for

their careers in journalism. After all, as Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim & Wrigley, (2001) point out, gatekeeping is responsible for the resulting social reality constructed by the media and understood by its audiences (Cassidy, 2006).

Journalists see themselves as important to the democratic process because they provide information to the public. Now they are facilitating exchange and interaction with audiences online, as they are keeping that role and expanding it (Singer, 2006). Information now available is of such a “wildly varying quality” (Singer, 2006, p. 265) that there is an even more obvious need for trained and experienced gatekeepers (Singer, 2006) to manage it all. The many technological advances and adaptations being used and ultimately affecting the news may eventually shake down to some dominant modes of operations. History shows that this typically happens, as a dominant style of transmitting knowledge will eventually rise to the top and be institutionalized (Boczkowsky, 2004b).

Meanwhile, gatekeepers will still serve the main function of making final decisions about which photographs of women in combat will be published. Their styles will vary, and the depth of their considerations may vary as well. Variance now depends on levels of experience as well as the particular type of media and its platforms and expectations, and technological and social use changes. However, the ingredients that influence decisions go well beyond individual gatekeepers. Shoemaker and Vos explained these influences as five different entities: the social system, social institution, organization, communications routine, and social systems (2009).

HIERARCHY OF INFLUENCES

The influences in the Shoemaker and Vos theory book are very similar to those outlined in Shoemaker and Reese's earlier work on the theory of hierarchy of influences (1996). Five similar levels of influence outlined in this theory are: ideology, extra-media, media organizations, media routines, and individuals (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013). In 1996 it was believed that the fifth level of influence, the individual level, was heavily influenced by the four previous levels within the hierarchy. It has been shown that "individuals both shape and are shaped by their larger institutional settings" (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013, p. 209). The fourth level of influence was said to have been shaped by the previous three, and so on. It has since been argued that these categories are not completely separate systems but are instead interrelated (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013, p. 209). The influences are also no longer perceived to be in the hierarchical order first proposed, especially as the media continues to change its social, economic, and political involvements. However, they will be addressed here in their original order.

The first level introduced in the hierarchy of influences, ideology, is the foundation for the next four levels. This is because it involves national, global, and community awareness and structures. These include societal beliefs and functions as well as ideological and religious systems, all of which play a part in the understanding and functions of societies (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013, p. 64). Anyone who is born and brought up in any one social system has the parameters and structure of that system shaping their thinking. People are under strong social influences by social structures that

“combine to maintain a system of control and reproduction of the dominant ideology” (Shoemaker and Reese, 2013), shaping their understandings.

Extra-media influences have to do with the interaction and intertwinements of society’s institutions, which can have an effect on the content of communications and media content (Shoemaker and Reese, 2013). Even though the media is itself an institution, this level focuses on the relationships between media and other power institutions in society. These other institutions are usually composed of the following types of entities: governmental organizations, advertising companies, public relations companies, news sources, and interest groups (Reese, 2001).

Even though journalists may work to be unbiased, they may be affected by such extra-media forces due to the relationships they have with their media companies. These relationships between the media and other organizations can be “coercive or collusive and can shape media content” (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013, p. 95) with plenty of opportunity for conflicts of interest. Editors may be constrained as journalists because of ties their company may have -- economically or otherwise -- to external powers that can influence the reporting about news that is controversial or contrary to an institution’s wishes. For example, with increased business ties, extra- media influences may “distort journalists’ ability to objectively describe the world” (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013, p. 157).

Media organizations have their own internal influences as well, and their structures and ways of operating can dictate news outcomes. As media companies introduce new technologies and adjust their budgets, they continually redistribute

responsibilities and workloads. Some journalists' jobs now consist of several former jobs all in one, as jobs have changed and been restructured in recent years due to financial constraints and organizational restructuring. "In today's news organization, a business executive has replaced the editor as the person in charge of the overall company" (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013, p.157). Financial constraints affect other areas, such as when resources limit the number and types of contracts with news agencies. This can make a difference in what and how much material an editor is allowed to see and use. This, in turn, affects the category of influence in the hierarchy of influences called "routines."

Shoemaker and Reese have explained editors' routines as "constraints" in the workspace or environments people work within, which are created by already constrained companies (2013). Job changes, and ways of distributing across platforms to disperse information, which are controlled by traditional media (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013), have affected routines and how the companies are able to manage that flow of news. These routines in turn have affect on the individual gatekeeper.

This individual level of contribution to the outcome of the news is the final influence addressed in the hierarchy of influences. Though it was found in 2001 that routines have more influence than individual differences (Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim, & Wrigley), individuals now compete with other forces higher on the former hierarchical ladder.

The individual level is described as having four factors: 1) demographic characteristics, backgrounds, and experiences; 2) attitudes, values and beliefs; 3) backgrounds and experiences of professional life; and 4) power of the individuals' roles within the organization (Shoemaker & Reese, 2013). These factors all have some very complicated influences on an editor's decision-making. For instance, the commitment an editor feels toward his or her need to inform, as well as his or her standing in the media company, could both affect an editor's efficacy.

In the editing of a war photograph containing an injured U.S. female soldier, an editor's personal background could influence how much graphic or descriptive imagery he or she may feel should be allowed for publishing. For instance, an editor who grew up in the military and lived on base, or whose father flew bombing missions overseas, might not be as sensitive to military policy and aggression, nor the visual impact of the representations of military installations and operations, as an editor who had not had that kind of exposure. Similarly, an American editor with a Middle East background might have a different viewpoint concerning military images showing U.S. involvement and any investment in that region. An editor with dual citizenship could feel more compelled to inform Americans about a second home country, and may have sensitivities to negative visual communications about that country as well.

The second level of individual influence includes attitudes, values and beliefs of editors and producers. For instance, whether journalists have an attitude that is positive toward the progress of women moving beyond the sphere of traditional roles and whether

they have values and beliefs that concur with any form of feminism, might influence their placement of visual images of women in combat. If personal backgrounds are more oriented toward full equality and participation for women, individual influence might lead an editor to think that showing women injured in battle is a positive step. They may feel it shows evidence of women's willingness to carry as heavy a risk as men in serving their country.

A journalist's background and professional experience that reflects a more limited exposure to war imagery, might encourage a more conservative approach to presenting war photography. Similarly, journalists who have had family or community members injured in the military might also be more conservative. Such an editor might decide to crop an injured soldier, or some part of the injured soldier, out of a photograph. Basically, everyone is likely to have different reactions to certain types of war photographs, depending on the background and understanding of each person (Perlmutter, 1998). Other personal or individual influences could include how seriously journalists take their professional jobs and how committed they are to their roles and work lives. Are they so passionate that they will stay and do whatever it takes to communicate accurately, or do they just need to survive the workday?

The power of the editor within an organization could also make a difference in his or her ability to influence. Some editors and publishers will have more say-so in whether certain images will run or not. Some, even in lower positions, may have stronger powers of persuasion. One of the particular ways they could have a subtle influence may be with

how concerned they are with the goals of feminism. This theory concerns many other issues that could open the door to more careful and complete considerations in gatekeeping decisions.

FEMINIST THEORY, PATERNALISM, AND ETHIC OF CARE

All three of these theories - feminism, paternalism, and ethic of care, are somewhat inter-related. Each is relevant here in the process of editing war photography, especially considering the graphic imaging of women in combat. These three theories could naturally have some impact on the workings of the prior two theories of gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences.

Feminism

The feminism umbrella covers many aspects of the human experience, including communications and moral development, and it will have something to say about how communications work to portray women in combat. Feminism is important because, the progress of the world depends on the progress of women. So wrote Charles Fourier, the man recognized for having coined the word “feminism,” in *The Condition of Women* (1837, 1901 printing). Many years later his words still reference a struggle in a system that is restrictive for women.

According to early feminist theories such as *The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860* (Welter, 1966), women were supposed to retain a softer side and manage the home

while providing a refuge for the rougher, more mobile, and wilder men. Women were supposed to act as “passive, submissive responders” (Welter, 1966).

The media have helped promote this notion from the beginning. Welter points out that women like Sarah Margaret Fuller, a journalist known to be the best read person in New England in her day, were shown in the media as destined for sorrowful ends. (Fuller died in a shipwreck.)

Sarah Josepha Hale, who wrote the Prospectus of the Young Ladies’ Seminary at Bordentown, New Jersey in 1836 (Welter, 1966 p.154), warned women to stay in the realm of the home and God. Staying in one’s place was what helped provide some respite from the chaos of a new world in America, which happened to be devoid of security (Welter, 1966), and where men’s instability was helped or anchored women in the home. A “true woman,” according to philosophers and writers of the day, was supposed to forego her personal talents to promote and work for her husband (Welter, 1966, p. 160). A proper woman practiced “piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity” to benefit everyone else in society and the world (Welter, 1966, p. 152). Being educated or well-read was considered to be in direct opposition to those four so-called “attributes.”

Early feminists such as Mary Wolstonecraft and ex-slave Sojourner Truth were outspoken against this. Wolstonecraft wrote in the late 1700’s that women should be allowed their share of the intellectual pie (*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: With Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, 1792). Likewise, Sojourner Truth talked about

the pint she should be able to fill with knowledge, compared to the gallon of knowledge that a man could contain, flattering men in a stirring speech that engaged but criticized them for restricting her.

Truth, who was born a slave in 1797, gave that speech at age 54 and turned a hostile mob of men into admirers wanting to shake the hand of her six-foot frame at the 1851 Women's Convention in Akron, Ohio, according to Frances Dana Barker Gage (Welter, 1966). Gage recorded Truth saying to the crowd that she could work as hard and bear the lash as well as any man. She showed her arm muscles to the crowd, and asked, "Ain't I a Woman?" She also asked the men there if they had not in fact been born from women, as she tried to dispel the idea of women as weaker and less participatory. This is the same argument women are still trying to make today. Showing women in combat will go a long way toward achieving this goal.

It has been said that feminism is not an easy word to describe (Beasley, 1999) and that the word has a "lack of clarity," and cannot be simply explained (p. ix) because its meaning is diverse and complicated. The Merriam -Webster Dictionary's first definition for feminism is "the belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities." Its second definition is: "organized activity in support of women's rights and interests." The Oxford Dictionaries online definition is: "the advocacy of women's rights on the grounds of political, social, and economic equality to men" (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/feminism?q=Feminism).

A feminist, then, advocates for the belief systems and policies that promote feminism and its goals. In this day and age, everyone should realize the advantage of being “feminists,” since women make up 50 percent of the population, and the other 50 percent of the population are related to, depend upon, and/or care for women. As Connell says (1987), men might be interested in feminism and making changes because “heterosexual men are often committed in important ways to women – their wives and lovers, mothers and sisters, daughters and nieces, coworkers—and may desire better lives for them. Especially they may see the point of creating more civilized and peaceful sexual arrangements for their children, even at the cost of their own privileges” (Connell, 1987, p. xiii).

Yet many women – let alone men – are still unaware of the inequality of the sexes. If women were conscious of the difficulties they endure due to inequality, then the effects of that inequality would not be harmful, and everyone would be a feminist (MacKinnon, 1983). Instead, there continues to be a need to point out that feminists are not trying to take away anyone’s rights, such as men’s. Feminists have only been advocating for fair treatment of women all along.

Donovan said that feminism has had three waves. The first was the women’s suffrage movement of the 1910’s; the second was the women’s liberation movement of the 1960’s. The third wave of feminism is a reaction to the second wave, as women adjust and examine what worked and what didn’t, in order to redefine feminism today. The term coined by Fourier in 1839 now encompasses many meanings and concerns, from

equality of wages and treatment in the workplace, to studies on feminism, involving Derrida's "phallogocentrism" (Dely, 2006), as well as a defense of animals, and/or not eating meat. Some of these causes have been said to be about rhetoric that causes harmful and limiting beliefs (Adams, Townes, & Gavy, 1995). Therefore, feminism has a simple goal of equality for all, while at the same time, many more branches and levels of concern are also under its umbrella. It is important to note that one area in direct conflict with feminism, however, is the age-old societal construction of patriarchy.

Paternalism and Protectionism

Feminism would advocate advancing the visual presentation of the work women contribute to the world, including fighting in combat. Seeing real images of women participating in war, however, could cause a bit of a jolt to people who are used to thinking of women as the "weaker" sex and always in need of protection. The U.S. population has been inundated with media showing women in that light, illustrating its entrenchment and normalization of paternalism.

The term paternalism was at one time defined by Webster's dictionary as "the system under which an authority treats those under its control in a fatherly way" (as cited by Sevitch, 1971, p.15). The term was originally brought up by Plato in The Republic doctrine, and is not regarded as a favorable concept in the U.S. (Sevitch, 1971, p15), a self-governing nation of independent people. Today the Merriam-Webster website defines paternalism as: "the attitude or actions of a person, organization, etc., that

protects people and gives them what they need but does not give them any responsibility or freedom of choice” (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/paternalism>).

Even though the U.S. was founded by independent thinkers, the states have been slow to let women exist as independently as men. However, as women advance in their roles in society, change in the system should speed up the opportunity women to become equally independent, and viewed as equal as well.

Presenting women as subordinates in need of a protector, as per Iris Marion Young’s argument (2003), does not help. The same is true when casting any group as subordinate, even if that group is another country. The creation of subordinates by patriarchal protectionism actually positions them to fear more dangerous others (Young, 2003) while “the logic of masculinist protection justifies aggressive war outside” (Young, 2003). Similarly, the framing of the frontiersman perpetuates the image of women as vulnerable and defenseless (Lake, 1996) – in need of protection.

The idea that men are naturally dominant and women subordinate is perpetuated when media portray women as childlike (Goffman, 1979) and less than able to be fully participatory. “Democratic citizenship thus means ultimately rejecting the hierarchy of protector and protected” (Young, 2003, p.23). Given the chance to illustrate full participation in society, women can secure a citizenship that aims toward a true democracy where everyone is equal and nobody subordinate. Young women will feel empowered to think progressively and could see themselves as having equal power and opportunity. It has been shown empirically that when women are exposed to more

women as leaders in their society, they are less likely to hold traditional gender stereotypes (Dasgupta & Asgari, 2004).

In an even larger picture, abandoning America's frontier and male hegemonic roots by portraying women as fully participatory in society could help to shift perceptions not just in America, but around the world. The perceived need for a strong protector exists in the system of patriarchal family units, which still serves as a model for larger systems. This includes countries, which may see themselves in the paternal role internationally. "Democratic citizenship at a global level, then, would constitute a relationship of respect and political equality among the world's peoples" (Young, 2003, p. 23).

Ethic of Care

The idea of preserving healthy relationships country to country or between people, is within the realm of concerns in the theory ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982) which falls under the expansive umbrella of feminism. It is a moral development theory that in this case may have real implications for photo editors and producers. The proponent of this theory, Carol Gilligan, was a student of psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg, who initially outlined a set of moral stages of human development. Gilligan advocated a solution to Kohlberg's "Heinz's Dilemma," an ethical problem illustrated by a story in which a man needed expensive and unaffordable medicine for his wife's terminal disease (Kohlberg, 1981). In the dilemma presented by Kohlberg, the man's only options were to steal the

medicine or let his wife die. Gilligan asserted that the women in the community would ensure there was a system in place to prevent anyone like this man from having to make such a dichotomous decision. She said women would just naturally use relationships and an ethical bartering system to solve problems through a give and take in their community.

In Gilligan's examples, "Amy," addressed the dilemma differently from "Jake." While Jake solved the problem mathematically and logically, Amy thought of the dilemma in terms of relationships and how they could be used. Jake's logical solution was that the woman's life was worth more than any prison time the husband would have to spend for stealing the drug. His deduction was that the man should steal the medicine to solve the problem.

Amy's perceived "inability" to solve the situation in that same way was not a result of her inferiority, as Gilligan felt Kohlberg had implied, but rather a result of thinking that takes more possibilities into account. It is not explained as a superior way of thinking, or a more in-depth way of thinking, but simply as a different way of arriving at the results. In Amy's solution, Heinz did not need to choose. Instead, the medicine was given to Heinz because it was the right thing to do in a community that meets everyone's needs. The pharmacist who gave the medicine to Heinz for free in this dire situation would be compensated in other ways within the community, rather than directly from the sale of the drug, and all relationships would be preserved.

This kind of thinking could be useful in journalism, especially with the many unknown factors involved with the integration of new technologies and ways of working.

Editors work under deadlines, and while they must act quickly much of the time, they also must be thorough and consider all possible reactions to their actions. Though certain routines dictate or guide how they make decisions, occasionally the unusual or deviant event can shake up normal structures and require reevaluation.

For instance, in editorial meetings throughout the country, there was much debate about using the Nick Berg beheading images (Johnson, 2004). Though ordinarily the media would want to show the latest news, in this case media personnel weighed options that varied from publishing graphic material in order to inform, to choosing not to publish at all in order to avoid being a vehicle for the enemy (Stannard, 2004). They considered the executioners' motives beyond those initially understood, such as claims of vengeance for prison abuse at Abu Ghraib (Stannard, 2004). In the end they decided that running the images would only encourage more beheadings, and that avoiding further publication of such images was the best policy.

As shown, decision-making about photographs can be complicated. Sometimes it can depend on the novelty of an image. There can be many other factors to consider, such as the angering of military or media officials (Lewis, 1980). There can be a fear of angry letters from readers, such as those written after published photographs showed a teenager dying from teargas during uprisings in Boston (Clark & Miller, 2005). Editors/producers may fear having an effect on war and/or aiding the enemy by providing ammunition for the enemy's media (Schwalbe, 2006). They may worry about offending veterans in their community who have gone to war (Winslow, 2004). There may be a concern about

protecting soldiers' privacy, which the government/military stressed when banning coffin photos beginning in 1991 and the Gulf War (Dalglish, 2004). Media professionals may also be concerned about a hardening or desensitizing of their community, given constant exposure to graphic photos of war and the possibility that this could result in compassion fatigue (Kinnick, Krugman, & Cameron, 1996). They may worry about hurting the psyche of the community by presenting the material too aggressively, or too tentatively when an outcome is still unclear (Rees, 2007).

Additional considerations include the possibility of offending other countries, especially those in which the photographs were taken, through leakage to audiences other than the intended audience (Dahlen et al., 2013; Feng & Guo, 2012; Cohen, Mutz, Price, & Gunther, 1988). There is also the matter of how an editor's own conscience will cope with editing any particular event (Winslow, 2011). A photo editor may feel he or she has a duty to war photographers to reward and encourage their risk-taking for the future of good news reports (Buell, 2009). Finally, there is the desire to make sure the full impact of incidents is relayed to audiences (Clark & Miller, 2005).

Editing photographs from war is a fluid, multifaceted, and fluctuating process, with rules and influences changing according to circumstances (Johnson, 2004). Editors acquire an understanding of their company's preferred modes of presentation by watching and learning over time, as if by "osmosis" (Breed, 1955) rather than from some formal declaration, policy, or plan addressing what to do. The "rules" are left flexible. In the process of editing there really is no final say, and no handbook of guidelines or

formulas (Johnson, 2004). Sometimes editing is restrained at other times the gates open wider to allow full impact, depending on the war's timeline and the current policies of the government and news organizations (Clark & Miller, 2005).

In 2004, the press abandoned its usual restraint when it showed photographs of four U.S. contractors' bodies that were burnt and hung from a bridge in Iraq (Gettleman, *NYT*, 2004). The photographs of this event were shown in U.S. newspapers to varying degrees of graphic display, due to the deviance and news-breaking value of the incident. In the effort to inform, the media sometimes risk upsetting the public as they did in this situation. Then again, there are times editors will back away from very graphic portrayals that may only enflame issues to the point of causing more harm. Feminist theory and ethics of care, gatekeeping, and hierarchy of influences, may all influence how editors make decisions regarding the placement of war photographs in their media

Representation

One of the concerns of feminism is the representation of women in the media through words and images. Shuttleworth (1990) claimed that advertising works much the way it did in the Victorian era, promoting an idea of woman being restricted to her body as if she were a commodity, instead of a human being with the capacity to achieve on a level equal to men. This representation is still active in advertising and other media today. The norms for representing women in photography have not changed significantly since its inception. It is said that early art and oil paintings of the 1400's established a style in which women were portrayed as languid and inactive, and that this is a style that is often repeated in women's portraiture to this day (Berger, 1972). A recent fashion layout with Kendall Jenner shows her spread across a sofa clad in leopard-skin and a blank expression with her eyebrows shaved off (Teen Vogue, September, 2014).

Another concern in the representation of women is their non-representation. This has been very evident in areas where women should have been represented but were not. This is not just true of women's real participation in past wars and every other area of societal participation, but it especially apparent in sports. This is where the media have incorporated "a formulae of exclusion" (Duncan & Messner, 1998, p. 178) to annihilate women instead of supporting their rise in sports (Gerbner, 1972). Because the real

participation level of women in sports is hidden from the public, people can't help but misunderstand women's true value and potential in that area.

Firsts

Despite the proliferation of this kind of ancient representation of women, society has seen women move progressively into higher positions over time. Documenting this progress is important, especially the first time women are heard, or seen in higher positions. As a PBS film on the history of women *Makers: Women Who Make America* (McGee, 2013) points out, first time actions and words can have impact. For example, when Anita Hill spoke up to say that Clarence Thomas had acted inappropriately as her superior, America awoke to the prevalence of harassment and inhibition of women on the job. The “Makers” film noted that this 1991 incident brought the conversation front and center into the homes of America, finally highlighting how powerfully harassment affects women's careers and lives (McGee, 2013).

Similarly, but more globally, conversations were ignited when Hillary Clinton addressed an audience in China. She said on her trip to that country in 1997 that “Women's rights are human rights, and human rights are women's rights, once and for all.” Of course China was the immediate audience, but her comments were noted around the world (McGee, 2013), adding fuel to the conversation about women's rights.

Representation of Women in Politics

There have been high-ranking women in the United States for some time, though they have been rare. Jeannette Rankin became the first woman elected to the House of Representatives in 1916. Nellie Tayloe Ross (cq) became the first female governor of a state (Wyoming) in 1924, and Amanda “Ma” Ferguson did the same two days later in Texas. In 1932, Hattie Wyatt Caraway of Arkansas became the first elected female senator. In the military, Oveta Culp Hobby of Texas became the first woman to head an Army organization, even though the organization was deemed auxiliary at that time, when she became the director of the new Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC).

In more recent years we saw Sally Ride fly into space in 1983. Ann Dunwoody became the first four-star general in the Army in 2008, and Nancy Pelosi became the first female U.S. Speaker of the House in 2011. Now, following attempts at the U.S. vice presidency by Geraldine Ferraro and Sarah Palin, Hillary Clinton is running for and could win, the presidency of the United States in 2016. This will be the same year that women are expected to be fully integrated into U.S military combat units. Publishing a photo of a strong U.S. woman fighting in combat in an aggressive, in-charge mode, and/or injured in battle, will be another first for women’s progress.

Changes in Representation

Some members of the media work to elevate minorities' status or at least portray their real participation in society. They do this by making sure women and minorities are shown visually as active leaders in society. However, it is still difficult to overcome the influence of who gets in the news for making decisions and running businesses. That is because it is still mainly white men who remain in decision-making, action, and power positions in business and society (Acker, 1990; Eagly & Carli, 2007). Because the men (most often white) are still the lead actors, it is they who are more often photographed when positive news or decisions are made, or when politicians are speaking, and news of progress is highlighted.

To challenge this, getting photographs of women and/or minorities as active participants has often been a goal among visual communicators. *National Geographic* photographer Jodi Cobb said in a *Washington Post* video interview in 2013 that during her career, she “was always trying to sneak in photographs of women doing things” to combat all the photographs of women just “looking pretty” (Washington Post.com, 2013). The new frontier of photographing women in war could significantly contribute to that mission to promote a stronger image of women. As participation in combat facilitates promotion of all soldiers, including women, to the highest positions in the military (*New York Times*, 2012), eventually women will likely have a bigger presence in key decision-making military positions. This is important as it affects women's overall profile moving forward in all realms. A visible rise in stature, responsibility, and

perceived influence in the military could widen the scope of how women are perceived across society. Women could be portrayed as self-determined and successful leaders of their communities and the world. Seeing themselves in such a new light, women might begin to believe in a wider range of possibilities for their participation in society and imagine more choices for their destinies. . That could in turn make a difference in more women's career choices and dedication to causes, contributing to participation on higher levels and deeper involvement in society's progress.

To facilitate this, the representation of women could change with use or non-use of incoming photographs of women in combat. That outcome could be determined by the effects from the theories of gatekeeping, as well as hierarchy of influences, that media editors and producers will be operating under. Similarly, feminist theory and ethic of care could also make a difference. This study aims to see if these theories fit, or if there are gaps to be filled.

Methodology

Because the coming images of women in combat will be new to the editors and producers of media companies, a grounded theory study is appropriate. Grounded theory

is most likely the best way to work with new material--photographs of women in combat that are yet to arrive --and the new ideas that may emerge about the editing of this material. This inductive style of research works to gather data for comparison and recognition of concepts that emerge in the study of the data, for further questioning and exploration. A grounded theory study is useful because it works objectively to analyze patterns, themes, and categories in data that the researcher observes (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) in an open and inductive, rather than deductive, manner. This could mean that exploring literature before concepts are developed would be incongruent. However, any study about to be undertaken involves researchers who have ideas about what they are looking for. Therefore, while Glaser and Strauss recommended exploring a topic before investigating the literature, it is understandable that researchers would become familiar with the literature involved with their subject of interest in order to be better equipped for their study (Hallberg 2010).

This study incorporates both in-depth interviews and a think-aloud procedure. Interviews are valuable for explaining practices and relationships and are especially central to qualitative research in communications (Rakow, 2011). The interview is conducted with a general plan of topics to cover, but not with a set, structured lineup of questions. Basically, it's a conversation with extra guidance from the interviewer to make sure the topics that need to be brought up are addressed (Babbie, 2011).

The think-aloud procedure involves subjects saying out loud the words that come to mind as they attempt to solve a problem (Charters, 2003). In this case, participants

looked at photographs of women in war. The goal was to get a direct line to the thoughts inside participants' minds as they thought about the images (Charters, 2003). Knowing the thought processes of key photo editors of print, broadcast, and web news organizations could reveal details about their concerns and about how they might edit and choose photographs in the future.

STUDY 1: INTERVIEWS

In-depth interviews gathered data inductively with a grounded theory approach. Data were gathered through questions and answers about editors' and producers' editing processes relative to the presentation of women in combat. Data and concepts were noted, entered into the qualitative Nvivo software program for precise help with the organization of data.. The program assesses the number of times a concept has been addressed, to help with the detection of categories during the data-collection process in a grounded theory style of reconnaissance. Information gathered during the interviews about photo editors' and producers' thought processes and concerns about editing and choosing photographs of women in combat were considered, contrasted, and evaluated. Extensive notes were taken after each interview to gather material for building and refining general concepts and to determine the line of questioning for the next interview.

In keeping with grounded theory research methods, data from initial interviews yielded opportunities for comparisons of concepts and ideas. Repeated exploratory

cycles of interviews and memos for discovery were used, as themes emerged from the interviews with coding and memo writing that pointed to specific concepts to be recognized and understood.

Participants for this study were located with the use of a public relations marketing program, Cision, as well as through photojournalism networks such as the National Press Photographers' Association (NPPA) and The Associated Press (AP). Participants were initially found through purposive sampling within Cision in order to target knowledgeable and experienced editors. Through theoretical sampling, more subjects were added who were thought to have specific information and insight to contribute and to make the selection of interviewees diverse in both type and size of media and in personal demographics (See Table 3). The study includes views of various news media practitioners from news and magazine print and broadcast companies and online news sites of both large and medium markets. Each interviewee was entered into a drawing for a \$100 Visa gift card. The date of the drawing was announced by email to all who participated at the completion of the study, and the gift card was mailed by postal service to the anonymous winning participant.

Each interview began with general topics and proceeded as directed by the interviewee. Where possible, the natural progression of conversation elicited thoughts and words from interviewees that framed future concepts. Opening discussions included general questions such as: "What is your approach toward presenting images of women?" and "Can you tell me how you approach or think about editing/choosing photographs of

war?” and “How do you approach the subject when women are visible in war photographs?” As interviews progressed questions became more detailed, such as: “How might you consider the possible new images of women in combat?” and, “Can you tell me if there are any concerns you might have about graphic photographs depicting injured female soldiers?”

Interviews lasted from one to one-and-a-half hours. Notes were taken constantly and extensive memos were written, in accordance with the grounded theory standards outlined in Corbin and Strauss (2008). These memos are written as transcripts of the interview and studied line-by-line to delineate apparent themes in phrases. This allowed some preliminary data analysis and coding, followed by more memo writing. The first interviews informed the next, with more notes and memos leading to more-focused coding and more data collection. Saturation began to occur on basic levels early on, but each interview still yielded new facets to consider. Even the last two interviews produced nuances that developed concepts just a bit further. Ultimately the 17 interviews completed fell within the typical amount that it takes before themes become overly repetitious (McCracken, 1988).

Memos were made as soon as possible after every interview.. Secondary memos and summary memos were written for each interview (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Memos were indexed with dates, concepts, interview names, news outlet titles – anything that helped to locate information about the note so it could be compared to other concepts in other notes.

In accordance with grounded theory recommendations and methods, topics in interviews were compared throughout the study to yield generalizable concepts. Constant and precise coding, collection, and analysis of data (Glaser, 2001), with repeated recycling of data during collection and analysis, preceded focused coding, which involves isolating certain codes from the initial set to hone in on the most important concepts (Glaser, 2001). Methodological notes documented changes in the direction of the research, per the Corbin and Strauss book (2008).

Concepts were marked and coded in side margins first on paper. Then they were entered into the software program N-Vivo, where the words of the interviewee were highlighted in yellow and directed into new “nodes,” as the Nvivo program calls concepts.

The process eventually yielded about 250 concepts that would eventually build the categories to be discussed in the Observations portion of this study. As the editors had been promised anonymity, their names were replaced with numbers to represent the identity belonging to feelings and comments expressed in interviews.

STUDY II: THINK-ALOUD PROCEDURE

A “think-aloud” is a cognitive processing measure that measures participants’ actual thoughts as they view material pertinent to a study. It is distinct from interviews, which

are self-reports. The think-aloud study records a less conscious thought process, revealing motives that might otherwise go undetected.

The think-aloud has been said to be especially useful with processes that are verbal as opposed to visual images or actions. This is because if participants do not have to translate thoughts into words but are working with processes already in words, the time between the thought and the expression is condensed (Charters, 2003). However there have been studies that used think-alouds with visual images (Lewalter, 2003; Balabanović, Chu, & Wolff, 2000; Edell & Staelin, 1983).

In this study, think-alouds were used to examine the thoughts of participants observing photographs of women in combat. The photos were potentially alarming, because they depicted battle scenes portraying women as atypically aggressive, injured, showing evidence of sexual abuse, or dead.

A new set of participants with 20 editors and producers were asked to take part in this second study, and were found through the same purposive and theoretical sampling processes as the first interview study. The participants were editors and producers who regularly or occasionally chose images for their media company, who had the responsibility of choosing images from war scenes in recent years. The anonymous participants represented media companies from large to small, with different platforms that included broadcast, print, and/or web-based news at media companies from the Southwest up through the Midwest of the United States, from Texas to South Dakota. Participants included page designers and copy editors, web producers, and broadcast

company directors, as well as editors who oversee most major operations at their company. None of the participants from the first study or their companies were duplicated in the second study (See Table 4).

Using the photo-elicitation method, participants were asked to verbalize their immediate thoughts about the photographs they were shown. They were asked to think out loud about the photographs and their content as if considering them for placement in their media. Participants' verbalizations were recorded on a voice recorder, as they looked at nine images on a MacBook Pro 13-inch screen, one at a time (as per studies with Rozendaal, Buijzen, & Valkenburg, 2012; Shapiro, 1994).

The objective was to ascertain what participants' concerns might be when making their decisions, what they thought was important to consider, and how they worked through those considerations to reach their conclusions. The results from the second study could then be compared to the self-reports in the first study. The overarching objective of the two studies was to determine whether participants would actually have the same sentiments, reactions, and plans for the future editing of photographs of women in combat. The comparison between the two studies was an effort to see if actual photographs in the second study, which contained images of women in combat, would cause any difference in reaction and method of working, than would be reported in the first study.

The Procedure

As is common in think-aloud studies, a “practice” session was conducted before the real data collection began (Johnstone, Bottsford-Miller, & Thompson, 2006; Olmsted, Hawala, Murphy, & Ashenfelter, 2010). The practice session gave participants the opportunity to verbalize their thoughts as they first solved a problem and then were presented the problem of editing a war photograph. The practice session ensured that participants were used to saying their thoughts aloud while the researcher witnessed them.

The researcher first demonstrated speaking aloud while solving a simple math equation, such as $(3 \times 4) + 2 + 5 = 29$. Participants were then given a piece of paper and pencil and asked to speak as they worked to solve their own math problems. Then participants were asked to speak aloud while solving the problem of editing a test conflict photograph. The photograph showed a female U.S. soldier standing guard with other foreign soldiers.

After the practice session, each participant viewed nine photographs. The participants were observed and audio recorded as they viewed the photographs, one at a time. The participants were simply asked to react to the image, keeping in mind that they were viewing as editors, and the photographs were of U.S. women in combat. Whenever participants stalled, they were asked to continue verbalizing their thoughts until they had spent at least three minutes with the photograph.

After the think-aloud procedure, participants were asked to verbalize in retrospect (van de Haak & de Jong, 2003). They were asked follow-up questions to clarify any words the researcher hadn't understood during viewing. In addition, they were asked, "Do you have any additional thoughts about the images and how you believe they would be best used?"

Stimuli Photographs

The 10 (including one practice) photographs for this study were obtained from photographic services such as Associated Press, Reuters, and MilitaryImages.com. One photograph was obtained from Pin It at Frontpagemag.com and had no traceable photo credit. Another photograph was obtained from the actual photographer, Tim Dillon, because the resolution of the image supplied online was too low. The other eight photographs were either watermarked or of low resolution, but still useable and presented in a familiar quality and style that media personnel are used to seeing when making photo choices.

The photographs were numbered for recognition by the researcher, and they were presented in the same order each time without words. (See Table 1 for List of Photographs and Credits. See Table 2 for Study II Photographs.) The participants were asked to assume these were photographs of U.S. female soldiers in combat, although in some cases, you could not tell if the soldier was male or female because of the amount of

combat uniform and gear they were wearing, or because the soldier was turned from view, or obscured in some way. The photographs were not manipulated or altered in any way. They were either authentic photographs from past wars, or contemporary soldiers in training, or recent battle reenactments that looked like real action. The images were shown without captions or photographer credits to let the images alone drive the participants' responses. The photographs chosen portrayed scenes with the following descriptions, found in List A in the appendix:

The practice photo was an image of a woman standing on guard in camouflage with armor, beside Middle Eastern male soldiers and personnel.

The first photo in the actual study, "Portrait with Prosthetic," was a studio portrait of U.S. returned soldier Dawn Halfaker standing in her fatigues and holding her prosthetic arm with her other arm, as she looked straight into the camera. The second photo, "Training," showed several young women close up in aggressive action and emotion while engaged in military hand-to-hand combat training. Photo 3, "Trench," showed a soldier who looked female in the trench of a battle field, looking out and beyond with the other male soldiers toward smoke and possible danger in the Middle East. Photo 4, "CPR," was a close-up photograph of a soldier who could have been female or male, receiving CPR, with a focus on the eyes that seemed to be reflecting possible death. Photo 5, "Hand Rehab," was a photograph of charred skin on thin hands being touched by someone else's blue-gloved therapeutic and military hands, with sleeves from fatigues that included a U.S military insignia. Photo 6, "Bandaging," was

an image of a female soldier who was injured in the upper chest, and had an open shirt where she was being treated with bandages by both male and female medics, with the male medic about to apply the bandage to her upper body. Photo 7, “On Patrol,” showed a woman in camouflage, seemingly on point, or leading a patrol, through water and away from some buildings in the distance of somewhere in the Middle East. Photo 8, “Prosthetic Rehab,” showed a young woman receiving physical therapy with her prosthetic leg as she lay stomach down in a physical therapy facility. The last photo used for recorded responses was Photo 9, “Face Down,” and it showed an unidentifiable dead soldier in uniform, face down in the dirt, with damage around the body and a gun nearby on the ground. Blood appeared to have pooled in the dirt near the head of the soldier, coming out from some long brown curls of hair.

The photographs were made in wars as far back as the Gulf War. One photograph was from 1996, in the Chechen/Russian conflict.

Findings

OBSERVATIONS, STUDY I

Interviews

Training and experience on the job seemed to influence participants' points of views to various degrees, depending on which jobs they had previously held. The most intricate and thoughtful responses were elicited from interviewees with a lifetime of media experience, who had spent a career thinking about their work. However, younger editors working on broadcast web sites were also very expressive and informative.

Four conceptual categories emerged from the interviews that addressed how editors and producers approach editing and choosing photographs of war and how they might handle future photographs that contain U.S military women in those images. These categories are: *Audience Concerns*, *Editors' Neutral Gender Plans*, *Controlling Gates*, and *A Fine Line*.

The first category, *Audience Concerns*, deals with the initial shock audiences may feel when seeing the first photographs of women in combat, especially if the images include graphicness, aggression, or injury. This category addresses feedback from the community to the journalists, or editor/producers. The second category, *Editors' Neutral Gender Plans*, addresses whether editors approach editing images of men and women differently or not. This category also addresses the importance of matching photographs to stories, and how editors/producers view the representation of women to date. The third

category, *Controlling Gates*, has to do with superior gatekeepers, whether they are of military or media business orientation. Finally, the category of *A Fine Line* centered on the decision-making caught between informing well, and not upsetting audiences, and/or withholding information to avoid that. This category addresses graphicness, as well as the need to inform.

Audience Concerns

Audience Concerns was found to comprise three concepts: *Community Feedback*, *Initial Shock*, and *Graphic Images of Women*.

Community Feedback

One of the most prevalent topics explored in the interviews was how editors thought about and appreciated their audiences' feelings. All of the editors, whether they were working in a small, close community with a smaller media company or with worldwide online media, shared these concerns for their audiences. They showed various levels of empathy, as they considered deeply how audiences might be affected.

The editors also often mentioned their audiences as a community with which they expected interaction, whether in the form of someone talking with an editor at the hair salon in a small community or online email feedback with editors in a worldwide online community. Even though a worldwide audience might at first seem too large to feel like

a community, in fact, editors often hear regularly from the same people within the larger online community. The editors get to know those audience members as if they were neighbors in a smaller town.

One editor from a large company said that their audiences:

“want to keep in touch with what’s going on in their community.”

This editor said how much feedback she gets varies:

“If someone ...really loves a story or really doesn’t like the story, they will reach out to you. A lot of our stories do come from the social media platform. Someone would say, ‘hey, I tried calling this desk but the lines were busy, here’s a great story, what do you think?’” (Source #8)

An East Coast editor with an international audience said,

“What you can get on the web is a lot of feedback, sometimes from the same half dozen people, but you know you get a sense right away. Like maybe we should tone it down or back that off a little bit, or whatever, from that instantaneous commenting that you get there.” (Source #14)

Initial Shock

Several sources said their audiences might be shocked to see photographs of women in combat but most also thought the information was essential. They said that any initial shock audiences might feel would not necessarily reflect negatively on the media and could be a catalyst for change.

One large-market Northwest photo editor summed up the idea this way:

“I think they might be shocked, but I think it might be good for them. I think things are changing, and things need to change, and change does not happen without shock. So for the woman in command, I think if it shocks people, they’ll get used to it. I mean they’ve gotten used to a lot in the last few years.” (Source #10)

Another Northeast large-market photo editor said this:

“But we’re certainly not used to women in combat, so that first time that it happened and we had that photo available to us, yeah, it would be, it would be quite a shock.” (Source # 4)

Admitting that she would have concerns, one young editor from a small media company in the Midwest talked about relating to the audience with expected traditional roles on the one hand, and on the other about how women should be rewarded for their hard work. This editor said:

“I can also see, maybe a little bit of horror at seeing that kind of aggression when your projection of a female’s role is... would be something different.” (Source #7)

At the same time, this editor admitted an internal conflict about this issue, saying:

“Well you know I think it would be split—she has got the same opportunity as a man, good for her.”

Graphic Images of Women

Graphicness

The graphicness of war images is always a concern to photo editors, but when future graphic photos depict women in combat, the concern is likely to increase, according to several of the journalists. This is especially true if the photos depict injured soldiers who are female. One young, progressive editor from a large Midwest organization, said:

“I think that a woman subject that would be injured in a war photograph is probably more sympathetic to the viewer” (the viewer would have more sympathy).

Also this editor thought audiences would be more understanding of a man being in that position as opposed to a woman:

“Men would be seen as, well, maybe he's a participant, you know? ... He's a man, he's tougher, he can handle it.” (Source #2)

The same editor said:

“If we ran a photo of a woman who was injured in combat, we would hear about it.”

Another editor from a large-market east coast organization admitted that a photo of an injured female soldier would gain more sympathy and implied that it would be a more useful image:

“Seeing an injured woman just after this takes effect, you know, might make us a little more sensitive and, and apt to run it because she was a woman.” (Source #4)

Similarly, a large-media company editor from the Midwest said,

”An injured woman might make people even more uncomfortable than an injured man. Just because of, you know....traditional gender roles.”
(Source #2)

Another editor with a large military audience said that he would use any photo of an injured female soldier:

“I would not personally hesitate to put an injured (female)... you know if that medevac photo was an injured woman ..., I wouldn’t hesitate” (to use it).

But that same editor brought up a unique, less-considered complication, saying he recognized that photos of injured U.S. women could cause a shift in support for war:

“You know, I think that there is something ingrained in us as a society that would require us to act with swiftness in that situation.”(Source #14)

Editors' Neutral Gender Plans

There are three concepts in this category: *Editors and Equality*, *Changing Representation of Women*, and *Matching Photos to Stories*. All three of the concepts show that the journalists are working to follow through on efforts to avoid bias, and work towards equality. The first concept, *Editors and Equality* focuses on journalists' plans to treat women no differently than men when it comes to presenting them in photographs. The idea of not discriminating when editing photographs appeared across the board in these interviews. This is partially because editors are aware of the importance of treating women and minorities fairly, and they know the visual component is an important part of the overall representation of women in the media. In the second concept, *Changing Representation of Women*, participants talked about needing to be cautious of the representations they transmitted and how new images of women in combat could affect the perception of women's roles in society. The third concept, *Matching Photos to Stories*, revealed that having to match photographs with stories is a part of their routine that takes some choice out of their hands. This can sometimes not only be a guiding factor, but an overriding factor in decision-making.

Editors and Equality

All 17 editors and producers said that for the most part, they would treat women no differently from men, when it came to publishing graphic war images. For instance, one

experienced editor of a large newspaper in the Northwest said that he saw no difference between photographs of injured women or men:

“If somebody has put themselves in harm’s way and loses a limb, or whatever the case might be, and that story needs to be told, I would have no hesitation to tell it any differently than we would if it was a guy.’

(Source # 15)

An editor from a large west coast publication said:

“I’m looking for the best picture whether it would happen to be a woman or a man.” (Sources #16)

And a web editor from a large market broadcast station said:

“They are all over there for the same reason, so I would use that photo just like I would use an injured male soldier, so that makes no difference for me.” (Source #8)

Another web editor from a national broadcast company said the same:

“I would approach any picture of combat (like)..... if we're gonna have women have an equal role in the military, if that's what's actually happening, then we should depict it that way.” (Source #9)

Another editor said:

“We do have a lot of women here (on base) obviously, but we don’t really approach them any differently than we would a male soldier to be honest. It’s the same situation...I would treat them the same.” (Source #12)

An editor with a worldwide audience said:

“I’m hoping that those kinds of conversations are beginning to happen now, or at least on a higher level, sort of thinking about it. But I also hope that we treat women the same way that we would treat men in a similar situation. Because we are human, we are subject to the same ...if we want to be seen equally then we have to see things equally. If a woman is in combat and she is yelling at a trainee, you know, that’s what it is. She should be treated and photographed just as if she were a male soldier. They are the same, and there should be, in a way, no difference.” (Source #13)

An East Coast large-market editor expressed her feelings more in terms of both sexes just being equal human beings:

“I really just think you approach every shooting scenario with the mindset that you we're gonna show what the reality of the situation is. And to really humanize people, I don't think you can go wrong.” (Sources #16)

Changing Representation of Women

This concept centers on the ways that women will look different from previous representations of women’s roles in society, with comments from participants about how it might affect audiences and society. Female participants felt strongly that photographs

of women in combat could have far-reaching effects. Fifteen editors and producers talked about this concept. One editor with a longer career than the others said,

“In the first half of the ‘90s you know we, we just started to see women engaging in leadership positions in business.”(Source #1)

He noted that across the world, women were also photographed doing different things:

“In the Middle East, you started seeing women as, as participants and combatants more. Which certainly changed, because prior to that, and, even during that time in Bosnia, for example, and especially in Rwanda you saw women as mostly victims....

“We've seen a rise in, in women suicide bombers. So you're, you're seeing a change in....how you see women...over the years..... the change that's affected me the most.... was, I think, a kind of wake-up call for people that were looking at women in traditional roles in war photography as mostly victims or spouses, or those kind of roles. And then all of a sudden, wow. You know here we have this particularly heinous woman, you know, doing all this stuff, and taking photos of it at the same time, just like the men.” (Source #1)

Other interviewees expressed similar sentiments. An editor from a large market Midwest organization said:

“In Egypt for example, there were a lot of women that were photographed.... among the protestors, and that's something that maybe you wouldn't have seen in previous generations.” (Source #2)

One editor from a large Midwest company said of the death of a woman who had fought and died in combat:

“We didn't have any images of her in combat, you know? ...We had nothing. We had images of her before she left.... And of images of women fighting...I can't really think of (any) women-shooting-guns pictures....I really can't think of a situation where I've seen something like that.”
(Source #3)

Most of the editors said they would not shy from portraying women in this new light. Even if the woman appeared in a very commanding and aggressive stance in a combat photo, one editor said:

“I think we would be able to run that. And I think I would run that.”
(Source #6)

Even an editor who was more reluctant to see women in combat and was from a smaller Midwest area where more traditional roles for women still predominate said he would have to show that new image of women:

“I would say so, because it would be reflective of the reality. But it also still is kind of unique - to see a female soldier in that situation. Even though it would be unfortunate.” (Source #7)

Another editor from a large west coast company added that it could be sensitive, “because of a very traditional mindset of..., women shouldn't be in those roles. But, ...people who, think that (way) probably don't think the CEO of Yahoo should be a woman. Or, ... the Secretary of State... should be a woman or whatever. I mean ... or the CEO of GM, or the Chancellor of Germany, or whatever, should be a woman.”(Source #15)

The editors agreed that showing women in this new level of participation had the potential to affect a general awareness of women's real participation in society. Some editors said they should promote the use of images of women in combat:

“I ought to make a special effort for them to see this particular kind of image ... of how far we've come in a way. That would be a big deal to me.... People of my mom and my grandma's generation, they were like nurses. You know, they didn't...go into that, ever. And so if there's people who are my age or my little sister's age, or ..., my niece's age, in battle... I think that would be...a story in itself, you know? Not only is this a conflict scene, but women are actively taking part in this conflict scene. And not just as victims, or as support personnel.” (Source #3)

Matching Photographs to Stories

While the participating journalists in this study strive for fair and progressive representations of women, another goal is making sure the photographs match the incoming stories.

“The pictures are always seriously wedded to the coverage. And the reporting dictated a lot of the picture usage.” (Source #2)

Another editor from a smaller media organization in the Midwest said,

“You know you really do want the photo to relate visually with what the story is depicting in its body.”(Source #7)

And Source #14 added:

“If the photo is what the story’s about, then that’s why it’s going to be there.”

Controlling Gates

Circumstances dictate how much latitude editor and producers have to follow through with their gatekeeping intentions. For instance, they can’t run photos they don’t have. To some degree, the military controls the photographers’ access to war zones and military life in general. This is considered with the concept, *Military Gatekeeping*, in this category

of *Controlling Gates*. The second concept of the category *Controlling Gates*, is *Other Superior Gates*, and it touches on gatekeeping forces within the media itself.

Military Gatekeeping

Most editors and producers expect that even after January of 2016, when U.S. women can participate in combat legally, images of women in combat will be carefully controlled. When such images do become available, the journalists will publish them as soon as possible.

One editor with a wide range of experience with large media speculated how long it would be before the press was given access to photographs of women actually in combat.

“Now will you be able to portray it, or will they wait to see after women have been in combat for a while before they allow you to photograph it?”

(Source #1)

This remains to be seen, but editors have seen some control over the years. For instance, the same editor spoke about restrictions on photos at the White House in recent years and said:

“Any time we don't see pictures, there's a loss of information. I mean ... look at the White House news photographers going after, you know, President Obama in these limited photo opportunities... . As much as we love Pete Souza, he's the only one that, you know that sends us

pictures....Anywhere that there is a lack of access that produces a lack of photos, people learn less. People know less.” (Source #1)

One editor from a large Midwest organization said that restrictions on images limit real communication and the media’s ability to inform “sort of like through a double filter.” (Source #2) Another editor in a similar market said,

“I think there's a lot of filters before it gets to me,” (Source #3)

She was referring to restrictions on photographs coming out of other countries that keep photos from reaching a news agency, and then her desk at her news outlet.

Most editors said they expected the first images of women in combat to be controlled by the military. An editor at a large U.S. web news agency said,

“I think those images will be heavily curated....I don’t think it will be this idea that the wire photographers will be on the side making their images as they see them. I think it will either be military photographers or like deeply, deeply embedded people that are clearing their stuff. I don’t think it will be a case of wire photographers or freelancers on the sidelines being able to capture these imagesAand I would say that for at least the first batch, which I think will form public opinion and sentiment, I think the first set of images we’ll see will be strong and brave and all of those things and not sort of anything else. ... It is sort of on par with what the military press site puts out for everything else they do,you know, (with) heavily guarded presentation.” (Source #5)

In the same breath, this editor said that naturally, the military would employ its public relations skills:

“Any good (PR) press worth its salt is only going to put out photos that contain exactly what they want to convey. ... I mean we don’t expect Xinhua to give us an honest presentation of life as a Chinese soldier, we don’t expect TASS to show us what it’s like to be Russian infantry. I don’t think we should expect the DOD to do that either....”

“They are not going to allow it to be a free-for-all - and I think those images will be very curated. Very, very curated....I think it’s a brand. It’s a brand and they are going to protect the brand and make sure it presents itself exactly the way they want it to.”

“They are going to make sure that it’s the right blend of strength and femininity and bravery and honesty but like *not* showing women in peril.”

(Source #5)

If images come from elsewhere and do not conform to the military’s plans for images of women in combat, this editor also said:

“If it comes from the wire from a photographer in the Middle East or something? It will be discredited then, you know.” (Source #5)

This editor was convinced that the branding success of the military convinces young people to go to war. She said she knew of a young person who was inspired by messages put out by military advertising.

“It was quite literally an ad that she saw on television that made her sign up.” (Source #5)

Many of the editors agreed that the military had too much power and control. One editor with an audience near military installments said:

“The military can provide some great imagery, but you know there is a purpose to what they are providing.” (Source #14)

This source implied that his company looks at objective sources in all the main photographic news outlets, because he and his co-workers feel their job is to report to their audience more than to comply with the military. But access to real and unfiltered news remains a problem. Regarding the ability to actually receive images of women in combat, a large West Coast photo editor asked,

“I think the big thing is: what’s our access going to be, and how controlled is it going to be? Usually, you don’t have access to that. The military did a pretty good job of eliminating your access to that over the course of the war.” (Source #17)

Other Superior Gates

Military control is a primary gate from which photographs of war are encouraged or stifled, but it is not the only one. Within the media itself, many decisions are made by higher level editors who have similar superior gatekeeping effects and influences. Among these are business decisions centered around money and efficiency.

One participating editor worked at a media company that had recently decided to streamline production by having its international and national pages put together at its parent company's central location. Those pages could then be shipped to the smaller company outlets and inserted into the center of the local pages. This process, which a number of newspapers have adopted, reduces the interaction and "eyes on the news" of editors across the nation. This editor said she would no longer be addressing national and international news that did not directly affect the local people:

"So they (parent company) would be choosing this (war photographs), unless we had somebody locally who was impacted by that. We would not be making those choices." (Source #11)

Another editor talked about the limitations on operations at a large broadcast market in the Southwest because of cuts in contracts with news agencies:

"We have real strict guidelines because we can't just Google an image or whatever, and take it off the web. We have to get permission to post anything that we use."

"If it's a national story, or a conflicts type of story, we would have to use our approved sources, which in our case is CNN. They have, you know, approved photos."

"They have a lot of power in the media, to be able to dictate what goes out and trickles down to smaller media outlets, for sure....From my corporate guidelines, that's the only thing I can pull from (the one contracted source

for images for the company). So if that's all they are offering.... that's a lot of power.” (Source #12)

A Fine Line

This category, *A Fine Line*, includes three concepts that have to do with the impact the images will have, and how to achieve the desired effect when informing audiences. The first, *Informing Carefully*, has to do with straddling that line of successfully informing the audience without upsetting them. The second concept, *General Graphicness Considerations*, concerns reporting with photographs that may contain very graphic material. The third concept, *Obligation to Inform*, illustrates editors/producers' strong leanings toward the intent to inform.

Informing Carefully

Editors and producers said there is a fine line between being as informative as they would like to be and divulging too much graphic information to tell the whole story. While editors and producers are aware of their audiences' desire for the truth, they also know their companies don't want to offend audiences. There is a delicate balance between informing and protecting. Graphicness in the images can add weight to the protective side of the line that an editor may lean toward.

“I think you have to draw the line. You have to decide where the line is between just being sensational or overly gory, and still being able to show what's real, the reality,” a mid-market Midwest editor said. (Source #11)

An East Coast editor from a large market said:

“I try to pick photos ...that show the reality of what's going on over there without ... being so graphic that you're turning off people from looking at them at all.....You try to present a balanced view.” (Source #16)

Another editor, from a large market on the East Coast said:

“I do try to find a balance, because I do think it's important to show what is happening, and even if it's not pleasant or if it's not what everybody wants to see, the fact that people need to know, I think, is important.”

(Source #13)

Even though they will approach with caution, if important news included graphic material, most editors said they would take the risk of offending the public. This included graphic material of women in combat. An editor from a major West Coast news organization, said:

“I think what we come down to is: is this an image that our viewers need to see? Is it the importance of the event and the significance of the image (that is important)?... if we think it's an image that our readers need to see, we will deal with any backlash that we get from it.” (Source #17)

This editor acknowledged that he would expect some audience backlash, but even so:

“I think if you have access to an image, you weigh the merits of publishing it and the importance of the image.” (Source #17)

Where the line is, remains the question. An editor with a large military audience pointed out how delicate this can be.

“If there's a battle and someone gets killed, like you want to make that known, and so... it's a tricky thing. I think you have to approach it on a photo-by-photo basis.... Any time you're gonna approach something that sensitive, you really have to think about ... why is this important.” (Source #1)

General Graphicness Considerations

There are various ways of talking about the effects of graphic material on audiences, including the well-known “Breakfast Test” (Fahmy, 2011). An editor on a web team from a large market broadcast station in the Midwest said,

“I know there are arguments on both sides obviously to kind of show what truly is happening over there, but I think people, you know, I don't think seeing a dead soldier in front of them helps them visualize that any better. I mean ... that is my own opinion, you know, I feel like it does more damage than the good I guess. That is all I would say. So when I use judgment that is kind of how I weigh things....

“When we are looking for world new events, ... where there is an ongoing war or hurricane or ... a tragic event, we try and use our best judgment in providing a photo that tells a story without upsetting the people .” (Source #8)

The web editor for a national broadcast company had more to say about the line between informing and alarming:

“You have to find a way to tell the story without pushing it so far that it's a spectacle. ... You do want to show what happens and not be too light ... about what happens.

“It’s my opinion that people need to see and understand exactly what happened, but you also, you want to just tow that line of ... not making it something that's just shocking and crazy, because I think that's really disrespectful for the audience and for the people that you’re photographing.” (Source #9)

Obligation to Inform

According to the interviewees in this study, making sure the news gets told, even when it’s a delicate and graphic situation, remains imperative. This is true even when the media company delivers news to a large military audience. An editor at such a company said,

“We don’t sugarcoat it for our readers, but we don’t just blatantly put something out there just for shock factor. We’ll put something out there if it’s really, really good. We’ve had a number of stories over the past couple of years, about like medical evac helicopters and things like that...you see a lot of injured people in those photos and we don’t shy away from putting that out there.... We don’t shy away from putting it on the front page.”

(Source #14)

A large-market West Coast editor said, in reference to the image showing U.S. contractors’ burnt and dismembered bodies hanging on the bridge in Fallujah in 2004:

“I think the responsibility to report the incident far outweighed what we thought the possible ramifications would be or the readers’ reaction to it would be.”(Source #17)

OBSERVATIONS, STUDY II: THINK-ALOUD PROCEDURE

This study involved the think-aloud procedure with photo editors and producers saying aloud their thoughts as they looked at nine graphic photographs of what they were told were U.S. women in combat. The participants’ responses were entered into the software program Nvivo, which revealed editors’ and producers’ responses and attitudes toward publishing the images in their media. At least 18 of the 20 respondents said they would publish six of the nine photographs.

The three images that respondents were more hesitant to publish were: CPR, Hand Rehab, and Face Down, the latter of which garnered the most hesitation. While only two of the respondents said the CPR photograph should definitely be published, five said they definitely could not publish the image. The other 13 respondents said that whether they chose to publish it or not depended on the story.

The Hand Rehab photograph was approved for publication by half, or ten of the 20 respondents. Three said it was not publishable, and six said it depended on the story.

The last of the images, “Face Down,” received only one approval for publication. This determined and experienced editor said all the images were not only deserving of publication, but needed to be seen.

The rest of the images received a high rate of approval for publication, despite most of the editors’ initial hesitation when seeing the images of women in these graphic or vulnerable situations.

Twenty-nine concepts emerged from the think-aloud procedure. These were grouped into three categories: 1) *Reactions to Women in Combat Photographs*, 2) *Effects on Routines*, and; 3) *Gatekeeper Opinions: Additional Thoughts About the Importance of Photographs of Women in Combat*.

Each category features the concepts that rose to the top of pertinent considerations during the registering of editors’ and producers’ thought processes. The first concept in the first category *Reactions to Women in Combat Photographs*, relates to the reactions of not only the audiences but also of the editors and producers themselves and is titled

Audience Reaction and Feedback. The second concept, *Alarming/Shocking*, centers on the alarm or shock that might occur from seeing photographs depicting something new, in this case, women in new roles and/or in graphic situations that depict them as injured, sexually abused, or even killed. The third concept pertains to difficulty in knowing the gender of a soldier in uniform and armory: *Male? Or Female?* The fourth concept, *Equal Treatment*, exposes editors and producers' common intent to treat women the same as men in the editing of photographs of war. The fifth concept, *More Reaction to Women in Combat Than Men*, concedes that there will be more reaction to women in combat than men when people see photographs of women in active combat.

The second category, *Effects on Routines*, included four concepts about how participants would most likely address the editing of photographs, depending on their experience, expectations of audiences and superiors, and journalistic norms. The first concept highlighted the need to have photos matching stories: *Photos Matching Stories*. The second concept, *Checking victim Outcomes*, was concerned with how victim's lives turned out after the photographed event and the need to know whether or not a subject was still injured, or alive and well after the photograph was taken. Participants thought it was important to know the health of anyone who had been seriously injured before they could make decisions about publishing. Many media have company policies of not publishing photographs of dead people. The third concept, *Dead Bodies*, addressed the issue of dead bodies more specifically. The fourth concept, *Proximity*, had to do with

proximity to the event, either geographically or culturally, especially if the people in the photographs were American or local rather than people from another part of the world.

The third category, *Gatekeeper Opinions: Additional Thoughts About the Importance of Photographs of Women in Combat*, includes participants' thoughts about how important it was that these photographs have the opportunity to be seen by audiences in the future. The first concept in this category, *Women in combat Photographs Are Needed*, addresses the feeling editors/ producers had that women-in-combat photographs are necessary to show/tell complete stories about women's participation in wars. The second concept, *Women's Roles and Representations*, addresses how the participants felt that women-in-combat images might be beneficial to women's roles and visual representations of those roles in media and society as a whole.

Reactions to Women in Combat Photographs

Gatekeeping occurred at several levels during this exercise. First, it showed what it is like for editors to work with a new kind of visual, as gatekeepers grappled with how to approach them. As noted earlier, this type of photograph has not previously been made available to news professionals, let alone the public. These combat images went beyond the kinds of photographs of women in supportive and/or auxiliary military operations, which journalists--and audiences--have traditionally been exposed. In addition, superior gatekeeping by the military and the government was cited by the editors as an

impediment to the publication of photographs showing reality. The reality that they refer to is naturally that in which some U.S. women have actually already had experience in war combat, despite the official rules.

Audience Reaction

Because these images are new and were evidently startling to think about even for experienced editors, the participants knew their audiences would be at least as sensitive about the contents of photographs that they were seeing in the study. This plays into their decision-making process, as the respondents' largest concern had to do with their audiences' reactions. Thirteen participants or sources mentioned their audience's likely reactions 39 times. Only two of the 39 said that their audiences would not be bothered by what they saw in the photographs.

One editor said in response to the "Hand Rehab" photograph showing a burned hand being touched by someone else's hands in blue gloves in a rehab facility:

"I don't think there would be any problems with readership" (Source #9).

Another source said of that photo:

"I wouldn't expect much backlash from our readers even if I were to use this photo." (Source #16)

Nonetheless, 37 of the editors' comments addressed how negatively their audiences would respond to some of the images. This was often because of the graphicness of the images, regardless of whether the subjects in the photo were male or

female. In addition, editors perceived a range in audience reactions. Some thought their audiences would be somewhat upset; others imagined them being upset enough to make calls to complain to the media company.

Some of the comments were less negative. Referring to the Hand Rehab photograph, one source said,

“If you're talking about my mom she would be very offended. ...So younger people are conditioned differently.” (Source #9)

Alarming/Shocking

In this concept, it was more than audiences who were seen as possibly having a jolt at viewing graphic images of women in combat. Some participants themselves showed some surprise and even discomfort in addition to inexperience in working with images like these. For instance, the seventh image, Patrol (in water), which shows a female soldier seemingly in the lead of the patrol and vulnerable as she walks through water out in the open river and surrounding terrain invoked the following response from Source #2:

:

“It's interesting seeing a woman taking point on that ... kind of startling a little bit....You wouldn't expect to see that.”

Similarly, of the training photograph that shows aggressive emotion on the faces of the young women who are training for hand-to-hand combat, another source said:

“I’ve not seen women in a very aggressive stance, which I’m not accustomed to seeing, other than in sporting events.” (Source #20)

Participants were definite that their audiences would be jarred by such images. Of the Hand Rehab photograph, one source said:

“That's just a little too shocking, and I don't think people want to see that. I don't think it would help the story. I think it might turn people away from the story more than ... help bring people into a story.” (Source #2)

The ninth and final photograph, Face Down, showing a soldier dead, face down in the ground, elicited the most negative and definite responses:

“I can't see many people running a dead body like that. Unless it's so newsworthy, or so integral to something (important or newsworthy). I think it's probably just a little too gruesome for the audience. We certainly would not run it, and I suspect a lot of other big papers wouldn't. I (would) be surprised actually, if they did..... I can see it overseas maybe, but we tend to be a little more conservative here in the US.” (Source #1)

“This is way too much blood for us ever to use this. This is just not worth it. The red everywhere just kind of tells you what's going on. Face down, with blood coming out, an arm mangled... It looks like a dead person and

we don't use dead-people photos. It's just way beyond anything we would ever use.” (Source #2)

Another source said:

“We would probably get a lot of outraged letters, and so you have to ask yourself at that point, is it worth angering the public?” (Source #3)

Male? Or Female?

Respondents sometimes said they couldn't tell a subject was a man or woman, because of the military uniform and the amount of gear used. There were 13 such comments from 9 different sources:

“The thing about men and women in combat– it's really hard to tell that's a woman. Unless you look really closely at the facial features, you know? Because they're covered in bulky combat gear and camouflage and fatigue boots and gloves even, so that it's really hard to tell that it's a woman sometimes. So I think most people probably assume that it's a man, until they look really closely and go: ‘Oh, crap, that's woman. And she's leading the patrol!’” (Source #5)

“Again, the uniforms are such that it's hard to tell the men from the women.” (Source #8)

:

“She’s in camouflage, but she’s also camouflaged by her camouflage.”

(Source, #18)

Equal Treatment

When the women in the photographs were discernible as female, responding editors and producers said they would treat them the same as men in their editing processes. Nine sources commented on this subject 23 times, saying for example:

“It wouldn't matter whether it was a woman or man's hand,” said Source #4 in reaction to the fifth photograph, the close-up photograph of the hands in rehab.

In reaction to the photograph of young women training in hand-to-hand combat, Source #7 said:

“When I look at pictures like this I'm really not seeing them in terms of the woman versus a man. In terms of the content I tend to put them in the same class.”

Source #8 said:

“I don’t think gender has anything to do with that.”

Source #11 said:

“Whether it’s a woman or it’s a man, at this point it doesn't matter. It's a human fighting for their life. And their fellow soldiers are trying to save it.”

Finally, Source #3 said:

“It doesn't matter to me whether this person is male or female; they are still dead.

And it's human life that's been lost.”

More Reaction to Women in Combat than Men

Though these respondents affirmed that, by and large, they would treat men and women in combat the same in their photographs of war, they also mentioned their own sensitivity – and that of their audience -- when it comes to women being in those same dangerous positions as men. Half, or ten of the respondents, admitted in 21 responses during their reactions to the photographs, to being more affected by women being in vulnerable positions in the photos. Because they thought their audiences would be more affected by women in these types of photographs, it would cause them to be extra careful in their decision-making. Each participant seemed to take an extra amount of time to consider this new way their audiences would see women in the field of combat.

The photograph of the women in hand-to-hand combat training elicited this reaction:

“This stands out more because it's all women.” (Source #4)

After viewing and commenting on all the photographs, Source # 7 said:

“With a female soldier, it goes up another little thing.”

After viewing the photograph of Dawn Halfaker in fatigues holding her prosthetic arm, Source #12 said:

“I think many of our viewers would see the fact that she's a woman, which has more of an effect.”

If audiences are from a region where traditional roles are more typical, journalists might have more of a tendency to treat photographs of women in combat differently from photographs of male soldiers. The ninth photo, Face Down, drew these reactions:

“If it's a woman, it doesn't change anything in my mind, but it might in theirs. Then not only do we not want to show a fatality of war, but we do not want to show a women's fatality in war.” (Source #9)

“I would expect that some people would have a recoil not just because it was a person dead, but because it was a woman dead. Yeah, because of her hair there, some people might have a more emotional reaction to that.”
(Source #4)

As seen here, editors and producers knew how their audiences might be conditioned to respond to the photographs they placed in their media. This is because they were aware of how their audiences were shaped by social structures and systems where they lived, This was an example of how the hierarchy of influences' effects work, due to social systems. Because the participants knew their audiences were not accustomed to seeing women in combat in their society, they felt that seeing such photographs would be jarring. After viewing the photo of Dawn Halfaker standing in her fatigues holding her prosthetic arm, Source #11 said:

“Most people think of soldiers as men. But here's a woman who lost her arm for her country.”

Source #9 also noted in extra comments after the think-aloud procedure that other editors/producers' decisions could be affected by yet another ingredient in their decision-making, and that could be pressure and time limits. Source #9 proposed that if/and when editors/producers are overworked and short staffed, they didn't really have the time needed to deliberate more deeply. It could be that the same might hold for those who simply had less photo-editing experience.

Effects on Routines

Editors recognized that audiences might react more intensely to photographs of women in combat. Nonetheless, editors said that when editing, they would try to treat photographs of men and women the same. They would rely on journalistic practices, norms, and routines of newsrooms in addition to making sure the photos matched the stories and merited publication. The first concept in this category, *Photos Matching Stories*, concerns the effort to match photos to stories already planned for publication. The second concept, *Checking Victim Outcomes*, concerns checking victims' subsequent health after they are shown suffering some event in a photograph. Checking with those victims is important to editors/producers so that they will know whether the people in the photographs lived through the injuries and/or experience shown in the photograph.

Concept three, *Dead Bodies*, addressed whether bodies can be seen in photographs, and how much that may or may not be a problem for media companies and their editors/producers. It is pointed out that media companies' policies most often are to avoid publishing images of the dead. The fourth concept, *Proximity*, addressed the geographical, cultural, or emotional familiarity of the audience to the people in the photographs.

Photos Matching Stories

Uppermost in the minds of editors when they select photographs is how well the photograph matches the story, which is how the concept of *Photos Matching Stories* emerged. Fourteen of the 20 respondents commented 43 times about how important it is to make sure the story and photo match, showing how engrained that objective is into newsroom routines. For instance, of the photograph of Dawn Halfaker holding her prosthetic arm, Source #2 said:

“Yes, as long as the story’s about her, I would have no problem using that.”

The photograph showing the close-up of a soldier receiving CPR elicited these reactions from a respondent:

“This might be one of those situations where we would go to the news director and say this is graphic but obviously germane to the story. It's about her and the conflict, and I would expect that we would run that....

“What's the context of this? What's the story were trying to tell?” (Source #4)

“If it’s a specific story about a soldier, male or female, a soldier was severely wounded in a chopper crash which caught fire, or whatever the case may be, and you got these photos I would have run it.” (Source #12)

In reaction to the Hands in Rehab, one editor said:

“As long as it made sense within the story, and addressed wounds....., once you start showing like the blood of their wounds and that, that's when you better be explaining to people why they are seeing this.” (Source #15)

Regarding the last photograph shown, Face Down, respondents were even more apt to need a connection to a story to ever come close to running the photograph, especially since it involved a dead body:

“This is one we probably wouldn’t use. Unless maybe for some reason you are talking about Osama bin Laden, and we really want to show, that he is actually dead.” (Source #18)

Checking Victim Outcomes

Part of the routine of gatekeeping war photography that journalists employ is a follow-up on the outcome of victims that have been portrayed as injured or dying in photographs they are considering. Since most of the journalists in these companies have said they have a common practice or policy against using photographs of dead people, making sure they know the outcome of injuries is part of their typical decision-making routine. Half of the editors mentioned this in 15 comments. The CPR photograph drew these comments:

“That would be a really difficult shot to run in the paper unless I knew what the state of the subject was.” (Source #16)

“If they live, and we were trying to tell a story about the recovery, we would probably run the photo. But if we knew they had passed, we would definitely not show it.” (Source #5)

“I’ll tell you this is the kind of photo we would have a hard time running without knowing whether or not this person survived..... If this person lived, and this is a heroic effort to save this person's life, then we’d run it. but if we know this person died, we wouldn’t. Because you have to consider who's going to see these photos. Family members are part of this community. Are they going to see this for the first time and find out that

their family member has been injured? And so all these little things are considered.” (Source #6)

Dead Bodies

This concept refers to the common understanding among editors and producers that their company policies typically dictate avoiding publishing images with bodies in them. For instance, Source #16 said:

“We have a policy, here. It’s long standing we are not allowed to show a dead body. And it’s not apparent to me if this person is fully alive or on the verge of death. If we found out that this person had died a short time later, we would really wish we hadn’t run it....We have a long-standing policy that prevents us from running images of death.”

Likewise, Source #13 simply said about the CPR photograph:

“We have a rule here. We’re not supposed to use any bodies in pictures.”

Of the Face Down image of a dead soldier, Source # 8 said:

“We’ve got a prohibition against dead bodies by and large. We have to run that by our executive editors, before we could even consider running something like that. The blood on the ground by the head is another factor that we’re pretty shy about printing.”

Two broadcast producers admitted to having the same policy:

“Clearly someone who has passed away. Not typically a photo that we would use” (Source #19).

“So the company policy.... we shy away from dead bodies or somebody in the process of dying.” (Source #5)

Proximity

Proximity also mattered to some of the editors. One respondent said that if the dead were not Americans, or if they seemed farther away either geographically or culturally, photographs with visible bodies in them might be given more consideration for publication. However, if a dying or dead person in a photograph could possibly be a U.S. soldier or contractor, participants would not be apt to use the photograph. (Source #6)

For instance, about the CPR photograph, Source #6 said:

“As much as I wanted them to, and argued for this to run, if we know this person died, we're not going to run it. Especially if this is American troops. If this were Afghan troops, or an Iraqi troop ...that's a long way from here. And the consideration for publishing is different.”

A large-media outlet print editor said essentially the same thing about being more sensitive to U.S. victims, especially soldiers, than to people from other countries:

“We are fine if it's another country or another ethnic culture, we have no problem running those in newspapers. But when it comes to running dead Americans and soldiers, we seem to think that we are above that, and I think that's wrong.” (Source #3)

Similarly, Source #4 talked about the distance in miles and country, and talks about more than the graphicness of war photographs, but graphicness in general:

“We’ll run something if it's several thousand miles from here, or somebody else's country, or somebody else's blood. But if it's an American, or if it's closer to home, we don't want to see a car accident, or anyone covered in blood.”

Of the “Face Down” photograph of a dead soldier with a lock of brown hair extending down into the dirt on the ground:

“If that was some blond hair with some bright red blood on it, it would be more jarring visually so people might have a stronger reaction to that.”

Speaking about the CPR photograph, one source said there is more leniency about publishing dead persons from other parts of the world, especially if they are perceived to be part of the reason Americans are in conflict in the first place:

“If these are Iraqis or Afghans, then the consideration is different. It simply is. It may sound callous, but that's reality.” (Source # 6)

Gatekeeper Opinions: Additional Thoughts about Importance of Photographs of Women in Combat

This category centers on the opinions that editors/producers expressed when they saw photographs of women in combat. This is good to consider, as these journalists are the ones who will be held accountable and so are giving this the most investment in thought. They opined about not only how the photographs looked to them in the moment but also how important it was for their audiences to see women-in-combat photos in the future. Thus the first concept in this category is about how professional journalists tend to agree that women in combat photographs are needed. The participants also provided input about women's roles and representations in media, the final concept presented in this study.

Photographs of Women in Combat Are Needed

Several respondents volunteered that they thought it would good for audiences to see the kinds of images used in the study are needed. Thirty-three comments from 15 sources expressed this idea. Of the Hand Rehab photograph, one editor said:

“They don't want to be faced with the reality. I feel like they should be, and I'm always an advocate for running stuff like this.” (Source #6)

Similarly, upon seeing the CPR photograph, another source said:

“I’m one that believes that, if it happened, someone needs to be offended.”

(Source #9)

Even when regarding graphicness and bodies, Source # 5 said straight out that:

“So the company policy.... we shy away from dead bodies or somebody in the process of dying. (This is) different from my own personal feelings. I feel that if we showed a photo like this, people might not be so willing to go to war at the drop of a hat. That's just my personal opinion.”

Similarly, after saying he could not use the last image, Face Down, Source #15 nonetheless recognized the value of the image and said:

“I am willing to add the qualifier, it does have journalistic value. I don't work at *National Geographic*. I don't work for *Time*, I don't work for *Life*, I don't work at places where they do great photography and gripping photography, I work at a general interest site. A general interest site has to stay within main stream druthers... that's about it.”

Also speaking about the Face Down photograph, another editor said:

“Personally speaking, it’s a photo that I think is important for people to see. It reminds us of the horrors of war, what we are asking people to do when we are sending them over to fight these wars.” (Source #16)

Regarding the image of young women training in the military for hand-to-hand combat, Source # 5 said:

“I think this is effective. It might open a few minds.”

Even regarding an image like the photograph of a female soldier receiving medical aid in the field, a source said that there was all the more reason to run an image of a woman in combat because:

“It would open people's eyes that we do have women in combat. American women in combat.” (Source #5)

Another participant responding to the Hand in Rehab photo, said:

“If you’re trying to show that women are increasingly in roles that put them at higher risk than was usually acceptable, say– then this is the kind of photo that you need to show that.” (Source #6)

Responding to the photograph showing what looks like a female soldier with male soldiers in a trench, Source #11 said:

“If we can run a few photographs like that they open their eyes to it, then that's good. I think that we should. That’s what we should be doing is telling it like it is.”

Women’s Roles and Representations

The results of the presentations their audiences would see were on the minds of participants, and they considered *Women’s Roles and Representations*. The respondents thought audiences would benefit from seeing women in their new roles. Source #5 said:

“I think that sort of thing should be published more. I'm sure there's a number of girls out there, teenage girls, who have never even considered –

it's never occurred to them-- to join the armed services because they've probably grown up thinking that it's all men. That it's a man's world out there, and this could go a long way towards opening minds."

Of the photograph of the young women in training, Source #13 said:

"This is what I would probably pick, just because it really illustrates what's happening with women in the military."

Of the photograph showing a young woman in rehab with her prosthetic leg, that same source said:

"I think something like this would be kind of an eye-opener for people."

Discussion

Both studies illustrated the communication theories of gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences, as well as feminism's ethic of care. Patriarchy's protectionism also rose to prominence in the reactions of the journalists to the images. Each study addressed issues in a different way, as information was presented in either interviews or think-aloud procedures, and the data emerged into various categories to explain the editing and presentation of future photographs of women in combat. Both studies revealed that concern for their audiences was a major factor in the editors' and producers' decision-making. In both studies editors were concerned specifically about the initial shock that audiences might feel when seeing graphic images of women in combat for the first time. Both studies showed that editors balanced the need to protect audiences with the need to inform them. But it was the second study that showed a contrast to the first with the hesitation of photo editors and producers as they considered publishing the graphic images of women in combat.

There were other similarities between the studies. For instance, both highlighted the need to match photographs to the stories they accompanied. The editors in both studies expressed concern about the equal treatment of women and men, and there was a common concern about graphicness. The differences seemed to arise when participants viewed the actual images in Study II that were sometimes graphic depictions of women in

combat. A slight change, or hesitancy, in the commitment to inform was noted as the participants processed what they were seeing. Even though there was follow-through on their commitments, the momentary reconsiderations and re-evaluations are important to consider.

The following discusses the categories found in each study and how the theories of gatekeeping, hierarchy of influences, and feminist theory's ethic of care all work to inform each other.

DISCUSSION STUDY 1: INTERVIEWS

Application of Theory

The framework for the theories of gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences are both easily detected within these interview participants' words, helping to explain their decision-making, and predicting how they will likely handle making decisions about photographs of active women in combat in the future. The feminist and moral theory of ethic of care could also be seen working to influence the more traditional gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences theories. Gatekeeping and the hierarchy of influences theories lack the emotional component that the ethic of care encompasses with its concern for relationships. By integrating the ethic of care within these other two theories, this study shows a more fully developed understanding of how editors make decisions.

The aspect of care and compassion for their relationships with audiences was a major driver of the decision-making of journalists in both studies. While both of the communication theories include an “audience” component, neither has to this point specified journalists’ feelings of closeness, compassion, and empathy toward the audience as integral to the theories. To ignore this component leaves these theories too coldly rational and logical when human decisions are naturally not devoid of emotion. This study calls for the integration of feminist theory and ethic of care within the gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences theories more broadly, but especially when decisions of graphic images are involved.

Ultimately, with the coordination of these theories, the outcome was shown to be that editors and producers will listen to their instincts to inform audiences. The journalists’ true overall drive to make sure the audience is informed even at some risk of an audience and/or superior gatekeeper backlash prevailed. This showed that their highest concern was for their audiences. When considering their audiences with emotion and empathy, their conclusion in the end, is that the best caretaking they can do for their audience is to inform them. This is true even if it involves showing images that might be shocking or upsetting at first. The journalists felt that it is a necessary risk. This could be considered a feminist stance, or one of an ethic of care, since it implies and emphasis and extra concern for the progress and wellbeing of the population, going to the extra effort including risk, to come to the most advantageous solution.

As shown in this Study I with interviews, the four categories that arose out of editors' thoughts and concerns when speaking about the future editing of these types of images were: *Audience Concerns*, *Editors' Neutral Gender Plans*, *Controlling Gates*, and *A Fine Line*. Each could be seen within the structure of gatekeeping, hierarchy of influences, and ethic of care.

The first category, *Audience Concerns*, initially brought up the feedback that participants tend to receive, and which contributes to making them feel close to audiences. This could in turn contribute to editors'/producers' feeling of closeness to their community, as well as to their responsibility for their audiences – both aspects of the ethic of care. This category of *Audience Concerns* also concerns the *Initial Shock* audiences might experience at seeing of women in combat for the first time. This was especially expected when photographs of women in combat were graphic in nature.

The second category, *Editors' Neutral Gender Plans*, reflects editors/producers' goals to treat photographs of women the same way as they treat photographs of men, with the first concept in the category titled *Editors and Equality*. The next concept, *Changing Representations of Women*, address the same issue, with the quest to be able to represent women in a realistic and equal way. Participants also expressed concern about the types of representation of women involved in photographs, and they acknowledged a shift in the roles that women are shown participating in.

Participants also expressed in this category their mission to make sure photographs match up with the news stories they are slated to publish, with *Matching*

Photos to Stories. This routine mission has the ability to present competition at any given time with the former goals, and interfere with and/or rival previous concerns regarding how women are represented. Further, matching photos with news can be just as important to the journalists when making decisions about what to publish. According to the sentiments brought up in these interviews, however, it appears that upon the arrival of the first image of a woman in combat, the journalists will err on the side of showing this new image of women.

Concerns about military gatekeepers and superior gatekeepers and their policies within media companies helped define the category of *Controlling Gates*, the third category that arose in the Study I interviews. The editors and producers were also very aware of military gatekeeping and thought it prevented both the journalists and their audiences from seeing realistic and recent war photography that included female soldiers. These professionals expect this superior gatekeeping by the military to continue.

Superior gatekeeping can come in several different forms and these were shown in the interviews. Financial cutbacks are shown to have caused the collapse of traditional operations, and a rearrangement of duties within newsrooms, which take the form of a more subtle but restrictive gatekeeping. Limiting contracts to companies that supply news images, for example, cuts back on options for the audiences' ability to see certain images in the news. This restriction keeps photography editors and producers from being able to fully participate in choosing photographs and visual story telling for their audiences.

Yet another form of superior gatekeeping that was brought up was not subtle. This involved the obvious need to satisfy superiors at the media company. When whether to publish or not was in question, especially if it might bump up against what was perceived as company policy, it was mentioned by several participants that they would need to check with their superiors about their decisions. This can be downplayed by language, such as getting approval on photographic decisions with descriptions like: “running it up the chain.” However, “chain” is the operative word here, as those editors and producers can be chained to the orders from superior gatekeepers at their companies, who may actually inhibit their ability to make decisions.

The fourth and last category, *A Fine Line*, addresses decision-making that involves the balance between upsetting an audience or not. Editors must walk a tightrope over whether to inform the public without upsetting it. The first category, *Informing Carefully*, addressed these study participants’ concerns about being sensitive to audiences as well as their willingness to inform their audiences, albeit as carefully as they can. In other words, when they can use a photo that is not upsetting, but can still relay the enormity of a war scene, they will often choose to publish the photo that has fewer graphic qualities.

As noted, the *General Graphicness Considerations*, the second concept, is of great concern. The participants don’t want to needlessly cause distress to audiences when they read the news, but they do want to make sure their audience is not left uninformed due to some amount of graphic material. These graphic concerns normally involve

blood, parts of bodies, burned or mutilated bodies, dead bodies, and emotional expressions on faces in war images. Typically graphicness is increased if there are children involved.

When it comes to the idea of future graphic photographs of women in combat, the participants said they would try to adhere to their typical standards, whether men or women were involved, as shown by the concept *Editors and Equality*. Even with the possibility of images of women in graphic war situations possibly being different and new for audiences, these participants felt that they would, and should, treat women in those situations no differently than men. Regarding graphicness that might involve some evidence of sexual abuse, the editors felt there should be, and has been, the same standard for both sexes.

In all, these editors and producers reinforced their desire to inform, as the third concept within the category of *A Fine Line* became the concept named *Necessary to Inform*. This is the journalists' mission, and despite company tendencies, policies, and the reactions and actions that might occur as a result, these professionals were adamant that they find a way to make sure they do their part to keep the public informed.

Gatekeeping and Hierarchy of Influences

Regarding how the theories of gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences were revealed in these interviews, all four categories mentioned above had elements that helped describe

the theory of gatekeeping. In talking about their decision-making when considering whether they would publish photographs of women in combat, the editors and producers also explained influences that affected their gatekeeping, pointing to several issues that fell well within the structures of the hierarchy of influences.

The influence of ideology, the first level of the hierarchy as it has been traditionally laid out, was shown in this study as participants, for the most part, seemed to be aligned with the ideology of their companies. This is no surprise, as companies tend to hire those who can carry out their policies. Additionally, journalists tend to learn together through trial and error and osmosis, as Breed explained (1955). Over time, workers absorb and adopt a media company's system and its expectations.

Naturally there were some variances in participants' and their companies' ideologies. This showed to be mainly due to regional and media or audience-size differences. Some of the larger media company participants were more approving of showing women in combat immediately when photographs of that topic became available than smaller company participants, and those in more remote regional areas, who were more sensitive to the sentiments of their more conservatively oriented audiences. All the participants were very conscious of their companies' ideologies.

The study showed that balancing ideologies – those of audiences, their media companies, and their own – was more challenging for some than for others. For example, some participants were in areas where the policy was more clear. Others were in more culturally conservative locations where ideologies conflicted with showing certain types

of women in combat photographs. There was one editor who said her community had more traditional ideas for how women should work, other than in war combat, and she was unclear at first whether she felt she should or would show women in combat images. But as she took time to consider the possibility, she began to recall that she also believed that women should get credit where they deserve it. She recalled women's shortchanged salaries and limitations on the job, and this swayed her into thinking she should go ahead and not shy away from using the photographs despite the conservative nature of the community.

At times it was obvious that a participant had more influence at his or her company. Those editors at the largest companies for instance, seemed to have more control and responsibility for decision-making. The confidence they exuded when discussing their reactions and how they would explain their decisions to management showed that they would have significant influence with their co-workers, including their superiors.

While that first level of the hierarchy of influences – ideology – is powerful, the level of influence that seemed to carry the most weight was the extra-media level. This is partly due to the *Audience Concerns* that became such a large and prominent concept that it rivaled any other extra-media entity. The issue of *Audience Concerns* was of primary importance to these professionals, as seemed to have a real attachment to their audiences in a very personal way, even if some audiences were worldwide. Their focus on the audience went far beyond financial concerns.

This was not an economic extra-media influence, because these journalists' interest in the audiences' response was beyond their own wellbeing. The participants said that when push came to shove, they were willing to risk and upset audiences in order to inform. Staying true to informing and following through on having an influence that bettered their community was paramount. This means their concern for the audience was above economic bottom lines.

Besides their engrained sense of duty to inform due to their basic makeup and then years of practice, the journalists are also tied to their audiences' concerns because of their many connections to their audiences. Most of the journalists making these decisions about visuals on their jobs were very tied to their communities. This could partially be due to the fact that many of them had worked in their communities for years before becoming the gatekeepers of information there. Many of them worked for their companies in the streets of their communities as writers and photographers before becoming editors and/or producers. They were beat reporters or staff photojournalists assigned to stories that took them to many streets, buildings, parks, and other structures in their communities, introducing them to the people in those places. This gives them an unusually close and intimate view of any community, and a deeper knowledge of many people and organizations from experiences in that community as they cover life stories that involve everything from joy to violence and mourning, which helps to form an emotional memory and bond.

Also, most of these journalists, whether they are on the street or in the newsroom, get a regular dose of feedback from their audiences. *Community Feedback*, the first concept in *Audience Concerns*, was partially responsible for these participants' attachments to their communities. Before the rise of the Internet, media companies would receive letters voicing the opinions of readers and viewers. Now, media companies get immediate feedback via email and the Internet. Thus, some of these professionals have developed a close relationship with the audience online, even so far as feeling they know specific personalities and what is going on in their lives. Though this was always the case when an editor interacted with businesses in their community, hearing opinions from hairdressers or drug store clerks, now the feedback is much more immediate and accessible.

The *Initial Shock* (the second concept in *Audience Concerns*) that audiences would feel when they saw some of this new material with photographs of women in combat was definitely on the minds of these participants. This was especially true when the images were graphic. The initial reactions to the incoming photographs of women in combat of the future were a new and special consideration for the participants. Participants admitted to not having thought about these upcoming photographs, but once thinking about the topic, they reconciled that there would most likely be tragic images of women coming. Their conclusions were that they would have to do their best to treat the photographs that contain U.S. female soldiers no differently than photographs of male

soldiers, even if they were graphically depicted. This again was shown in the concept of *Editors and Equality* in the category of *Editors' Neutral Gender Plans*.

Though not as powerful as *Audience Concerns*, there were other extra-media traditional institutional influences in their considerations as well. Among them were the military and government ties. These extra-media influences were brought up in the *Controlling Gates* category of the interviews. These concerns often arose in the interviews when participants talked about restrictions on material the news media has access to. Superior gatekeeping and control by the military and businesses connections were mentioned as influences that have already curtailed the consideration for photographs of women in combat to date. By not allowing photographs to be taken of women in active combat roles, this institutional and extra-media influence of the military was cited by participants as having restricted the public's ability to see women's true participation in war.

While the extra-media influence of the government and military did have influence, neither extra-media entities of advertising nor public relations became evident at this level of the hierarchy of influences in this study. There also was no special interest group influence, nor special new source influence that emerged as a competitive extra-media influence for *Audience Concerns*.

Media organizational influences included media companies' limitations in their own access to news images. This was evident also in the concept of *Superior Gates* in the *Controlling Gates* category in interviews. Ostensibly to cut spending, media

companies sometimes were said to not have contracts with some of the most prominent news photograph distributing agencies. Because of limited contracts with some of the largest agencies that supply news photographs to media companies, editors could not be assured about the availability of all the images from war zones.

Finances dictated other organizational influences within the media, such as the restructuring and/or cutting back on staff. This was shown to have an impact on workflow and job responsibilities, as participants spoke of cuts in staffs, or the increase in duties. It was clear that cutbacks in staffs and a merging of duties signaled changes for news gathering and editing procedures that put limits on the abilities of gatekeepers.

. Traditional superior gatekeepers concerns remained as well, which was also displayed in the concept of *Superior Gates*. This was especially apparent when participants talked about the need to adhere to what they perceive their superiors want. Participants spoke about needing to “have a conversation” and/or run graphic photographs by their superiors. Though this is something that typically comes with a news company job, as previously mentioned, some gatekeepers are given more autonomy than others. When addressing ideologies of all involved, in a few cases it was apparent that the journalist was confident of his or her ability to sway superior gatekeepers to their own way of thinking.

The next level of the hierarchy is media routines, which help journalists get the job done amid the chaos of constantly changing news around the world. Routines have been disrupted in recent years, however. One typical routine for gatekeepers is finding

photographs to go with stories. This showed as a main concern in the category of *Editors' Neutral Gender Plans* and that category's concept of *Matching Photos to Stories*. This was a strong enough concern, that this routine could ostensibly prevent some novel photograph from making the pages if it does not match the news that the words people in an organization have decided to report about. Hence, if a new photograph of a woman in combat comes across a photo agency's system but there is no story already planned, the chance that the image will run will be slight until the words of some story is found later to go with it. Sometimes that can take days, or even weeks, to appear. This occurred, for instance, with the Russo-Georgian War in 2008, when photographs of conflict came across the wires for a significant time before the stories.

Other routines that were discussed were the ways in which editors try to treat men and women the same in photographs, as per the concept *Editors and Equality*, in the *Editors' Neutral Gender Plans* category. This routine was strong enough that even though these participants were imagining future photographs of women in combat, and even graphic ones, they stuck to their routine plans of treating the images of male and female soldiers alike. Additionally, some of the editors spoke of routinely checking to see if there was a photograph of a woman that they could use instead of a man, in order to equalize treatment of photographic representation.

Also incorporated into routines now is that interaction between audiences and editors/producers with the feedback previously mentioned and messaging online, within the concept of *Community Feedback*. Participants were very aware of their audiences

partly due to the routine of checking feedback and interacting with audience members. This routine helped guide them in knowing their audiences well, and giving them a feeling of being a part of their community.

Though routines and the other influences higher in the hierarchy of influences are powerful, ultimately the last gate the material passes through is the gate of the individual journalist. At the individual level, personal influence remained prominent for and against being able to publish photographs of women in combat in editors' gender plans. This was noted in concept of *Editors and Equality*, within the category of *Editors' Neutral Gender Plans*. For instance, even though almost all of the participants professed to want to inform their audiences, some admitted to personal qualms about some aspects of images of women in combat. Those journalists seemed to echo the sentiments of their particular community and region. This shows that once again, these professionals were using their audience as a guide, putting emphasis on *Audience Concerns*.

Additionally, the agency of the editor and producer could also be a factor at the individual level. As previously mentioned, some journalists had more power in their positions than others. Though this phenomenon also illustrates *Superior Gates* in the category of *Controlling Gates*, an individuals' status also matters on the individual level of the hierarchy of influences. Again, it was noticed that some of the editors/producers had less experience and would defer more to routines and expectations. Editors/producers with more experience and higher positions at larger companies seemed to carry enough weight that whatever their personal inclinations were when it came to choosing and

publishing a possible a problematic photograph, that journalist would be able to have sway within the company. One of the participants was at the top of the chain, so the buck actually stopped with him.

Feminist Theory and Ethic of Care

One of the main findings of this research is why the individual level of the hierarchy of influences could be the key to how editing processes work when considering images of war. This is because individuals are influenced by feminist theory and the moral theory ethic of care at this level. This was particularly apparent when participants were considering the feelings and sensibilities of their audiences. It was also apparent when participants talked about equality, a core concept of feminist theory.

Once again, the participants were very much in tune with their readers/viewers, most likely especially because of the *Community Feedback* displayed in the category of *Audience Concerns*. The interviewees talked about how their audiences would feel about future images of women in combat, particularly if they were graphic, and what their likely reactions will be. Participants emphasized that their audiences would be very sensitive to any graphic depictions, especially involving U.S. soldiers, and especially involving anything that may have to do with injury, manipulation, death, or sexual abuse.

The participants' top concern was professed to be making sure their audiences saw the important news and photographs that they need to see. Though these participating gatekeepers said that sometimes feel like they are walking that "fine line,"

they did not absolutely negate the idea of using images of women in combat that would include the negative subjects mentioned above – even death. If the photograph warranted being published because it told a story that could not be told in any other way, most of the participants voiced that they would try to get that photograph published.

The concept of the category of *Informing Carefully* concentrated on the idea of informing about the harshness of war while being as careful as possible with the presentation of photographs. This is especially true when the photographs are graphic and may show women in new ways that editors think the audiences of their community and/or the world may not be quite ready for. While participants displayed an empathetic concern about how audiences might actually feel upon seeing disturbing images, they also were concerned about making sure their audiences got what they needed to operate as informed citizens in the democratic process. Ultimately the interviews in this study showed that these gatekeepers are ready to cross that fine line between protecting the audience and showing this type of news when necessary. This concern about audiences being informed is the winning influence that helped the journalists come to their final conclusions even as they were considering the audiences' feelings.

This is the main reason why the audience is perceived as a powerful extra-media influence. These participants want to go to whatever length it takes to inform, which they see as the most important way of taking care of their audiences. The editors and producers will be using the kind of intricate decision-making skills that are required by the ethic of care. Instead of just following their typical routine when a novel or deviant

type of photograph from war arrives, these editors will most likely try to figure out the many arguments they can make for using the image. They might consider different croppings, placements, sizes, tones (color or black and white), and different presentation of words around the image. They will likely incorporate any and all tools possible to get the photograph that needs to be seen to the public, no matter the *Initial Shock* described sometimes in *Audience Concerns*.

Between the concern for audience reaction and journalists' need to inform, editors and producers can end up straddling a fine line between the two concerns. This is where the individual level of influences comes to the rescue, as it utilizes the ethic of care on that personal level. Editors and producers will try to *Inform Carefully*, (the first concept in the category of *A Fine Line*) when balancing on that line, even with any *General Graphicness Considerations* (second concept in *A Fine Line*), and they will find an *Obligation to Inform* (third concept in *A Fine Line*).

Choosing war photography to accompany news reports is more complicated than simply printing the "best picture." These editors thought about their audiences as family members and community members, all of whom are relationally interconnected and vulnerable. To accommodate these relationships while informing, the ethic of care advises compromise and possible bartering to get what is needed, and the editors showed that they will consider their options just as carefully. This could help lead editors and producers away from the razor's edge of that fine line.

While routines and general practices and expectations from audiences and superiors all help navigate the territory involved in editing war images, it is ultimately the person from the individual level of the hierarchy of influences who is the key. This individual person must weigh the many considerations, including the most powerful force – *Audience Concerns* – along with his or her own biases, and the likely outcome of choices and publications. It is this individual level that also offers use of the ethic of care, which when inserted into the equation adds a powerful human influence to the process of editors/producers' decision-making.

Gatekeeping, hierarchy of influences, feminist theory and ethic of care together can better explain these processes in working with the photographs of war and women in war. Studying these four theoretical concepts in conjunction may be useful for other situations and processes as well, such as decisions about words and news reports for publication, or other media decisions about what videos to release, what movies to produce, or other materials for publication. Any time a novel or unexpected decision arises, such as never-before-seen images of women in combat, the proliferation of personal data via social media, or other issues that arise, this insight about the ethic of care as an important component in gatekeeping and the hierarchy of influences, should be able to help explain journalists' responses.

The working combination of these theories may likewise apply to processes beyond communications. For instance, that person responsible for pushing the red button to activate nuclear arms in the country's defense presents a similar situation. It is an

example where with all the practice, education, and consideration about whomever is chosen to do that job, there is still some level of unpredictability about the outcome of their decisions. This is because it is impossible to really answer all questions at that individual level that involve a gatekeeper's background, experience, training, ideology, etc. However, the decision to push the button, or not, is ultimately their own sole responsibility and cannot be totally foretold or vetted beforehand by anyone else. What will matter is whether or not they were able to employ an ethic of care, and to what capacity.

The role of a judge in court is another illustration of how these theories can work together. A judge may have guidelines, routines, or structured procedures to follow in making any legal decisions. Nevertheless, it is still that judge who will decide which aspects of the existing law are most applicable to consider for a particular case. An individual judge's particular leanings, ideologically and emotionally, could affect or alter the way the judge views the particular circumstances. A judge's experience and agency within his or her job could also contribute.

Because of their drive to inform for the betterment of society, most editors in this study said they would push to publish images of women in combat as soon as they are available. They were confident about this, even though they had no previous experience working with such photographs. While they could rely on routines to guide them, as discussed in the interviews, the ethic of care has a chance to intervene. This most often led these journalists to favor stepping over that "fine line." These professionals expressed

the desire to chance any risk of upsetting their audiences in order to make sure the public is informed of the in the news and of the world, including the depiction of U.S. women in combat. By doing so, as one editor expressed, they will also be sending a possibly a more powerful message about war, and ultimately affecting war decisions in the present and long-term.

In these interviews, the moral theory of ethic of care got to the heart of the problem. It described human decisions being made, with a consideration in decision-making that is best for everyone, and preserves relationships, even if it becomes very complicated. In this kind of decision-making there are no clear-cut, logical, or quick answers. Instead, there is usually a decision that may be slower in some cases to evolve, but works to come to a solution outside of the norm in order to come to the best solution for all. This is the kind of effort that feminism advocates, as it seeks to equalize and advance society as a whole.

DISCUSSION STUDY II: THINK-ALOUD

The Application of Theory

As in the first study, categories and concepts from this think-aloud procedure provide a framework for discussing the theories involved in the editing photographs of women in combat, now and in the future. Participants' reactions to the war images presented showed how they would cope and operate within the gatekeeping model. Their actions and thoughts also pointed to influences in the hierarchy of influences that have an effect

on their gatekeeping processes. Ethic of care was implicated here in an even more profound way as a display of emotions in responses by participants was witnessed. It was a useful ingredient to help editors and producers as they struggled with patriarchy's protectionism and that system's societal training that guided their deep and involuntary reactions to the images presented to them.

Three categories arose in the think-aloud study: *Reactions to Women in Combat Photographs*, *Effects on Routines*, and *Gatekeeper Opinions*. The first category, *Reactions to Women in Combat Photographs*, encompasses five concepts. The first concept in that category is *Audience Reaction and Feedback*, which reflected how the participants thought their audiences would be affected by and react to the photographs. The reactions that participants thought their audiences would have to some of the images is the name of the second concept, *Alarming/Shocking*, which also showed participants' personal reactions that almost involuntarily led them to protectionist tendencies that they knew they needed to monitor. The third concept, *Male or Female?* reflected the fact that because soldiers' bodies are so covered in military uniforms and armor, it can be hard to distinguish their gender. The fourth concept, *Equal Treatment*, is about how the editors mean to treat the images of women or men in any photographs. The fifth concept, *More Reaction to Women in Combat Than Men*, is about how participants felt the audience would likely respond to photographs of U.S. women, rather than men in combat. In many cases, this understanding of the audience was a reflection of the participants' own initial response to seeing the photographs.

The second category of the think-aloud observations is about how these new types of photographs will have effects on routines for participants as they work with future photographs of women in combat. Hence, the name of the concept is *Effects on Routines*. Chief among those routines is the practice of *Matching Photographs to Stories*, the title of the first concept in the category of *Effects on Routines*. Another typical concern in the journalists' routines was to ascertain the outcomes for any of the victims portrayed as injured, explained in the concept *Checking Victim Outcomes*. The third concept, *Dead Bodies*, addressed the unofficial policy of many media not to run photographs with deceased people visible anywhere in the image. The fourth concept, *Proximity* dealt with the familiarity between audiences and the people in the photographs, whether in nationality or culture, profession (military for instance), or community.

The third category that emerged from this think-aloud study simply deals with the gatekeeper opinions, creating the title *Gatekeeper Opinions: Additional Thoughts About Importance of Women in Combat Photos*. This category was important because it takes into consideration the sentiments that these professional journalists ultimately had about the photographs they saw. They spoke about how they are personally affected, and how the photographs would likely affect their audiences, as well as the future for women and society. The first concept in this category reflected that the participants thought these types of war photographs that show the reality of women's participation are necessary in order to keep the public abreast of developments in the world, and of women's true role in society. It is titled *Photographs of Women in Combat Are Needed*. The second concept

related to those roles that women hold in society, with the concept *Women's Roles and Representations*. This concept features thoughts about how women have been represented in media of the past, and how women will eventually be represented.

Gatekeeping and Hierarchy of Influences

The above categories helped display the theories involved, and gatekeeping was once again evident. This time, in the second study with the think-aloud procedure and 20 new participants, it was apparent that the participants lacked experience with graphic photographs of women in combat. Participants expressed some frustration about this, and the lack of images that they felt should have existed by now. They knew women have actually been injured and killed in battle in recent wars overseas, and that the government had kept images of that reality hidden. Gatekeeping in the form of military control with access to combat zones, as well as access to any photos that the military could have taken, had thus prevented them from receiving photographs of women in combat. To date, professional journalists have only seen photographs of female soldiers in auxiliary roles, such as being in training or on patrol. They had not yet received or worked with photographs of female soldiers in such vulnerable positions as shown in the study photographs.

As a result, even after years of editing experience, the participants seemed to be taken aback when they saw the study's graphic photographs of women in combat for the first time. The photographs showed more vulnerability, injury, or graphicness involving

U.S. female soldiers, than anyone is used to seeing. Participants' words reflected a subconscious surprise at what they saw, as their hesitancy and review of norms illustrated. Participants sometimes seemed even surprised by their own reactions to these unusual, and in some cases, graphic images of women in war scenarios

The participants' own gatekeeping was illustrated by all three of the categories in the think-aloud study: *Reactions to Women in Combat Photographs*, *Effects on routines*, and *Gatekeeper Opinions*. For instance, their own decisions about whether or not to try and promote women illustrated their gatekeeping styles, as did their levels of tolerances for graphicness and/or women in combat situations. They gave hints to their agency in their gatekeeping positions at their jobs, and also how important the audience was to them as considerations in their gatekeeping decisions. They also displayed traces of patriarchal and protectionist reactions to the images.

In each of these of the three categories that emerged in the study, participants also displayed how the hierarchy of influences affected their gatekeeping roles. First, the ideological level of the hierarchy of influences emerged when participants talked about their audiences' societal experience and exposure, and how they might not be ready to see photographs of women in combat, at least not graphic or aggressive representations. The editor/producer participants showed an awareness of how their audiences have been raised and affected by their society's rules and understandings. Many of the participants know their audiences' positions from living and working in the same communities with

their audiences, or at least from hearing from their worldwide audiences with feedback online.

The ideologies of the participants themselves were also illustrated as they talked about their own reactions to photographs, and their own previous experience with war photographs. Though they were determined to portray women in a fair way, they admitted to having some concerns about the women in those situations, and also about their audiences' feelings. The concepts of *Alarming/Shocking* and *Male? Or Female?* reflected this. All these ideologies were illustrated when the concepts of *Equal Treatment* and *More Reaction to Women in Combat Than Men* emerged and were discussed as well.

Personal ideologies were also apparent in the third category of the think-aloud study, *Gatekeeper Opinions: Additional Thoughts About Importance of Women in Combat Photos*. Here participants made it clear that they felt people needed to see the true representation of women's participation in combat for the U.S., and that it would have a positive effect. Participants also said that they felt women deserve the opportunity to see their own true participation levels and potentials reflected in the news they consumed.

The influence of institutions within the extra-media level of the hierarchy, such as the military, were often mentioned by participants when they spoke about the availability and type of combat images they have experienced and expect in the future. As discussed, several participants noted the military, and therefore the government, had significant control over access to photographs of women in combat.

Of greater concern to the participants in this study was the possible reaction by their audience. With 29 mentions, the audience emerged as a top priority in the *Reactions to Women in Combat Photographs* and the concept within it, *Audience Reaction*. The influence of the audience was one of the most, if not the most, powerful of all influences. This influence is not just the result of company dictates for subscription and viewer rates. Instead, it appears to reflect a real connection with fellow citizens, especially as participants talked about the feedback they enjoy with audiences. Extra concern was apparent when participants talked about their audiences' alarmed and shocked reactions that will likely come after exposure to the first graphic photographs of women in combat. This high level of concern about audience reactions and feedback results in raising audience concerns to a level within the extra-media level of influences, and at the top of the list.

Other extra-media institutional concerns were not raised to be of note. Advertising entities did not emerge as concepts to consider, nor were there public relations concerns. There were no other influential news sources or interest groups that competed in the extra-media level of the hierarchy of influences.

The routine level of the hierarchy of influences was seen to help guide participants in decision-making. The editors and producers hesitated at times as they made decisions about the photographs, and they could be observed reviewing their routines. This seemed to be a process to justify and reinforce their decisions as much as guide them. For instance, editors and producers talked about routines giving guidance as

far as traditions and/or policies about dead bodies. The same was true when discussing the need to manage physical, relational, and emotional proximity to the dead depicted in photographs. Though it did not rise as a major concept or category, even the presentation size of photographs was also mentioned as another consideration, given the large-format television screens that exist now and the audience's capability to zoom in on photographs. As a result, the need to check photographs for the tiniest hint of a body part anywhere in war images has increasingly become a part of routines, as was pointed out by one of the participants.

Journalists' routines were evidenced not only by their similar approaches to editing and choosing the images, but also by their statements of similar rules. For example, it was apparent that most editors understood the importance of treating women the same as men in photographs when they were editing, which was featured in the concept of *Equal Treatment* in the category of *Reactions to Women in Combat Photographs*. This has changed in recent times from a novel approach to a routine approach, as a rule, and participants' journalistic experience with this as a routine seemed to keep this approach in check. Participants' normal activity of matching photographs to stories was also a routine often mentioned, and it showed in the category of *Effects on Routines* with the concept of *Photos Matching Stories*. Similarly, the routine of needing to check the state of health of anyone injured in a photograph before publishing it, in *Checking Victim Outcomes*, was also an important routine that they said helps guide the journalists in frantic and/or chaotic days of news.

In category 1 of the think-aloud study, *Reactions to Women in Combat Photographs*, respondents were somewhat taken aback by seeing the photographs of women in such graphic war photographs. The editors were self-aware in their measures of not only their own reactions to this new view of women in combat, but also how they thought their audiences would be affected. Though their previous routines may be to try and treat women the same as men, which the concept of *Equal Treatment* displayed, their gut and subconscious reactions did not adhere to that routine automatically at first response. These reactions were aligned with patriarchal tendencies toward protectionism that still seem to be in place. Eventually, routines and lifetime newsroom training did come to the rescue, and participants did follow through with intent to treat the soldiers the same no matter their gender. However, it was often after a brief hesitancy and review of rationalities and routines that would guide them to publish the images.

Finally, the individual level of the hierarchy of influences emerged in this think-aloud study as the editors talked about their background experiences in relation to seeing these types of photographs. This is where their professional background experience made a difference in their decision-making and whether or not they had a long background of choosing war imagery, made some difference. Editors' and producers' locations and experience in a certain type of community also emerged as a factor and influence on the individual level. For instance, whether or not they were from a more metropolitan area with less restrictive ideas about the roles of women, made a difference in their hesitancy or tendency to show women as aggressive and strong.

Feminist Theory and Ethic of Care

The individual level is where feminist influences and the moral theory ethic of care enter the scene. Here editors' and producers' personal and individual reactions are still key, allowing an ethic of care to activate as individuals process these new and sometimes traumatic images.

First of all, photographs have an extra ability to affect the brain's emotional core (Morris, Woo, Singh, 2005), and images are known to increase ethical reasoning (Coleman, 2006). When the participants were looking at photographs that showed graphic images of women in combat, they seemed to hesitate and review their normal thoughts and routines.

Participants seemed to experience some emotion as they processed the images they saw in the study. According to past visual studies, emotion is a key to triggering deeper thought. This thinking sparked by emotion is called ELM (Elaboration Likelihood Model). ELM causes deeper and more central route processing, as opposed to peripheral thinking (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). This would mean that editors and producers might tend to spend more thoughtful time on photographs of this nature in relation to their audience and their possible reactions. This extra elaboration could allow for cognitively putting oneself in another's position, or, empathetic thoughts (Hoffman, 2004).

Possible longer-term impacts on audiences were noted as concerns by participants, and a preservation of relationships to parts of the community, such as military families and veterans. Though media companies necessarily have to think of

pleasing their audiences to some degree, it was never apparent that monetary gain was the main goal in these gatekeepers' sights. Instead, there seemed to be a real emotional attachment to the audience as well as the topic of concern and how it would be perceived. This is why there is a propensity for the kind of moral thinking that the ethic of care may bring. By doing so it has the ability to affect the two communication theories of gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences, to help predict future publication of women in combat photographs. This moral theory is what ties the communication theories of gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences together, and sets them into action. This is decidedly a feminist theory approach.

It is also is a small but important wedge in the idea that individuals are completely controlled by their companies' routines, monetary aspirations, or ideologies. Journalists may use the structures of their company's routines and environments to help guide and order chaos in their jobs, but they can at times still have the power to re-think normal routine ways of doing things, especially in unique situations. No matter the original plans in any situation, plans are and should be changeable by the individual, especially when it comes to news. Whether an editor/producer will change and how much is the part that is not in control. This is similar to the situation where those in charge of pushing the nuclear warhead missiles.

In stories we have seen about those individuals in charge, the military and society is left to hope that they have picked the right people to make those final judgments and actions. Society and the media business must ultimately put someone in charge of that

last gate. In reality, whether talking about the button pusher in charge of the launching of nuclear missiles, or the editor of war imagery, the personnel come with a mix of experience, training, and moral character that we can only hope will result in good decision-making.

How each person comes to his or her conclusions is the other factor that will make a difference in decisions. The amount that editors feel the need go up against opposition to inform could involve their own strength and resolve. This again speaks to each individual background and influence, and the agency of the individual gatekeeper.

While emotion was key in ethic of care processes on the individual level, latent emotional traces could also be considered at other levels of the hierarchy of influences. Routines, for example, would have been set taking into consideration audience emotions. This is in contrast to the active emotional reaction on the individual level present in the moment of final decision-making.

Evidence of participants' internal convictions that could influence their decisions are illustrated in the third category, *Gatekeeper Opinions*. Even though their reactions upon seeing the images of women in combat showed some surprise and hesitancy, ultimately the editors' actions were based on what they felt was best for everyone. Here they stated their real opinions about whether photographs of women in combat should be published and why.

Understanding how these theories of gatekeeping, hierarchy of influences, feminist theory, and ethic of care, all work together is important. They work to mitigate

paternalism and protectionism. This is because the gatekeeping decisions about potentially graphic photographs of women in combat, ultimately play a large part in the perception of the news and women. In this case, the gatekeeping procedures employed by these editors have the potential to effect change in the perceptions about women beyond their service in the military. After all, as Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim & Wrigley, (2001) pointed out, gatekeeping is responsible for the social reality that the media construct (Cassidy, 2006).

The study's photographs that graphically showed aggression, vulnerability, injury and death, and possible susceptibility to sexual abuse, affected even these experienced editors and producers. This is partially due to the successful gatekeeping of superior and extra-media gatekeepers that have so far limited even the most experienced editors and producers by keeping them from exposure to the types of images that may arrive with women in active combat.

As a result, upon seeing the images in this study, participants reacted with surprise at their own hesitations as they re-thought their traditional positions. Their own programmed patriarchal and protectionist reactions caused a momentary conflict. Protectionist reactions by editors and producers involved concern for the female soldiers as well as audiences who would most likely also have similar reactions. Though the participants displayed some hesitancy in their reactions, they also showed us how their review of routines and norms helped them work through their thoughts about the images, and that they were fairly uniform in those similar journalistic routines and re-evaluations.

This rechecking of all influences and routines on the individual level of the hierarchy of influences is what gave the individual level such a strong influence on final decisions. When feminist theory and the moral theory of ethic of care merge with gatekeeping and the hierarchy of influences, the explanatory power is even greater. This somewhat fluid individual level is where decisions led by all the previous forces left an opening for real human elements in an otherwise stark and emotionless model of communication processes.

STUDIES I AND II

Because journalists want to inform their audiences, showing audiences this important new phase of history through photographs of women in combat would be something that editors would want to do as soon as they had the option. But until this study, we didn't know for sure how professional journalists would react upon seeing these types of photographs for the first time, and how they would act in their role as gatekeepers of this particular material.

It has been shown that journalists want to inform, and will publish harsh or graphic images when necessary. Therefore it could be determined that journalists are likely to eventually publish photographs of women in combat, probably as soon as the photographs are made available and/or accessible for producing.

Together, these two studies showed there is a contrast between what editors and producers expect to do when the first photographs of women in combat come across their desks, and what might actually occur, at least in their initial responses. We saw how these editors/producers paused when they actually saw what they perceived as real images of women in combat to consider for their audiences versus when they were asked about the possibility without seeing actual photographs. We also see that there is a difference in reaction, but not a difference in action, or the end outcome and resulting gatekeeping action. We see in the first study that participants are fairly confident about how they will approach the subject and work with the photographs. In the second study, we see more real reaction and hesitancy, and even surprise at their own reactions at times, to the graphic photos they see and must consider for publication.

There was no suggestion in the first study that this type of reaction from the professional journalists would occur. In other words, in the first study there was no real expectation of the editors/producers being affected personally as they worked with images of women in combat, and there was no suggestion that editors would be influenced by more than their stated commitments to inform as well as treat the representation of men and women equally. In the second study, however, reactions clearly showed that they were affected by the graphic images of women in combat in this study, and this seemed to make participants think and actually take more time to feel and assess possible audience reactions.

There was a difference in the perception of how editors and producers thought they would treat women and men the same in photographs in the first study, compared to how some actually responded with their reactions when they saw the graphic images of women in combat in the second study. Most editors in the first study said they do not now, nor will they in the future, treat images of women any differently than images of men, even in combat photographs. They were in more control of any patriarchal influences seeping into their decision-making. The think-aloud observations, however, showed some hesitancy about that when participants actually saw the graphic images. The participants had an extra hesitancy sometimes because of their own internal conflicts about how society should regard women. In this case, it was clear that paternalism remains difficult to avoid even with open-minded and worldly journalists, as the news professionals have been raised in a social system that still employs it, and they know their audiences have the same orientation, with possibly less self-awareness.

This is one area where routines helped editors stay on track with the ideology of their media companies and their audiences. But it wasn't just company norms that ruled these decisions. It also empathy for audiences' possible reactions, and recognition that audiences need this information in order to be self-sufficient and self-governing. Participants eventually said they would inform even if it upset their audiences. They would force the issue even in the face of engrained paternalistic tendencies. Furthermore, they commented that they felt strongly that the audience needed to see and learn about women in combat.

Participants' hesitancy, empathy, and extra consideration all seem to leave an open door to other theoretical possibilities. Their emotion and empathy works to spark the ethic of care, which spurs a review of their thoughts and routines. When there is an extra element of hesitation before making a decision on a photograph, similar to pushing a button to start a nuclear warhead to fire, a moment is allowed for review. This activates concerns for audiences and how they will feel upon seeing graphic material of women in ways they have never seen. It also allows a review of the resulting long-term effects of audience exposure to this material. The editors and producers in this study seemed to check themselves to come to the absolute best solutions in some complicated scenarios that could involve all of these considerations. This is an ethic of care quality of decision-making.

The idea that ethic of care, under the umbrella of feminist theory, is the ingredient affecting the hierarchy of influences and gatekeeping, is a new way of showing how several theories from different disciplines can intertwine. This is a sort of braiding of theories for eventual effect. This offers a new, unique, and alternate view of how journalists might confront new situations in their workflow – and what might cause them to review their routines for the best outcomes in their new circumstances. While the idea of the ethic of care itself is not novel, it has not heretofore been applied to theories of news judgment.

Besides this particular subject, there are other news scenarios that could illustrate this particular braiding of theories. For instance, if the media were suddenly open to

exploring the conditions in slaughterhouses for people and/or animals, how would the new images of that business be approached? Would journalists feel that they should show images of the type of work required of slaughterhouse employees on the killing floor? That would provide a new and shocking visual of how food gets onto the dinner tables of America and every other country. If the story talked about the effect on those workers, which then had an effect on society, and/or the effect on the animals, and/or spoke specifically about the graphic qualities of the photographs, how would journalists approach the new images?

In addition, would these media gatekeepers use those types of photographs online? Would they be more or less apt to put up warnings about such a gallery of images on their online sites? And, how much empathy and concern would there be in that instance about impact on audiences for seeing the graphic images as opposed to not being informed? Even if it was not dealt with in images, how much graphic information would a gatekeeper feel was needed with words to describe how the killing floor job affects a worker in that situation? This is one way in which the use of ethic of care may work to effect gatekeeping on that subject as well. This could be a good study to explore in the future.

The idea about how feminism and ethic of care weave into other theories by affecting the individual level of influences and then gatekeeping, could work in other communications, even if non-visual. For instance, does ethic of care enter the individual level of influences in the gatekeeping of sensitive stories about rape? How much might it

influence the amount of material allowed about a victim of murder if there are sensitive issues in a victim's past? If that person is a public figure, how much will the ethic of care influence the typical routine policy in the media that public figures are fair game, even though they have children who must live out their lives with that information about their family in the media? The ingredient that makes a difference on the individual level of the gatekeeper once again, and affects his or her decisions, is the ethic of care. This determines the tendency to stick to routines for guidance, or an exploration to see if there are better and new solutions.

There are other ways in which this scenario might work outside of communications. For instance, to check routines in within the legal system, a judge facing some new phenomenon in an otherwise typical case might change the way he, or she, assesses similar cases in the future. Or, because of news events highlighting the way minorities are treated, a police offer might change typical routines in order to affect perceptions of police procedures nation-wide. The individual level and its incorporation of ethic of care into gatekeeping and routine procedures could take the front seat in guiding people, and even police departments, to more favorable process solutions for all.

These studies produced several key concepts about relaying graphic information with war photography, particularly with images of women. First, the studies spotlighted how two of the five influences from the hierarchy of influences were most powerful in determining gatekeeping of sensitive graphic materials such as photographs of women in combat. It also gave an example of how the hierarchy of influences can change its order

of hierarchical influences. The two most prevalent of the hierarchy of influences were the extra-media and individual levels. The latter, the individual level, is motivated by the moral theory ethic of care. It caused a check on an otherwise routine and coldly modeled system of gatekeeping. By doing so it offers the element of human touch within processes. It adds the elements of emotion and empathy to an otherwise rational and logical theory.

Second, the concept of *Audience Concern* was highlighted as such a strong concern that this study proposes that it rates as a category of extra-media proportion. It rivals any other influence within or outside that level of extra-media influences in the hierarchy of influences. It holds its own as an entity that sets apart in importance from other institutions like the military, government, educational or economic institutions and their ties. Audience concerns are powerful enough to affect every other entity.

Third, the study showed a discrepancy between how participants self-reported their equal treatment of men and women in photographs, and how they actually reacted to photographs of women in combat scenes. While the participants in the first study said they would treat war photographs of women and men the same, when participants in the second study actually saw photographs of women in active combat that included aggression, injury, and/or death, the editors were more taken aback than the interviews suggested editors would possibly be. In the first study's interviews, participants typically said they always see women and men as the same and saw no reason to treat images of them in combat differently from one another, going against a system of patriarchy that

would dictate special treatment for subordinate groups, and a protectionist stance for women. Yet, the think-aloud study revealed hesitancy among even the most experienced of editors and producers. As evidenced, the participants commented often about not having seen such images before. They also then proceeded to take time and review their journalistic procedures to decide how to approach their decision-making.

In the second study, it was clear that editors relied on journalistic routines and workplace norms to inform their editing of sensitive materials, and a model that participants could follow while still merging their concerns into their decision-making. The study also showed how quickly the individual journalist could be to step back from the routines to question them. Though these professionals were well trained, either through their journalistic studies or through on-the-job training (Breed's 1955 idea of osmosis), and they still used those routine guidelines to generally guide them through the chaos of breaking news. But, the photo editors and producers balked at challenging new material as they took a moment to question training and routines, and weigh those against their own feelings and ethical judgments about audience needs.

It is this individual level that most strongly influences the final stages of decision-making. Here ethic of care opens the door to extra considerations about any bias or limitations that they could be passing on to their audiences. It is here that the outcome of publishing, or not publishing, graphic images of women in combat are affected.

It may be that journalists are primed to be on alert. Just as parents must be constantly vigilant, their senses alert for danger at all times, professional journalists may also be hyper-alert due to their own exposure to this type of material in the news. New studies are beginning to suggest that viewing graphically disturbing photographs can be traumatic – even leading to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)-- for professional journalists (Rubens’ study in progress, 2015). One study has shown that constant exposure either by shooting the images or by editing them may set up defenses for journalists better than intermittent exposure (Arana, 2015). This would leave the more common scenario of intermittent exposure to be even more distressing to journalists. Nonetheless, the exposure on a regular enough basis month after month or year after year no doubt keeps these journalists on their toes, with a watchful eye for their audiences.

This need to be on the alert for their audiences opens up the door for yet more inquiry and possible theory. For instance, are journalists in editorial positions kept in a state of constant vigilance much like that of a teacher or a parent? Could a theory such as “Parentalism” explain how journalists work? “Parentalism” would be different from “paternalism,” which implies an authority figure who traditionally was more aloof and made judgment calls for the home while off at work or during the few hours back at home (another theory with less than human warmth and touch). Instead, “parentalism” would imply a necessary and constant vigilance among editors/producers, their focus being as it is, always on their audiences.

The introduction of ethic of care to the individual level of hierarchy of influences is one way to explain how that could occur. To date there is not a theory addressing editing that expresses an overall ethic of care quality that could include levels of nurturing protection of audiences while fostering healthy education in a community at the same time. By interjecting this human emotion component to gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences, with ethic of care theory and processes, things begin to look a little more normal and like humans are involved in the communication process. This could better explain of how journalists' work takes on the role of parentalism with a natural and normal vigilance and surveillance for those we care for.

Whether or not parentalism will measure up to be a working theory in communications, it is clear that Carol Gilligan's ethic of care plays a part in the editing of war photographs that journalists do for their audiences. It adds that human touch to otherwise cold theories and models of communications. Because this is very delicate and emotional material, it seems that such a human caring and ethical touch is required.

Because we are talking about the representation of women and photographs of women in combat, a feminist influence is also required. Feminist theory's quest for equality for women (as well as everyone else) is a necessary ingredient to address the editing and presentation of these types of images. Ethic of care is the precise way in which it works to affect the communication theories of gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences.

These studies could be duplicated with a wider sample in the demography of editors in the think-aloud portion. One of the limitations of this study is the sample; a more diverse selection of participants might be possible with more resources and time to travel. Though the ratio of male to female and minority photo editors and producers in the study was close to reality, getting more diverse responses could be more informative. In addition, backing this information up with some quantitative data, possibly with surveys, could help verify the findings. As the photographs of women in combat become available, each publication over the next few years will be worth studying, and comparing. It will be interesting to see if different regions of the country approach the photographs differently as measures are taken on the responses of audiences around the country. It will also be interesting to measure the responses of the audiences around the country. Further, it will be interesting to witness how the photographs of women in combat might influence policy and changes in society.

Conclusion

This is a new way of looking at how gatekeeping and hierarchy of influences incorporates the extra ingredients of human emotion and caring. It offers a well-rounded view of how these theories work together to guide and describe journalists' processes. To date, these communication theories have been described with mechanical and logical displays of their operations. Without addressing human qualities such as emotion and empathy, however, no theory can fully explain the human activity of informing the public for the well being of society.

Communication theories must take into account the emotions of the humans making decisions; and the ties to community that include intimate relations with women and their quest for equality. Feminist theory can help explain, as ethic of care becomes the element that intercedes on the individual level to facilitate the other theoretical systems, possibly with more satisfactory gatekeeping outcomes for all.

One editor said it is difficult to predict exactly how the media will act, or how the public will react when photographs of women in combat become available, and that we can only surmise. But these two studies leave us much to consider. They show the likelihood that even though editors may balk at first when seeing photographs of women

in combat, editors' and producers' journalistic duty to inform will lead them to publish these types of photographs. Their engrained personal drive to inform and care for their audiences' ultimate wellbeing is surpassed by any momentary paternalistic and protectionist impulses. The added push of an ethic of care will drive not only their ethical concern about graphic photographic impacts on their audiences, but also their inclination to follow through on their duty to inform. When that finally happens with photographs of women in combat, a new era will begin for the realistic representation of women and their true participation in the world. This will, according to Fourier, re-set the rate of progress for society as a whole.

Appendix

Table 1: List of Photographs used for Study 2

Photo 0 – Test Photo by by Lynsey Addario – NYT
Photo 1 - Portrait with Prosthetic - Photo by Tim Dillon - USA Today
Photo 2 - Training - Photo by Scott Olson - Getty Images
Photo 3 - Trench- Pin It at Frontpagemag.com - no photo credit available
Photo 4 – CPR- Photo by Bob Strong - Reuters
Photo 5 – Hand Rehab - Photo by Meghan Portillo (NCOjournal.dodive.mil)
Photo 6 – Bandaging - Photo by Jennifer Sardam - US Army photo
Photo 7 – Patrol - Photo by by Lynsey Addario - NYT
Photo 8 – Prosthetic Rehab - Photo by Coburn Dukehart - NPR
Photo 9 – Face Down - Photo by by Vassily Detchkov - AP (1996 -Russian/Chechen conflict)

Table 2: Photographs used for Study 2:
(AP/Reuters/MilitaryImages.com/Pin It/Tim Dillon)

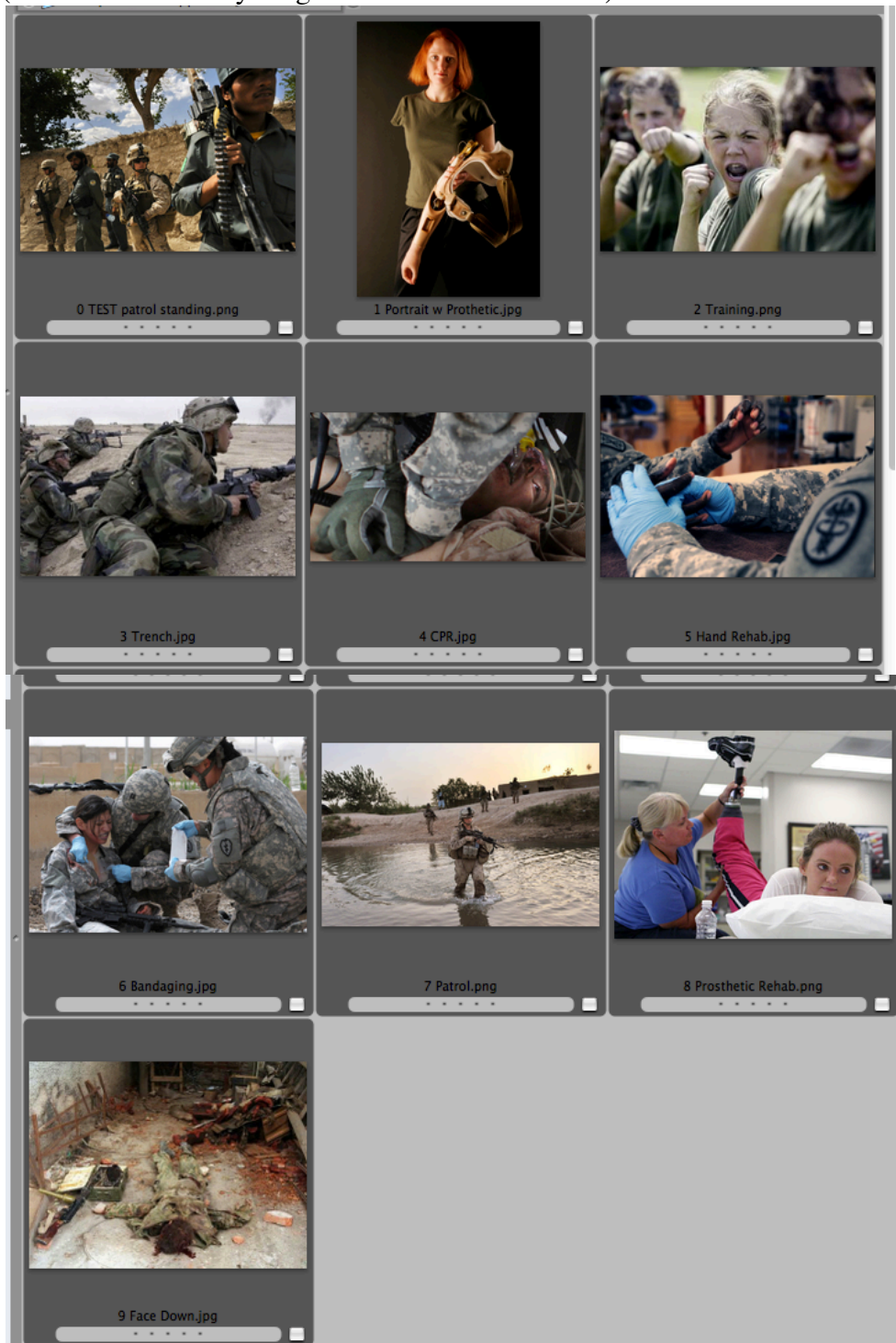


Table 3: Demographics Study 1

Journal list	Job Title	Education	Age	Gender	Race	Religion	Ideology	Years in Location
1	Past Photo Ed/Photog/ Instruct	3 some college	55-59	1-m	1 <u>cauc</u>	3.5	5	2 years
2	Photo Editor/Photog	4 bachelors	30-34	1-m	1 <u>cauc</u>	1	5	10 years
3	Chief Copy Editor	6 grad degree	30-34	2-f	1 <u>cauc</u>	3	5	15 years
4	Photo Editor	3 some college	50-54	1-m	1 <u>cauc</u>	3	5	50 years
5	Director/Photo	4 bachelors	40-44	2-f	2 <u>Af/Am</u>	3	6	24 years
6	Photo Editor/Photog	4 bachelors	25-29	2-f	1 <u>cauc</u>	3	5	7 years
7	Special Sections Editor	4 bachelors	20-24	2-f	1 <u>cauc</u>	7	2	20 years
8	Photo Editor	4 bachelors	25-29	2-f	1 <u>cauc</u>	6	6	life
9	Photo Editor	6 grad degree	30-34	2-f	1 <u>cauc</u>	3	5	12 years
10	Photo Editor	6 grad degree	50-54	2-f	1 <u>cauc</u>	2	6	20 years
11	Senior Editor/Platforms	4 bachelors	35-39	2-f	1 <u>cauc</u>	7	3.5	11 years
12	Web Content/ Social Media Dir.	4 bachelors	30-34	2-f	1 <u>cauc</u>	3	6	24 years
13	Photo Editor	5 some grad	45-49	2-f	2 <u>Af/Am</u>	5	6.5	25 years
14	Photo Editor	4 bachelor	40-44	1-m	1 <u>cauc</u>	3	3	13 years
15	Executive Editor	4 bachelors	60-64	1-m	6 <u>mix/oth</u>	3.5	3.5	20 years
16	Photo Editor	5 some grad	40-44	2-f	6 <u>mix/oth</u>	5.5	2	25
17	Deputy Director/Photo	4 bachelors	50-54	1-m	1 <u>cauc</u>	3.5	4	25 years

Table 4: Demographics Study 2

Journalist	Job Title	Education	Age	Gender	Race	Religion	Ideology	Years in Location
1	Dig EP	4 bachelors	28	1-m	1 cauc	6	5	2
2	Photo Editor	4 bachelors	45	1-m	1 cauc	1	5	1
3	Dig Ed	3 some colle	47	1-m	6 mix	6	2	20
4	Anchor/Ed	4 bachelors	55	1-m	1 cauc	4	5	20
5	Photo Editor	4 bachelors	58	1-m	1 cauc	3	4	18
6	Staff Photog	4 bachelors	43	1-m	1 cauc	5	3	20
7	Chief Ed	4 bachelors		1-m	1 cauc	7	5	58
8	AME Photo/Vis	3 some colle	58	1-m	1 cauc	5	4	17
9	Photo Editor	4 bachelors	55	1-m	1 cauc	4	4	16
10	Director Photo	4 bachelors	58	1-m	1 cauc	2	3	58
11	Chief Phot	4 bachelors	57	1-m	1 cauc	1	6	30
12	Dig Content Ed	5 some grad	37	1-m	1 cauc	6	5	5
13	Nat/World Ed	4 bachelors	63	1-m	1 cauc	5	2	35
14	Online News Ed	6 grad degree	32	1-m	1 cauc	2	7	10
15	Dig Content Ed	3 some colle	34	1-m	1 cauc	3	4	10.5
16	Nat/World Ed	6 grad degree	67	1-m	1 cauc	4	4	25
17	Copy Dsk Chief	4 bachelors	32	1-m	1 cauc	6	5	2
18	Photo Coordinator	4 bachelors	31	1-m	1 cauc	3	3	7
19	Senior Web Producer	4 bachelors	36	2-f	1 cauc	4	5	14
20	Director Photo	4 bachelors	58	1-m	4 hisp	2	3	1

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