

1996

# Coverage of Mahatma Gandhi in The New York Times and The Times (London) (1924-1947)

Rajan Zed  
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**COVERAGE OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND THE TIMES (LONDON) (1924-1947)**

**A Thesis**

**Presented to**

**The Faculty of the School of  
Journalism and Mass Communications  
San Jose State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science**

**by**

**Rajan Zed**

**May 1996**

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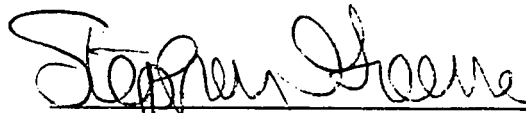
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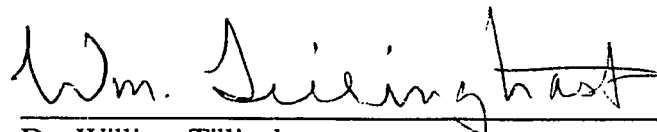
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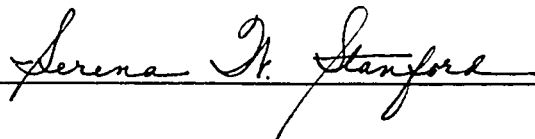
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## ABSTRACT

### COVERAGE OF MAHATMA GANDHI IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND THE TIMES (LONDON) (1924-1947)

by Rajan Zed

This content analysis was conducted to determine how two major foreign newspapers treated Mahatma Gandhi and how much their approaches differed or were similar.

The study revealed that, despite certain similarities, there were significant differences in the coverage of The New York Times and The Times (London) about Gandhi.

It was found that The Times (London) gave more space to Gandhi, had more unfavorable than favorable items and headlines, used more news reports by its own sources, gave more coverage to items critical of Gandhi and/or his actions, offered significantly higher visibility to Gandhi's viewpoint, as compared to The New York Times.

In both papers, news reports constituted over 90 percent of all items about Gandhi. The amount of space for unfavorable items was comparatively highest, with neutral items outnumbering others in numbers, and unfavorable headlines outnumbering headlines that were favorable to him. As seen from the coverage, both papers appeared mainly concerned with the political actions of Gandhi and did not elaborate on his philosophy of life.



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (Mahatma Gandhi) fascinated journalists. It was a mark of distinction for foreign as well as domestic correspondents to be received by him, to quote him and to depart with marks of his favor. The American press particularly gave him consistent notice.

This study of Gandhi coverage brings into focus the Third World criticism of Western news coverage of these countries that has been building up for a long time and has increased in recent years. Various studies (Hart, 1966; Hester, 1974; Peterson, 1981; Schramm, 1964) provide evidence of underreporting and of a negative emphasis in western news coverage of Third World countries. India has been among the worst reported countries in the American press, both quantitatively and qualitatively. To the western newspaper reader in general and the American reader in particular, religion in India connotes idolatry, holy men and sacred cows. For scores of decades, newspapers have told him only about these; by and large, they still continue to do so (Balaraman, 1954).

"Who sets the agenda?" is another question posed here. Despite the transformations in the scope and reach of the news media, the executive branch of the U.S. government, not the media, usually sets the agenda (Serfaty, 1990). The job of the responsible foreign policy official and the job of the foreign policy reporter are complementary, not antithetical (Casey, 1963). The newspeople are

willing to withhold news and commentary from publication when publicity would severely complicate the government's foreign policy problems (Graber, 1980).

This study looks into the functioning of the elite press of the world on these and other related issues. In its editorials, The New York Times often takes position above the battle. Its attitude towards the Soviet Union has resulted in remarkable distortions in its news columns and in its editorial judgments (Dinsmore, 1969). As sociologist Paul Hoch (1974) puts it, "The point is that, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, The New York Times will insist on the policy most in the interest of the corporate business class, without having to be lobbied, threatened or controlled" (p. 11). Cecil King, former chairman of the biggest publisher of Britain, IPC, wrote in a report to the British Council, "The British Press is, in fact, censored. Not directly; not openly by decree. But by the arbitrary operation of a series of loosely drawn laws which make it hazardous in the extreme for newspapers to comment or even report on a number of issues of vital public importance" (Twentieth Century Fund Task Force, 1978, p. 49). The New York Times, one of the world's best newspapers, serves as a kind of model or standard against which other American papers are judged and editorial comment in a large segment of American newspapers reflects the influence of its editorial page (Merrill, 1968, p. 269). The Times (London) has been included in the highest journalistic circles in the world and is perhaps the one paper which most readily comes to mind when thoughts turn to quality daily journalism. The Times (London) is still a paper of the Establishment—the government, the nobility, the ruling class (Merrill, 1968).

Another area this study examines is how the USA and Britain viewed Gandhi as reflected in their press. Great Britain, for example, was anxious that

the United States should view Gandhi and his actions in a light more sympathetic to British policy. Knowing that the American people, like the British people, are prone to judge the news on a sentimental basis, great care was taken that American correspondents in London should be "properly" informed on the Indian situation in which Gandhi was the central figure (Desmond, 1938). To most British, Gandhi looked very different from the picture that his name immediately evoked in the minds of most Indians. To most British people, he appeared, first and foremost, as a political leader of what seemed to them an unreasonable, "disloyal" movement, a man who refused to work the reasonable reforms proposed from time to time by the British, and preferred appeals to mass emotion, thus arousing the passions of undisciplined millions. Americans, Europeans, Africans and other Asians might have ideas about him that were quite different from either the Indian or the British view (Alexander, 1969).

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Foreign News Coverage

News emphasis stabilizes perceptions about the international status quo. Graber (1980) found the thrust of foreign news provided basic support for the policies and personalities of the current American administration. The media generally accepted official designations of who were America's friends and enemies and interpreted their motives accordingly. When relationships changed, media coverage mirrored the change. Editorials and news stories about India and the People's Republic of China provided many examples of ebbs and flows in media appraisals that matched changes in official relationships. Withholding sharp criticism of Iranian leaders during the 1979 hostage crisis to avoid angering them, and throttling information about America's breaking of Japanese military message codes during World War II were examples in which major political interests were at stake. Likewise, news of delicate negotiations among foreign countries might be temporarily withheld to avoid rocking the boat. This had happened when the Soviet Union had expressed willingness to change the course (Graber, 1988).

Rosemary Righter reports a typical comment at a UNESCO conference in Florence in April 1977: "The control of news flow into the Latin American region is dominated by the United States wire services that systematically distort through selection and manipulation the image of the world outside presented to Latin



Americans through their papers" (p. 62). While the major services are clearly striving to be international in outlook and coverage, the market dictates that they serve the interests of the richest sectors (Twentieth Century Task Force, 1978).

There are four things that should be understood by the average reader of the newspapers: (1) that there is no government in the world not engaged in "weighting" the news in its own interest; (2) that there are many newsgathering organizations, some of which add their own bias to what they report; (3) that correspondents have what Mr. Justice Holmes called their "inarticulate major premises" that necessarily color the reports they send; and (4) that the editorial offices have also their own special values to contribute to the work of selection and presentation of news (Desmond, 1938).

Markham (1961) found that the United States papers gave most of their space to the news of Western Europe (45.2 percent) and the Soviet Union (37.0 percent) of all their world news. Smith (1980) perceived informational domination of the world on two main levels. On the first level was the domination of countries of the South (the less developed countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East) by countries of the North (the advanced nations of Europe and North America), and on the second level was the domination of the rest of the world (developed and less developed) by the United States. The essence of Cohen's (1963) argument is: (1) the public is badly informed, because (2) the press does not print enough international news, because (3) the editors believe that the public does not want more foreign reports, because (4) only very few persons, possibly 10 percent, understand international news or care about it.

McCoy (1992) contended that The New York Times, referred to more often by people for serious news coverage of issues of import, rarely disturbed

foreign-policy strategies of Washington and their communication to the American people through its daily foreign affairs practices. Yet The New York Times occasionally would publish stories causing consternation at the State Department. Most often, however, it relied on government-made maps, and officially sanctioned leads. Some areas were restricted, and some closed during certain seasons. If any reporter violated State Department policy boundaries in a significant manner, there were journalists eager to blow the whistle on the miscreant. Reporters were trained to be responsible and can be trusted not to go into restricted areas or to interview questionable sources.

Stories on other nations tend to be sought out and reported in light of their relation to American interests (Alger, 1989). The "geography of the news" comprises another category of foreign news selection. Coverage of the world is very uneven. The "world of newspapers" as Gerbner and Marvanyi (1977) put it, was dominated by Western Europe and, to variously lesser extents, the Middle East, especially Israel, and the Soviet Union. Another category is elections, especially if there is a change in the heads of government. Other types of more peaceful change in heads of government and/or state can be included in this subset. Another category is the coverage of royalty, primarily West European and most especially British (Gans, 1980).

Alger (1989) stated that there was a substantial concentration of reporters from the American news media in Western Europe, and a moderate concentration in the Soviet Union and Middle East, especially in Israel. Japan had received an increasingly larger delegation of correspondents through the 1980s. Elsewhere, numbers varied greatly with dramatic developments and many nations or even regions of the world had very few or no full-time foreign correspondents.

Journalist Mort Rosenblum noted that in many developing and socialist nations, news organizations had no representative at all. They monitored official news agencies. McQuail (1977) pointed out that Asia and Latin America received a disproportionately low number of front page stories. These findings lend support to the view that some parts of the world might tend to have a consistently more negative "news image" than other regions.

Peterson (1981) tested the news factors which were proposed by Galtung and Ruge (1965) as the likelihood that an event will be perceived or reported. These factors are: "unambiguity" (complexity makes the interpretation of an event more difficult and reduces its newsworthiness); "frequency" (the extent to which an event unfolds within the same time frame as the publishing cycle of the news medium); "threshold" (the scope of an event—the greater its "amplitude," the more likely it is to be reported); "elitism" (stories or news involving elite nations or elite persons are more newsworthy than others); "meaningfulness" (an event will be perceived as meaningful because it occurs in a nation culturally familiar or in close association to your own, or it had a special relevance to your own if it occurs in a culturally distant nation); "negativity" (negative or conflicting elements in an event increase the probability of its being reported).

Peterson also tested two hypotheses proposed by Galtung and Ruge—the "complementarity hypothesis" and "additivity hypothesis." She studied The Times. The result showed that three individual news factors—meaningfulness, national elitism and negativity—governed news reports.

In another study, Peterson (1979) tested the same group of hypotheses as in the above research, plus four more: "domestic news" (domestic news about a foreign country is perceived as more newsworthy than international news involving

the same actor); "consonance" (predicted and desired events are more likely to be perceived as newsworthy); "unexpectedness" (it is not merely the opposite of consonance, but it is the unexpected "within the meaningful and the consonant" that increases the likelihood of perception of the event); "personalization" (events clearly associated with individual human beings may be regarded as more newsworthy because of the ease of identifying with human beings). She conducted the survey research on The Times (London) newsmen with questionnaires. Newsmen showed consensus in their choices, which suggests strongly that "events characterized by erratic, and uncomplicated surprises, by negative or conflictual (sic) events involving elite nations and persons" (p. 124) have a greater chance of being considered newsworthy. The general direction of the newsmen's rankings of the newsworthiness of events was the same for the news gathering staff and the news processing staff. The cultural background of newsmen shapes news choices more than their organizational position.

The newspaper readers' attitudes toward foreign countries also become determinants of the selection of foreign news because newspapers are urged to provide what the public wants. The research conducted by Nincic and Russett (1979) tested the hypothesis that the American public's attitudes toward foreign nations will be determined by the similarity of those nations to their own country and by the interest that the United States derives from these nations. Several indicators of similarity are race, language, religion, political system and level of economic activity. To measure interest, the following factors were used: direct investments (U.S. investments in the nation), trade (exports and imports from the foreign nation), military bases (U.S. installations located in the country), and military personnel (the number of U.S. military personnel located in the foreign

nation). Using an opinion survey reported by the Gallup Opinion Index (November 1976) for 25 foreign nations, Nincic and Russett measured similarity and interest. Their results confirmed that both similarity and interest proved to be good predictors of the American public's attitudes toward foreign nations. They also confirmed that interest performed better than similarity.

#### Content Studies of The New York Times and The Times (London)

There have been several studies conducted on the content of The New York Times and The Times (London). Lynch and Effendi (1964) studied the editorial treatment of India in The New York Times. The object of their study was to see how one particular country, in this case India, was portrayed by assessing evaluations of the editorials in The New York Times, which has been called the most authoritative U.S. source on international affairs. The method used in this study was evaluative assertion analysis as developed by Osgood (1959) and modified by Westley, et al. (1963). The method is to take sample assertions from editorials and substitute the significant concepts (attitude objects) with neutral replacements in these assertions, and then have people rate them. Five hundred assertions were selected from The New York Times editorials from the period of January 1950 through December 1962. Their finding was that The Times' editorials showed fair and impartial treatment of India, but there was a tendency to write editorials in terms of American ideals and interests.

Sahin (1973) analyzed the content of Turkish politics in The New York Times. The object of his research was to find whether news reporting of The New York Times changed in response to shifts in Turkish-American political relations. He concluded, "It appears that The New York Times evaluative assessment of

foreign political figures and institutions changes in response to shifts in American foreign policy" (p. 689).

Vilanilam (1972) analyzed foreign news coverage in two U.S. newspapers and two newspapers from India. The results of the study indicated that The New York Times gave more importance to news from Western Europe with a special emphasis on Great Britain.

Hart (1966) compared foreign news coverage in the U.S. and English newspapers. For this study, he chose four English newspapers, including The Times of London, and four U.S. newspapers, including The New York Times. The results of the study indicate that the four English newspapers seemed to judge foreign events as more newsworthy than did the U.S. newspapers, but newspapers of both countries showed a similar pattern in the types of foreign news they print with emphasis on foreign affairs and political news. The English newspapers allotted a large proportion of foreign news to Western Europe (geographical nearness), the United States and Africa (political ties), whereas the U.S. newspapers gave a large portion of foreign news space to the Far East and Southeast Asia (the Vietnam involvement), Western Europe and England (cultural and political ties), and the Soviet Union and Eastern European nations which account for neither geographical nor political ties.

Kam (1978) conducted a comparative content analysis of Chinese news coverage in The New York Times and U.S. news coverage in the People's Daily. The result showed that in The New York Times, "as long as the friendly relationship continued, the coverage would continue to be more favorable" (p. 96).

In content analysis of the news reported on Latin America in The New York Times, Wright (1981) examined to what extent the American press covered

Third World countries and whether the American public was given warning of political turmoil within these Latin American countries prior the crisis or informed only after the crisis. Her analysis concluded that the American public was not given warning of an impending crisis in a particular country prior to the crisis, but received reports only after the crisis.

Nelson (1984), in his study of the Japanese news coverage in The New York Times and the US news coverage in the Asahi Shimbun (comparative study), concluded that the U.S. received much more coverage in the Asahi Shimbun than Japan did in The New York Times. The difference in the coverage by the two newspapers was so great that it seemed to be almost a one-sided communication.

Gabriel (1988), in his study on the coverage of Malaysia by The New York Times and The Times (London), found that favorable coverage might be anticipated if the country written about had the same national interests, fulfilled the economic interests, and held the same values as the country or countries whose newspapers were doing reporting. Smith (1984), in the study on the analysis of coverage of the Angolan civil war in The New York Times and The Times (London), stated that journalists took with them their personal and professional values and frames for viewing reality, wherever they went. Al-Shingieti (1992), in his doctoral thesis on analysis of The New York Times and The Times (London) of the coverage of Sudan during two crises, found out that these newspapers generally conformed to the official governmental views in the definition of the crisis; the representation of its constituent elements, and the proposed course of action in response to it. Abu-Hassabu (1989), in the study of coverage of Sudan's civil war by The New York Times and The Times (London), concluded that the historic connections between Britain and Sudan determined the coverage by The

Times (London), and negativity as an important Western news value and conformity with social changes in the United States shaped The New York Times' coverage of the Sudan's war.

Armer (1988), in her investigation of nationalistic bias in The New York Times, The Times (London) and Le Monde coverage of the United States raid on Libya, found that respected Western newspapers presented a major international event in a generally similar way. Mathurin (1967), in his analysis of the Vietnam War news in The Times (London) and The New York Times, found that two newspapers were in substantial disagreement. Majumdar (1988), in his examination of the coverage of killing of Indira Gandhi in The New York Times, The Times (London) and two Indian newspapers, found that despite frequent accusations of unbalanced coverage of events in the Third World by the Western media, foreign publications did the better job. Beil (1983), in his analysis of trends of coverage of Ghana and Tanzania in The New York Times, The Times (London) and Milwaukee Journal, found that The Times (London) devoted more coverage to the former British colonies than The New York Times. Tang (1990), in the study of the image of China through the content analysis of The New York Times and The Christian Science Monitor, found that on the whole, the coverage of China in these papers was politically oriented. Mousa (1981), in his doctoral dissertation on the Arab portrayal in The New York Times, found that coverage was primarily event-oriented, conflict oriented, unfavorable and possibly biased in its limited contexts.

Guirguis (1988), in her doctoral dissertation on the image of Egypt in The New York Times, found that the theory, which maintained that there was a relationship between the projection of an image and the political context,



appeared to be valid. Yon (1979), in a study of Korean news in The New York Times and Washington Post, found that emphasis was placed on hard news such as foreign relations, politics and government, defense and war, and economic activities, while human-interest stories and pure cultural activities were almost ignored in these newspapers. Kim (1963), in the study of the coverage of South Korean coup d'etat in The New York Times and The Times (London), found that The New York Times treated the coup d'etat quantitatively better than The Times (London). Yamashita (1990), in the study on coverage of Hirohito's death by The New York Times, The Washington Post, and Asahi Shimbun, found that the American papers discussed World War II including Hirohito's wartime role more frequently than any other theme, despite the fact that the coverage occurred along with Hirohito's illness and the following death while the Japanese paper focussed mainly on reporting Hirohito's illness and the subsequent social phenomenon. Gerbner and Marvanyi (1981), examined one week's foreign news coverage (in spring 1979) from sixty daily newspapers and found that The New York Times and The Times (London) used 16.4 and 22.4 percent, respectively, of their non-advertising space for foreign news. Acosta (1992), in his study on the coverage of Rafael L. Trujillo in The New York Times (1959-1961), found that the paper failed to give its readers—whether favorable, unfavorable or neutral—a more truthful and accurate picture of the era of Trujillo for the period in question.

Dong (1990), in a study on coverage of China by The New York Times and The Times (London), found that coverage of these papers was consistent with the past criticism that Western news media were often crisis oriented in coverage of Third World. Levin (1969), in his study on the news of India in The New York

Times, Washington Post and Christian Science Monitor, concluded that these papers failed to provide interpretative reporting that Americans need in order to understand the nature of developing nations such as India. Nutter (1991), in her doctoral dissertation on coverage of Marcus Garvey by the New York Age and The New York Times found that The New York Times presented a much more balanced picture of Garvey than the New York Age, which appeared to consciously create a negative image of Garvey. Sahu (1965), in his study of the news and views concerning India in The New York Times, found that in The New York Times, India was presented as a country constantly suffering from political troubles in the internal governmental affairs and politics. Waters (1984) in a content analysis of the image of Rhodesia in The New York Times, overwhelmingly confirmed the assertion that international news in America, particularly of the Third World, was negative. Noble (1989), in the study on the perception of Lenin and Stalin by The New York Times, found that the paper generally agreed with the U.S. policy during the 1930s and 1940s. Im (1989), in the study on South Korean news coverage in The New York Times, found that the news covered was heavily political-oriented and crisis-oriented, and the image of Korea portrayed by the paper was substantially negative.

Gitau (1979), in his analysis of the coverage of Idi Amin by The New York Times, The Times (London) and The Jerusalem Post, found that these newspapers took sides from the very beginning either for or against Idi Amin. Hence, there was little neutrality in their coverage. Shoar-Ghaffari (1985), in the doctoral dissertation on coverage of Iran by The New York Times and The Times (London), found that Iran's international relations received more coverage than its internal affairs, and more specifically, this coverage focused on topics and

issues related to the interests of newspapers' respective base countries. Husni (1980), in his study on the coverage of Lebanese Civil War, found that The New York Times devoted nearly twice as many words to this war as The Times (London) did. Hill and Fenn (1977) in their comparison of The New York Times and The Times (London), by analyzing data from a year of international events, concluded that the two elite newspapers covered international crisis in a similar manner. But Hopple (1982), in his examination of the international coverage of The New York Times and The Manchester Guardian, found that the two papers presented considerably discrepant pictures of international events. Becker (1977), studying press performance during the Indian-Pakistani war, found that The New York Times shifted its position in a direction opposite to what the leaders in Washington were saying, while The Times (London) remained relatively stable in its coverage.

#### Other Related Studies

Deters (1977), in the study on attitudes of different newspapers toward William Bryan during the Scopes Trial, found that the St. Louis Post Dispatch was hostile to Bryan, the Kansas City Star reported the trial objectively, The Manhattan Mercury gave Bryan little coverage, and the Seattle Post Intelligencer treated him as a hero of the time. Shoemaker (1972), in her study on the coverage of Senator Joseph McCarthy by news magazines, found that Time published mostly negative assertions, U.S. News and World Report mostly positive, and Newsweek was mostly neutral. Wells (1967) in his research on the coverage of John F. Kennedy by Time magazine, found that Time was consistent in its friendly, respectful portrayal of Kennedy's personal image. Rollins (1963), in her

study on the coverage of Governor Donald G. Nutter by the Montana daily press, found that coverage was overwhelmingly favorable to the Governor's program, and that comments and criticisms that were unfavorable to the Governor were published only rarely.

Mackey (1990), in the study on objectivity in coverage of the Jesse Jackson presidential campaign by newspapers from various regions of the country, including Afro-American press and the mainstream press, concluded that coverage of the Jackson campaign was consistent among the various regions and newspapers reviewed. Chaudhary (1980), in her study on the portrayal of black officials in 19 newspapers in the United States, found that articles written about black elected officials were more negative than the articles written about white elected officials. Merrill (1962), in his study on the image of United States in ten Mexican dailies, concluded that the image in the sampled Mexican dailies was unfavorable. Showalter (1976), in his study on the coverage of objectors to the Vietnam War in American magazines, found that 19 out of 21 magazine samples were favorable in their coverage of the objectors. Schultz-Brooks (1987), in the study on American press coverage of French President Francois Mitterrand, found that for one country to understand the politics, fears and motivations of the other is difficult at best; American news reporting has tended to make it even more problematic.

Singh (1949), in his doctoral dissertation on American press opinion about Indian Government and politics (1919-1935), found that the small section of the American press which commented on Indian problems during Non-Cooperation Movement could be divided into three distinct groups: the first sympathized with the Indian struggle and was critical of British policy towards India; second was

critical of Gandhi and his movement and favored British nomination; third was the neutral section whose interest in Indian problems was limited to Gandhi and his unique struggle. Stern (1956), in his study on American views of India and Indians from 1857-1900, found that Great Britain had a monopoly on the flow of information as well as in trade. Mitchell (1943), in a 1942 survey on India, stated that most foreign observers attempting to describe the "paradox that is Gandhi" had stressed the baffling contradictions of Gandhi the man, Gandhi the saint, and Gandhi the astute political leader. Ishida (1970), in the study on Japan's changing image of Gandhi, stated that as in India so also in Japan, the image of Gandhi had varied, both from time to time and from person to person.

Wright (1969), in his doctoral dissertation on the projected image of John F. Kennedy in the mass media, found that Kennedy fared best when the articles discussed his family or personal characteristics but he did poorest in articles that evaluated his ability as President. Maldonado (1987), in her study on the coverage of the Mexican earthquake by the Western and Mexican press, found that American papers were mostly neutral in their tone of coverage. Lent (1977), in his study on foreign news in the American media, stated that Western news reporting traditionally had played up the violent and disastrous, in short, bad news. Johnson (1979), in a content analysis of Time magazine to study the image of Martin Luther King, Jr., found that Time's coverage of King was basically neutral. Merrill (1965), in his study on treatment of three U.S. presidents by Time magazine, found that Time was clearly anti-Truman, strongly pro-Eisenhower, and neutral or certainly moderate towards Kennedy. Schillinger (1966), in her study of British and U.S. newspaper coverage of the Bolshevik Revolution, found that their coverage lacked accuracy, depth, and objectivity.

### Coverage of Third World

Studies show that media coverage of the Third World or developing countries is underreported and tends to be bad news or crisis-oriented or drawn to sensational and atypical happenings (Stevenson & Shaw, 1984). According to Larson (1979), not only do the Third World nations get less coverage than developed nations, but also, that coverage contains a greater proportion of crisis stories than does the coverage of the developed nations.

Most Third World countries disagree with the American idea of what constitutes news in U.S. newspapers because American reporters harp too strongly on the dramatic, the negative, and the trivial (Rosenblum, 1979). According to King (1979), the great majority of Western stories about the Third World are "bad."

In "Study shows U.S. media distort foreign news" (Editor and Publisher, 1980), it was found that the news reported about the developing countries tended to be bad news. In fact, a news event had to be very bad, if it occurred in the Third World, for it to be conveyed to the American public. According to Rosenblum (1979), coups and earthquakes are favorites of many newspapers. Bose (1988), in her study of coverage of environmental issues, the Bhopal disaster, developmental, and crisis news in The New York Times and The Times of India, found that The New York Times' coverage of the Bhopal disaster and of Third World crisis news was more negative than The Times of India.

Tuchman (1978) argued that the news presented to the public was largely that news which legitimated the status quo. Moreover, "the act of making news was the act of constructing reality itself rather than a picture of reality" (p. 12). Peterson (1979) found that foreign news gatekeepers on The Times (London)

showed a consensus in their news choices but cultural differences existed among British and foreign staff.

The Third World's grievance against the Western transnational media is not confined to inadequacy of the news coverage, but extends to the graver charge of distortion and biased, slanted and even punitive reporting (Mankekar, 1978).

### Functions of the Press

According to Rivers, Schramm, and Christians (1980), the media together with the government and the public have the function and responsibility for promoting change in society.

Each society controls its mass media in accordance with its policies and needs. The controls may be legal and political (through laws and censorship), economic (through ownership and support), or social (through criticism and the giving and withholding of patronage) (Rivers, Schramm, & Christians, 1980). They explain that the West has essentially developed three ways of relating the press and society: (a) Authoritarian Theory, where a man is a dependent creature, able to reach his highest level only under the guidance and care of the state; (b) Libertarian Theory, where the task of the society is to provide a free market place of ideas so that men may exercise reason and choice; and (c) Social Responsibility Theory, where the media should accept and fulfill certain obligations to society, reflecting the diversity of their society and giving access to various points of view (McQuail, 1984; Rivers, Schramm, & Christians, 1980).

### Studies of Gatekeeping

The purpose of gatekeeping studies has been to pinpoint where in the

process of communication the selection of events for reporting occurs and to determine how this selection process distorts what is really happening (Shoar-Ghaffari, 1985).

According to Galtung and Ruge (1965), there are three occasions in the process when the selection may occur: in the perception by the media of what occurs, in the reporting by media of what is perceived, and in the perception of the media report by the audience. Most studies in the gatekeeping approach have focused on the second of these occasions. The term "gatekeeper" was originally proposed by Kurt Lewin (1947) in connection with his studies of group dynamics to describe those who have the power to decide whether a particular item should remain in the news channel or be removed from it. It was later applied to news flow studies.

According to Shoar-Ghaffari (1985), one group of gatekeeper studies has investigated the role played by editors and publishers in deciding what to print. These studies have attempted to find out whether the editor or publisher functions as a gatekeeper and, and if he does, to determine why he makes particular decisions. The studies have indicated the importance of the role played by both editor and publisher. However, they have been much less successful in determining why certain stories run and others do not. For example, the study by Bowers (1967) found that publishers are more active in newsroom decisions affecting local affairs, while a study by Donohew (1967) found a rather high correlation between publishers' attitudes and the direction of coverage of a national issue.

These studies also focus on the same selection process as that considered in the gatekeeping studies, namely the selection that occurs between media



perception and media report. Also, they indicate that the selection process does not produce any distortion at this point, and therefore, they tend to de-emphasize the importance of gatekeepers (Shoar-Ghaffari, 1985).

### The New York Times

The New York Times, morning daily newspaper published in New York City, has long been seen as the newspaper of record in the United States, and one of the world's great newspapers. Its strength is in its editorial excellence.

Launched in 1851 as a penny paper, it was built into an internationally respected daily by Adolf Simon Ochs, who bought it in 1896. According to Merrill and Fisher (1980), the prestigious The New York Times comes closest to the claim of being nationally read and it manages to have readers in 10,651 towns in every state and in nearly all countries. They noted that because of its thoroughness, it was highly respected in the nation's colleges and universities, and found in practically every academic library. Merrill and Fisher wrote that many of the paper's readers were quite influential. Its audience around the world has long helped to make it not only a great American daily, but also a key member of the world's elite press.

Merrill and Fisher (1980) state that international coverage has always been one of the strongest suits of The New York Times. Many experts consider the Times coverage unrivalled. The paper's list of outstanding overseas correspondents is lengthy, and includes, to mention a few, such prominent journalistic names as Max Frankel, Harrison Salisbury, A.M. Rosenthal, C.L. Sulzburger, Clifton Daniel, Arnaldo Cortesi, Walter Duranty, Seymour Topping, Hedrick Smith, Clarence Streit, Wickham Steed, Frank Kluckhohn, Wythe

Williams, George Barrett, Herbert Matthews, Henry Lieberman and Tad Szulc. David Halberstam received a Pulitzer Prize for his Vietnam coverage in 1964 and Sydney Schanberg's reports from Cambodia won a Pulitzer in 1976. Thirty-two full-time correspondents work out of 23 bureaus located in the world's strategic centers and another 25 part-timers complete the paper's world-wide coverage network. It may be the only newspaper to take all five major international wire services—AP, UPI, Reuters, TASS and AFP. "While it is not as careful in its typography as Pravda, not as unpretentiously interesting in its prose as the London Times, not as well documented as Le Monde and not as scholarly and serious as Switzerland's Neue Zurcher Zeitung or West Germany's Frankfurter Allgemeine, it does go further in combining the worthy characteristics of all these great papers than any other daily. Even though it aims primarily at upscale readers in educational attainments, income and employment, there is material for all audiences" (Merrill & Fisher, 1980, p. 230).

Merrill (1968) says that not everybody likes The New York Times, but nobody can ignore it. It is a proud, almost arrogant, newspaper. Its international reporting has always been considered one of its strongest areas. Sir Francis Williams, a British press historian and journalism critic, has called this paper "the Great Pedestrian of the Press," saying that it is a good paper but not a well-written or well-edited one. "Despite the sins of commission, it really does stand as a monument to serious-mindedness and honest intent." Robert C. Nelson of the Portland Oregonian, describes it "as nearly as a newspaper can be, it is a history of one day in the world of events." A Times associate editor, James B. Reston, once said, "Our primary responsibility is not . . . to the commuter reading the paper in the train. Our primary responsibility is to the historian of 50 years

from now. The Times is primary source material—and we must never poison the stream of history." Its stories filter into many American newspapers through The New York Times News Service (Merrill, 1968, pp. 263-266).

According to Fischer (1990), the total volume of special foreign news in The New York Times in 1940 was 5,530,185 words and the total cost of foreign news messages from its own correspondents outside of the U.S. was \$708,112. But there were no staff or regular correspondents of The New York Times in India in 1940. Carter of the Institute of Pacific Relations (1941) said that The New York Times was both more and less than The Times (London). It is less only in the sense that The Times did aim in the main to support government policy, whereas The New York Times felt free to make a critical, albeit a responsible attitude towards the U.S. Government. Its coverage of the Far East was excellent, but not yet good enough. Its coverage of southern Asia and the USSR was admittedly inadequate, he added.

The New York Times has maintained its position as the premier news medium for covering foreign news. It is the prime example of the "prestige press" which is relied on by the foreign policy establishment in the United States—from Congress to the State Department. For higher officers, it is virtually required reading (Alger, 1989).

#### The Times (London)

The Times, one of the Britain's oldest newspapers, has managed to gain and hold a highly respected image of reliability, civility and dignity. It has been a "newspaper of record," the paper to read for nearly everyone, but especially for the influential opinion maker of the government, nobility, ruling class and

business and financial circles. It has ever stood in the highest journalistic circles of the world as the paper that most readily comes to mind when thoughts turn to quality newspaper journalism. The best-known elite paper, The Times has always been considered the Establishment paper, a daily to read to keep up with the affairs of the empire. The Times began in 1785 as a small sheet called The Daily Universal Register. After three years, its founder and editor, John Walter, changed its name to The Times. Walter wanted his paper to be "a register of the times, a faithful recorder of all species of intelligence and independent of any party, " but, because of his financial problems, the paper fell far short, even stooping at times to government-subsidized and edited news and to sensational scandal (Merrill & Fisher, 1980, pp. 320-323).

The Times is recognized for its thoughtful and interpretive articles, for its calm and rational discourse, and for its thorough news coverage, although it is highly selective compared to The New York Times. The Times has won innumerable honors and awards for its quality journalism. One of these, and which expresses the typical world-wide reaction to the paper, was the Honor Award for Distinguished Journalism given to The Times in 1933 by the University of Missouri School of Journalism. The paper was commended for "its impartiality, its learning, its courage, and its incorruptible English honor; for its completeness and accuracy, its urbane and cultural editorial page . . . for its polished special articles, its excellent financial reviews and its world outlook." And in 1958, reflecting its continuing prestige, a critic called The Times "sedate, unsensational, well-mannered, impeccably turned out" and standing for the "sober, phlegmatic, matter-of-fact side of the British character" (Merrill, 1968, p. 171).

Merrill (1959) classified The Times as a quality daily which he said

belonged to a high type of serious journalism. By "quality" newspapers, Merrill meant those aimed at the highly educated. The paper is the journal of Britain's governing circles and is written for thinkers and opinion leaders. Merrill said that The Times belonged to a group of international newspapers because of its world-wide readership (though small), stability, high standards and consistent quality.

Discussing its content, he wrote that the newspaper was recognized for its thoughtful, interpretive articles, scholarly "leaders" (editorials), and its conservative news presentation. The reporting style was restrained, dignified and unsensational, in such a manner that all news stories were treated with detachment and respect.

#### India in the United States' Press

Balaraman (1954) points out that even though American press is the largest and richest press in the world, only two American newspapers, The New York Times and The Christian Science Monitor, station their correspondents in India. The rest are content to be served by the news agencies whose coverage of India is unfortunately perfunctory and haphazard, and, as is to be expected, even this meager flow does not get printed. American editors generally seem interested only in Indian news items belonging to one or other of these broad classifications:

1. Of a bizarre or outlandish character (holy men, sacred cows, eccentric maharajahs, etc.).
2. If they have some bearing on the East-West struggle and Communism.
3. If they are connected with American economic aid.
4. Disasters.

If a story does not come under one of these categories, it does not have much chance of publication (Balaraman, 1954).

The foreign press used to associate India with stories about mystics, tigers, cobras, child brides, etc., and unfortunately continues to do so. It is easy to find an editor to print these stories. Some typical "human interest" stories found in the clippings were: ten lions found mysteriously dead in Gir Forest; return of ballot-boxes from interior villages delayed by tiger; dog in Cooch-Bihar killed while trying to save three children from King Cobra; trickster selling tickets to see woman thrown to the lions in Calcutta zoo; German student wandering in India looking for a "Guru" (Balaraman, 1954).

Except the inevitable pieces about "untouchability" or the caste system or child marriages, not much is published in the daily press about Indian social affairs. American editorial writers base their opinions of India on the material which appears in their own press. Since the news about India which appears here does not convey a balanced picture and is also often "slanted," editorials reveal inadequate background and understanding and sometimes err on the factual side too. An editor of an Ohio paper once commented, "I do think that the American press as a whole has treated India shamefully in the picture published of the great country over the years." The editor of a Virginia paper said, "Few editorial writers are competent to write about the country. I think the news about India is slanted" (Balaraman, 1954, p. 85).

#### British and American Press in India During and Around the Period of Study

According to Desmond (1982), the events occurring in India starting 1918 received extensive attention in the press. Reuters and its subsidiary, the

Associated Press of India, provided coverage both within India and for the rest of the world. Reuters had been represented in India since 1897 by Sir Edward Buck. He remained until 1933. He was followed by James Strachey Barnes, and Ion S. Munro in 1938-1941. William J. Moloney, Reuters general manager for the Far East from 1932 to 1937, chose to make India his base, with the main bureau in Calcutta. Everard Cotes, former editor of the Statesman of Calcutta, was co-founder with Buck of the Associated Press of India. The agency was purchased and made a subsidiary of Reuters in 1915. British journalists, including Sir Harry Perry Robinson and B.K. Long of The Times, accompanying the Prince of Wales on his visit to India in November 1921 observed the violence growing out of civil disobedience campaign at that time. Sir Stanley Reed of that paper already was in Bombay when the Prince arrived. Sir Alfred Watson, editor of the Statesman of Calcutta, was a stringer for The Times in that city. Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett of the Daily Telegraph, on a roving commission for the paper, was in India at various times between 1920 and his death in 1931. Harry J. Greenwall, representing the Daily Express, also made visits to India between 1920 and 1926. Robert Bernays of the News-Chronicle, and George Slocombe of the Daily Herald were in India in 1930 and later (Desmond, 1982)

Correspondents from the press of the United States and other countries rarely visited India before 1930. Exceptions included Bayard Taylor, undoubtedly the first, who moved through the country in 1854 as a representative of the New York Tribune. There were occasional visitors in later years. Following World War I, these included Charles Merz in 1921 and then with the New York World, John Goette of International News Service in 1924, and James P. Howe of the AP in 1927. Howe returned in 1930 to open a bureau in Calcutta, which he directed

until 1932. James A. Mills, also of the AP, was in India at the time of the Salt March and riots of 1930. He became acquainted with Gandhi, accompanied him to the London Round Table Conference in 1931, was in India again in 1933 when Gandhi was released from prison. Upon leaving prison in 1933, the first person Gandhi saw was Mills, to whom he said, "When I stand at the gates of heaven, I suppose the first person I'll see will be an AP man." Webb Miller, of the United Press, and William L. Shirer, of the Chicago Tribune, were perhaps the first correspondents, certainly for the U.S. press to make the flight to India, as they did in 1930. Miller reported the salt riots, became acquainted with Gandhi, and remained for some time. Shirer remained in India for two years. During his time there, he formed a close relationship with Gandhi. From 1930, the press and people of the United States conceived an interest in events in India, with constant coverage provided, particularly through AP and UP (Desmond, 1982).

A Free Press of India (FPI) was established in 1927, with headquarters in Bombay. It was an agency sponsored by Dr. Annie Besant, British born, and by other followers of Gandhi. An office was opened in London and a stringer was engaged in New York. Reuters and the API had a near-monopoly on telegraphic news communications facilities in India. James A. Mills, an experienced and mobile correspondent for the AP, moved to India in 1930 to report the salt rebellion in which followers of Gandhi dramatized their struggle for independence. In this, Mills and Howe were among the first U.S. correspondents to give direct coverage to events in India, so long reported almost exclusively through the Reuters agency (Desmond, 1982).

In the 20 years following the end of World War II, the imprint of the American press abroad was unmistakable. American correspondents generally



outnumbered all others by far at every major story. Nowhere was the change more evident than in the coverage of India, where Reuters had been well-nigh unopposed for almost a century. Yet, when Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in the New Delhi garden of Birla House on January 30, 1948, a number of American correspondents were at the scene. Price Day of the Baltimore Sun and Robert Stimson of BBC had been among the last to interview him. Robert Trumbull of The New York Times and Vincent Sheean heard the fatal shots fired and were among the first at the scene. A UP resident correspondent, James Michaels, moved one of the first bulletins. Edgar Snow, who had been waiting for an appointment, was nearby. While such coverage was by no means massive, it was considerably ahead of what American and foreign correspondents had been able to provide in the past (Hohenberg, 1964).

#### Some Contemporary Opinions About Gandhi

Gandhi meant differently to different people with varying degrees of opinion. Beverly Nichols (1944), a correspondent of Allied Newspapers (a British syndicate), commented, "But Gandhi's "non-violence" seemed to me bogus from first to last. Not only does it conduce—as he knows it must conduce—to bloodshed, but in its very principles it makes a hundred compromises with brute force" (p. 198).

Journalist Harry J. Greenwall (1941) said, "The spectacle of Mr. Gandhi being fitted with a set of false teeth the day after it was made known to the world that he intended to 'fast unto death' is one which will undoubtedly delight historians of the future. What is this brown, lean little man? Is he a clown, a charlatan or is he a sincerely religious person who believes really and truly all that he says" (pp. 5-6) ?

Chester Bowles (1970) felt, "It has been said that there is scarcely an individual on this earth whose life has not been affected in some essential way by Gandhi" (p. 39). Frederick B. Fisher (1932) said, "Without him (Gandhi), India, in fact the whole modern Orient, is like France without Napoleon, like America without Lincoln" (p. VIII).

Glorney Bolton (1934), commented, "Life conspires against men who would impose an unnatural order upon the world. Gandhi the ascetic, Gandhi the moralist and social reformer, Gandhi the politician, set loose forces stronger than himself. He has not fashioned life according to his own pattern" (p. 20).

Margaret Bourke-White (1968), who had met Gandhi, said, "A touch of magic clung to this little brown man with his squeaky voice which influenced opinions around the world" (p. 89).

### Images of Gandhi in America

A wispy brown man in a loin cloth, his wire frame glasses, his asceticism, and his actions became transnational images in the United States. Gandhi came into American consciousness with respect to the challenge to British imperialism. The literature of anti-imperialism was accompanied by several distinct, if minor, themes: the enigmatic personality of Gandhi himself, the bearing of his ideas on religious questions, and the tactical and philosophical meaning of nonviolence. Gandhi's image was useful both as a link with world processes and also as an instrument for the re-evaluation of political and social reality (Chatfield, 1976).

According to Rudolph (1990), Gandhi's presence in American consciousness has varied with historical circumstance and his public image. There

is the anti-imperialist, a nationalist leader who challenged the British empire in India. Then there is the guru, a world historical teacher whose ethic of nonviolent collective action in pursuit of truth and justice offers a new way to think, believe, and live. There is the mahatma, the great soul, saint, and "homo religiosus," whose meaning is translated in terms commensurable with or found in America's religious perceptions and beliefs. And then there is also the fraud, an oriental "other" whose alien and subversive ideas and practices threaten American religion, morality, and politics.

According to Jha (1978), Gandhi interested the Americans not only because he was a quaint figure, a good subject for cartoonists. To the liberals, the pacifists, and a section of clergymen and religious thinkers, his attempt to bring about a social and political change in India through the methods of non-violence represented a redeeming feature of the strife-torn world of post-war period. Some highly respected American clergymen even depicted Gandhi as the Christ of the modern era. There were many Americans who, on the other hand, believed that Gandhi was a scheming politician, prototype of a horse-trader; at best, an Oriental enigma. According to Isaacs (1972), this great and powerful Gandhi image climbed but slowly to its present eminence. In the earlier years and decades of Gandhi's lifetime, he appeared to many as the quintessential figure of the puny Indian, ribs showing, naked but for a loin cloth, or draped in a dhoti. He was the odd, the strange, the incomprehensible Indian with his mystic hold on the masses. When he came more closely into view at the London Round Table Conference late in 1931, much was made of his odd appearance and strange ascetic ways, but a newspaper correspondent described him as a "diplomat with one of the subtlest minds that ever came out of the East." Some of his critics were calling him an

opportunist, more rarely a phony, and one newspaper even called him, in 1931, "the evil genius of India."

Gandhi was portrayed as "patriot martyr, high souled idealist, and arch-traitor; evangelist, pacific quietist, and truculent tub-thumper and revolutionist; subverter of empires and founder of creeds, a man of tortuous wiles and stratagems, or, to use his own phrase, a single-minded seeker after truth" (Candler, 1922, p. 105).

The major papers in India reflected a distinctly British point of view, and in times of severe crisis, as in the Amritsar Massacre of 1919 and in 1930-31, the government imposed censorship on telegraphic news. The non-official images of Gandhi were fed by many sources: by books ranging from the vituperative, hostile works of Katherine Mayo (1930) to the venerative writings of Charles Freer Andrews (1924); by newspaper stories ranging from the skeptical accounts in The New York Times to appreciative reports of journalists observing the salt satyagrahs and British repression of 1930-31; by organizations such as the Friends of India and pacifist groups; by periodicals ranging from the critical Literary Digest to the pro-independence Christian Century, World Tomorrow, and Nation; by direct appeals, from Gandhi and his friends on one hand to the members of the British government on the other. News magazines and papers tended to focus on the foreground of Gandhi's dramatic displays. But besides Reuters, American papers depended much on British journalists and magazines for their understanding. Material from these sources was obviously biased, but it stimulated American journalistic attention. It contributed to the increasing space given to Indian affairs and to Gandhi, and this in turn created a market for American journalists (Chatfield, 1976).

According to Seshachari (1969), American involvement with Gandhi, both with the man and his message, goes back to the year 1921. A spate of Gandhi's biographical sketches appeared in the early 1920's. Some called him an anachronism and branded his technique of non-violence impractical; others saw him as new St. Francis toiling in the fields to sow the seeds of a less contentious future. Gandhi was a very good story, and the American press knew one when they saw one. Cartoon after cartoon depicted a scrawny, half-naked, bony man, clad in nothing but his loin cloth, defying a belligerent and inalienable part of the American image of Gandhi. The Americans realized that the fast was a powerful weapon in Gandhi's arsenal, but could not understand why the simple act of fasting should send a shiver through the British spine, the Indian to his temple, and the country into a state of suspended animation. From the first day of the Second World War, American opinion dramatically turned against Gandhi. The entire American daily press, and a host of weekly periodicals and newscasters let loose a tirade against Gandhi, scalding him with such equal vehemence that it was hard to distinguish who had once sat at Gandhi's feet and who had slung mud at him. He was termed as a snake in the grass, an imposter, a fool and an adventurer. The most frequent epithet tagged to his name was "traitor" (Seshachari, 1969).

Once the Gandhi image was a composite of the ludicrous and the saintly. He was a recurrent target for Broadway jokes and the delight of the cartoonists. His sharp nose, flapping ears, ribs pressing against his emaciated body, loin cloth and the goat, all lent themselves to the ridicule and mirth. The idea of an unarmed and defenseless man taking on a mighty empire seemed to border on the ridiculous. Simultaneously, there was the other image of a great leader and

greater man jostling shoulders, as it were, with the image of the part enigmatic, part ludicrous Indian. The religious and liberal periodicals were very prominent in projecting the image of a saint lost in politics. Gandhi was never before so great in American eyes as in those final weeks and hours of his life (Seshachari, 1969).

Chatfield (1976) wrote that the Nation and the New Republic were encouraged by Gandhi's program and wanted to believe his philosophy. Subsequently, the Christian Century, the World Tomorrow and Unity gave Gandhi increasing and enthusiastic attention. Skeptical or adulatory, they contributed to the familiar, picturesque visual image of him (probably only Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler became as recognizable to the Americans in the inter-war years). Journals such as the Nation, the Survey, the New Republic, and later the Christian Century, Unity and World Tomorrow promulgated the image of nonviolence as a new method in a long-range quest for social justice and self-rule. The religious journals welcomed Gandhi's cause as a demonstration of the political efficacy of spiritual values. The liberal journals identified him with the principle of freedom. Americans could not possibly see Gandhi the way Indians did. In the American pantheon his nearest likeness must have been Lincoln.

#### How US Press Viewed Gandhi

According to Singh (1949), in the early 1920s, in its appraisal of Gandhi, the American Press concluded unanimously that the Mahatma had created a revolution in the minds of his fellow countrymen and that he was a difficult adversary to be taken into consideration. It was his non-cooperation movement which called for the widest variety of comment. His Dandi March to break the salt law made front page news for practically all important U.S. newspapers in

America. So much importance was given to the news that a majority of the papers displayed it in bold headlines covering two or three columns. A number of papers published regular reports of the progress of the march. Surprisingly enough, the Dandi March did not evoke comment. Gandhi's arrest on May 5, 1930 was also a big story for the American press. Almost all the daily papers printed broad headlines on their front pages. Like the Dandi March, it also did not evoke any editorial comment from quite a few papers. The opinions expressed in the few comments that did appear, were either neutral or critical of Gandhi and his movement. No newspaper had a word commending the Mahatma or his campaign. The release of Gandhi on January 26, 1931, which was a great front page story for the American press, also drew very little comment. The opinion of the American Press on the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations, which was expressed in only a few periodicals, was not very hopeful of the settlement, and the course of the negotiations proved their misgivings were not groundless. The settlement in India was the biggest story of the day for the American press and was universally acclaimed as good news. All the important dailies gave prominent space on their front pages and almost all the important newspapers commented editorially. The periodicals too did not lag behind in expressing their views. The majority of the papers were profuse in their praise of both Gandhi and Viceroy Lord Irwin (Singh, 1949).

The American press commented at length on Gandhi's odd appearance and outfit during the second Round Table Conference, never forgetting to mention his two goats that added color to the description. Some of the papers stretched their imaginations a bit too far and wrote things about the Mahatma quite out of tune with reality. The majority of the press considered the conference

a failure. The pro-British papers blamed Gandhi, while the liberal section held the British responsible. The American press was greatly concerned by the news of Gandhi's fast unto death in 1932, and it appeared on the front pages of practically all the important papers and the general opinion was very sympathetic. The period between the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1934 and the outbreak of war in 1939, witnessed a slackening of interest in Indian affairs in the American press. In this period, the political observers saw the political impracticability of Gandhi (Singh, 1949).

According to Mackett (1957), Mahatma Gandhi provided a marked appeal to American idealism, fortified by its own historical objections to colonialism. Interest culminated in his arrest, with more references and comment on India during 1922 than for any year of study, except 1942. By 1924, Gandhi had become a controversial figure, some supporting him almost as devotedly as did Indian Nationalists, while others were troubled at the outbreaks of violence which followed in his wake. Gandhi's march to the sea in 1930 captured the American imagination. Here was material of obvious news value, recalling memories of the Boston Tea Party. Gandhi was accorded considerable attention in both America and India in 1932 with his fast on behalf of the untouchables. There was a strong feeling against Gandhi and his reported proposal to negotiate with Japan in 1942.

According to Jha (1978), Gandhi's Dandi March in March 1930 attracted wide attention in the American press, which tried to calculate the possible effect the movement may have on India and the entire East. His arrest in May 1930 became subject of wide and prominent publicity in the USA. Gandhi, for the Americans, represented an interesting combination of "a holy man" and "a master strategist." The personality of Gandhi attracted attention from all sections of the



Americans. They were doubtful if he would succeed in controlling the explosive situation in India. But the fact that he was making new experiments in the field of politics and had succeeded in rallying a vast section of the populace behind his banner immensely appealed to a large number of Americans. Some of them went to the length of comparing him to Jesus Christ (Jha, 1978).

According to Chatfield (1976), from mid-1921 through 1922 Gandhi received good coverage. Many accounts were descriptive. In 1929-31, unlike 1919-21, events were reported in the United States by American journalists and leaders who were in India and in touch with Gandhi followers. There was by no means unanimity in America about Gandhi's tactics or objectives. In 1942, American journalists had more direct access to Indian events than ever before, and there were now on the scene influential news magazines such as Time, Life, and Newsweek with a vested interest in illuminating accurately the passing world. Greater access made a more informed American public all the more important to Gandhi.

#### Criticism of Gandhi in British and American Press

Living Age (1927) from New York made critical comments on Gandhi's appearance and activities. "Gandhi lacks the sense of joy that some Christians derive from contact with a personal God," it said (p. 736). Great Britain and the East (1941) from London wrote a critical editorial note on Gandhi's individual "satyagraha." It believed, "The obstacle to every scheme of reorganization of the Indian Government is the campaign of pacifism organized by Mr. Gandhi" (p. 319). Fortnightly Review (1938) from London criticized Gandhi's political policies towards the British Government. Commonweal (1942) from New York

criticized Gandhi and his attitude towards World War II. Literary Digest (1932) from New York, commenting on Gandhi's influence, pointed out, "but it is power that lives only in his own environment" (p. 22). The New York Times Current History (1921) from New York provided hostile criticism of Gandhi and his non-violent non-cooperation movement against the British Government. An article, "Mr. Gandhi—complete nihilist," in Spectator (1930) from London, which reviewed India's political condition, expressed hostile criticism of Gandhi. "Gandhi in high," appearing in Time (1942) from Chicago, is illustrated with a cartoon and is a bitter criticism of Gandhi. "Gandhi's gangster trouble," appearing in the Literary Digest (1931) from New York, asks the question, "Can Gandhi tame the gangsters of India?" (p. 16). "Gandhi's strength and weakness" in Literary Digest (1930) from New York is critical interpretation of Gandhi's activities. It declares that he can see nothing that "Mr. Gandhi possesses, except the personal quality of inspiring men to action" (p. 105). Newsweek (1933) from New York, giving an account of Gandhi's imprisonment, concludes that his influence is waning because "this time few strikes were called, few shops closed in protest" (p. 11). Current History (1922) from New York published an article "India turns away from Gandhi," written by M. Joachim. "Problem of Mr. Gandhi" in Nation (1922) from London criticized Gandhi and his political agitation. American Mercury (1943) from New York carried bitter criticism of Gandhi's attitude towards World War II. E. Roy, in Labour Monthly (1923) from London, criticized Romain Rolland's and Henri Barbusse's articles on Gandhi. Sir Alfred Watson, in Great Britain and the East (1942) from London, commented that Gandhism was ended. In another issue of the same magazine (1942), he bitterly criticized Gandhi after his arrest on August 8, 1942, in Bombay. In "What is the main obstacle in India?" in the same

magazine (1941), he criticized Gandhi and his attitude towards World War II. Blanche Watson's "What is Gandhi trying to do?" in Christian Century (1924) from Chicago is a critical study of Gandhi's activities in 1924 (Sharma, 1955).

#### Gandhi's Views on The Times (London)

Gandhi, who started reading newspapers only in England, had a strong liking for the way The Times (London) was edited. It was moderate in tone, accurate in presentation of news (Bhattacharyya, 1965).

When referred to the vicious attacks upon him (Gandhi) in certain of the London newspapers, Gandhi said that it hurt him that such things could be done, but added that nothing could injure truth (Holmes, 1953).

"But he was disappointed in British journals. The Times (London) could no more serve as his ideal" (Bhattacharyya, 1965, p. 76).

In a letter to Henry S.L. Polak from London on October 12, 1931, Gandhi said, "Like all Times reports, this is one-sided, inspired and mischievous. Far more mischievous things have appeared in that paper and it has ignored contradictions. . . . How to remedy mischief I do not know" (Publications Division-XLVIII, 1988, p. 138).

#### How The Times (London) Portrayed Gandhi During Earlier Years

On April 15, 1919, Gandhi was called "a misguided and excitable person, who is used by others as a stalking horse."

Sir Stanley Reed, The Times correspondent in Bombay, wrote to the Office on March 27, 1920: "Opinions naturally differ with regard to a man who is a fanatic and on many points quite hopelessly impracticable. He is however a very

close friend of mine and I am convinced he is a man of transparent sincerity, I know the viceroy shares this view." (The History of the London Times, 1952, p. 851).

On November 22, 1921, The Times called forth the following condemnation: "Mr. Gandhi is doing exactly what he has done several times before. Periodically he stirs up some section of the ignorant masses to tumult, finds he cannot control them, expresses regret, and after an interval of quiescence behaves in the same way again. Perhaps too much stress has been laid in the past upon the loftiness and the purity of his motives. In practice he is revealed as a mischievous crank with a talent for fomenting disorder. He now says he has come to the conclusion that 'mass civil disobedience' cannot be started at present. He will be judged by his future actions, and if he is really contrite he can best prove his sincerity by withdrawing from public life" (p. 11).

Articles of Valentine Chirol, Head of Foreign Department at The Times, with general title "India Old and New," opened on December 23, 1920, under the heading "Saint and Firebrand." The Mahatma was beyond argument, since his conscience told him he was right. To the Western mind he might appear a madman; in the East "a touch of madness is apt to be taken for an additional sign of inspiration from the gods."

#### Gandhi in The New York Times in the Earlier Years

In the early 'twenties, The New York Times did very little to help readers gain an understanding of Gandhi, his work, or his philosophy. Although he was by then middle-aged, and had formulated his major policies as a humanist, politician, and religious leader, most Americans did not at that time consider Gandhi a

unique example of East meeting West, although he was a man who had received much of his education in England, who understood the West, and who had proven himself in the mixing pot that was South Africa (Hannon, 1970).

According to Hannon (1970), the first mention of Gandhi in The New York Times during the 1920s comes in 1921. An editorial of that year announces, "Sir Valentine Chirol does not believe that boycott will really spread, or that Mr. Gandhi will attain formidable political power in India" (January 9, 1921). An editorial which appears the following year, however, actually sets the tone of the West's early misinterpretation of fact. In referring to Gandhi's stay in England, the reporter announces, "He had a large allowance, which he spent lavishly among people who promised him a social career. Most of the young Indians then being educated in England were Brahmans. They ignored him. When he saw them received at homes which he had not been able to enter he realized the hopelessness of his social ambitions and went back to India as a disillusioned man" (March 11, 1922).

Philip Whitwell did an article portraying Gandhi. "He discouraged violence, but with the next breath he denounced the constituted authority of the country in terms which were plainly an incitement. While disdaining the use of force, he prophesied 'seas of blood' and his name was used on placards calling on the people to dishonour white women—not without deplorable results" (March 19, 1922).

According to Hannon (1970), the first front-page story on Gandhi was occasioned by his release from prison in February of 1924. The article is the first piece of news that seems, in part, to record accurately the situation as well as comprehend his philosophy. "His great power . . . consisted of a policy and a

creed. The policy was 'non-cooperation'; the creed was 'the power of the soul.' By the first he hoped to make the British administration inoperative by simply considering it non-existent; by the second he hoped to make the Hindus worthy of self-government and the British to realize that worthiness" (February 5, 1924). In his article, Simeon Strunsky stated, "Gandhi and his spinning wheel are more than an anachronism. They are a serious obstacle to the uplifting of the Indian people" (August 23, 1925).

Although chronologically the trend appears to have been towards understanding of Gandhi, in many cases remarkable mis-statements of fact, coupled with a partial commentary and apparently undiscerning attitude towards the Eastern viewpoint, indicate that The New York Times did very little in the initial period (around 1920-1930), to help readers gain an understanding of Gandhi (Hannon, 1970).

### Research Questions

1. Which of the two newspapers was more favorable/unfavorable to Gandhi?
2. Which newspaper had more items and devoted more space to Gandhi?
3. What issues/topics about Gandhi were most covered?
4. What were the sources of news reports?
5. How much space was covered by different categories of written and pictorial items?
6. What was the tone of headlines?
7. What was the tone of pictorial items?

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Content Analysis

Because of its objectivity and systematic description of the content of communication, the methodology used was content analysis. As Budd (1967) points out, content analysis allows the researcher to observe the communicator's behavior without influences from the biases of the gatekeeper. Moreover, the content analyst does not participate in the communication process.

In general, content analysis applies empirical and statistical methods to textual material. Content analysis particularly consists of a division of the text into units of meaning and their quantification according to certain rules. Definition of content analysis have changed over time with development in techniques and with its application to new problems.

Berelson (1952) defines content analysis as a method of objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of a text. Holsti (1969) has modified this definition by saying that content analysis is an objective, systematic, and general description of the manifest content of a text.

Holsti (1969) points out that objectivity in this context means that every stage in the research process must be based on explicitly formulated rules and procedures. The content of the text is to be emphasized, and the values and beliefs of the researcher must not influence the result of the analysis. Some kind

of reliability test must be undertaken, so that another researcher can obtain the same results from the same rules and data. The content analysis is systematic implies inclusion and exclusion of categories according to consistently applied rules. The possibility that the researcher will use only material supporting his hypothesis is thereby eliminated. There must be a principle of generality. The content analysis must have theoretical relevance; that is, one must be able to generalize from text data to other data of the components in a communication model.

#### Selection of Newspapers

For this study, one U.S. newspaper, The New York Times, and one British newspaper, The Times (London) were selected for content analysis because they are the newspapers of record in United States and Britain (Merrill & Fisher, 1980). The New York Times is also regarded as a "benchmark of U.S. news coverage by foreign governments" and it carries "a greater volume of foreign news than any other U.S. newspaper" (Albritton & Manheim, 1985).

As one of the Britain's oldest newspapers, The Times (London) has "managed to gain and hold a highly respected image of reliability, civility and dignity" (Merrill & Fisher, 1980). Merrill says that The Times (London) "has ever stood in the highest journalistic circles of the world quality newspapers journalism" (Merrill & Fisher, 1980).

Merrill (1968) says that "The New York Times leads all papers of the world in its widespread collection and publication of news and views . . . (and its) international reporting has always been considered one of its strongest areas." The Times (London) has a good record of standard as a balanced, civil and reliable



paper (Merrill, 1983).

According to Time magazine, "It (The New York Times) is the platinum bar by which editors across the country measure their own papers" ("The Kingdom," 1977, p. 73). The Times (London) has been traditionally considered an establishment paper, representing the paper to read to find out about the affairs of Britain (Merrill and Fisher, 1980). The Times (London) was considered the voice of Britain (Merrill, 1983).

In several respects, The New York Times ranks as the best or near-best newspaper in the United States. Its prestigious leadership audience around the world has long helped to make it not only a great American daily, but also a key member of the world's elite press (Merrill & Fisher, 1980). The Times (London) has been a "newspaper of record," the paper to read for everyone, but especially for the influential opinion-maker of government, nobility, ruling class and business and financial circles (Merrill & Fisher, 1980).

The researcher included The Times (London) to see how much the British were concerned about Gandhi and his activities and how they reacted to him, as they had vested interests in India during the period of this study, India being one of their colonies. On the other hand, India seemed to be far removed from the American concerns during this period. Colonial India and its leader (Gandhi) held little threat or promise for the United States then. So the researcher chose The New York Times for comparison.

### The Period

The 24-year period (1924-1947) was chosen as the best period to study Gandhi. Gandhi was expected to receive much coverage during this period. These

were the most eventful years in Gandhi's life and saw him rise as an international celebrity. This period included his famous Salt March, participation in two Round Table Conferences in London, his fast to protest unfair treatment of untouchables, Quit India movement, and Indian independence.

The investigator photocopied all the material under the heading "Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand" (in The New York Times Index) and "Gandhi, Mr," (in The Official Index to The Times) for the following periods: month of January for 1924 and 1925, February for 1926 and 1927, March for 1928 and 1929, April for 1930 and 1931, May for 1932 and 1933, June for 1934 and 1935, July for 1936 and 1937, August for 1938 and 1939, September for 1940 and 1941, October for 1942 and 1943, November for 1944 and 1945, December for 1946 and 1947. Because The Sunday Times (London) is a separate publication from The Times (London) and was very different, and because it was not available in microfilm form, all Sunday issues were eliminated from the study. In addition, all Sunday issues of The New York Times were also excluded from the study.

### Coding

The category of written item (news report, editorial, letter to the editor, leading article), category of the pictorial item (news picture, map, mug shot, cartoon), direction of written item (favorable, unfavorable, neutral), tone of pictorial item (favorable, unfavorable, neutral), tone of headlines (favorable, unfavorable, neutral, without headline), space covered by written item (including headlines) (in column centimeters), space covered by pictorial item (including captions and description at the bottom) (in column centimeters), issue/topic covered, and news source, were coded. (See Appendix B.)

The unit of analysis was the entire item (written or pictorial). Measurements were done with a standard ruler by the number of column centimeters, taking The New York Times column as standard. All items were measured to the nearest centimeter. All the column centimeter measurements for both The New York Times and The Times (London) items were given in microfilm column centimeters. As The New York Times had eight columns and The Times (London) had seven columns during this period, so all the column centimeter lengths of The Times (London) were multiplied by 1.14 to equalize the lengths of coverage in both the papers.

#### Direction

Directions of bias in the published item, or what attitudes towards Gandhi were expressed in coverage of events relating to Gandhi, were determined via classifications proposed by Budd (Budd, Thorp, & Donohew, 1967).

Favorable items depicted Gandhi as progressive, successful, peace-loving, moral, intelligent, lawful, strong, right, unified, or as exercising leadership. Unfavorable items depicted Gandhi as backward, domineering, immoral, impractical, unlawful, weak, wrong, disunified or lacking leadership. Neutral items were those which reflected neither favorable or unfavorable conditions either through balance of content or a lack of controversial material. The tone of the pictorial items was judged by the expression of the face, action or state of being.

#### Intercoder Reliability

To test the reliability of the coding, a pretest was conducted with the researcher and one coder. To determine percentage of agreement, both coded the

same 40 items for direction/tone. This sample contained both written and pictorial items, equal number from each newspaper, and represented about 15 percent of the total number of items analyzed. Holsti's (1969) formula was used to determine reliability:

$$R = \frac{2(C_{1,2})}{C_1 + C_2}$$

$C_{1,2}$  is the number of category assignments both coders agree on, and  $C_1 + C_2$  is the total of category assignments made by both coders. The intercoder reliability for direction/tone was .92.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Space Covered and Number of Items

Over the period of this study, 269 written and pictorial items were published about Mahatma Gandhi in The New York Times and The Times (London) with a mean item size of 14 column centimeters.

Table 1 shows that The Times (London) carried more items about Gandhi, covered more space and its mean item size was bigger than The New York Times.

#### Direction by Number of Items

Overall, items favorable to Gandhi outnumbered items unfavorable to him during the study period.

Table 2 shows that while favorable items outnumbered unfavorable and neutral items in The New York Times, on the other hand, their number was the lowest as compared to unfavorable and neutral in The Times (London). The chi-square shows that these results would occur by chance, less than two percent of the time. Therefore, there is a significant difference in the tone of the coverage in the two newspapers.

Table 1

Amount of Coverage of Gandhi in The New York Times and The Times  
(London) (1924-1947)

Newspaper	Items (N = 269)	Space Covered (N = 3,799 cms.)	Mean (col. cms. per item)
<u>The New York Times</u>	43.49%	34.54%	11
<u>The Times</u> (London)	56.51	65.46	16

Table 2

Tone of Coverage of Gandhi by Number of Items (1924-1947)

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	<u>The New York Times</u> (N = 117)	<u>The Times (London)</u> (N = 152)
Favorable	41.88%	25.66%
Unfavorable	25.64	28.95
Neutral	32.48	45.39

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Chi-Square (2, N = 269) = 8.349,  $p < .02$

### Direction by Length of Items

Although the number of items unfavorable to Gandhi was smaller as compared to items neutral to him in The Times(London), yet these covered more space than neutral items. This indicates that items unfavorable to Gandhi tended to be longer as compared to items neutral to him.

Table 3 shows that while The New York Times gave comparatively more space to favorable items, The Times (London) provided comparatively more space to unfavorable items.

### Tone of Headlines

Headlines neutral towards Gandhi were even more than unfavorable and favorable headlines added together. About 10 percent of items did not have headlines at all.

Table 4 shows that the number of unfavorable headlines in The Times (London) was more than three times as compared to headlines favorable to Gandhi. But the overall picture indicates that both papers tried to take a more neutral stance in their headlines.

### Yearly Distribution of Items

Gandhi coverage changed from year to year with ups and downs during the study period, depending upon his activities.

Table 5 shows that 1930 and 1933 provided highest number of stories in The New York Times about Gandhi with 1930 covering almost double the space as compared to 1933 although both had same number of items.

Table 6 shows that 1930 saw about four and a half times more space



Table 3

Tone of Coverage of Gandhi by Length (in column centimeters) of Items (1924-1947)

	<u>The New York Times</u> (N = 1,312)	<u>The Times (London)</u> (N = 2,487)
Favorable	40.09%	25.09%
Unfavorable	30.56	41.70
Neutral	29.34	33.21

Chi-Square (2, N = 3,799) = 96.047,  $p < .0001$

Table 4

Tone of Headlines of Gandhi Items (1924-1947)

	<u>The New York Times</u> (N = 105)	<u>The Times (London)</u> (N = 126)
Favorable	29.52%	8.73%
Unfavorable	28.57	24.60
Neutral	41.91	66.67

Chi-Square (2, N = 231) = 20.176,  $p < .001$

Table 5

Distribution of Items (both written and pictorial) by Direction, Number, Space Covered, and Year in The New York Times

Year	Favorable Unfavorable Neutral			Total			
	Percent	Percent	Percent	No. of Items	% of Items	Space in col. cm.	% of Space
1924		100.00		1	0.85	12	0.91
1925							
1926		100.00		1	0.85	6	0.46
1927							
1928							
1929	33.33	33.33	33.33	6	5.13	34	2.59
1930	17.65	47.06	35.29	34	29.06	514	39.18
1931	46.15	15.38	38.46	13	11.11	190	14.48
1932	100.00			1	0.85	5	0.38
1933	55.88	11.76	32.35	34	29.06	265	20.20
1934		50.00	50.00	2	1.71	14	1.07
1935							
1936							
1937	100.00			4	3.42	59	4.50
1938							
1939	100.00			1	0.85	5	0.38
1940	50.00		50.00	6	5.13	66	5.03
1941			100.00	1	0.85	5	0.38
1942	33.33	33.33	33.33	6	5.13	85	6.48
1943							
1944							
1945							
1946	66.67	16.67	16.67	6	5.13	50	3.81
1947	100.00			1	0.85	2	0.15

Table 6

Distribution of Items (both written and pictorial) by Direction, Number, Space Covered, and Year in The Times (London)

Year	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	No. of Items	% of Items	Total	
	Percent	Percent	Percent			Space in col. cm.	% of Space
1924	20.00	20.00	60.00	5	3.29	109	4.38
1925		100.00		1	0.66	14	0.56
1926							
1927							
1928			100.00	1	0.66	8	0.32
1929	16.67	33.33	50.00	6	3.95	47	1.89
1930	10.91	43.64	45.45	55	36.18	1268	50.99
1931	41.18	29.41	29.41	17	11.18	448	18.01
1932		100.00		1	0.66	22	0.88
1933	40.54	13.51	45.95	37	24.34	280	11.26
1934		50.00	50.00	4	2.63	26	1.05
1935							
1936							
1937	28.57		71.43	7	4.61	114	4.58
1938			100.00	1	0.66	7	0.28
1939			100.00	2	1.32	7	0.28
1940	50.00		50.00	8	5.26	106	4.26
1941							
1942		100.00		1	0.66	3	0.12
1943							
1944							
1945	50.00	50.00		2	1.32	7	0.28
1946	50.00	25.00	25.00	4	2.63	23	0.92
1947							

covered about Gandhi as compared to 1933 in The Times (London) and unfavorable items were four times in number as compared to favorable ones in 1930.

#### Sources of News Reports

While The New York Times used Reuters few times to cover Gandhi, The Times (London) never used AP (The Associated Press) or UP (The United Press).

Table 7 shows that The Times (London) mainly depended upon its own correspondents while covering a sensitive subject like Gandhi while The New York Times published nearly half of the items covered by the sources other than its own.

#### Topics/Issues Covered

Tables 8 and 9 show that while "Gandhi's fast" and "Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign" ranked one and two respectively in both the papers in the number of items covered, The Times (London) gave much more space to "Gandhi's Salt March/Salt law breaking campaign" as compared to "Gandhi's fast." This can be explained from the argument that while Gandhi's fast was against a local social issue, the Salt March and subsequent campaign was in direct confrontation against the British rule.

#### Treatment of Most Emphasized Issues

Table 10 shows that both papers gave more favorable than unfavorable treatment to Gandhi while covering the five most emphasized issues of this study

Table 7

Sources of News Coverage of Gandhi (1924-1947)

<u>The New York Times</u> (N = 111)		<u>The Times (London)</u> (N = 131)	
<u>News Agency</u>	<u>45.95%</u>		<u>9.92%</u>
AP (or The Associated Press)	37.84	Reuter	9.92
UP (or The United Press)	5.41		
Reuters	2.70		
<u>Own Sources</u>	<u>48.65</u>		<u>82.44</u>
Wireless to <u>The New York Times</u>	29.73	From Our Correspondent	16.03
Special Cable to <u>The New York Times</u>	16.22	From Our Own Correspondent	45.80
Herbert L. Mathews (Wireless to <u>The New York Times</u> )	1.80	From Our Special Correspondent	19.08
George E. Jones (Special to <u>The New York Times</u> )	0.90	From A Correspondent	0.76
		From A Correspondent lately in India	0.76
<u>Other Sources</u>	<u>1.80</u>		<u>2.29</u>
The <u>Chicago Tribune</u> Co.	0.90	Pioneer Mail	0.76
Canadian Press	0.90	Exchange -	1.53
<u>No Source Mentioned</u>	<u>3.60</u>		<u>5.34</u>

Chi-Square (1, N = 226) = 39.633, p < .001

(Note: Chi-Square is analyzed here comparing News Agency and Own Sources.)

Table 8

Distribution of Subject Matter by Number of Items

Topic/issue covered	<u>The New York Times</u>			<u>The Times (London)</u>		
	<u>R</u>	No.	%	<u>R</u>	No.	%
Gandhi's fast	1	31	26.50	1	35	23.03
Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign	2	13	11.11	2	29	19.08
Gandhi and Congress Party	2	13	11.11	4	18	11.84
Gandhi's Civil Disobedience or other campaigns/programs	3	11	9.40	4	18	11.84
Gandhi's followers	4	8	6.84	7	4	2.63
Gandhi's statement/message/appeal/address/view	4	8	6.84	3	21	13.82
Gandhi's foreign trips	5	7	5.98	10	1	0.66
Gandhi's arrest/release/court appearance/bail/trial	6	5	4.27	6	6	3.95
Gandhi and minorities	7	4	3.42	8	3	1.97
Gandhi-British relations/truces/meetings/parleys	7	4	3.42	8	3	1.97
Government/British reaction to Gandhi	7	4	3.42			
Gandhi and foreigners	7	4	3.42	10	1	0.66
Attack on Gandhi/plot against him	8	2	1.71	9	2	1.32
Criticism of Gandhi and/or his actions	8	2	1.71	5	8	5.26
Spinning	9	1	0.85	10	1	0.66
Gandhi's illness/recovery				9	2	1.32

R = Rank

Table 9

Distribution of Subject Matter by Space\* Covered

Topic/issue covered	<u>The New York Times</u>			<u>The Times (London)</u>		
	<u>R</u>	No.	%	<u>R</u>	No.	%
Gandhi's fast	1	254	19.36	4	262	10.53
Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign	1	319	24.31	1	714	28.71
Gandhi and Congress Party	3	155	11.81	3	299	12.02
Gandhi's Civil Disobedience or other campaigns/programs	4	141	10.75	2	447	17.97
Gandhi's followers	5	107	8.16	8	85	3.42
Gandhi's statement/message/appeal/address/view	8	48	3.66	5	227	9.13
Gandhi's foreign trips	6	91	6.94	14	6	0.24
Gandhi's arrest/release/court appearance/bail/trial	9	36	2.74	10	43	1.73
Gandhi and minorities	7	54	4.12	7	121	4.87
Gandhi-British relations/truces/meetings/parleys	10	31	2.36	9	74	2.98
Government/British reaction to Gandhi	11	23	1.75			
Gandhi and foreigners	12	22	1.68	12	19	0.76
Attack on Gandhi/plot against him	13	14	1.07	13	16	0.64
Criticism of Gandhi and/or his actions	14	12	0.91	6	145	5.83
Spinning	15	5	0.38	11	26	1.05
Gandhi's illness/recovery				15	3	0.12

\*Space is in column centimeters.

R = Rank



Table 10

Comparison of Treatment of five Most Emphasized Issues in The New York Times and The Times (London) Coverage

Issue	<u>The New York Times</u>			<u>The Times (London)</u>			
	<u>F</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>N</u>	
Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign	3	6	4	4	8	17	
Gandhi's fast	17	3	11	15	4	16	
Gandhi's Civil Disobedience or other campaigns/programs	2	7	2	3	10	5	
Gandhi and Congress party	12		1	8	3	7	
Gandhi's statement/message/appeal/address/view	3		5	7	2	12	
Total	Number	37	16	23	37	27	57
	Percent	48.68	21.05	30.26	30.58	22.31	47.11

F = Favorable

U = Unfavorable

N = Neutral

Chi-Square (2, N = 197) = 7.260,  $p < .05$

(Note: Chi-Square analysis here examines the total amount of favorable, unfavorable and neutral coverage of all the five major issues.)

period. While "Gandhi's fast" received comparatively favorable treatment in both the papers, "Gandhi's Civil Disobedience or other campaigns/programs" received comparatively most unfavorable coverage.

#### Classification of Items

Table 11 shows that most of the coverage involved straight news reporting with very few editorials and leading articles. There were some news pictures and maps but no mug shots or cartoons of Gandhi appeared during the study period.

Table 11

Amount and Classification of Items

Category	No. of Items	% of items	Space (col cm)	% of Space	<u>L</u> (col cm)	<u>F</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>N</u>
News report	243	90.33	3,348	88.13	14	78	71	94
Editorial	4	1.49	42	1.11	11	3		1
Leading article	3	1.12	80	2.11	27	1	1	1
Letter to the editor	6	2.23	60	1.58	10	4	1	1
News picture	6	2.23	231	6.08	39	2	1	3
Map	7	2.60	38	1.00	5			7
<b>Total</b>	<b>269</b>		<b>3,799</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>107</b>

L = Average LengthF = FavorableU = UnfavorableN = Neutral

### Research Questions

Answering the first question regarding the direction of both the newspapers concerning the coverage of Gandhi, the findings of this study indicate that The New York Times was more favorable to Gandhi than The Times (London) during the study period.

Regarding the number of items and space covered about Gandhi as asked in the second research question, The Times (London) had more items, devoted much more space, and its mean item size was bigger as compared to The New York Times, as shown in Table 1.

Issues/topics (asked in question three) covered about Gandhi fell into 16 broad categories, shown in Table 8. Five most emphasized topics were "Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign," "Gandhi's fasts," "Gandhi's Civil Disobedience or other campaigns/programs," "Gandhi and Congress party," and "Gandhi's statement/message/appeal/address/view." Out of these five topics, in "Gandhi's Civil Disobedience or other campaigns/programs," he received the most unfavorable treatment while quite favorable treatment was accorded in "Gandhi's fasts" and "Gandhi and Congress party."

As an answer to the fourth question about the sources of news reports, this study indicates that while The New York Times used the own sources about half of the time, about 82 percent of The Times (London) items were covered by their own correspondents. The New York Times used Reuters a few times but The Times (London) never used AP or UP. While The New York Times mentioned the name of the reporter a few times, The Times (London) never mentioned the name of the reporter with their news reports.

About space covered by different categories (asked in question five), Table

10 shows that over 88 percent of space was taken by news reports. News pictures ranked second in the space coverage with just over six percent of the share. There were few editorials, leading articles, letters to the editor, and maps, taking the rest of the about six percent space left. There were no cartoons and mug shots of Gandhi during this study period.

Question six was about the tone of headlines. Over 60 percent of the headlines in The Times (London) were neutral, over nine percent written items were without headlines, and in the rest of headlines, number of unfavorable to Gandhi was about three times higher than the number of headlines favorable to him. In The New York Times, number of favorable and unfavorable to Gandhi headlines almost evenly matched.

Question seven concerned tone of pictorial items. Out of total six news pictures published during the study period, three were found neutral, two favorable, and one unfavorable to Gandhi. All the seven maps were found neutral. There was no mug shot or cartoon of Gandhi during this study period in any of these two papers.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### Discussion of Results

In light of much higher British interest in India during the study period, it was not a surprise that The Times (London) devoted nearly double the amount of space to Gandhi in its coverage as compared to The New York Times and its mean item size was also larger than The New York Times.

Overall, items neutral to Gandhi outnumbered favorable and unfavorable items, with favorable items at the second position in numbers. While in The New York Times, favorable items significantly outnumbered the unfavorable items; on the other hand, The Times (London) had more items unfavorable to Gandhi as compared to favorable items during the study period.

But in terms of overall space covered by items about Gandhi in both the papers, amount of space for the unfavorable items was the highest, followed by neutral items and relegating the favorable items to the last place. The New York Times gave more space to favorable items, followed by unfavorable and neutral items in that order. But The Times (London) gave more space to unfavorable items with neutral and favorable items at the second and third positions respectively.

The Times' (London) more unfavorable direction may be explained from the fact that British Empire and Gandhi were in direct confrontation with each

other during the study period. As Winston Churchill said, "It is alarming and also nauseating to see Mr. Gandhi, a seditious Middle Temple lawyer, now posing as a fakir of a type well-known in the East, striding half-naked up the steps of the Viceroy's palace while he is still organizing and conducting a defiant campaign of civil disobedience to parley with the representative of the King-Emperor. . . ." (James, 1974, p. 4,985).

Overall, half of the headlines were neutral to Gandhi in tone, but unfavorable headlines outnumbered the headlines favorable to him. Some items were so small, they did not have any headlines at all. In The New York Times, favorable and unfavorable headlines were nearly equal in numbers, but in The Times (London), unfavorable headlines were nearly three times in number as compared to the favorable ones. Here are some examples of unfavorable headlines: "The Gandhi Problem," "Mr. Gandhi's March at Dandi today: Extremist leaders' hopes," "Mr. Gandhi's Campaign: A gambler's throw," "India and the War: Congress in two minds: Gandhian paradox."

The largest concentration of items in both these papers during the study period was in 1930. This was because of Gandhi's Salt March to the sea (or Dandi March) and subsequent Salt Law breaking campaign, which received wide coverage in practically all the important newspapers. "The meek-looking little ascetic was once again on the move to take up cudgels against the mighty Empire. So much importance was given to the news that the majority of the papers displayed it in bold headlines covering two or three columns. A number of papers published regular reports of the progress of the march. No news about India had ever hit such a high water mark" (Singh, 1949, p. 352). Another big concentration of items about Gandhi during the study period was in 1933. This was because of

his fast to eradicate untouchability, which lasted three weeks. Other year during this study period with heavier coverage was 1931.

Unfavorable coverage significantly outnumbered coverage favorable to Gandhi in the study period during 1930. (The New York Times carried nearly three times unfavorable items as compared to favorable items while The Times (London) had four times unfavorable items as compared to the favorable ones). This may be explained by the fact that his Salt March (Dandi March) and subsequent Salt Law breaking campaign was clear flouting of the salt tax act formulated by the then British Government. On the other hand, Gandhi items received highly favorable treatment during the study period in 1933 [The New York Times gave Gandhi nearly five times favorable items as compared to unfavorable ones and The Times (London) carried three times favorable items as compared to unfavorable ones during the study period]. This can be explained from the fact that Gandhi's fast, which was the main topic of coverage during this study period, was directed against his own countrymen, and not against the British Government.

While The New York Times' written items about Gandhi during the study period were nearly equally divided between own sources and other sources, the majority of the written items in The Times (London) were covered by its own correspondents. In The Times (London), most of the more important items with heavier and analytical coverage were found to be covered by "From Our Special Correspondent," medium sized items by "From Our Own Correspondent" and the smaller items by "From Our Correspondent" or "From A Correspondent" or "Reuters." In The New York Times, analytical and bigger size items usually gave the source as "Special Cable to The New York Times" or these carried the name



of the reporter. Smaller items either gave the source as "Wireless to The New York Times" or AP/UP/Reuters. News agency "Reuters" spelled as "Reuter" in The Times (London) while in The New York Times, it spelled as "Reuters." Among other sources, AP was the most frequent source of news in The New York Times.

The argument behind The Times (London) mostly using its own correspondents or Reuter to cover Gandhi may be because Gandhi being a sensitive issue for British Empire, The Times (London) did not want to take a chance with an "outsider" source.

Gandhi's 21-days fast in 1933 to eradicate untouchability received wide coverage in both the papers. Almost everyday, some days even more than once, in both the papers, there was some mention of Gandhi's fast which included bulletins of his condition, Government reaction, appeals to Gandhi not to fast, criticism of the fast, motives behind the fast. The coverage, besides news reports, also included leading article in The Times (London), editorial in The New York Times, and letters to the editor. The New York Times even gave it first page treatment once. In its May 17, 1933 issue, Christian Century (p. 649), while writing about Gandhi's fast, stated, "Reason would like to declare it all an obsession. It can see no relevance, no relation of cause and effect between the fasting and possible death of Gandhi and the ends which he hopes to attain thereby. But the obsession is so magnificent that reason dare not pronounce a judgment. It stands baffled, like Pilate before Christ. . . ." "To the average westerner, Gandhi's three-week fast was bewildering. It was hard for him to understand why the Mahatma should resort to a course which might result in his death. There could be detected in the opinions of some a note of impatience with the methods used

by the holy man, for the novelty of the method seemed to be wearing off and they had begun to suspect that it was merely a means which the Mahatma was using to compel obedience after his appeal to reason had failed to convince his followers. The man in the street, not appreciating the significance of the fast, was rather inclined to sympathize with the plight of the British Government" (Singh, 1949, p. 440). The New York Times (May 31, 1933) observed: "Gandhi's latest fast, now happily concluded, is a bit hard to understand if we think of it as addressed to the outside world. A three week hunger strike would not be an effective weapon against the British Government, since to put it roughly, the British Government would probably expect Gandhi to come alive out of the ordeal. For the same reason the propaganda value on outside opinion other than British would be small. We might almost say that the outside world has lost a good deal of interest in that particular spiritual weapon."

On April 6, 1930, Gandhi picked up a pinch of salt in remote Dandi village near seashore and with that simple gesture he broke the law. Nationwide, the salt law was breached then. The topic/issue of "Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign" received wide coverage during the study period. The New York Times even gave it front page treatment. Various facets covered of this topic/issue included Gandhi making salt at Dandi village, police action on salt law breakers, arrests, sentencing, "Gandhi to Try to Force Arrest," demonstrations, etc.

The number of items concerning "Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign" was more than double in The Times (London) as compared to The New York Times. Similarly, "Gandhi's statement/message/appeal/address/view" got almost five times more space in The Times (London) as compared to The New York Times. Space covered by items on the issue of "Criticism of Gandhi

and/or his actions" was over 12 times in The Times (London) as compared to The New York Times. This shows that criticism of Gandhi and/or his actions got prominent display in The Times (London) as compared to The New York Times but at the same time, The Times (London) gave significantly higher visibility to Gandhi's viewpoint on different issues.

Another most emphasized topic/issue in both the papers was "Gandhi's Civil Disobedience or other campaigns" but it got high unfavorable treatment. Unfavorable to Gandhi coverage on this issue/topic was over three times higher as compared to the favorable coverage in both the papers.

Activities of Gandhi and his followers in the Congress party also received significant coverage during the study period now and then but treatment of these was highly favorable in both these papers. Same was true of coverage of Gandhi's statement/message/appeal/address/view.

News reports, which constituted over 90 percent of the total number of items about Gandhi in both the papers during the study period, were nearly evenly divided between favorable and unfavorable categories but more editorials, leading articles, letters to the editor, news pictures and maps were either favorable or neutral to him.

All the maps during the study period were in The Times (London) and concerned Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign or Gandhi's campaign. All the news pictures, which were also in The Times (London), also covered Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign.

Leading articles, all of which were found in The Times (London) during the study period, focussed on Gandhi's campaign, Gandhi's fast or criticism of Gandhi's movement. Editorials, all of which were in The New York Times during

the study period, covered the issues of Gandhi's fast, Gandhi's England visit, or Gandhi's role in Congress party. Letters to the editor on Gandhi during the study period which appeared in both papers, talked about Gandhi's prohibition program, Tolstoy's influences upon Gandhi, Gandhi's fast, Gandhi's interaction with Congress party.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study would have benefitted from a content analysis of radio coverage of Gandhi during that period but limited access to old radio broadcasts made it difficult. Thus, for practical purposes, the study was limited to a content analysis of newspaper coverage of Gandhi.

The eliteness of the newspapers studied presented limitations in applying this study to the whole of the American and British press.

#### Directions for Future Research

It would be interesting to study how newspapers of other countries perceived Gandhi, keeping in view differing foreign policy perspectives of the newspapers' country of origin.

For comparison purposes, it would be worthwhile to do a similar study on how Indian newspapers treated Gandhi. Similarly, coverage of other world personalities can be studied in different foreign and domestic newspapers.

Another area of research can be how India policy of US Government influenced the coverage of Gandhi in the American media or how the British Government influenced the coverage of Gandhi in British media.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Gandhi was not an easy man to place. To most Britishers and the British press, he looked quite different from what Americans and the American press thought about him.

Contrary to the popular criticism of the Western news media as a homogenous group when it comes to the coverage of Third World, this study indicated that despite some similarities, there were significant differences in the coverage of The New York Times and The Times (London) about Gandhi.

The Times (London) gave almost double the amount of space to Gandhi as compared to The New York Times during the study period. Items favorable to Gandhi significantly outnumbered unfavorable items in The New York Times while The Times (London) had more items unfavorable to Gandhi as compared to favorable items. In The New York Times, favorable and unfavorable headlines were nearly equal in numbers, but in The Times (London), unfavorable headlines were almost three times in number as compared to the favorable ones.

While The New York Times' items about Gandhi during the study period were nearly equally divided between own sources and other sources, the majority of the items in The Times (London) were covered by its own correspondents. The New York Times used Reuters few times but The Times (London) never used AP or UP. Items about the issue of "Criticism of Gandhi and/or his actions" were

about 12 times higher in The Times (London) as compared to The New York Times, but at the same time, The Times (London) gave significantly higher visibility to the Gandhi's viewpoint on various issues. While The Times (London) carried maps and news pictures to illustrate the news, The New York Times never carried these during the study period.

"Gandhi's Salt March/Salt Law breaking campaign" and "Gandhi's fast" were the two most emphasized issues/topics in both the papers. News reports constituted over 90 percent of the total number of items in both the papers. In terms of overall space covered by items about Gandhi in both the papers, amount of space for the unfavorable items was the highest, followed by space for neutral items and relegating the space for favorable items to the third place. But in overall numbers, items neutral to Gandhi outnumbered favorable and unfavorable items, with favorable items at the second position. Overall, half of the headlines were neutral to Gandhi in tone, but unfavorable headlines outnumbered the headlines favorable to him.

The largest concentration of items in both the papers during the study period was in 1930 because of Gandhi's Salt March followed by Salt Law breaking campaign.

Almost all the items in the study covered day to day actions of/around Gandhi and were event oriented. During the study period, both The New York Times and The Times (London) seemed mainly concerned in Gandhi's political actions and neither of these made any effort to help readers gain an understanding of his philosophy of life.

Overall, The New York Times was more favorable to Gandhi than The Times (London) during the study period.

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## APPENDIXES

Appendix A

## Mahatma Gandhi: Principal Dates

- 1869 Born at Porbandar.
  - 1883 Married at the age of 13.
  - 1887 Left for law studies in London.
  - 1893 Arrival in South Africa.
  - 1899 Boer War.
  - 1908 Resistance in Transvaal. First gaol experiences.
  - 1913 The Natal-Transvaal March.
  - 1914 Indian Relief Act. Outbreak of the First World War.
  - 1915 Return to India.
  - 1917 Bihar indigo-dispute.
  - 1919 Rowlatt Acts. Amritsar shooting.
  - 1921 Mass civil disobedience.
  - 1922 Arrest and trial.
  - 1924 Appendectomy and release from prison. Delhi fast for Hindu-Muslim unity.
  - 1926 Year of political silence.
  - 1928 Simon Commission boycott.
  - 1930 Dandi Salt March. Mass civil disobedience.
  - 1931 Gandhi-Irwin talks and Pact. Second Round Table Conference.
  - 1932 Yeravada Fast for Untouchables.
  - 1934 Rural constructive program. Withdrew from Congress.
  - 1936 Settled at Sevagram.
  - 1939 Rajkot Fast and Award. The Second World War.
  - 1942 'Quit India' Resolution. Last imprisonment.
  - 1944 Death of Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi. Gandhi-Jinnah talks.
  - 1947 Transfer of power to India and Pakistan. Gandhi's 'Miracle of Calcutta.'
  - 1948 Last fast in Delhi. Assassinated on 30 January.
- (Watson, 1967, p. 62).

**Appendix B****Coding Sheet****NEWSPAPER: NYT / LT****DATE:****CODER:****WRITTEN ITEM: news report / editorial / letter to the editor / leading article****PICTORIAL ITEM: news picture / map / mug shot / cartoon****DIRECTION OF WRITTEN ITEM: favorable / unfavorable / neutral****TONE OF PICTORIAL ITEM: favorable / unfavorable / neutral****TONE OF HEADLINES: favorable / unfavorable / neutral / without headline****SPACE (in column centimeters) COVERED BY WRITTEN ITEM (including headlines):****SPACE (in column centimeters) COVERED BY PICTORIAL ITEM:****ISSUE/TOPIC COVERED:****NEWS SOURCE:**