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## **International News Coverage, Borrowed News and Geopolitical Focus in the New York Times during 1991, 1996 and 2001**

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Heather E. Rogers entitled "International News Coverage, Borrowed News and Geopolitical Focus in the New York Times during 1991, 1996 and 2001." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Communication.

Bonnie Riechert, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Paul Ashdown, Dorothy Bowles

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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International News Coverage, Borrowed News  
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during 1991, 1996 and 2001

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A Thesis Presented for the Master of Science Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

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Heather E. Rogers

December 2002

## Dedication

To my parents for their unending support, encouragement, understanding and, most notably, their patience, for without any of these things I would not have been able to complete this process.

Additional thanks to all of my friends who have also supported and encouraged me with their understanding and commiseration.

And, of course, a gracious thank you to my committee members, Dr. Bonnie Riechert, Dr. Paul Ashdown and Dr. Dorothy Bowles, for their support, for their belief in me and for pushing me to make this study the best that it could be.

## Abstract

International news coverage by the U.S. media (and for the purpose of this study, newspaper coverage) is a heavily debated issue within the scholarly and professional worlds. Critics, both in the United States and abroad, charge that the U.S. media prescribe to an egocentric attitude about international news coverage, and that Americans do not receive the quality of news that could be expected in a nation with a free press, where citizens are, for the most part, highly educated and where access to news is not restricted.

Previous studies have focused on how much international news coverage Americans receive, and also on what type of coverage Americans receive. Some such studies investigated the size of international news hole, the geopolitical focus of news items and the quality of international news in the *New York Times*. This study explores these same factors.

A content analysis was used to examine articles in the international section of the *New York Times*. The articles were coded the income level of the country the news item pertained to (High, Upper-Middle, Lower-Middle or Low), the supplier of the story (news correspondent or wire service) and whether news borrowing occurred. The working definition of news borrowing for this study is any news reported where another form of media was the source (i.e. in an AP news wire story it was reported . . .). Departing from the earlier studies, this study also noted headlines and the source(s) from which news was borrowed, if there was a presence of borrowed news.

This study found that the size of international news hole in 1991, 1996 and 2001 was largely the same for the three years studied - about 45 percent international news hole and 55 percent national news hole. The amount of coverage about the countries in the four income levels varied. In some cases it was found that the amount of coverage could be correlated to the amount of space the countries occupied in the

world, like in the Upper-Middle income group. The same cannot be said for the Lower-Middle income group. The amount of coverage for the Lower-Middle income group, though it actually decreased over the time period studied, was still the highest of all the income groups. This category includes countries like the Russian Federation and China, which could help to account for this.

As could be expected, *Times* correspondents made up the majority of the reporting source for the paper. *Times* correspondents wrote approximately 70 percent of the content for the *Times*, and news wires supplied about 30 percent of the content. News borrowing decreased over the three-year period studied, drastically from 1991 and 1996 to 2001. The sources from which news borrowing occurred varied, but television and newspapers were the consistent top two.

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## I. Introduction

The United States is a powerful player in the international arena, as a military and economic force, as well as in communications. This makes the United States an easy target for critics. Charges against the U.S. media about the lack of foreign coverage and foreign coverage that is biased are not new and come from critics both at home and abroad.

Foreign news coverage has been studied from many angles, including the size of foreign news hole over the years, and the quality and quantity of that foreign coverage. Many researchers agree that the quality of international news coverage is just as important as the quantity<sup>1</sup>. A problem some foreign coverage researchers believe is beginning to encroach into U.S. media practices is the use of second hand or borrowed news (information disseminated by one news medium and reported and cited in another).

At the center of this problem is the fear that these second hand stories cannot be verified, especially in countries where news is monitored carefully and sources are often hard to access. This fear surrounding second hand news is illustrated in stories related by Riffe (1984):

Soon after the 1979 revolution in Iran . . . Iran's state news organizations claimed an Iraqi invasion of Iran. The story flashed worldwide before the [Iranian] media quietly withdrew the story. Then, after Western correspondents were expelled from Iran in 1980 . . . [an American news executive] said his organization would rely even *more* heavily on Radio Tehran broadcasts for news. When 200 Western correspondents were

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<sup>1</sup> Alleyne, Mark D. and Janet Wagner. "Stability and Change at the 'Big Five' News Agencies." *Journalism Quarterly* 70 (1, Spring, 1993), 40-50; Chang, Tsan-Kuo, Pamela J. Shoemaker, Lucig H. Danielian and Nancy Brendlinger. "Deviant acts, risky business and US interests: The newsworthiness of world events." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 68 (4, Winter 1991): 781-95; Chang, Tsan-Kuo. "All countries not created equal to be news: World system and international communication." *Communication Research* 25 (5, October 1998): 528-63; International Press Institute, "The News from Russia," in *First General Assembly: The Professional Panels* (Zurich: I.P.I, 1952); Hopple, G.W. "International News Coverage in Two Elite Newspapers." *Journal of Communication* 32 (1, 1982): 61-74; Riffe, Daniel. "International News Borrowing: A Trend Analysis." *Journalism Quarterly* 61 (Spring 1984): 142-148; Riffe, Daniel, Charles F. Aust, Rhonda J. Gibson, Elizabeth Viall and Huiuk Yi, "International news and borrowed news in the *New York Times*: An update." *Journalism Quarterly* 70 (3, Autumn 1993): 638-646; Riffe, Daniel, "Second-hand News Risky?" *Grassroots Editor* (Summer 1980): 3-17; Riffe, Daniel, "Newsgathering Climate and News Borrowing Abroad," *Newspaper Research Journal* 6 (Winter 1985): 19-29;

ordered to leave Afghanistan, newsmen set up “listening posts” in New Delhi and elsewhere to monitor government-controlled radio reports of an uprising against the Soviet-backed regime. Later eyewitness accounts differed drastically from broadcast reports (142).

Unfortunately, problems with second hand news reporting don't stop at staff writers and correspondents not being able to verify the contents of a story or of a news item not originating within a particular media vehicle. Algraawi and Culbertson (1987) write that there is a risk that a reader may not know that the “cited media . . . are serving as intermediaries or pipelines for others, not as originators of statements attributed to them,” (799).

While researching for this study many explanations for news borrowing were given. First, Riffe and his colleagues (1993) suggest that “some news borrowing is a short-cut for [geographically and culturally] overextended or ‘scooped’ correspondents,” (638). Secondly, news borrowing can occur due to news being tightly controlled and restricted access to sources, as in Communist, Socialist or other Totalitarian nations. And, thirdly, news borrowing often occurs due to some news organizations having earned such a well-respected name that other news organizations are willing to use the renowned papers' stories to supplement their own news stories.

In 1984, Riffe conducted a content analysis of the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* from 1969-1979 on second hand (borrowed) news to assess how often news borrowing occurred and if it was on the rise. Riffe chose the *Tribune* and the *Times* for two reasons: 1) both papers “provide more extensive world coverage than most American dailies and probably represent the widest possible variety of foreign news items in American dailies,” and 2) “the *Tribune*'s widely-documented reductions in its overseas staff during the '70s provided a basis for exploring, through a comparison with the *Times*' stable staff . . . any relationship between a paper's level of overseas staffing and its use of correspondent-filled, second-hand news,” (Riffe, 1984, 144).

For classification Riffe classified foreign news as any news occurring outside the United States. The foreign news items were coded for “geopolitical focus (First, Second or Third World); originating agent (newspaper’s own correspondent or wire service); and media attribution (was news medium or organization cited as a source of information?),” (Riffe 144).

Riffe’s initial study of the *Times* and *Tribune* failed to establish a link between staffing and incidence of borrowed news published; however, the data did reveal a relationship between geopolitical focus and the publication of borrowed news. This prompted Riffe and his colleagues, Aust, Gibson, Viall and Yi, to follow up the study with a content analysis of the *New York Times* on microfilm/microfiche during the years 1980 through 1990. Riffe and his colleagues used both data sets (1969-1979 and 1980-1990) to examine any trends in borrowed news in the *Times*, and the first study’s sampling procedure was replicated.

This study will extend the two studies done by Riffe and his colleagues. In both studies Riffe coded news items for a number of things. As with the latter study (1980-1990), this study will attempt to assess the extent of news borrowing during the 1990s and into 2000 to determine whether news borrowing increased during the 1991-2001 time frame, and whether there are still differences among the geopolitical blocs in publishing borrowed news in the *New York Times* only.

With the advent of newer and better communications technology and with the fall of most Communist nations, the world is a drastically different place, certainly far different than when Riffe conducted his studies and set up his research categories. Riffe’s research yielded interesting results, but the geopolitical focus category is outdated. The terms First, Second and Third World no longer used by the World Bank. Development and income are now used to distinguish world countries.

Riffe tested for geopolitical focus, agent used to report news (*Times* correspondent vs. news agency), and borrowed/second hand news. The coding method for this study will follow that of Riffe’s, and the major

items for which Riffe et al. coded will be duplicated; however, Riffe's studies precluded certain aspects that this study will research, such as further examining: 1) the focus of articles (i.e. headlines), 2) which news agencies were used to report news when an article was not written by a *Times* correspondent coding for the reporting agent, and 3) which news medium was used when there is a presence of borrowed news. The results of this research will be tabulated separately to ascertain any trends within the 1991-2001 time frame, but the results will also be compared to that of Riffe's studies to ascertain any trends over the three decades studied.

## II. Literature Review

Around the world, the United States is often looked upon as one of the most arrogant nations, possibly *the* most arrogant nation. This reputation comes from many things including its foreign policy, flexing its proverbial economic and military muscle and even cultural attitudes assumed by U.S. citizens, but it also comes from Americans' ignorance of international affairs. Dave Zweifel (2001), editor of the Madison, Wis. *Capital Times*, writes that "we Americans – whether we're the readers of newspapers or the viewers of television or the people who put together that news – don't worry much about international events" and that American indifference to international news "not only fosters ignorance, but it also allows our own government to make questionable policy decisions without the benefit of public discussion" (8A).

International news coverage by the U.S. media is severely lacking<sup>2</sup>. A reporter for the Global News Wire wrote on Nov. 5, 2001 that "thanks . . . to a scarcity of international news . . . many in the U.S. [don't] know the Taliban from the Autobahn." The fact that Americans are some of the most ignorant world citizens when it comes to foreign news, especially considering the relative wealth and information access capabilities of the U.S. citizens, has many facets. First, one must consider how U.S. media cover international news.

In 1985, the United States withdrew from UNESCO<sup>3</sup> [the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization] for many reasons, including UNESCO's involvement in the movement for a new world

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<sup>2</sup> Altheide, David. "Media hegemony: A failure of perspective." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 48 (2, Summer 1984): 476-90; Chang, Tsan-Kuo, Pamela J. Shoemaker, Lucig H. Danielian and Nancy Brendlinger. "Deviant acts, risky business and US interests: The newsworthiness of world events." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 68 (4, Winter 1991): 781-95; Chang, Tsan-Kuo, "All Countries Not Created Equal to be News: World System and International Communication." *Communication Research* 25 (5, October): 528-563; Emery, Michael, "An Endangered Species: The International Newshole," *Gannett Center Journal* 3 (Fall 1989): 151-164; Kaplan, Frank, "The Plight of Foreign News in the U.S. Mass Media: An Assessment," *Gazette* 25 (1979): 233-243; Zweifel, Dave. "Our Ignorance of World Embarrassing." (Madison, WI) *Capital Times* 28 Sept. 2001, all ed., sec. editorial: 8A; Hopple, G.W. "International News Coverage in Two Elite Newspapers." *Journal of Communication* 32 (1, 1982): 61-74;

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO is an organization with a "main objective to contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language, or religion, by the charter of the United Nations," (UNESCO 1).

information order (NWIO). This withdrawal prompted Chang and Lee (1993) to survey top editors and/or foreign news editors from a national sample of 540 daily newspapers, all having similar circulation figures, on how U.S. newspaper editors evaluate the form and content of international news flow and the factors that might affect their responses to the issues that Chang and Lee chose. The response rate to the survey was quite high -- 51.7 percent. Findings showed that of the editors who responded to the survey, many (statistic not given) "denied the charge that American news media tend to 'overplay' negative coverage of foreign countries and rejected the proposal for an equal and balanced flow of news between nations" (Chang & Lee, 1993, 313). However, these respondents did not deny that stereotyping of other countries did exist and that training for overseas journalists was deficient.

Chang and Lee's study implies that the issue of an international news organization/governing body (i.e. NWIO) was for these editors less about fairness of coverage and more likely about a power struggle. Editors felt an international news organization and governing body would "compromise the independence and autonomy of the U.S. press in the international communication theater," because UNESCO's endeavor to make news flow equal and unbalanced would inevitably mean that the organization would have some type of press control (Chang & Lee, 1993, 314).

During the late 1970s and early 1980s Altheide studied the media hegemony theory<sup>4</sup>, which holds that mass media play an important role in maintaining the status quo through agenda setting. Altheide found that between 1972 and 1979 network newscasts (ABC, CBS, NBC) contained an average of 37 percent international news coverage. Between 1976 and 1979 the percentage had risen to an average of 40 percent of newscasts devoted to foreign coverage. Altheide reported that in 1978 "half of CBS's evening news dealt with international stories. Moreover, numerous countries in various regions were included in these reports in the late

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<sup>4</sup> Carragee, Kevin M. "A critical evaluation of the media hegemony thesis." *Western Journal of Communication*. 57 (3, Summer 1993), 330-348; Severin, Werner J. and James W. Tankard, Jr. *Communication Theories: Origins, Methods, and Uses in the Mass Media*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Longman, 2001. 282-283.

1970s” (Altheide, 1984, 484). Altheide noted that most of the network international news was ‘crisis-coverage,’ and that while a variety of countries were covered, most coverage was on countries involved in conflict with or allies of the United States.

Many studies<sup>5</sup> have revealed that developing nations, above all other regions or economical rankings, are the most unfairly covered by the U.S. media. Altheide further showed that while there was more coverage of international news than the media hegemony theory would suggest, the coverage was “negative and promotive of cultural stereotypes,” especially when dealing with “Third World” countries (Altheide, 1984, 484). While his study showed an increase of international news in the 1970s and 1980s, the study also showed that between 1970 and 1979 the U.S. network newscasts covered Latin America most often in the areas of foreign relations, security, violence and disasters. In a similar study conducted on Latin American TV news coverage, researchers found that coverage was not “decidedly supportive of U.S. political or business interests and values” (Altheide, 1984, 485). This could suggest that while the United States media may at times endorse stereotypes with their choice of rhetoric and graphics used to describe developing nations, at least in television, these broadcasts are not used explicitly to further U.S. interests.

Part of Riffe’s and his colleagues’ 1993 content analysis of the *New York Times* examined the degree to which the “Third World,” and foreign affairs in general, are covered. Their analysis of *New York Times* from 1980-1990 showed that although the “number of international news items in the *New York Times* has decreased

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<sup>5</sup> Chang, Tsan-Kuo. “All countries not created equal to be news: World system and international communication.” *Communication Research* 25 (5, October 1998): 528-63. Chang, Tsan-Kuo, Pamela J. Shoemaker, Lucig H. Danielian and Nancy Brendlinger. “Deviant acts, risky business and US interests: The newsworthiness of world events.” *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 68 (4, Winter 1991): 781-95; Chang, Tsan-Kuo, Pamela J. Shoemaker and Nancy Brendlinger. “Determinants of International News Coverage in the U.S. Media.” *Communication Research* 14 (4, August 1987): 396-413; Kim, Kyungmo, George A. Barnett. “The Determinants of International News Flow: A Network Analysis.” *Communications Research* 23(June 1996): 323-352; Malek, Abbas and Anandam P. Kavoori, Eds. *The Global Dynamics of News: Studies in International News Coverage and News Agenda*. Stamford, CT: Ablex, 2000; pp. xiv-426; Meyer, William H. “Structures of North-South Information Flows: An Empirical Test of Gatlung’s Theory.” *Journalism and Mass Communications Quarterly* 68 (1/2, Spring/Summer 1991): 230-237; Righter, Rosemary. “Is Western-style Journalism Appropriate to the Third World?” *Nieman Reports* (Summer 1978): 30-32; Sussman, Leonard. *Mass News Media and the Third World* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977).



over the last 22 years,” during the 1980s “Third World [articles] out-numbered First World [articles] and represented a larger proportion of each year’s foreign items than did either of the other blocs” (Riffe et al., 1993, 638). They concluded that although overall international news coverage was on the decline, “this shift in emphasis reflects the growing economic and political importance of the Third World” (Riffe et al., 1993, 641).

Mayo et al. (1991) found similar results. In a content analysis of *Business Week*, *Forbes* and *Fortune* during the years 1964-1968, 1974-1978 and 1984-1988, Mayo et al. found that “about one of every six business stories focused on international news, increasingly with a global emphasis” (Mayo et al., 1991, 509). Their analysis further revealed that although there were more stories during the 1980s period, the stories were shorter, and overall, the total space in business magazines devoted to international news had not changed since the 1970s.

Although these studies and other such research<sup>6</sup> show that some forms of media are giving international news and foreign affairs adequate coverage, other studies<sup>7</sup> refute this evidence, and, in fact, have shown that international news hole is getting smaller. Through their content analysis, Riffe et al. found that although the “Third World” was covered more extensively than in the past, the overall size of international news hole in the *Times* was shrinking. They report that “in 1969, there were 685 international news items sampled, but by the end of the ‘70s, the number was closer to 500, and the 1980-1990 period ended with fewer than 350 items” on international news coverage (Riffe et al., 1993, 640).

Within the foreign coverage that did appear, about one in five articles contained second-hand or borrowed news (news reported by other news media and/or news agency wire services and used in articles by

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<sup>6</sup> Hopple, Gerald W. “International News Coverage in Two Elite Newspapers.” *Journal of Communication* 32 (1, 1982): 61-74; Kim, Sung Tae. “Making a Difference: U.S. Press Coverage of the Kwangju and Tiananmen Pro-Democracy Movements.” *Journal of Mass Communication Quarterly* 77 (1, Spring 2000) 22-36; Merrill, John. “Global Elite: S Newspaper Community of Reason.” *Gannett Center Journal* 4 (4, Fall 1990) 93-101.

<sup>7</sup> Teboul, J.C. Bruno and Donald Cegala. “Redefining ‘News’ in Network Television News Content Research.” *Communication Reports* 5 (1, Winter 1992) 32-39; Welch, Matt. “Kosovo Highlights Failing in Journalism.” *Online Journalism Review*. April 9, 1999. [www.ojr.org/ojr/ethics/1017968790.php](http://www.ojr.org/ojr/ethics/1017968790.php).

*Times* correspondents). Of the news that was borrowed, “Second World” news borrowing had dropped, but “Third World” news borrowing had risen significantly.

The trend in higher “Third World” reportage is positive; however, the equally high amount of news borrowing that occurs in this economic stratum makes it appear that the effort, in general, being made to cover “Third World” news is minimal. More news reporting on the Third World is not necessarily a guarantee of better news reporting.

Riffe et al. posited that international affairs still do not get the attention they deserve. In fact, they suggested, “if these data are representative of foreign news coverage and not limited to the [*Times*], the trend toward a shrinking foreign news hole continues. Americans receive less news of the world . . . than they did twenty years ago” (Riffe et al., 1993, 643).

The problem Americans face in not receiving enough international news is exacerbated if the news they do receive is ‘tainted’ or biased. Entman (1991) studied the positions taken by the U.S. media on the U.S. downing of an Iranian plane and the Soviet downing of a Korean jet liner. He found that the U.S. media “[de-emphasized] the agency and the victims of the downed Iranian flight by the choice of graphics and adjectives, calling the downing of the commercial plane a ‘technical problem,’ while the Soviet downing of the Korean jet was portrayed as a moral outrage” (Entman, 1991, 6).

Many researchers have documented the phenomenon of the U.S. news organizations ignoring or unfairly reporting international news in and among various regions of the world (see footnote 5). Chang and Lee (1993) claimed “the U.S. news media have long been singled out for criticism by proponents of the new world order as being ‘biased or imbalanced’ in their coverage of foreign news,” and that “as long as the international communication problems, real or imagined, remain, . . . the U.S. mass media may face continued criticism from abroad,” (Chang & Lee, 304).

And, indeed, the U.S. media do face criticism from abroad. For example, in an Oct. 19, 2001 article from the Global News Wire, a statement from the Pakistan Press Foundation was quoted in which the foundation charged that “the biased Western media has embarked on a media terrorism and is engaged in creating misperception against the Muslim world” and that the media coverage “clearly reflects [the Western media’s] discriminatory and partial attitude.” The Pakistani Press Foundation may itself not be an entirely unbiased organization when it comes to the United States or the U.S. media; however, in another Global News Wire article on Nov. 8, 2001, a senior Canadian diplomat also charged not just Western news media, but the international news media en masse with not “properly portraying the Gulf region . . . after the Sept. 11 attacks on America.”

In order to fully understand how the U.S. media cover international events, one must also understand why it is covered the way it is, that is, what determining factors are at work when news stories are selected for print or broadcast. Many scholars, journalists, editors and TV producers have their own theories. Most coincide, while others are a little at odds. However, for the most part it seems that most of these theories are at work in small ways in every newsroom across the United States.

One aspect of news coverage that cannot be ignored is news frames. Entman (1991) states that “news frames exist at two levels: as mentally stored principles for information processing and as characteristics of the news text.” He calls them “information-processing schemata<sup>8</sup>” (Entman 7). As examples of information-processing news frames he names the cold war frame used for coverage of international affairs until the fall of communism and the “horse race frame imposed on election campaigns” (Entman 7).

As previously mentioned, these news frames can also be applied to the news text itself. By using certain words and using them repeatedly (now referred to as rhetoric), “frames work to make some ideas more

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<sup>8</sup> Entman, Robert. “Framing U.S. coverage of international news: Contrasts in narratives of the KAL and Iran Air incidents.” *Journal of Communications* 41 (4, Autumn 1991): 6-27; Scheufele, Dietram A. “Framing as a Theory of Media Effects.” *Journal of Communication* (Winter 1999): 103-123

salient in the text, others less so - and others entirely invisible . . . [T]hrough repetition, placement and reinforcing associations with each other, the words and images that comprise the frame render one basic interpretation more readily discernible, comprehensible and memorable than others” (Entman 7).

Besides news frames, other news determinants are at work. In the past other scholars have ventured to outline what makes news news. Hester (1973) took an international relations approach when outlining factors that influenced news coverage and found that determining factors of news include hierarchy of nations, cultural affinities, and economic association between nations and news and information conflicts.

The theory of news as international relations is a shared idea by some, but Ostgaard (1965) argued that international coverage depends on political and economic systems:

In addition to factors inherent in the news process, such as simplification of the news [e.g. the use of pictures], identification with the news [e.g. proximity in geography and culture], and sensationalism, government control of the mass media [e.g. censorship], economic considerations [e.g. media ownership] also affect the flow of news among countries. In other words, those who control the political and economic life of a nation are likely to influence the news flow (Ostgaard 42).

As would be expected, there is much overlapping or even rephrasing of news determinants. Much like Ostgaard, Gans (1979) proposed that, among other things, political and sociological similarities with the United States influence the size of the news hole and time devoted to international news coverage. Chang, Shoemaker, Danielian and Brendlinger (1987) grouped theories pertaining to determining factors of international news coverage as either context oriented or event-oriented, with the former being the dominant paradigm. They argue that an “assessment of deviance underlies many of the indicators of newsworthiness in international events coverage. The more deviant an international event is . . . the more likely it is to be covered in the U.S. mass media,” (Chang et. al, 1987, 399-400).

They set out to find the most prominent factors that set certain international events apart from others and why those events were covered by the U.S. media, as opposed to those that were not covered, by using a step-wise discriminant analysis. They used coverage of international events as the dependent variable and seven independent variables were chosen to distinguish these events into groups. The seven independent variables were potential for social change, normative deviance, and relevance to the United States, geographical distance, language affinity, press freedom and type of economic system.

They found that the factors having the most impact on whether an international story was covered by the U.S. media were normative deviance of event, relevance to the United States, potential for social change and geographical distance. While the findings are interesting, they are not terribly surprising since the U.S. media's own guidelines for newsworthiness include proximity, novelty or the unusual, importance or impact and conflict or controversy, all of which are in line with their findings, when applied to international events and coverage.

While no one can argue that these factors are indeed taken into account when deciding what gets reported and what doesn't, Wu confirmed what other scholars, including Ostgaard and Gans, have found. He found that "international news coverage in most countries is predominantly determined by the magnitude of economic interaction and availability of news sources" (Wu, 2000, 128). His study found that the two major predictors of coverage were trade volume and a presence of international news agencies, while distance was only a minor factor and clout variables had an inconsistent impact. He posited that these results suggest many factors are at work when dictating international news coverage: economic interest, information availability and production costs of intentional news.

How news is determined can be theoretical or pragmatic. Meyer's study of Galtung's "feudal structure" theory on north-south news flow in 1991 showed that the theory does hold for news to and from the "Third World." A similar study by Chang, "All countries not created equal to be news: World system and

international communication,” again supports the idea that economics can be the root of the international news coverage problem. His study revealed that within Reuters, an international news service, a hierarchy exists to help in ranking the importance of countries and events that may take place in them, a hierarchy that consists of a “three strata of the world system,” (Chang, 1998, 558). Chang reported that even the countries within these three strata are not covered equally, that some countries receive more coverage than others, and states that this is a structural inequity among the world’s nations. He also found that “the flow of coverage of international events may not recognize national boundaries in the age of information technology” - the information “may fail to originate” or be censored by the country from which the news is happening (Chang, 1998, 557).

As shown by the studies illustrated and discussed above, most scholars and industry professionals agree that there is an inequity in the coverage of some countries, even regions of the world; however, as more recent research has shown, coverage is now based less upon political leanings, and more upon the economic power of countries and freedom of the press in those countries.

Giles (2002) blames poor foreign coverage on the concentration of ownership and the creation of media monopolies stating that there is an “unbalanced priority on profits and financial growth [that] weakens the foundation of journalism as a public trust . . . Market forces and other pressures are causing [many] problems,” (2). Welch (1999) disagrees insisting the onus is on editors and publishers and that they should take another look at what media consumers want. He found that after the bombing in Kosovo began CNN.com’s visitation went up 963 percent and that an April 8, 1999 poll conducted by the *New York Times* showed that 43 percent of Americans said they had followed the events in Kosovo “very closely.”

Getting to the root of the problem of American’s ignorance about foreign affairs, in some people’s eyes, this problem has a more practical nature and could be considered a vicious cycle. Dave Zweifel, (2001) editor of the *Capital Times* in Madison, Wis., explains that his paper, like most other dailies in the nation,

excluding the *New York Times*, stress local news because “periodic research . . . confirms” that local news is what readers want. “Even the national TV networks have cut back on foreign news coverage over the past decade because their research, too, showed that viewers were turned off by it,” (Zweifel, 2001).

Like Welch, Zweifel placed most of the blame on the news editors’ and TV news producers, which prompts the question: Would the American public care more about international happenings if they had a broader base of knowledge on which to judge the foreign news that is reported? This is the question news editors and TV news producers must wrestle with daily.

Riffe et al. are of a similar mind in their reasoning about the overall shrinkage of international news hole. They suggest the increasing cost of foreign news production, the impact of contemporary broadcast news on the role of the news media or the effort to suit the provincial tastes of American readers could be just a few of the problems plaguing news editors in their efforts to cover foreign news.

Until international news coverage is increased, Welch suggests turning to Online Journalism Review, *Mother Jones* and MoJo Wire, the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post* and CNN. Lappin suggests in his *New York Times* article “Turning the Page To a Fresh Window” that people should turn to the Internet for international news. Web sites like The Paperboy ([www.paperboy.com](http://www.paperboy.com)) provide links to thousands of newspapers in more than 150 different countries. Searching The Paperboy directory is free, and for \$2.95 a month they offer the option of having non-English papers translated. The Paperboy creator Ian Duckworth states that his main objective when starting this site was so citizens of the world could gain some perspective and “a balanced world view” (Lappin, 2001, 9).

Fashingbuer-Cooper, a staff writer for the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, agrees with Lappin’s assertion that the Web is the way to go until the U.S. media can do a better job at reporting foreign events: “Americans are criticized for not knowing (or caring) about what happens outside U.S. borders; but, thanks to international

news Web sites, [one] can stay up-to-date on events [around the world], just as easily as those in the U.S.”

(Cooper, 2001, 2). She recommends the various CNN sites such as CNN Europe, CNN Asia, CNN en Espanol for Spanish-speakers, the BBC Web site, the International Herald Tribune and Yahoo!’s daily news.

Past research leaves little doubt that there is a deficiency in international news reporting. Many factors are at work causing this deficiency, and in the case of international news, it is most often audience size and expenses incurred while researching stories that determine what is getting covered. Seaton (2001), editor-in-chief of the Manhattan (Kan.) Mercury and former president of both the American Society of Newspaper Editors and the Inter-American Press Association, sympathizes with regional and daily papers, noting that often “neither have the budget nor the space to cover the world comprehensively” (1).

Also, stories often end up on the newsroom floor or are over simplified due to the ever-increasing fast pace of the media. The American ethnocentric reputation has been apparently well earned, since news happening in the rest of the world often goes unnoticed or unreported.

However, because of the sheer size of the United States, coverage of both national and international events can be very difficult. The United States is one of the largest countries in the world, consisting of 50 states, on average each roughly the size of France. It is difficult at best to keep up with all of the news of the nation, let alone all of the international news, especially in light of the fact the United States has so many pressing problems that often take the forefront.

That being said, U.S. citizens are some of the richest and most educated per capita in the world and have more, better, freer and faster access to media and technology. All of these factors would enable most citizens to easily become more familiar with international and foreign affairs. There is a growing interdependency of the worlds’ economies. The global connections can now be related as local connections, especially in the United States where so many backgrounds converge.



After the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, there appeared to be resurgence in interest in international news and in the idea that foreign affairs do have an impact on life in America. The attention paid to international news by both media outlets and media consumers briefly became the focus of attention, as did the idea that news media outlets should continue their coverage of affairs impacting the United States and that citizens should be paying more attention. Unfortunately, a PEW Research Center study found that the resurgence might have just been a folly<sup>9</sup>.

The study, “Public’s News Habits Little Changed by September 11 [2001]: American’s Lack Background to Follow International News,” found the amount of reading, watching and listening to news did not greatly differ from the amount consumed in the spring of 2000, and that while a higher general interest in international and national news was reported, that interest didn’t translate further than terrorism and the Middle East.

This study’s results on demographics were consistent with past study’s results. The PEW study found an increase in people reporting that they follow international news developments very closely (from 14 percent in 2000 to 21 percent in 2002), but of these people, almost all were in a “narrow, highly-educated segment of the public - the same demographic groups that traditionally have dominated the audience for this coverage: affluent Americans, college graduates and older people,” (1).

After Sept. 11, 2001 there was an expectation or perhaps just a most sincere hope that the events would spark resurgence in interest in foreign news for everyone, especially the younger generations. Unfortunately, this study reveals that is not the case<sup>10</sup>. Not only were there no signs of people under the age of 35 having a higher interest in overseas developments, the levels of interest actually dropped even further below the levels

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<sup>9</sup> PEW Research Center – for the People and the Press. “Public’s News Habits Little Changed by September 11: Americans Lack Background to Follow International News.” June 9, 2002. [www.people-press.org](http://www.people-press.org)

<sup>10</sup> Also see National Press Club, “What Future for International Coverage After 9/11?” “Do Americans Want More International News?” and “The View From Abroad.” May 23, 2002. [www.ncppress.org](http://www.ncppress.org)

reported by previous generations, again consistent with past studies. The study found a possible explanation for the lower levels attention paid to and the lack of interest in foreign affairs: for the past 10 years young adults have not or are not acquiring the news habits as past generations, whether in cable and network news broadcasts or in newspaper readership.

Perhaps most intriguing is what this study uncovered about the apparent lack of interest or failure to follow overseas developments by the respondents. The reason given by the majority of respondents (65 percent) with low to moderate interest in international news on why they do not follow overseas news more closely is that they “sometimes lose interest in these stories because they lack background information to keep up,” (1). Other reasons for lack of interest or failure to follow international news included repetitiveness of foreign coverage, its proximity (or lack of) or extreme coverage of wars and violence.

Because the number one reason for not following overseas news developments was lack of background information, the lack of interest in foreign news in general and the danger of second hand news dissemination, this study will attempt to answer the following questions in order to gauge how much and the quality of international news media consumers had access to in a leading newspaper, the *New York Times*, over the past decade (1991, 1996 and 2001):

- 1) Is there a trend in size of international news hole vs. national news hole for the decade studied?
- 2) In which income bracket for countries is the most news reported?
- 3) Has news reporting related to High-income, Upper-Middle-income, Lower-Middle-income and Low-income countries increased or decreased (separately from 1991 to 2001)?
- 4) What amount of news hole is allotted for use by *Times* correspondents, and what amount of news hole is allotted to wire services?
- 5) Which news agency is the most used when publishing wire stories?

- 6) Has wire story publishing increased or decreased over the decade?
- 7) Are there differences among the income brackets for countries in originating agent?
- 8) Which had the higher instance of news borrowing, *Times* correspondents or wire services?
- 9) Has borrowed news increased or decreased from 1991 to 2001?
- 10) Are there differences among the income brackets for countries in publishing borrowed news?
- 11) Were there any dramatic changes in sources used when news borrowing occurred over the decade studied?
- 12) From which news medium was news borrowed most?
- 13) Are there differences in the sources when borrowed news is present in the countries' income brackets?
- 14) From which sources are *Times* correspondents and news agencies most likely to borrow?

### III. Method

To gather the information needed to answer the 14 research questions, this study consisted of a content analysis of the *New York Times* based roughly on Riffe et al.'s 1993 study using a snapshot approach. A sample of the *New York Times* was gathered and examined on microfilm the years of 1991, 1996 and 2001 to get a broad feel for the next decade in this study.

In order to make results comparable to the past studies, international news was coded from two constructed weeks. This yielded 42 issues (three years, 14 days/ two weeks). Because Riffe and his colleagues were not specific about the procedure they used to yield their two constructed weeks, a new method was devised: Names of the months and the days of the week were typed (see Appendix I. Constructed Worksheet). For the months, the Associated Press' abbreviations were used so the longer months would not be on larger pieces of paper, and, therefore, perhaps have a higher chance of being picked. For the days of the week, each day was prefaced with first, second, third and fourth (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, etc...) to indicate which week of the month would be studied. Days of the week and the months were cut out at equal intervals, so each would be the same size, and perhaps have a more equal chance of being picked.

The months were separated from the days of the week and put into a separate bag. Then the days of the week were sorted according to the day and put into the respective bags (i.e., All Mondays in one bag, all Tuesdays in another, etc...). A chart was made, beginning in 1991. A month was picked; then a day/week for that month was picked (see Appendix II. List of Dates Studies in the *New York Times*). This process was repeated twice per year so there was a total of two randomly constructed weeks per year. In total, the *complete* process was done six times (two weeks/ three years).

Neither of Riffe's studies indicated exactly which sections were coded and which were not. In an effort to focus the study, the examination concentrates on hard news in the first section of the *New York Times*, which

consists of the front page, the international section and the national section. News summaries and front page blurbs that state an article is on a following page were eliminated from the study.

It should be noted that in the dates selected for analysis, three were after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, DC. This caused some concern because of the fear that these dates could possibly skew any results for the year of 2001 and possibly even the study. Examining the *New York Times* on these three dates showed that the structure of the paper had not changed. The front page, international and national pages still made up the first section, while a special section titled "A Nation Challenged" made up the second section B. Therefore, news reporting on the terrorist attacks has not drastically interfered with this research.

Riffe stipulated in his two studies that he coded items depending on whether the action of the news item took place outside the United States. With the increase of wealth, technology, cooperation and communication, coding items based on this definition would have proved difficult. The working definition for this study on what could be described as international news is a little more in depth and subjective. The general definition used by Riffe (action taking place outside of the United States) was used; however, the two coders assisting in this study were alerted that certain situations, like a diplomat going to another country then returning and reporting on what took place there, would still count as international news, even if the diplomat is here in the United States when he/she reports the story.

However, if the United States makes a policy change pertaining to a foreign country, the story may have an international flavor, but it counts as domestic news, as it is a policy change within the United States and the U.S. government. For the sake of determining foreign vs. domestic news hole the coders will count frequencies for news items/articles that do not take place outside the United States.

In the 1980-1990 study, Riffe and his colleagues coded items for “geographic focus, using World Bank geopolitical region categories of First (Western industrialized nations and Japan), Second (Communist or socialist nations) and Third World; originating agent (*Times* correspondent or news agency/wire service); and presence of borrowed news or material attributed to news media organizations,” (Riffe et al., 1993, 639). Just as Riffe coded for geographic focus, originating agent and presence of borrowed news, this study, too, coded for these items, but with some modifications.

As mentioned earlier, the First, Second and Third World classifications had to be updated. The World Bank Development Data Collection Group, which collects and compiles data from around the world to establish the World Bank geopolitical region categories no longer used First, Second and Third World geopolitical region classifications, as they are now outdated. The Second World classification was made up of Communist and Socialist nations. Since the major fall of most communist and most socialist nations, the First/Second/Third World system is now obsolete, although the practice of using the system is now so ingrained in our language that the terms are still used. The World Bank now classifies countries based on income and based on development. The income classification was used for coding because Riffe’s focus seemed to be more on the financial and economic importance of countries as related to their size of news hole. The new World Bank income classifications are Low-income, Lower-Middle-income, Upper-Middle-income and High-income. For a complete list of countries classified by this system by the World Bank see Appendix VI. World Bank Information.

Instead of coding only for *Times* correspondent or wire service in the originating agent category, like the Riffe et al. study, coders coded for *Times* correspondent, and when a wire service was used, coders indicated which wire service was used (i.e.- AP, Reuters, Agence France-Press, Bloomberg, or other).

Because of a slight discrepancy on the definition of “borrowed news,” inconsistent results were revealed in the 1980-1990 Riffe study between the ten coders (inter-coder reliability for that data set was 71 percent although the composite coefficient was 96 percent). This discrepancy lies in the many ways borrowed news can be defined. Bullion and Bytwerk examined the East German paper *Neues Deutschland* and used the term “borrowed news” to describe any story about the United States with the United States media as the source; where as, Hudson and Swindel used the term “borrowed news” to describe any stories not originating in Saudi Arabia when studying the Saudi television news. Riffe made it clear in both studies that he defines borrowed news as any news item that cites another news organization as the source for information within the story. To replicate this study’s coding procedure as accurately as possible, Riffe’s definition of borrowed news was used and the definition of borrowed news was made clear to the two other coders on this project.

A fourth category was added to the coding. If borrowed news was present in a news item, coders indicated which news medium was used (i.e.- newspaper, radio, television, journal/magazine or news agency like AP or Inter-fax).

To summarize, news items were coded for countries' income classification, originating agent, presence of borrowed news, and if borrowed news is present, which medium was cited. Also, headlines of all international news items coded were noted, so readers may get a better feel for the types of stories being reported. For the purpose of between coder agreement, two coders<sup>11</sup> were given nine randomly selected dates (four for one coder, five for another). Nine was chosen because though 10 days would have been almost exactly 25 percent of the dates selected, it does not divide evenly into the three years examined. Therefore, the dates examined were reduced to nine. Between coder agreement on borrowed news presence was 92 percent.

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<sup>11</sup> The author would like to thank Shane Gaddes and Veronica Barger for their coding assistance.

Agreement on geopolitical focus and originating agent was 100 percent, and agreement on borrowed news sources was 89 percent. The overall between coder agreement was 95.3 percent.

Chi-square tests and cross tabulation tables were used for analysis, Pearson chi-square was used to measure significance and Kendall's *tau* was used to measure between the ranks, rather than computing z-scores as used in Riffe's 1969-1979 study. For research question one, international and national news coverage were compared by year in a cross tabulation table, a chi-square frequency test was run comparing total international coverage and year, and Kendall's *tau* was applied. For research question two, total international coverage was slated against the income brackets as classified by the World Bank. Research question three was answered by setting up a cross tabulation table comparing income brackets by year, and chi-square and Kendall's *tau* tests were used for analysis. A comparison between international news coverage and originating agent (*Times* correspondent or wire service) answered questions four and five, again applying chi-square and Kendall's *tau* for analysis. Question six was answered by setting up a cross tabulation table comparing originating agent and year with a chi-square test and Kendall's *tau* as the analysis tools. To answer research question seven, a chi-square test and Kendall's *tau* was used to compare and contrast the income brackets by originating agent.

The same tests, Kendall's *tau* and chi-square, were run on originating agent by presence of borrowed news, presence of borrowed news by year and presence of borrowed news by income to answer research questions eight, nine and 10. This data was set up in cross tabulation tables. To answer research question 11 a cross tabulation table was set up to compare borrowed news sources by year, and a chi-square test and Kendall's *tau* were used to assess significance and trends. A chi-square frequency test comparing borrowed news sources and total international coverage was used to answer research question 12. Question 13 was answered by setting up a cross tabulation table comparing borrowed news sources and income brackets, with a chi-square test and



Kendall's *tau* as the tools for analysis. To address question 14, the same steps were taken comparing originating agent and borrowed news in a cross tabulation table.

Because of the World Bank classification discrepancy between this study and Riffe's studies, comparing data will be difficult; however, tests on foreign news hole shrinkage, increases or decreases in borrowed news items, fluctuations in wire stories published, and use of borrowed news in correspondent copy and in wire stories will still be compared with Riffe's results. For these tests the collected data along with the two former studies will be used to draw comparisons and contrasts.

Riffe et al. can merely speculate why borrowed news is on the rise. Their research did not center on why borrowed news was on the rise while foreign news hole shrinks, but rather *whether* borrowed news was on the rise and *whether* foreign news articles continue to dwindle. This study makes no assumptions as to why second-hand news is on the rise or why international news has lessened over the years, although several theories are offered.

## IV. Findings and Discussion

Riffe, in the earlier two studies cited, has provided reason to believe that international news hole in the *New York Times* is shrinking; however, this research suggests that trend may be reversing. In 1991, a cross tabulation table between year (1991, 1996 or 2001) and type of article (international or national) showed that the first section of the *News York Times* was well distributed 45.8 percent pertaining to international affairs and 54.2 percent pertaining to domestic affairs (see Table 1).

To address research question one (is there a trend in size of international news hole and national news hole for the decade studied?) the year 1996 had the lowest occurrence of international news items of the years studied; however, even then, the split was about 40/60 (41.5 percent international news, 58.5 percent national news). By the end of the decade and into the new one, the split was much closer to 50/50. In 2001, international news coverage made up 47 percent of the first section of the *Times*. The Pearson chi-square significance was 0.103, revealing no statistical significance. Even with the small difference in the percentage of space devoted to international news throughout the years studied, when the numbers are broken down by day, it shows that in 1991 and 2001 about 18 articles per day pertaining to international news were published. In 1996, that number

**Table 1. International and National News Coverage by Year**

			Type of Article				Total
			International		National		
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	
Year	1991	Count	258.0	45.8	305.0	54.2	563.0
		Expected Count	253.0	44.9	310.0	55.1	563.0
	1996	Count	197.0	41.5	278.0	58.5	475.0
		Expected Count	213.4	44.9	261.6	55.1	475.0
	2001	Count	255.0	47.0	287.0	53.0	542.0
		Expected Count	243.6	44.9	298.4	55.1	542.0
Total	Count	710.0	44.9	870.0	55.1	1580.0	
	Expected Count	710.0	44.9	870.0	55.1	1580.0	

Pearson Chi-Square value = 4.546(a); df = 2; Kendall's *tau* = 0.635; *p* = 0.103

was about 14 articles per day pertaining to international news, so as we see, the number of articles is not drastically different.

The chi-square test for the cross tabulation table deals in percentages based on the total number of, in this case, articles expected compared to observed in each category to project expected numbers of articles. For example, there were a total of 710 international articles and 870 national articles totaling 1580 articles all together. The international articles made up 44.9 percent of the total articles recorded; therefore, if no trend is occurring in each year, 44.9 percent of the articles would be expected to be international articles.

Chi-square frequency tests deal with the data set as a whole and average the number of articles entered into the data set to project the number of expected articles for each category, such as Table 2, the year category. For example, the total number of international articles was 710 for the three years studied, 1991, 1996 and 2001. The chi-square frequency test takes the 710 articles and divides them by three, assuming that each year had an equal amount of articles.

Kendall's *tau* was used to compute between the ranks. Kendall's *tau* is a rank-based association and measures dependence between random variables. An important property of this test is that it remains unchanged under increasing changes in the random variables.

An extension of research question one, differences over time in international news coverage are summarized in Table 2. The amount international coverage 1991 and 2001 included 258 and 255 articles (respectively) pertaining to international news, which is higher than what was projected. However, in 1996 the number of international articles in the sample published was down to 197, an average of 60 less than 1991 and 2001. The distribution was statistically significant.

Because of the slight drop in 1996 in international coverage Kendall's *tau* revealed no trend; however, this does not mean there is no trend, merely that Kendall's *tau* does not measure for this type of trend. Kendall's

**Table 2. Total International News Coverage by Year**

	Observed		Expected		Residual	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
<b>1991</b>	258	36.3	236.7	33.3	21.3	3.0
<b>1996</b>	197	27.7	236.7	33.3	-39.7	-5.6
<b>2001</b>	255	36.0	236.7	33.3	18.3	2.6
<b>Total</b>	710	100	710 (.1)	99.9	N/A	N/A

Chi-Square = 9.992; df = 2;  $p = 0.007$

*tau* looks for a straight line showing an increase or a decrease. What Kendall's *tau* does not account for are curvilinear results, such as what the cross tabulation table and the chi-square test results showed. This data could indicate a trend or trends, especially if the years between the sampled years had been studied, but Kendall's *tau* doesn't measure for that type of trend.

Research question two asked in which income bracket for countries is the most news reported? Table 3 shows that in the three years studied 198 articles pertaining to the High-income bracket were published. This bracket made up 27.9 percent of all the international coverage sampled from the first section of the *Times*. Since High-income countries make up 25.1 percent of the world's countries<sup>12</sup>, this study shows that High-income countries are not over-represented in news sampled from the *Times*.

Upper-Middle-income countries were the most underrepresented with only 105 articles of 710 (14.8 percent). It should be noted, though, that Upper-Middle-income countries have less countries in that bracket than in any of the other income brackets. Upper-Middle-income countries only account for 18.4 percent of listed countries, so it could be said that these countries are not underrepresented, merely that the news coverage pertaining to these countries (14.8 percent) is in direct proportion to how much space they occupy in the world.

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<sup>12</sup> For more information, see Appendix VIII, Subsection I, Table 11: Number of Countries by Income.

**Table 3. Total International News Coverage by Income Brackets**

	Observed		Expected		Residual	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
<b>High</b>	198	27.9	177.5	25.0	20.3	2.9
<b>Upper-Middle</b>	105	14.8	177.5	25.0	-72.5	-10.2
<b>Lower-Middle</b>	294	41.4	177.5	25.0	116.5	16.4
<b>Low</b>	113	15.9	177.5	25.0	-64.5	-9.1
<b>Total</b>	710	100	710	100	N/A	N/A

Chi-Square = 131.882; df = 3;  $p < 0.000$

The same cannot be said for countries in the Lower-Middle-income bracket. This income bracket had, by far, the most occurrences in the *Times*. At 294 articles of 710, Lower-Middle-income countries represented 41.4 percent of all international articles published in the *Times*' first section. These results show a disproportionate amount of news coverage on Lower-Middle-income countries, especially when considering that Lower-Middle-income countries only make up 26 percent of the world's countries.

The Low-income country reportage numbers were closer to that of the Upper-Middle-income countries', with Low-income stories accounting for only 15.9 percent of the coded articles. However, unlike Upper-Middle-income countries, the Low-income country reportage numbers are not proportionate. Low-income countries are definitely underrepresented in the news when compared with the 30.4 percent of the world's countries Low-income countries make up.

Table 3 shows that High-income and Lower-Middle-income countries are paid more attention than the countries in other two brackets. While many would suspect that the High-income countries would get more attention from the media, this study has shown evidence that could help to dispel the myth that the Lower-Middle-income countries (part of what used to be considered Third World) get less coverage than they deserve. But, if this study is any indication, Low-income countries still appear to be routinely ignored.

Research question three asked has news reporting related High-income, Upper-Middle-income, Lower-Middle-income and Low-income countries increased or decreased (separately from 1991 to 2001)? As seen in the Table 4 test results, the actual count of news item occurrence percentages for the High-income bracket rose 7.4 percent from 1991 to 2001. Upper-Middle-income news hole stayed somewhat consistent, going from 16.3 percent in 1991 to 14.9 percent in 2001.

The most significant change occurred in the Lower-Middle-income bracket. Lower-Middle-income news hole went from 50.8 percent in 1991 to 40.6 percent in 1996 to 32.5 percent in 2001 for a difference of 18.3 percent. Even with the marked decline in Lower-Middle-income country reportage, the Lower-Middle-income bracket was still the most highly reported of any group, as noted earlier (294 of 710 articles). This is in accordance with two other factors: the amount of countries in the world considered Lower-Middle-income (26.1 percent) and, more importantly, the countries that are classified as Lower-Middle-income.

The decline of reporting on Lower-Middle-income countries was the most significant change in news hole of any of the income categories, although Low-income news hole also had a change worth noting. In 1991, Low-income articles accounted for only 8.9 percent of *New York Times* news hole, but by 2001, that percentage

**Table 4. Year by Income Brackets**

			Income								
			High		Upper-Middle		Lower-Middle		Low		Total
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)
Year	1991	Count	62.0	24.0	42.0	16.3	131.0	50.8	23.0	8.9	258.0
		Expected Count	71.9	27.9	38.2	14.8	106.8	41.4	41.1	15.9	258.0
	1996	Count	56.0	28.4	25.0	12.7	80.0	40.6	36.0	18.3	197.0
		Expected Count	54.9	27.9	29.1	14.8	81.6	41.4	31.4	15.9	197.0
	2001	Count	80.0	31.4	38.0	14.9	83.0	32.5	54.0	21.2	255.0
		Expected Count	71.1	27.9	37.7	14.8	105.6	41.1	40.6	18.3	255.0
Total	Count	198.0	27.9	105.0	14.8	294.0	41.1	113.0	18.3	710.0	
	Expected Count	198.0	27.9	105.0	14.8	294.0	41.1	113.0	18.3	710.0	

Pearson Chi-Square value = 26.882(a); df = 6;  $p < 0.000$ ; Kendall's  $\tau = 0.890$

had risen to 21.2 percent, a number much closer to the 30.4 percent of the world the Low-income countries occupy.

As discussed before, one of this study's objectives was to take a qualitative approach, as well as a quantitative approach, in examining the *New York Times*. Headlines for each of the articles examined were recorded in order to better understand what developments were taking place that could increase or decrease a country's or region's news presence. In the High-income bracket, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Israel and Kuwait were countries that were continually covered throughout the time period studied. Not surprisingly, High-income westernized countries were covered much in the same way domestic news in the United States is covered. Topics, in general, did not just pertain to conflicts and war as they did with most other income bracket countries. Many articles were on cultural developments and issues, business and court cases.

In 1991, nine articles about Germany appeared. In 1996, the number lowered to six, but in 2001 10 articles pertaining to Germany appeared. These numbers are concurrent with the dip in international news articles in 1996. Topics covered in Germany included Nazi trials and other World War II era topics<sup>13</sup> (German/Jewish issues), European Unity issues<sup>14</sup>, military investigations and military funding<sup>15</sup>, and others<sup>16</sup>. The United Kingdom was relatively highly represented throughout all the years studied if the dip in international news in 1996 is accounted for (eight articles in 1991, four in 1996 and 12 in 2001). Topics covered include a news media deal<sup>17</sup>, court cases<sup>18</sup>, hostage deals<sup>19</sup>, Blair/Bush relations and allied help in the war

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<sup>13</sup> "Poles Get Wider Travel Rights," "First Service Since 1945 Held in Dresden Church," "Germans, Jews and Blame: A New Book, New Pain," "Relic Who's Unrepentant and Red," "Jews to Sue over Internet," "Nazi Era Payments," "East German's Appeal," "Former Party Leader Cleared"

<sup>14</sup> "Germany and Britain Split on Larger Community," "Kohl Calls the Path to European Unity Irreversible," "Nations Wrangle in All-Night Marathon on Climate Treaty"

<sup>15</sup> "Honecker Focus on Trial in Berlin," "Germany's Search for Libya Suspect Finds Ties to Its Own Spies," "Defendant in Bosnian War-Crimes Case is Sent Home Gravely Ill," "Kohl Case Date Set," "Yearning for a Big Army, If Only for a Paycheck," "Military Funds to Increase," "Pension Vote"

<sup>16</sup> "German Terrorist Sentenced for '77 Killing," "A Fantasy Land of Toys Where No Child May Play," "Convoy of German Aid to Soviets Begins Journey Through Poland," "Squatters Victorious (A Checkbook Did It)," "Attack Dogs Banned"

<sup>17</sup> "British Publisher Is Said to Agree to Buy News, Pending Union Pact"

<sup>18</sup> "British Courts to Review 1974 Bombing" and "No Fault in Rail Crash"

<sup>19</sup> "Hostage Back in Britain" and "Freed Briton Salutes Hostages As He Sets Off"

against Iraq<sup>20</sup> (Desert Storm, 1991), civil unrest<sup>21</sup>, domestic politics<sup>22</sup>, domestic issues<sup>23</sup>, and international relations<sup>24</sup>.

France was, again, covered consistently with six articles in 1991, eight in 1996 and nine in 2001. Most articles pertained to immigration issues<sup>25</sup>, international relations<sup>26</sup> and domestic affairs<sup>27</sup>.

While the Western High-income countries were covered much like United States domestic affairs, contrarily, Eastern High-income countries, like Kuwait and Israel, were covered basically only on topics pertaining to war and conflict. Of the international news sections examined, articles on Kuwait only appeared in the 1991 set. Israel, on the other hand, was covered consistently throughout the decade studied, and was reported on more than France, the United Kingdom or Germany. In 1991, 12 articles appeared, in 1996, 10 appeared and in 2001, 15 appeared. Articles on Kuwait, not surprisingly, dealt mostly with the war with Iraq and the issues that come with war like Red Cross aid, war trials and tribunals, and the aftermath of war like conditions in the Kuwaiti government and a war ravaged land. The articles pertaining to Israel mostly centered on the Palestinian conflict<sup>28</sup>, but internal political strife<sup>29</sup> was also documented.

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<sup>20</sup> "B-52 Crews in England Tell of High-Altitude Strikes on Iraqi Targets"

<sup>21</sup> "Rioting in Britain Gives Voice to Silent Minorities"

<sup>22</sup> "British Tories Defeated in Former Stronghold," "British Government Criticized for Ordering Saudi to Leave," "Tories Slip into Minority; Labor Silent on Forcing Elections"

<sup>23</sup> "Foot and Mouth Under Control"

<sup>24</sup> "New Terror Law"

<sup>25</sup> "French Aides Talk with Immigrants, but Hunger Strike Goes On," "Paris Expels 40 of 120 African Immigrants,"

"Meeting on Tunnel Migrants" and "Kurds Abandoned on Riviera Hold Protest for Asylum"

<sup>26</sup> "Regrets Over Algerian War Victims," "Arms Scandal Widens," "French Premiere Opposes German Plan for Europe," "French Police Round Up Suspected Arab Militants," "France to Sign 1968 Nuclear Pact," "France Spurns Iranians Over Uranium Request"

<sup>27</sup> "Mitterand Dies at 79, Champion of Unified Europe," "French Papers Strike Protesting End of Tax Break," "In France, Socialized Medicine Meets Gaelic Version of Healing," "French Communist Chief Attacked for Stance on Coup," "Ban on Human Cloning Proposed," and "Le Peu Victory"

<sup>28</sup> "MidEast Pact: Israelis' View," "Palestinian Journalist Freed From Israeli Jail," "Jerusalem's Mayor Assails Raids in Arab's Quarters," "Israeli Says All Sides Want Prisoner Swap," "Israel to Let Palestinian Parliament Members into Self-Rule Areas," "Likud Says Arafat Staged Interview to Bolster Peres," "Israeli President Offers to Meet Arafat Privately," "Emotions Escalate At Hearings on Killings of Israeli Arabs," "8 Palestinians and An Israeli Settler Killed in Surge of Violence," "As 2 Die, Israel Suspends Military Moves," "Calls for Revenge and A Shooting End A Brief Respite in the MidEast," "Ban on Palestinians Eased"

<sup>29</sup> "Head of Israel's Shin Bet Security Service Resigns," "Reprisals Rekindle a Debate in Israel," "Little Excitement in Israel as Vote Nears," and "Labor Opposition"



The Upper-Middle-income economy bracket has fewer countries in it, which translates into less coverage of countries in this bracket. But, of those countries in that bracket with the highest amount of coverage were South Africa, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Mexico. South Africa was most often covered internal political strife, coup attempts and other struggles for power<sup>30</sup>, international political issues<sup>31</sup>, apartheid issues<sup>32</sup>, and AIDs<sup>33</sup>.

Lebanon's coverage was minimal after 1991 (eight in 1991, three articles in 1996 and none in 2001). But, of that coverage, PLO related issues<sup>34</sup>, Lebanese allegiances<sup>35</sup> and hostages<sup>36</sup> dominated.

Saudi Arabia had a higher news presence in 1991 than in any other year studied. In 1991, Saudi Arabia's news centered around missing journalists/kidnapping/hostages<sup>37</sup>, international relations<sup>38</sup>, U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia<sup>39</sup> and the Saudi Arabia's governmental position and comments on the Gulf War<sup>40</sup>.

Mexico rounds out this group of Upper-Middle-income economies with a relative amount of coverage. Of the articles examined, four about Mexico appeared in 1991, six in 1996 and six again in 2001. The overlying theme in the majority of articles was political problems and unrest<sup>41</sup>. Other topics in 1991 included trade talks with the United States and tourism<sup>42</sup>. In 1996, articles not pertaining to political unrest<sup>43</sup> were about civil

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<sup>30</sup> "South Africa: New Reality," "Pretoria Drafts Charters Based on Universal Vote," "Coup Attempt Fails in Ciskis," "Muslims in Drug Protest Riot in Cape Town," "South African White Party, Hurt by Feud, Collapses"

<sup>31</sup> "U.N. Urges Nations to Begin Restoring Ties to South Africa"

<sup>32</sup> "Pretoria Seeking Non-Racist Local Government," "DeKlerk Blames Rogue Security Units For Apartheid Terror"

<sup>33</sup> "Coca-Cola Joins AIDs Fight in Africa," "Despite Legal Victory, South Africa Hesitates on AIDs Drugs"

<sup>34</sup> "For the PLO, A String of Setbacks," "Three Killed as Israelis Hit PLO Site in Lebanon," "PLO and Lebanon Reach an Accord"

<sup>35</sup> "Lebanon and Syria Sign Wide Security Pact"

<sup>36</sup> "U.N. Optimistic on Hostage Release," "Amnesty Ratified in Lebanon," "Amnesty to Allow Rebel to Flee Lebanon"

<sup>37</sup> "26 Journalists Reported Missing on Road to Basra"

<sup>38</sup> "Saudi Elected by U.N. Assembly"

<sup>39</sup> "A Contrite Schwarzkopf Says He Agreed 100%," "Gunman Wounds Three Marines on Highway in Saudi Arabia," "Other Enemies: Fine, Pervasive Sand and Cutting Rocks"

<sup>40</sup> "Saudi King Says Iraqi's President is Facing the Fate of All Tyrants," "Saudis Fear War Could Disrupt Muslim Ritual"

<sup>41</sup> "Mexico's Ruling Party Diffuses Vote Protest," "Mexico, Admitting Torture, Says It Has Charges 12"

<sup>42</sup> "Mexico's Chief and Bush to Talk Trade," "Fewer Tourists in Mexico as Was Cuts Travel"

<sup>43</sup> "Mexican Writers Killed After Underworld Book," "Love, Death and Cover-Up Charges in A Mexican State"

unrest<sup>44</sup>, and drug trafficking<sup>45</sup>. And, in 2001 news items were mostly related to political upheaval<sup>46</sup>, natural disasters<sup>47</sup> and international relations<sup>48</sup>.

Though the Lower-Middle-income economies had a decline in coverage, this income bracket still maintained the most coverage of all the brackets. This may be due to the countries in this bracket like the Russian Federation, China, Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the West Bank and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which occupied the most news hole of the articles studied.

The Russian Federation had the most news items and articles written about it than any other country in any income bracket. This obviously helped to inflate the Lower-Middle-income bracket numbers. The subjects of the articles on the Russian Federation were varied, although most articles were about internal strife within the Russian Federation, as opposed to international relations or external conflicts. In 1991, the conflict with the Baltics<sup>49</sup>, government structural problems and the difficulty of the government change over<sup>50</sup>, problems with the economy<sup>51</sup>, U.S./Soviet relations<sup>52</sup> and internal conflict with rival military groups<sup>53</sup>. In 1996, the turmoil with Grozny and Chechnya<sup>54</sup>, Yeltsin's re-election<sup>55</sup> and nuclear concerns<sup>56</sup> topped the list of topics covered that year.

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<sup>44</sup> "Mexico Confronts Rebels with Limited Crackdown," "Income Gap in Mexico Grows and So Do Protests," "Mexican Government Says It Carried Out Ambush"

<sup>45</sup> "U.S. Decision on Mexico Drugs Draws Opposition in Congress"

<sup>46</sup> "PRI Doesn't Concede in Yucatan Election," "New Violence in Chiapas," "Death in Mexico Symbolizes Slow Pace of Police Reform," "Power Fight in Mexico on Peering into the Past"

<sup>47</sup> "One Death in Hurricane"

<sup>48</sup> "A Lifeline from the U.S."

<sup>49</sup> "In A Splintered Union, Ethnic Russians Fear Future," "Yeltsin Warns Seceding Republics About Ethnic Russian Minorities," "Gorbachev's Appeal for Union," "Baltic Crackdown Backed," "Major Sees Gorbachev And Is Reassured on Baltics"

<sup>50</sup> "Soviet Insurgents Fear Hard-Liners Plan New Moves," "A Collapsing Empire," "President [Gorbachev], in Address to Parliament, Accepts Blame for Coup," "Apparatchiks Awaken to Life on the Sidelines," "Legislative Leader Quits, Denying Charges," "Old Admirer Comes to Suspect Yeltsin's Methods"

<sup>51</sup> "Gorbachev Asks British Leaders for Economic Aid," "New Suicide: Budget Chief"

<sup>52</sup> "In Bush's Councils, Growing Distrust of Yeltsin," "Kremlin Calls Bush's Words on an Accord 'Useful,'" "KGB Passes Secrets Back to U.S."

<sup>53</sup> "Four Die in Soviet Georgians as Rival Military Units Clash"

<sup>54</sup> "Russians Failing to Wrest Grozny From Insurgents," "Russian Troops Shell Rebels in Chechen Town," "Chechens Seize Hostages and Insist Russians Leave," "Kremlin Jousts with Army Over Chechnya," "Chechen Rebels Say Leader Died in Russian Air Attack," "Chechen Leader Apparently Still Alive"

<sup>55</sup> "Like Soy, Corn, Yeltsin's Worth a Gamble," "On Russian Campaign Trail, Communists Recast the Past"

In 2001, topics covered included Bush/Putin relations<sup>57</sup>, weapons treaties and talks<sup>58</sup>, Yeltsin's health<sup>59</sup>, the Russian submarine accident<sup>60</sup> and more government changeover issues<sup>61</sup>.

China had quite a bit of coverage as well, and the coverage was even more varied than the Russian Federation's. In fact, it seemed as if China was covered in a much more Western way, in that cultural topics were covered almost as much as conflicts and international relations were. In 1991, articles on culture and love<sup>62</sup> in China, government hard-liners<sup>63</sup>, the Hong Kong switchover<sup>64</sup>, the conflict with Taiwan and the United States' position on that conflict<sup>65</sup>.

Much of the news in 1996 reflected the news in 1991. Articles on the Hong Kong switchover continued in 1996<sup>66</sup>. Other topics that dominated news from China included the plight of Chinese citizens<sup>67</sup>, more cultural stories<sup>68</sup>, the Taiwan-China conflict<sup>69</sup>, international business issues<sup>70</sup>, international relations<sup>71</sup> and a story on Falon Gong<sup>72</sup>.

The news in 2001 took a different turn. An exposé on a cake factory was featured – “Gross! The Inside Story of China's Festive Cake.” A story on the return of the U.S. spy plane appeared<sup>73</sup>. Also, Chinese

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<sup>56</sup> “Russia Backs Treaty Against Nuclear Testing,” “Occupation of a Nuclear Plant Signals Russian Labor's Anger”

<sup>57</sup> “Russian Card in Bush Deck”

<sup>58</sup> “Bush and Putin Tie Anti-Missile Talks to Big Arms Cuts,” “Russia Says It Continues to Oppose Scrapping ABM Treaty,” “U.S. Offers Russia a Blue Print for Talks on Nuclear Weapons”

<sup>59</sup> “Yeltsin's Reported to be Ill, But Improving”

<sup>60</sup> “In Rough Seas, Divers Struggle to Raise Hull of Russian Sub,” “Raising the Kursk,” “Fire Apparently Spread in Sunken Russian Sub”

<sup>61</sup> “TV Station Raid in Georgia Leads to Protests and Cabinet's Ouster,” “Putin Allies Seem to Gain in Battle Over Critical Press Empire”

<sup>62</sup> “Monkey Hill's Swinging Crowd Jars the Neighborhood,” “Barefoot Doctors Shod, But Still Footsore,” “Love, The Starry-Eyed Kind, Casts Spell on China”

<sup>63</sup> “Hard-Liners in China: Old, But Definitely Not Out”

<sup>64</sup> “China Wins Bigger Say in Hong Kong”

<sup>65</sup> “China Attacks Ex-U.S. Envoy for Stand on Taiwan”

<sup>66</sup> “Sign of a Last-Gasp Empire”

<sup>67</sup> “Chinese Deny Maltreatment at Orphanage,” “Chinese Dissident Headed for U.S.”

<sup>68</sup> “A Lovely Bit of Old China Languishing in the New”

<sup>69</sup> “Old Problems Surface Between China and Taiwan”

<sup>70</sup> “Copyright Pirates Prosper in China Despite Promises”

<sup>71</sup> “Action on Nuclear Ban”

<sup>72</sup> “Falon Gong Manages Skimpy Rally; Is Sect Fading?”

<sup>73</sup> “China Agrees to Return Partly Dismantled Spy Plane as Cargo”

dissidents<sup>74</sup>, international relations<sup>75</sup>, and issues about the Chinese entry into the World Trade Organization<sup>76</sup> were all news stories.

Due to Desert Storm, Iraq was largely represented in 1991 with 18 articles. However, instead of most news items centering around the United States and the war efforts<sup>77</sup> the majority of articles on Iraq were actually about United Nations (U.N.) arms team visits<sup>78</sup>, internal political unrest and power struggle<sup>79</sup> and the plight of the Kurds and Kuwaitis<sup>80</sup>. Other stories that appeared were about POWs and journalists taken as prisoners<sup>81</sup>, and the trouble Iraqi hospitals had in coping with war victims<sup>82</sup>. In both 1996 and 2001, most articles were on the aftermath of the war in the Gulf<sup>83</sup>, and U.N. oil negotiations and other matters<sup>84</sup>.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's coverage also peaked in 1991 with the war between the Serbs and the Croats dominating that coverage<sup>85</sup>. Other topics included compromises on border posts<sup>86</sup>, allied forces visits for peace and protection<sup>87</sup>, international sanctions and bans<sup>88</sup> and domestic politics<sup>89</sup>. In both 1996 and 2001 only one article per year of the articles examined appeared about Yugoslavia. Coverage of the West

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<sup>74</sup> "Freed Chinese Scholar, Still Defiant, Returns to the U.S.," "China Detains and Isolates Liberal Computer Whiz"

<sup>75</sup> "China Rejects Allegations on Improving Iraqi Weapons," "Beijing's Turnabout Is Seen As A Maneuver to Mollify," "China Lets Foreigners Back into Rail Business"

<sup>76</sup> "Obstacles to China's WTO Entry are Eased in Talks with U.S."

<sup>77</sup> "Iraq's Moves to Meet Conditions for Truce Termed Insufficient," "Allies Said to Hope Raids from Air Will Erode Iraqi Might," "War in the Gulf: Regional Adjustments"

<sup>78</sup> "U.N. Arms Team Visits Iraqi Sites for Second Time," "Iraq Ready to Yield Over U.N. Inspectors," "Iraq's Letters to U.N.," "U.N. Inspection-Unit Leader Seems Tailored for the Job," "U.N. Suspects Iraq Has Fourth A-Plant," "U.N. Unit Back Form Iraq, Say Were Denied Inspection Access,"

<sup>79</sup> "Three Reported Killed As A Crowd Storms Party Office in Iraq," "Iraq to Allow Opposition Parties," "Iraqis Shift Majority"

<sup>80</sup> "At A Kurd Homecoming; Never Again," "Joyous Kuwaitis Return From Iraq, But Others Find Border Closed," "Kurdish Rebels Equivocate on Who Holds Oil"

<sup>81</sup> "Journalists Vanish, 35 Allied War Prisoners Released – All Now Free, Iraq Declares," "Red Cross Says Iraqis Will Release Journalists"

<sup>82</sup> "Iraqi Hospitals Struggle with Wounds of War"

<sup>83</sup> "F-16 Fighter on Patrol Over Iraq Fires on Radar Site, U.S. Says," "23 Iraqis Reported Killed," "U.S. Tells Iraq It May Retaliate For Missile Attacks on Spy Plane"

<sup>84</sup> "U.N. & Iraq Fail to Reach Agreement on Oil Sales," "U.N. & Iraq Suspend Talks on Limited Oil Sales," "Iraq Absolved of U.N. Deaths," "Iraq is Running Pay Off Racket, U.N. Aides Say"

<sup>85</sup> "Five Die As Croats and Serbs Trade Fire," "At Border Town, An Uneasy Calm," "Attacks on Croatia Called Worst of War," "Capital of Croatia Under Attack As Yugoslavian Accord Breaks Down," "Factions Agree on Truce," "Croats Appeal for Cease-Fire," "Slovene Rebels Revive Tito's Wartime Tactics," "Tanks Roll into Town"

<sup>86</sup> "Yugoslavian Leaders Demand Surrender of Border Posts," "Yugoslavs Agree to A Compromise on Border Posts,"

<sup>87</sup> "Europeans Arrive in Yugoslavia to Promote Peace Plan"

<sup>88</sup> "UN Bans Weapon Sales to Yugoslavia"

<sup>89</sup> "Slovenes Vote to Make Duty in Yugoslavian Army Voluntary," "Leaders in Slovenia Sees End to Slav Nation"

Bank<sup>90</sup> and Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>91</sup> was on the conflicts that took place there, and the coverage peaked in 1996.

There are more Low-income economies in the world than any other economy, and this was reflected in the sheer number of Low-income countries covered by the *New York Times* in the time period studied. The *Times* covered 31 Low-income countries, but even though there were more countries represented in the *Times* than in any other bracket, articles on these countries were still fewer. For example, 31 countries in the Low-income bracket were covered, but only made up 18.3 percent of the total coverage. By contrast, 29 Lower-Middle-income economies were covered by the *Times*, but made up 41.1 percent of the total coverage. The countries in the Low-income bracket that received repeated coverage throughout the three years studied include Pakistan, India and Indonesia.

Pakistan's coverage centered on nuclear security issues<sup>92</sup>, human rights and trial updates<sup>93</sup>, domestic help programs<sup>94</sup> and internal politics<sup>95</sup>. India had the most overall coverage of any of the Low-income economies. Topics included political tension/unrest and power struggles<sup>96</sup>, women's rights and issues<sup>97</sup> and the Kashmir conflict<sup>98</sup>. Other topics worth mentioning are Mother Teresa's health<sup>99</sup> and the earthquake<sup>100</sup>.

Indonesia also had a fair bit of coverage for this income group with most of the articles occurring in 2001. The

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<sup>90</sup> "Jordan's King Visits West Bank to Bolster Arafat in Talks," "Niche Beer Made, You Might Say, To Toast Peace," "For Israeli Settlers, A Dream Revived," "Israeli Troops Stop Battle Over Land," "Arab Guard Sentenced in Killing of Detainee"  
<sup>91</sup> "Tensions in Mostav Eases with Bosnian/Croat Pledge," "Prisoners Release Stymied," "U.S. Troops Enter Bosnia to Cover Withdrawal," "In Bosnia's Voter Registration, Portents of Trouble," "Under Pressure by NATO, Bosnian Serbs Free Captives," "President Bush Visits Troops," "Protest? In Belgrade? What Protest? Asks State Controlled Newspaper," "Mine Hits 5 Peacekeepers," "Bosnia Election Monitors Warn of Irregularities."

<sup>92</sup> "U.S. and Pakistan Discuss Nuclear Security"

<sup>93</sup> "Four Recent Statements Linking Bhutto's Husband to Killings," "Judge Vows Aid Workers Trial Will Be Fair," "Death Sentence Upheld," "Seeking Miracles from Cruelty and Beauty"

<sup>94</sup> "Pakistan – Help for Drug Addicts"

<sup>95</sup> "Pakistan Shifting Stance on Hard Line Afghans," "Pakistan's Military Ruler Declares Himself President"

<sup>96</sup> "Crisis Continuing in India's Politics," "A Maharajah on India's Elections," "'Bandit Queen' is Cremated," "Party Leader Fasts Amid Political Tension in India," "Government in India Shaken by Walkout of an Essential Foe," "Hindu Party in India Seeks Government Image"

<sup>97</sup> "Ex-Policeman's Jail Term Hailed by Women in India"

<sup>98</sup> "Two of Thousands Stranded in Himalayas Are Rescued by Helicopter," "Judicial Inquiry," "Separatist Guerillas Leave Kashmir Shrine"

<sup>99</sup> "Mother Teresa Alert But Has an Infection"

<sup>100</sup> "Biggest Trembler in Half a Century"

top stories that year in the time period studied were on civil rights and unrest<sup>101</sup>, domestic politics and struggles for power<sup>102</sup>.

To answer research questions four and five (what amount of news hole is allotted for use by *Times* correspondents, and what amount is allotted to wire services? And , Which news agency is most used when publishing wire stories?) originating agent and total international news coverage were compared (Table 5). Of the 709 articles applicable (one news item was discarded because it was a transcript of a meeting between President Clinton and Vladimir Putin), 528 articles were written by *Times* correspondents, which is 74.5 percent of all articles coded.

All wire service articles coded accounted for only 181 articles of 709 (25.5 percent). Reuters had the most articles published by the *Times*, with 91 of the 709 articles coming from them. The Associated Press (AP) came in a close second with 81 of 709; whereas, Agence France-Presse has only eight of the 709 and Bloomberg Business News had only one used in the entire set.

The decade trend in the number of articles written by *Times* correspondents is curvilinear. In both 1991

**Table 5. Total International News Coverage by Originating Agent (*Times* Correspondent or Wire Services)**

	Observed		Expected		Residual	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
<b><i>Times</i> Correspondent</b>	528	74.5	141.8	20	386.2	54.5
<b>Associated Press</b>	81	11.4	141.8	20	-60.8	-8.6
<b>Reuters</b>	91	12.8	141.8	20	-50.8	-7.2
<b>Agence France-Presse</b>	8	1.2	141.8	20	-133.8	-18.9
<b>Bloomberg Business News</b>	1	.1	141.8	20	-140.8	-19.9
<b>Total</b>	709	100	709	100	N/A	N/A

Chi-Square = 1362.164; df = 4;  $p < 0.000$

<sup>101</sup> “Resettled Indonesians Find Hard Life,” “No Gays Allowed,” “As in Manila, Jakarta? Upset of Leader is Protest’s Aim”

<sup>102</sup> “Jakarta Assembly Meets to Remove Chief from Office,” “Indonesian Chief Cleared in Two Cases, But Future Seems Dim,” “Suharto Charges,” “Indonesian Ex-Chief Heads to U.S. Not without Some Parting Shots”

and 2001 the percentage of articles written by *Times* correspondents was about 77 percent (1991 – 77 percent; 2001 - 76.9 percent)<sup>103</sup>. However, in 1996 only 68 percent of articles coded were written by *Times* correspondents, leaving 34 percent of the articles being attributed to news agency wire services, as opposed to the approximate 23 percent of articles being attributed to wire services in both 1991 and 2001.

Overall, Reuters' usage by the *Times* increased over the decade studied from 9.7 percent in 1991 to 12.1 percent in 2001, although, it hit its high point in 1996 with 17.8 percent of all stories coming from it. The Associated Press (AP) wire service items totaled 34 of 257 (13.2 percent) in 1991, but by 2001, AP stories had lowered to 19 of 255 (7.4 percent). More than likely this slight trend may have more to do with the inception of other news agencies like Bloomberg Business Wire and the use of foreign news agencies like Agence France-Press.

The use of foreign news agencies, specifically Agence France-Press, rose distinctly over the years of this study. In 1991 and 1996 no items by Agence France-Press wire service were published, but by 2001 eight items from the news agency were published, for a growth of 800 percent. This is most likely due to Agence France-Press ending its agreement with the Associated Press on its provision of American news and the setting up its own autonomous news gathering network in the United States in September of 1995<sup>104</sup>.

To address research question seven (are there differences among the income brackets for countries in originating agent?) originating agents were compared with the income brackets, as seen in Table 6. This data shows that neither *Times* correspondents nor news agencies showed favoritism overly much by dedicating more attention to one particular income bracket. However, High-income countries got slightly more attention from *Times* correspondents with about 80 percent of articles written by correspondents, and the Upper-Middle-

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<sup>103</sup> For more information on these statistics, which answer research question six (Has wire story publishing increased or decreased over the decade?), see Appendix VIII, Subsection I, Table 14.

<sup>104</sup> Information from Agence France-Press's website: [www.afp.com](http://www.afp.com)

**Table 6. Originating Agent (*Times* Correspondent or Wire Service) by Income Bracket**

			Originating Agent										Total (N)
			<i>Times</i> Correspond't		Associated Press		Reuters		Agence France-Pressé		Bloomberg		
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	
I n c o m e	High	Count	158.0	79.8	16.0	8.1	23.0	11.6	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.5	198.0
		Expected Count	147.5	74.5	22.6	11.4	25.4	12.8	2.2	1.1	0.3	0.2	198.0
	Upper- Middle	Count	75.0	71.4	9.0	8.6	20.0	19.1	1.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	105.0
		Expected Count	78.2	74.5	12.0	11.4	13.5	12.8	1.2	1.1	0.1	0.2	105.0
	Lower- Middle	Count	214.0	73.0	40.0	13.7	35	11.9	4	1.4	0	0	293.0
		Expected Count	218.2	74.5	33.5	11.4	37.6	12.8	3.3	1.1	0.4	0.2	293.0
	Low	Count	81.0	71.7	16.0	14.2	13.0	11.5	3.0	2.6	0	0	113
		Expected Count	84.2	74.5	12.9	11.4	14.5	12.8	1.2	1.1	0.2	0.2	113.0
	Total	Count	528.0	74.5	81.0	11.4	91.0	12.8	8.0	1.1	1.0	0.2	709
		Expected Count	528.0	74.5	81.0	11.4	91.0	12.8	8.0	1.1	1.0	0.2	709.0

Pearson Chi-Square value = 16.828(a); df = 12;  $p = 0.156$ ; Kendall's  $\tau$ -b = 0.138

Lower-Middle- and Low-income brackets coverage by correspondents averaged to about 72 percent of coverage coming from correspondents.

Stories written by the AP had a greater occurrence in the Lower-Middle-income and Low-income bracket at 13.7 percent and 14.2 percent respectively (High and Upper-Middle-income brackets had only about 8 percent of stories written by the AP). News supplemented by Reuters was at about 11.5 percent for all of the income brackets, except for the Upper-Middle-income bracket, which was at 19 percent. All income brackets except the High-income bracket had an occurrence of Agence France-Pressé articles at about 1.5 percent (High-income had no articles written by Agence France-Pressé). The only bracket with an occurrence of a Bloomberg news story was the High-income bracket. Some brackets had slightly more coverage by one agent or another, but overall none of these items differed greatly from what was expected.



It should be noted that for the borrowed news category, one article was excluded because it quoted another story in the *New York Times*. Since the article was written by a *Times* correspondent and quoted the paper for which the article was written, it really was not applicable. The article was coded in all other categories and “n/a” was entered for borrowed news presence.

As for presence of borrowed news, a chi-square frequency test (see Appendix VIII, Subsection I, Table 12) showed 505 articles of 709 did not contain borrowed news, with 204 of 709 articles (28.8 percent) with a presence of borrowed news. Since Riffe does not make it clear which sections of the *New York Times* he coded, his results are not exactly comparable; however, it is worth reporting that he found in his study that the 1969 to 1979 borrowed news total percentage was 17.7 percent, and the 1980 to 1990 total of borrowed news total percentage rose to 18.7 percent.

It may well be that since Riffe does not make it clear, he assumes it is understood that the whole paper was coded. If this is true, then this study’s results truly would not be comparable, as coding the remaining sections of the *Times* may have diluted the number of items containing borrowed news.

To answer research question eight (which had the higher instance of news borrowing, *Times* correspondents or wire services?) originating agent (*Times* correspondent or wire service) was compared to the presence of borrowed news in the news items examined. The results were almost exactly what was expected statistically by the test. The expected count for all coded news items without the presence of borrowed news was 71.3 percent and 28.7 percent containing borrowed news. Of the 527 articles written by *Times* correspondents, 70 percent did not contain borrowed news, with the remaining 30 percent of articles containing borrowed news. The same can be said of every other news agency except Reuters, where the split was about 80/20 (79.1 percent did not contain borrowed news, 20.9 percent did).

**Table 7. Presence of Borrowed News by Year**

			Borrowed News				Total (N)
			No Presence		Presence of Borrowed News		
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	
Year	1991	Count	172.0	66.7	86.0	33.3	258.0
		Expected Count	183.8	71.2	74.2	28.8	258.0
	1996	Count	134.0	68.0	63.0	32.0	197.0
		Expected Count	140.3	71.2	56.7	28.8	197.0
	2001	Count	199.0	78.3	55.0	21.7	254.0
		Expected Count	180.9	71.2	73.1	28.8	254.0
Total	Count	505.0	71.2	204.0	28.8	709.0	
	Expected Count	505.0	71.2	204.0	28.8	709.0	

Pearson Chi-Square = 9.889(a); df = 2; p = 0.007; Kendall's tau-b = 0.003

Throughout the time period studied, news borrowing over this decade actually decreased, which addresses research question nine. As Table 7 shows, news items occurring *without* a presence of borrowed news increased steadily throughout the decade. In 1991, items appearing without a presence of borrowed news were at 66.6 percent. This rose to 68 percent in 1996, and increased again in 2001 to 78.3, for a total difference of 11.7 percent. To put it another way, items containing borrowed news decreased from 33.3 percent in 1991 to only slightly less in 1996 at 32 percent, with the major change occurring in 2001, when news borrowing by both correspondents and wire service lowered to 21.7 percent. This change is statistically significant.

This is a very interesting finding, since most studies, including both done by Riffe and his colleagues, showed that news borrowing in the past was on the rise. There are many reasons as to why news borrowing could be on the decline, which are discussed later in the study.

Research question 10 (are there higher differences among the income brackets of countries in publishing borrowed news?) is addressed by Table 8. Although this study has shown that the Lower-Middle-income bracket received more attention during this decade studied than did the other brackets, a cross tabulation table comparing income brackets and presence of borrowed news (Table 8) showed that the Lower-Middle-

**Table 8. Presence of Borrowed News by Income Brackets**

			No Presence		Presence		Total
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)
Income	High	Count	139.0	70.2	59.0	29.8	198.0
		Expected Count	141.0	71.2	57.0	28.8	198.0
	Upper-Middle	Count	81.0	77.2	24.0	22.8	105.0
		Expected Count	74.8	71.2	30.2	28.8	105.0
	Lower-Middle	Count	196.0	66.9	97.0	33.1	293.0
		Expected Count	208.7	71.2	84.3	28.8	293.0
	Low	Count	89.0	78.8	24.0	21.2	113.0
		Expected Count	80.5	71.2	32.5	28.8	113.0
Total	Count	505.0	71.2	204.0	28.8	709.0	
	Expected Count	505.0	71.2	204.0	28.8	709.0	

Pearson Chi-Square value = 7.708(a); df = 3;  $p = 0.052$ ; Kendall's  $\tau$ -b = 0.599

income bracket also had the highest instance of borrowed news at 33.1 percent. High-income came in second with 30 percent of articles in that bracket containing borrowed news, the closest out of all income brackets to the expected 28.8 percent. Both Upper-Middle and Low-income groups had about 22 percent of articles containing borrowed news, but since Upper-Middle- and Low-income countries have received less coverage, it is consistent that they would also have a smaller occurrence of borrowed news.

The percentages of borrowed news presence varied slightly from income bracket to income bracket, though not overly much. And, while these numbers varied only slightly the Pearson chi-square significance was 0.052. This number is not statistically significant, but it does border on being significant. What is most notable is that the presence of borrowed news numbers reflect the coverage devoted to each income bracket, meaning that as the overall coverage for each bracket went up, so did the presence of borrowed news numbers.

Research question 11 asked were there any dramatic changes in sources used when news borrowing occurred over the decade studied? To answer this question borrowed news sources were analyzed by year. Though news borrowing decreased, it still made up a portion of the news reported in the *New York Times*. Of that borrowed news, the most distinct changes happened in television and news agencies as sources, while

**Table 9. Borrowed News Source by Year**

			Borrowed News Source										
			Papers		Radio		TV		Journal/ Magazine		News Agencies		Total
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)
Year	1991	Count	26.0	30.6	11.0	12.9	24.0	28.2	1.0	1.2	23.0	27.1	85.0
		Expected Count	26.8	31.5	9.6	11.3	28.1	33.1	3.3	3.9	17.2	20.2	85.0
	1996	Count	22.0	34.9	8.0	12.7	18.0	28.6	5.0	7.9	10.0	15.9	63.0
		Expected Count	19.9	31.5	7.1	11.3	20.8	33.1	2.5	3.9	12.7	20.2	63.0
	2001	Count	16.0	29.1	4.0	7.3	25.0	45.5	2.0	3.6	8.0	14.5	55.0
		Expected Count	17.3	31.5	6.2	11.3	18.2	33.1	2.2	3.9	11.1	20.2	55.0
Total	Count	64.0	31.5	23.0	11.3	67.0	33.1	8.0	3.9	41.0	20.2	203.0	
	Expected Count	64.0	31.5	23.0	11.3	67.0	33.1	8.0	3.9	41.0	20.2	203.0	

Pearson Chi-Square value = 12.647(a); df = 8;  $p = 0.125$ ; Kendall's  $\tau$ -b = 0.650

newspapers and radio stayed mostly the same and the journal/magazine borrowing results were curvilinear (see Table 9).

News borrowing from television sources increased from about 28 percent in both 1991 and 1996 to 45.5 percent in 2001, a marked increase, especially when considering that news borrowing on the whole decreased over the decade studied. A possible explanation is the inception of 24-hour news channels like CNN and MSNBC.

As for news agencies, the trend was opposite that of television. In 1991, news borrowing by news agencies accounted for 27.1 percent. The marked change came in 1996 when that number dropped to about 16 percent and then decreased again in 2001 to 14.5 percent, for an overall decrease of 12.6 percent. It is relevant that in 1996 the Internet was beginning to take off, and perhaps this, coupled with 24-hour news channels, can explain why usage news agencies as sources dropped so significantly in 1996.

The trend in news borrowing from journals and/or magazines was curvilinear. In 1991, journal and magazine news borrowing was at the decade low of only 1.2 percent. In 1996 that number rose to about 8 percent, nearly a 7 percent difference from 1991. In 2001, the number dropped again to 3.6 percent of news

borrowed from journals or magazines, which is much closer to the 3.9 percent expected. The increase of journal and magazine news borrowing in 1996 is odd because international coverage itself dipped in 1996, yet was news borrowing from journals and magazines was much lower in both years coverage was up. Also, although news borrowing decreased over the decade studied, it did not dramatically decrease until 2001, which again is not congruent with the higher amount of news borrowing from journals or magazines.

To address research question 12 (from which news medium was news borrowed most?) a chi-square frequency test (see Appendix VIII, Subsection I, Table 13) revealed that, as confirmed above, television reports were borrowed from the most, at 33.1 percent, with newspapers a close second at 31.5 percent. News agencies accounted for 20.2 percent of all news borrowing, radio accounted for 11.3 percent and journals or magazines only accounted for 3.9 percent. Had the numbers been evenly distributed, as the chi-square test calls for, journals and magazine were the most underrepresented (as illustrated Table 9) with only eight articles containing borrowed news from these media, 32.6 less than what could be expected.

Interesting results were revealed when a chi-square test was run using income and borrowed news source (Table 10)<sup>105</sup>. The test showed that newspapers were the highest borrowed news source when writing about High-income and Upper-Middle-income countries. At 50.8 percent, borrowing from newspapers dominated the rest of the High-income bracket, as it did in the Upper-Middle-income bracket at 39.2 percent. Perhaps borrowing from newspapers occurred at a higher rate for these two income brackets because, as was mentioned earlier, there are some newspapers, all in the higher income brackets, with such stellar reputations other media will use their stories as their own. It is possible that the *Times* relies more heavily on these papers to report on themselves and the *Times* then uses those stories as a source for their own articles.

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<sup>105</sup> Table 10 addresses research question 13 (Are there differences in the sources when borrowed news is present in the countries' income brackets?).

**Table 10. Borrowed News Source by Income Brackets**

			Borrowed News Source										Total (N)
			Newspaper		Radio		TV		Journal/ Magazine		News Agency		
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	
Income	High	Count	30.0	50.8	7.0	11.9	14.0	23.7	2.0	3.4	6.0	10.2	59.0
		Expected Count	18.6	31.5	6.7	11.4	19.5	33.0	2.3	3.9	11.9	20.2	59.0
	Upper-Middle	Count	9.0	39.1	2.0	8.7	5.0	21.7	3.0	13.1	4.0	17.4	23.0
		Expected Count	7.3	31.5	2.6	11.4	7.6	33.0	0.9	3.9	4.6	20.2	23.0
	Lower-Middle	Count	18.0	18.6	10.0	10.3	40.0	41.2	2.0	2.1	27.0	27.8	97.0
		Expected Count	30.6	31.5	11.0	11.4	32.0	33.0	3.8	3.9	19.6	20.2	97.0
	Low	Count	7.0	29.2	4.0	16.7	8.0	33.3	1.0	4.1	4.0	16.7	24.0
		Expected Count	7.6	31.5	2.7	11.4	7.9	33.0	0.9	3.9	4.9	20.2	24.0
Total	Count	64.0	31.5	23.0	11.4	67.0	33.0	8.0	3.9	41.0	20.2	203.0	
	Expected Count	64.0	31.5	23.0	11.4	67.0	33.0	8.0	3.9	41.0	20.2	203.0	

Pearson Chi-Square value = 29.619(a); df = 12;  $p = 0.003$ ; Kendall's  $\tau$ -b = 0.001

The second medium most often borrowed from in the High- and Upper-Middle-income brackets was television, at 23.7 percent and 21.7 percent, respectively. This trend reversed itself for both the Lower-Middle- and Low-income brackets. Television news borrowing had the highest occurrence for both of the lower income brackets, at 41.2 percent (Lower-Middle-income) and 33.3 percent (Low-income) of the time, while newspaper news borrowing occurred 18.6 and 29.2 percent (respectively) of the time.

As for the rest of the High-income bracket, radio was the next source from which news was most borrowed (11.9 percent). News agencies were close at 10.2 percent and journals/magazines finished up at only 3.4 percent. The only one of this last group that differed from the expected percentage was the news agencies with a 10 percent difference.

In the Upper-Middle-income group the most significant difference occurred in the news borrowing from journals/magazines. Journal/Magazine borrowing occurred at 13 percent, which is much higher than in any other income bracket. Both radio and news agency news borrowing were within 3 percent of what was expected at 8.7 percent and 17.4 percent respectively.

While television garnered most of the borrowed news percentages in the Lower-Middle-income group, news agencies were the second highest source used for borrowing news, at 27.8 percent. Both radio and journal/magazine news borrowing were pretty much as expected at 10.3 percent and 2.1 percent respectively.

Of all of the income groups, it was the Low-income bracket that had the most evenly distributed news borrowing percentages. As mentioned earlier, television was the medium most often borrowed from, with newspapers second. News agencies were borrowed from third most often at 16.7 percent, close to the 20.2 percent expected. Radio was extremely close to news agencies, at 16.6 percent, and new borrowing from journals/magazines occurred 4.2 percent of the time.

The chi-square test between originating agent and borrowed news source (see Appendix VIII, Subsection II, Table 16) addresses research question 14 (from which sources are *Times* correspondents and news agencies most likely to borrow?) Table 16 shows that *Times* correspondents borrowed news most from newspapers about 36 percent of the time, and borrowed from television at about 33 percent Both the Associated Press and Reuters borrowed news most often from other news agencies at a rate of about 37 percent.

Besides borrowing from other news agencies, the AP borrowed second most from television. This was a departure from all other news agencies, which borrowed from newspapers second most often. The AP borrowed news from print material the least of any of the originating agents (newspapers only 12.5 percent of the time and journals/magazines none of the time). Reuters borrowed from newspapers and television equally at 26.3 percent, from radio at 10.5 percent and had no occurrence of borrowing from journals or magazines, while the Agence France-Presse borrowed only from television.

## V. Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Study

In the 1980-1990 study, Riffe reported that shrinking foreign news hole is a bone of contention for many scholars and professionals and that research to support the idea of foreign news hole shrinkage has often “been based on data collected at wide and irregular time intervals, using questionable sampling techniques or operational definitions,” (641). He illustrated this point, citing several studies such as the Emery study “An Endangered Species: The International Newshole,” and the International Press Institute’s study *The Flow of News*.

Although the 1969-1979 and 1980-1990 studies both seemed to support the idea of shrinking international news hole, using similar methods (content analysis of two constructed weeks on the *New York Times*), this study’s results differed and refute the idea of foreign news hole shrinking. Because there is no benchmark study, one cannot determine whether Americans received more or less international news from the *Times* in this decade than in past decades, but when comparing national news and international news for this decade alone, it appears that *Times* readers are receiving equal parts international and national news.

This study adds to the body of knowledge by providing data on many aspects of international coverage, such as the amount of attention paid to countries in the different income brackets, instances and frequencies of borrowed news, both by *Times* correspondents and wire services, how often the presence of borrowed news occurred in each income bracket and from which sources agents typically borrow news.

This research also adds to the body of knowledge by showing increases and decreases in international coverage in the three years studied, and how those increases and decreases affected everything from news borrowing and coverage of the different income brackets to the amount of space given to *Times* correspondents and wire services.



High-income countries, as could be expected, generally received more attention from both the *Times* as a medium and from *Times* correspondents, though it had the second highest occurrence of borrowed news. Reasons for High-income countries receiving more attention range from charges of elitism to a lack of funding for foreign correspondents to tightly controlled media sources in the other income bracket countries.

Both the Upper-Middle and Low-income brackets received less coverage than did the other two brackets. In the case of the Upper-Middle-income bracket, this could be explained by the fact that the Upper-Middle-income bracket represents a smaller portion of the world's countries, and would, therefore, typically receive less coverage. This cannot be said for the Low-income countries, as they have the most countries in that bracket. Upper-Middle-income countries had a smaller instance of borrowed news, but this could also be explained by the fact that they received less coverage and that the media may not be as tightly controlled in areas considered to be Upper-Middle-income countries, like Brazil, the Czech Republic, South Africa and Turkey. Also, the *Times* is known to have established foreign bureaus in these countries.

Even with the marked decrease in borrowed news about Lower-Middle-income countries, the Lower-Middle-income countries still had the most coverage and the highest occurrence of borrowed news. The higher amount of news borrowing could indicate the higher level of control some Lower-Middle-income countries' leaders exert over information flow and correspondent access to the country and information. Should this be the case, the information borrowed from these countries' media could be questionable at best, since in many cases the media is state controlled.

Wire services receive the same amount of news hole now as they did in 1991, so any evidence Riffe showed of their placement shrinking has, again, not been supported by this study. Perhaps the most exciting item in reference to wire service is that the *New York Times* is now using the Agence France-Presse regularly to report news. Because of the tenuous relationship the United States has with the rest of the world because foreign

policy and various other factors, citizens and the media are accused of not having a better, unbiased worldview. Perhaps routinely using foreign news agencies like Reuters and Agence France-Presse will help in widening that worldview and also help to refute claims that the U.S. media continually put a positive U.S. spin on foreign news reports.

Other than international news hole being split about 50/50 and the use of Agence France-Presse, the other very exciting discovery was that in this study news borrowing actually decreased. Many factors could be at work that would explain the decrease in borrowed news over this specific time period. With the advancement of technology and communications, sending and receiving information can happen in a matter of minutes, sometimes seconds; certainly less than the hours or days it used to take. Also, with new technology like laptop computers and the Internet, reporters are able to work on their back-story and collect information about breaking news while on the way to where the news is taking place. These advancements increase turn-around time for reporter's stories and also make it possible for correspondents to actually go to where the action is taking place, rather than relying on wire services or second-hand, "borrowed," news.

Another reason that could explain why news borrowing decreased from 1991 to 2001 is the fact that, for the most part, communism and socialist governments, which heavily regulated media and communication output from their countries, have fallen. Of course, there are still dictator-controlled countries and a few communist/socialist nations in existence, but overall, communications between countries have increased through both technology and international relations' progress.

If this study is any indication, the trend in shrinking international news hole in the *Times*, as shown by Riffe's studies, may be reversing. Updates to past studies pertaining to size of international news holes need to be conducted in order to ascertain if indeed this can be said of other forms of media. Perhaps we will find that with the advent of the Internet, better communication technology, freer media around the world and better

foreign relations, international news will remain a sizeable portion of *New York Times* and other media news hole.

As with the rest of the newspaper industry, the future of the *Times* is uncertain. The audience share 24-hour television news stations have taken away from newspapers compounded with rising production and maintenance costs are both serious problems the *Times* and the industry as a whole are currently dealing with. The *Times*' segue onto the Internet could prove to be the future of the paper as a news entity. Many magazines hope to follow in the footsteps of the *New York Times*' success on the Internet where the Internet production is more successful than the print edition. Today, the online edition of the *Times* now has a higher "circulation" than the print version.

Riffe's research method had many positive aspects including the fact that the study was done by content analysis. This allows for qualitative results as well as quantitative results. However, with the addition of noting the wire service used in wire stories and the addition of noting from where news was borrowed, a whole new aspect to this study was added. These new coding items really added the necessary depth that the previous studies lacked before. Also, the addition of noting the headlines for each story coded added a qualitative facet to this study.

The first suggestion for the next study would be to add a coding section for the type of story being examined. The categories would be made up from the U.S. media's guidelines for newsworthiness: 1) proximity, 2) novelty or the unusual, 3) importance or impact and 4) conflict or controversy. Researchers could take this a step further so that the coding may not be so subjective and break the guidelines down into other categories like war/conflict, drugs or drug trafficking, governmental policy changes, famine or food related, natural disasters, political unrest, etc...

Also, the addition of a section in which the type of government that is in control where the story is taking place is indicated could help track wire service vs. correspondent coverage and help to better qualify borrowed news occurrences. When coding borrowed news, whether the medium being used as a source is a function of the state or controlled by the state should also be a category. This section could be further broken down and the country from where the medium cited reports added. In some cases, a story about, say, Israel had news borrowed from another Middle Eastern country's media. Adding this coding category will also help in better qualifying borrowed news because if two countries are at war, and the story is about one of the countries, but the borrowed news source is from the opposing country, researchers should be able to account for this in their research results. If the reader of the news story has the benefit of qualifying the news source, then the results should reflect that as well.

If a researcher were so inclined, a list of possible news sources could be added to the borrowed news section. In this study many of the same media and news agencies were repeatedly used, like Inter-Fax news agency for stories about the Russian Federation and Radio Tehran for stories about Iran.

The time frame of the study could also be extended. Instead of using two constructed weeks, the study could examine at least four constructed weeks. And, to get an even better feel for trends in the *Times*, one could even do 12 constructed weeks, one week for every month of the year. This is suggested because in not one of the three years examined was every month represented. This is of course due to the days, weeks and months being randomly selected, and one cannot control when what months are selected when the process itself is random.

The next study should track trends in the *New York Times* through the whole decade rather than using the snapshot approach. While the snapshot approach was more than adequate for tracking trends throughout the decade, because of the increase in borrowed news from 1991 to 1996 and the subsequent decline from 1996 to

2001, it makes one wonder if the increase was in 1996 alone, or if the years of 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995 lead up to this, and vice versa for the years leading up to 2001.

In order to ascertain income bracket story placement, the next study should allow for coding of what page the story appears. It would be interesting to see which income bracket got more front page coverage and front page of the international section coverage, and which ones got pushed to the back on a page covered in ads.

Story sizes can vary greatly. In an effort to truly see how much attention is being paid to certain income brackets, the next study should account for how much space is devoted to not just international news as a whole, but how much is devoted to each article. To say that a paper has 15 articles about the Low-income bracket and 15 articles devoted to the High-income bracket is not the same as saying that one of those articles about the High-income bracket was a three page spread with several other articles being continued to other pages, while all of the articles about the Low-income bracket were blurbs the size of wire service stories.

The last suggestion would be to code the entire newspaper's hard news sections including Science and Technology, Business, Environment, and Health. This is recommended only because of the high amount of news pertaining to the Lower-Middle-income countries. Although that bracket's news hole decreased over the decade, it still made up the largest portion of the income brackets covered. This was also the case in Riffe's study, and his conclusion was that the large amount of coverage was due to the growing economic and financial importance of countries in this bracket. It would be interesting to see if as much attention was paid to countries in this portion of the world in other sections as was paid in the first section of the paper.

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## Appendices

## Appendix I. Constructed Week Worksheet

How the two constructed weeks for the three-year time period were randomly selected:

JAN.	FEB.	MARCH	APRIL
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.
SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.
1 <sup>ST</sup> MONDAY	2 <sup>ND</sup> MONDAY	3 <sup>RD</sup> MONDAY	
4 <sup>TH</sup> MONDAY	1 <sup>ST</sup> TUESDAY	2 <sup>ND</sup> TUESDAY	
3 <sup>RD</sup> TUESDAY	4 <sup>TH</sup> TUESDAY	1 <sup>ST</sup> WEDNESDAY	
2 <sup>ND</sup> WEDNESDAY	3 <sup>RD</sup> WEDNESDAY	4 <sup>TH</sup> WEDNESDAY	
1 <sup>ST</sup> THURSDAY	2 <sup>ND</sup> THURSDAY	3 <sup>RD</sup> THURSDAY	
4 <sup>TH</sup> THURSDAY	1 <sup>ST</sup> FRIDAY	2 <sup>ND</sup> FRIDAY	
3 <sup>RD</sup> FRIDAY	4 <sup>TH</sup> FRIDAY	1 <sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY	
2 <sup>ND</sup> SATURDAY	3 <sup>RD</sup> SATURDAY	4 <sup>TH</sup> SATURDAY	
1 <sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY	2 <sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY	3 <sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY	
4 <sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY			

## Appendix II. List of Dates Studied in the *New York Times*

### 1991

July, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mon.; Sept., 1<sup>st</sup> Mon.

June, 1<sup>st</sup> Tues.; August, 4<sup>th</sup> Tues.

March, 1<sup>st</sup> Wed.; Sept., 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed.

Sept., 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs.; Oct., 1<sup>st</sup> Thurs.

July, 1<sup>st</sup> Fri.; March, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fri.

Dec., 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat.; March, 4<sup>th</sup> Sat.

Aug., 3<sup>rd</sup> Sun.; Feb., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun.

### 1996

May, 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon.; Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup> Mon.

Feb., 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues.; Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues.

March, 4<sup>th</sup> Wed.; Oct., 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed.

Aug. 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs.; April, 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs.

Jan., 1<sup>st</sup> Fri.; March, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fri.

July, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat.; Dec., 1<sup>st</sup> Sat.

Nov., 1<sup>st</sup> Sun.; Aug., 4<sup>th</sup> Sun.

### 2001

May, 1<sup>st</sup> Mon.; Feb., 4<sup>th</sup> Mon.

June, 4<sup>th</sup> Tues.; Jan., 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues.

Feb., 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed.; June, 4<sup>th</sup> Wed.

March, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs.; May, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs.

Oct., 1<sup>st</sup> Fri.; Dec., 4<sup>th</sup> Fri.

Aug., 1<sup>st</sup> Sat.; June, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat.

Oct., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun.; Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> Sun.

Dates for re-coding for inter-coder reliability

### 1991

Feb., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun.

March, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fri.

Sept., 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs.

### 1996

April, 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs.

March, 4<sup>th</sup> Wed.

July, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat.

### 2001

June, 4<sup>th</sup> Wed.

Jan., 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues.

Aug., 1<sup>st</sup> Sun

### Appendix III. Coding Sheet

Date of Issue: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Country (Countries) Involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Headline: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the story/action take place outside of the United States of America?

Yes (proceed to numbers 2, 3, and 4)  No (mark article on non-int'l sheet)

2. Income Focus: (list of nations in appendix \_\_\_\_)

High-Income

Upper-Middle-Income

Lower-Middle-Income

Low-Income

Originating agent:

*Times* Correspondent

AP  Reuters  Agence France-Presse Other \_\_\_\_\_

Was there a presence of borrowed news (material attributed to other news media organizations inside the news item)?

Yes (code #5)  No

If yes to number 4, from which news medium was the news borrowed?

Newspaper  Radio  Television  Journal/Magazine  News Agency

## Appendix IV. Coding Sheet for Data Entry Purposes

1. Date = 1991, 1996 or 2001

2. Newspaper Section Codes:

-Front Page = 1

-International Section = 2

3. World Income Classifications:

-High-Income = 1

-Upper-Middle-Income = 2

-Lower-Middle-Income = 3

-Low-Income = 4

4. *Times* Correspondent = 0

AP = 1   Reuters = 2   Agence-France-Presse = 3   Other = 4

5. Presence of Borrowed News:

Yes = 1

No = 0

6. Medium Borrowed From:

Newspaper = 1   Radio = 2   TV = 3   News

Journal/Magazine = 4   News Agency = 5

## **Appendix V. World Bank Countries by Income**

### **Low-income economies (65)**

Afghanistan, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo - Dem. Rep, Congo - Rep., Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Korea, Dem Rep., Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Moldova, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal Gambia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen - Rep., Zambia, Zimbabwe,

### **Lower-middle-income economies (52)**

Albania, Algeria, Africa, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, China, Colombia, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt - Arab Rep., El Salvador, Fiji, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Iran - Islamic Rep., Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Macedonia – FYR, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia - Fed. Sts., Morocco, Namibia, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa Belarus, South Belize, Sri Lanka, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Vanuatu, West Bank and Gaza, Yugoslavia - Fed. Rep.

### **Upper-middle-income economies (38)**

American Samoa, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Dominica Mayotte, Estonia, Gabon, Grenada, Hungary, Isle of Man, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Oman, Palau, Panama, Poland,

Puerto Rico, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Slovak Republic, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela – RB

**High-income economies (52)**

Andorra, Antilles, Aruba, Australia, Austria, Bahamas – The, Bahrain, Belgium, Bermuda, Brunei, Canada, Cayman Islands, Channel Islands, Cyprus, Denmark, Faeroe Islands, Finland, France, French Polynesia, Germany, Greece, Greenland, Guam, Hong Kong- China, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea - Rep., Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Macao – China, Monaco, Netherlands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Northern Mariana Islands, Norway, Portugal, Qatar, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Virgin Islands (U.S.)



## **Appendix VI. World Bank Information**

World Bank Info Line - (202) 473-1000

World Bank Info Shop Line (publications, etc...) - (202) 458-5454 / 4500

World Bank Development Data Collection Group - (202) 473-7824

World Bank website: <http://www.worldbank.org> or [www.worldbank.com](http://www.worldbank.com)

**Appendix VII. Number of Countries by Income, as Classified by the World Bank**

**Table 11. Number of Countries by Income Brackets**

	<b>Number of Countries</b>	<b>Percent of World Occupation</b>
<b>High</b>	53	25.5
<b>Upper-Middle</b>	38	18.3
<b>Lower-Middle</b>	54	26.0
<b>Low</b>	63	30.2
<b>Total</b>	208	100

## Appendix VIII. Raw Statistics

### Subsection I. Chi-Square Test Results

**Table 12. Total International Coverage by Presence of Borrowed News**

	Observed		Expected		Residual	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
<b>No Presence</b>	505	71.2	354.5	50	159.5	22.5
<b>Presence</b>	204	28.8	354.5	50	-150.5	21.2
<b>Total</b>	709	100	709	100	N/A	N/A

Chi-Square = 127.787; df = 1;  $p < 0.000$

**Table 13. Total International Coverage by Borrowed News Source**

	Observed		Expected		Residual
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)
<b>Newspapers</b>	64	31.5	40.6	20	23.4
<b>Radio</b>	23	11.3	40.6	20	-17.6
<b>Television</b>	67	33.1	40.6	20	26.4
<b>Journals/Magazines</b>	8	3.9	40.6	20	-32.6
<b>News Agencies</b>	41	20.2	40.6	20	0.4
<b>Total</b>	203	100	203	100	N/A

Chi-Square = 64.463; df = 4;  $p < 0.000$

Subsection II: Cross Tabulation Tables

Table 14. Originating Agent by Year

			Originating Agent										Total (N)
			<i>Times</i> Correspond't		Associated Press		Reuters		Agence France-Presse		Bloomberg		
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	
<b>D</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>Count</b>	198.0	77.0	34.0	13.2	25.0	9.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	257.0
		<b>Expected Count</b>	191.4	74.6	29.4	11.4	33.0	12.8	2.9	1.1	0.4	0.1	257.0
<b>A</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>Count</b>	134.0	68.0	28.0	14.2	35.0	17.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	197.0
		<b>Expected Count</b>	146.7	74.6	22.5	11.4	25.3	12.8	2.2	1.1	0.3	0.1	197.0
<b>T</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>Count</b>	196	76.9	19.0	7.5	31.0	12.1	8.0	3.1	1.0	0.4	255.0
		<b>Expected Count</b>	189.9	74.6	29.1	11.4	32.7	12.8	2.0	1.1	0.4	0.1	255.0
<b>E</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Count</b>	528.0	74.6	81.0	11.4	91.0	12.8	8.0	1.1	1.0	0.1	709.0
		<b>Expected Count</b>	528.0	74.6	81.0	11.4	91.0	12.8	8.0	1.1	1.0	0.1	709.0

Pearson Chi-Square value = 28.904(a); df = 8;  $p < 0.000$ ; Kendall's  $\tau$ -b = 0.554

**Table 15. Presence of Borrowed News by Originating Agent (*Times* Correspondent or Wire Service)**

			Borrowed News				Total (N)
			No Presence		Presence of Borrowed News		
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	
Agent	<i>Times</i> Correspondent	Count	369.0	70.0	158.0	30.0	527.0
		Expected Count	375.9	71.3	151.1	28.7	527.0
	Associated Press	Count	57.0	70.3	24.0	29.7	81.0
		Expected Count	57.8	71.3	23.2	28.7	81.0
	Reuters	Count	72.0	79.1	19.0	20.9	91.0
		Expected Count	64.9	71.3	26.1	28.7	91.0
	Agence France-Presse	Count	6.0	75.0	2.0	25.0	8.0
		Expected Count	5.7	71.3	2.3	28.7	8.0
	Bloomberg	Count	1.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
		Expected Count	0.7	70.0	0.3	30.0	1.0
	Total	Count	505.0	71.3	203.0	28.7	708.0
		Expected Count	505.0	71.3	203.0	28.7	708.0

Pearson Chi-Square value = 3.635(a); df = 4;  $p = 0.458$ ; Kendall's  $\tau$ -b = 0.123

**Table 16. Borrowed News Source by Originating Agent (*Times* Correspondent or Wire Service)**

			Borrowed News Source										Total (N)
			Newspaper		Radio		TV		Journal/Magazine		News Agency		
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	
Agent	<i>Times</i> Corr.	Count	56.0	35.7	17.0	10.8	52.0	33.1	8.0	5.1	24.0	15.3	157.0
		Expected Count	49.7	31.7	17.9	11.4	52.1	33.2	6.2	3.9	31.1	19.8	157.0
	Associated Press	Count	3.0	12.5	4.0	16.7	8.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	9.0	37.5	24.0
		Expected Count	7.6	31.7	2.7	11.4	8.0	33.2	1.0	3.9	4.8	19.8	24.0
	Reuters	Count	5.0	26.3	2.0	10.5	5.0	26.3	0.0	0.0	7.0	36.9	19.0
		Expected Count	6.0	31.7	2.2	11.4	6.3	33.2	0.8	3.9	3.8	19.8	19.0
	Agence-France Presse	Count	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
		Expected Count	0.6	31.7	0.2	11.4	0.7	33.2	0.1	3.9	0.4	19.8	2.0
	Total	Count	64.0	31.7	23.0	11.4	67.0	33.2	8.0	3.9	40.0	19.8	202.0
		Expected Count	64.0	31.7	23.0	11.4	67.0	33.2	8.0	3.9	40.0	19.8	202.0

Pearson Chi-Square value = 19.102(a); df = 12;  $p = 0.086$ ; Kendall's  $\tau$ -b = 0.010

**Table 17. Borrowed News Source by Presence of Borrowed News**

			Borrowed News Source										Total (N)
			Newspaper		Radio		TV		Journal/ Magazine		News Agency		
			(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	
	Presence of Borrowed News	Count	64.0	31.5	23.0	11.4	67.0	33.0	8.0	3.9	41.0	20.2	203.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>Count</b>	64.0	31.5	23.0	11.4	67.0	33.0	8.0	3.9	41.0	20.2	203.0

No statistics are computed because Presence of Borrowed News is a constant.

## **Vita**

Heather Rogers, originally of Rock Spring, Ga., earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Communications from the University of Tennessee of Knoxville in December of 1999. After working for eight months in Public Relations she entered the Master's program in Communications at the University of Tennessee of Knoxville in August of 2000.