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Wartime Photography Controls and the Manipulation of Public Opinion

by

Tricia M. Long

A Thesis

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in

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Wartime Photography Controls and the Manipulation of Public Opinion

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Date Approved

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ABSTRACT

War photography has the power to dictate a story line, create a lasting, memorable impression, and in some cases, serve as significant influencers of how the public understands war. They can cement a defining moment that offers a new reference point for the American public. While it is nearly impossible to judge the effect of a photograph in and of itself, as part of the larger picture of war, a photograph can influence, spark discussion and either perpetuate patriotism or erode support. However, it is the subjective nature of photographs that creates an ongoing tension between the producers of images and a government that fears its inability to control the interpretation of images. Photographs alone are not enough to sway public opinion either for or against a war, but the presence and proliferation of images of death and destruction can reinforce pre-existing public attitudes about the war being contested. Because of this, the American government has recently imposed restrictions on images of American casualties in order to stifle dialog that counters its desire to mobilize mass support for a war. In recent wars and conflicts, these restrictions have come primarily in two forms, either as strict censorship, or as context control. However, the government doesn't necessarily impose restrictions on the news media in wartime because the media are influencing public opinion, but instead because the media are reinforcing and spreading pre-existing opinions that conflict with the government's motives. In most cases, the controls are highly effective in preventing a picture of the true cost of war, and keeping public outrage over fatalities to a minimum.

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Introduction

Photographs are said to be worth a thousand words. Take for example Michael W. Browne's 1963 photograph of a Buddhist monk's self-immolation, Eddie Adams' 1968 photograph of a Vietnamese general in Saigon executing a Viet Cong suspect on the second day of the Tet Offensive, or the 1943 photograph of three soldiers lying dead on the shore of Buna Beach in New Guinea. These images captured in the midst of war created attention for conflicts that few witnessed, and many struggled to understand. The staying power of these images and their elevation to iconic status illustrates the strength of a photograph to dictate a story line and create a lasting, memorable impression. Images captured by photographers like Browne and Adams are often remembered because they stirred a feeling and attitude within viewers that words were unable to communicate. These images cemented a defining moment that offered a new reference point for the American public. They captured not only the eyes, but also the minds, of the public because "photographs excel, more than any other form of either art or journalism, in offering an immediate, viscerally emotional connection to the world" (Linfield 22). However, war after war, the question of whether a photograph–in this particular case those of American casualties–can sway public opinion, for or against a war, remains.

The Communicative Power of Photography

It is nearly impossible to judge the effect of a photograph in and of itself, but as part of the larger picture of war, a photograph can influence, spark discussion and either perpetuate patriotism or erode support. And while other influencers of public opinion are at work, "photography is an attractive shorthand way to learn about war… That visual knowledge gained from photography cannot but have an effect on American attitudes toward war" (Moeller 7).

Determining whether images can change the perceptions and opinions of the public is not an easy task. However, Susan Sontag argues that, "a photograph that brings news of some unsuspected zone of misery cannot make a dent in public opinion unless there is an appropriate context of feeling and attitude" (*On Photography* 17). Photographs alone are not enough to sway public opinion either for or against a war, but the presence and proliferation of images of death and destruction can mirror pre-existing public attitudes about the war being contested. "Photographs cannot create a moral position, but they can reinforce one–and can help build a nascent one" (*On Photography* 17). However, the converse is also true. Images of death can bolster a war if the war being waged is viewed as having a just cause. Photographs can communicate a message, but the meaning of that message relies heavily on the viewer's perceptions and the context surrounding them. "For photographs to communicate effectively, they must have a transitive function: they must act on viewers in ways that bear directly on the judgments that viewers formulate about the world" (Butler 823). This subjective nature of photographs creates an ongoing tension between the producers of images and a government that fears its inability to control the interpretation of images. Most notably, in

a time of war, the stakes are higher and the tensions greater. The mass media walk a narrow tightrope when it attempts to balance its need to stay competitive and financially viable with its duty to present unbiased, objective reporting. Yet, neither the mass media nor the government can always anticipate viewers' interpretations of images. "When selected for their dramatic content, images become powerful communicators. Their meaning, however, depends on their viewers' subjectivity, spanning an emotional range from empathic connection to revulsion. Though the mass media provide the words that define the range of legitimate meanings associated with imagery, in a contested culture the images themselves are capable of transcending the media's boundaries through their subjective connection with viewers" (Morgan 116).

This inability to control photographic interpretation has led to governmental efforts to suppress the release of images or control their subject matter. Unable to control the meaning of images, the government aims to stifle their dissemination through various means, from strategic forms of control to overt censorship. The government doesn't necessarily impose restrictions on the news media in wartime because the media are influencing public opinion, but because the media are reinforcing and spreading pre-existing opinions that conflict with the government's motives. The tightening and loosening of controls on the media, including photographers, has ebbed and flowed for decades as each administration struggles to find the tactic that responds, and often counters, that public opinion. In most cases, the controls are highly effective in keeping public outrage over fatalities to a minimum.

From the Spanish Civil War, marked as the "first war to be witnessed in the modern sense by a corps of professional photographers at the lines of military

engagement," (*On Photography* 21) to the more recent embedded reporters' program in both Iraq and Afghanistan, photography has been scrutinized by the government, at times as a means to carry out government propaganda and at others as a target for governmental control. Just as the policy concerning wartime photography constantly evolves, so too does the government's justification for its restrictive policies. In many cases, policy attempts to keep pace with the changing media landscape and advances in media technology, but its overarching mission continues to thwart the dark side of war and reduce the visibility of American casualties among the American public.

In order to understand how photographs of casualties influence the public, it's important to also understand how the casualties themselves influence individuals. However, there is no easy method for making this determination. One of the most-cited studies, written in 1973 by John Mueller, shows a link between casualties and public opinion. Mueller examined the Korean and Vietnam wars to determine that cumulative casualties are the best predictor of public opinion in wartime. Mueller maintains that the correlation between casualties and public opinion continues in recent wars. He believes that in Korea, Vietnam, and more recently Iraq, the "American public opinion became a key factor in all three wars, and in each one there has been a simple association: as casualties mount, support decreases. Broad enthusiasm at the outset invariably erodes" (Mueller, *Foreign Affairs*). Cori E. Dauber and Peter D. Feaver cite a similar correlation in a phenomenon they describe as the "body-bag syndrome," in which support for a war or military intervention declines as a result of seeing American casualties returning home from combat.

Mueller's work, while considered groundbreaking, is often contested–both in his approach and in his data's failure to account for the influence of major events on public opinion across the course of a war. Scott Sigmund Gartner and Gary M. Segura suggest instead that "the rally effect, the level of initial support, the manner in which the conflict is initiated, and the way in which it is fought deserve considerable scrutiny" in order to properly capture the true nature of the relationship between casualties and public opinion (Gartner, Segura 297). Lieutenant Colonel Richard A. Lacquement argues that "public casualty aversion is a myth" and that "there is no evidence that the American public has an intrinsic, uncritical aversion to U.S. military casualties" (Lacquement 54). However, in the cases of Lacquement, Dauber and Feaver, they all believe the onus is on the U.S. administration to positively advocate for a war in order to build–and sustain–public support. A failure to do so will draw more public ire to the casualties returning from war, as was evidenced in Vietnam. The American people "are not casualty phobic. But they are defeat phobic and meaningless-death phobic. Americans withdraw support for missions that are failing or without purpose, not missions that are costly" (Dauber, Feaver). This does not mean that Americans are bloodthirsty and insensitive to casualties, but that they are willing to accept them as a reality of war when the war has a just cause. Perhaps where Mueller's conclusions are most flawed is in his failure to give credence to the declining support for the war on moral grounds. During Vietnam, Americans may have felt prepared to accept military casualties as a necessary evil, but they were unprepared and unwilling to accept countless civilian casualties as a necessary cost of war. The images of civilian casualties had a profound effect on shaping how the war was begin waged and called into question the government's justifications for war.

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However, while there is perhaps no empirical evidence that "casualty aversion" and "body-bag syndrome" erode public support for a war, the American government sees this correlation as reality, and as such, imposes restrictions on the media to reduce the visibility of those casualties. When those military controls are absent, however, the highly graphic images that make it into the mainstream media help prompt a shift in the war that's being waged and "over time, a greater explicitness to the photography of combat prompted a greater sensitivity to American casualties, a greater reluctance to engage in certain kinds of exceptionally bloody warfare, and ultimately, a greater reliance on military technology. Visual portrayals of death and destruction began to outweigh the rhetorical arguments in favor of the wars" (Moeller 6). In certain cases, the photographs of casualties are too compelling to ignore in favor of the government's justifications for war.

If, as Sontag believes, a photograph is unable to remain free of influence and free of interpretation, photographs can work both for and against the government's cause. The government's agenda, however, is not the only message embedded in certain wartime photographs. Photographs coming out of a war, in particular, "are defined by the moral position of the individual photographer, the institutional structure of the media, the official censorship of the military, the propaganda needs of the government, and the technological advances of both the photographer's equipment and the armed forces' weaponry" (Moeller 4). Just as photographers are aware of the power of their images, governments and military institutions have become adept at using a photograph for its own political purposes. A photograph's context can be easily manipulated as the narrative surrounding the image changes, as Browne discovered after photographing a Buddhist

monk's self-immolation. In the film *Reporting America at War*, Browne explained how

the photo "meant many things to many different people and interests. The Chinese and

the North Vietnamese regarded it as a wonderful propaganda picture, and of course they

labeled it 'A Buddhist priest dies to oppose U.S. imperialism and its influence in

Vietnam.'" By contrast, the American media's interpretations were divided as

independent media "argued that the United States should sever its ties with Diem and

being discussions with Ho Chi Minh" while some of the mainstream media believed the

"Buddhist action was designed to force President Diem to 'knuckle under to demands for

increased religious freedom'" (Morgan 132). As was seen in Browne's case, harrowing

photos "are not much help if the task is to understand. Narratives can make us

understand. Photographs do something else: they haunt us" (*Regarding the Pain* 89). This

is why these images not only raised the public's consciousness surrounding the tensions

in Vietnam, but they also continue to be recognized and recalled today as they were

decades ago when they were first created. They haunt us because their pure existence

stands as evidence of the past, reminders of history.

  If photographs have such a strong ability to haunt us, there must be consequences

for when photographs do not exist. When the media fail to publish photographs that

depict the totality of war–either because of governmental control or its own self-

selectivity–it withholds the evidence needed by the public to make an informed decision

about the validity of a war. Browne's photograph was significant in that it contributed to

a growing dialogue that questioned government policy in Vietnam. Its absence would

have muted public awareness. But with stricter controls placed on photographers since

Vietnam, a greater consequence is at stake: An entire war can remain far from the public

eye. While Vietnam is often remembered "for open access given to journalists–too much, many critics said, as the war played out nightly in bloody newscasts–the Iraq war may mark an opposite extreme: after five years and more than 4,000 American combat deaths, searches and interviews turned up fewer than a half-dozen photographs of dead American soldiers" (Arango, Kamber). With photographic evidence of American casualties missing from the media landscape, the only outcome is that valuable evidence goes missing from the collective American consciousness. Upon examination of the wars in Iraq and in Afghanistan, a lack of photographs of casualties will have a profound impact on how we recall those wars. In an interview with the *New York Times*, author and professor Gail Buckland said that there was a more comprehensive photographic record during the Civil War than in the war in Iraq (Hoyt). Even when such images exist, the "graphic images of war involving the investment of Western lives often do not emerge until some time after the end of the cessation of conflict, if at all. In such later times these images are often more palpable to Western audiences, particularly when the event being depicted has receded further into history" (Hoskins 78).

Likewise, a photograph's influence can shape "what catastrophes and crises we pay attention to, what we care about, and ultimately what evaluations are attached to these conflicts" (*Regarding the Pain* 104). But more than just informing us of the conditions of a war, photographs serve "as evidence of crimes of war" and Sontag says that without photographic evidence, there is no atrocity (Butler 824).

Political Implications of Photographic Imagery in Wartime

Each war the United States has engaged in has demonstrated varying levels of governmental control and censorship. In World War I, the impact of photographic evidence of war was first fully realized by the U.S. government and strict censorship tactics were employed. Photographs of dead Americans were strictly forbidden, and wounded American soldiers could be photographed only if they were already receiving medical care and therefore assumed to be alive and reasonably well. Even American property destroyed in battle could not be depicted in photographs or publications. Despite a plethora of war photographs appearing in American media, images of human death and physical destruction were intentionally absent. The Committee on Public Information, the public relations arm of the U.S. War Department, which enacted the ban, defended the practice because "such pictures caused needless anxiety to those whose friends and relatives were at the front, and tended to foster the anti-war spirit that was always so persistently cultivated by the enemy" (Moeller 136). The influence of the "enemy" was a powerful excuse for why the government, in World War I and in subsequent wars, found it necessary to impose restrictions on the media.

During World War II, however, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the War Department chose to reverse the long-standing ban on photographing dead and wounded American soldiers. The new policy took a sharp turn from the previous ban and strict censorship. Many of the images were difficult to digest–both by the news organizations unaccustomed to printing them and the general public unaccustomed to seeing them on the front page of the morning paper. However, the images had a surprising effect. Rather than "foster an anti-war spirit," the startling images sparked a strong sense of patriotism

as people "did not see only the loss; they saw instead, as directed, the death of men fighting for 'freedom.' And, to them, the fact that men had died for it made freedom only that more precious, that more essential, that more urgent" (Moeller 207). The images sparked a "rally around the flag" effect that the government had been hoping to create.

As the public's reaction to images of World War II demonstrates, the context surrounding the creation of a photograph is one of the greatest influencers of how that photograph is interpreted. As a result, the political implications of each photograph change as the context changes. Even the context itself becomes political as groups begin to redefine and interpret the contextual meaning. This is evident when observing the media's actions during the Korean War as well. "One would like to imagine that the American public would not have been so unanimous in its acquiescence to the Korean War if it had been confronted with photographic evidence of the devastation of Korea, an ecocide and genocide in some respects even more thorough than those inflicted on Vietnam a decade later." The differentiator between Korea and Vietnam was the perception, or perhaps justification, of why that war was being waged, not how it was being waged. "The Korean War was understood differently–as part of the just struggle of the Free World against the Soviet Union and China–and, given that characterization, photographs of cruelty of unlimited firepower would have been irrelevant" (*On Photography* 18). This supports the idea that if the government can present a military struggle as a just cause, the American public will accept that casualties are a necessary cost of the war.

At times these images can garner startlingly different reactions from the public, which is evident in examining differences between World War II, to an extent Korea, and

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Vietnam. In September 1943, *Life* magazine chose to publish the now iconic photograph of three soldiers lying dead on the shore of Buna Beach in New Guinea. The Buna Beach image was one of many images of U.S. military casualties released in World War II, and its publication, like other photographs from the war, prompted mostly a positive response. Rather than generate criticism of the war, these photographs helped spark a wave of patriotism at home, suggesting the United States' involvement was necessary and its casualties were justified. Television very well may have had a similar effect during the Vietnam War had anti-war sentiment not already permeated the American psyche. The media showed both the events happening in war and the dissent happening at home. Had the climate at home, and the government's justifications for war, been different, "seeing fellow Americans fighting and dying might have kindled patriotic sentiments, and inspired in the television audience the determination to see the war through to a successful conclusion, in order to vie meaning to those sacrifices" (Mandelbaum 161).

These stark differences between public reactions to photographs, such as between those from World War II and those from Vietnam lie in the photographs themselves. The Vietnam War was photographed from a distinctly different vantage point. Moeller argues that images from Vietnam had a reference point that questioned the morality of the war and its participants in a way that the images published during World War II never did. In the United States, images of military and civilian casualties, collateral damage and the sheer brutality of the war returned from Vietnam with a powerful statement of how the war was being waged and at what cost. While television is historically scrutinized, "it is the photographic images that endure. What can be considered as 'flashframes' of

memory–the freezing in time and space of a never-to-be repeated moment and its capture in a single image–seem to carry greater cultural and historical weight than the moving image" (Hoskins 19). The photographs from Vietnam set up "a dichotomy within an image itself that was unacceptable to civilians at home: dead bodies festered while soldiers stood oblivious. Occasionally the reference point was to be found in the common values held by the viewing public; all found something horrific in the naked agony of a young man holding his buddy killed just moments before. But during World War II, no similar juxtapositions were established. The presumption of patriotism sweetened the bile even of any potentially antipathetic images of dead Americans. American soldiers remained heroes in death" (Moeller 227). Perhaps this was due in part to the fact that "compared to World War II, in particular, the enemy engaged in Korean and Vietnam conflicts was less obviously 'evil,' and it was far more difficult to find convincing ideological or humanitarian reasons to justify the wars to the public" (Mueller 34).

Just as photographs from Vietnam could have generated positive response as they did in World War II, so too could the photographs from World War II have dampened morale as they did in Vietnam. One of the primary differences was the medium in which the images were being delivered. Television had a profound effect on the frame through which war and war casualties from Vietnam were viewed. Prior to this war, "families back home worried about the welfare of their soldiers but could not see the danger. Had the mothers and fathers of U.S. soldiers serving in World War II seen a real-time CNN report of D-day in the style of *Saving Private Ryan*, they might not have thought Europe was worth saving" (Laird 33).

While previous wars demonstrated varying methods of control over the press, it is Vietnam where the tensions between media and military in wartime heightened. Photographers and reporters were free to roam around the country, conduct interviews, and photograph American and enemy soldiers, with little oversight from the military. The practice proved problematic for the American government. Hal Buell, who ran the Associated Press photo service for 23 years believes that "no war was ever photographed the way Vietnam was, and no war will ever be photographed again the way Vietnam was photographed. There was no censorship." All a photographer had to do says Buell "is convince a helicopter pilot to let him get on board a chopper going out to a battle scene. So photographers had incredible access, which you don't get anymore" (Adler). Because of this, Vietnam provides a distinct opportunity to look more closely at the influence of the media on public opinion. Perhaps nowhere was this more evident than in living rooms across America, where news of Vietnam streamed nightly on television screens for all the country to watch. A televised war was a first for the country, and the media coverage prompted many to surmise that this war was actually being waged far from Vietnam, but at home in the U.S. where images were being interpreted by the American public. "It was not the conceptual framework for interpreting the pictures of violence that appeared on American television screens that shaped public attitudes toward the war, according to the conventional wisdom, but the pictures themselves. An image is thought to be many times more powerful than words. These images, of shot and shell, blood and death, produced a particular set of reactions in those who saw them: dismay, disgust, and horror, all of which fed the desire to stop the war, or a least to stop American participation in it. When Americans could only read about war, they could contemplate it with dispassion. When

they could see it in their living rooms, they turned against it" (Mandelbaum 161). Robert

Elegant argues "for the first time in modern history, the outcome of the war was

determined not on the battlefield, but on the printed page, and above all, on the television

screen" (Elegant). However, while television is an easy scapegoat for the turning tide of

public opinion of the war, "the routines of objective journalism–routines which are

incompatible with an actively oppositional conception of the journalists' role–seem to

have persisted more or less unchanged throughout the Vietnam period" (Hallin 5).

Instead, Hallin believes it's highly plausible "that the increase in negative news coverage

had nothing to do with any change in the media, but simply reflected the evident failure

of U.S. policy and the growth of domestic opposition" (Hallin 9). This concept of a

"mirror theory" supports the idea that the media respond to public opinion, more so than

it shapes public opinion. It is when the myth of a war is exposed, "as it eventually was in

Vietnam, does the press begin to report in a sensory rather than a mythic manner. But

even then it is reacting to a public that has changed its perception of war. The press

usually does not lead" (Hedges 22). What images did achieve during this period was

convey "some of the war's sensory realties, confirming to some and revealing to others

the moral horror of the war and giving lie to the official propaganda about the war's

progress and the government's 'good intentions'" (Morgan 132). The public learned not

only of military casualties, but also learned of the "blunders and senseless slaughter by

our generals, the execution of prisoners and innocents, and the horror of wounds"

(Hedges 22). Photographs coming out of Vietnam began to depict "limbless children,

stoic survivors of a violent village sweep, peasants being herded off to strategic hamlets."

These images diverged from the accepted military combat photographs that were more

customarily seen in wartime, and "revealed a profound reality of the war not acknowledged within mainstream media – that the war was systematically victimizing the very people the government claimed 'we' were in Vietnam to help" (Morgan 134). By the time the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations released its poll findings on American public opinion and U.S. foreign policy in 1979, "72 percent of the public agreed with the statement that 'the Vietnam War was more than a mistake, it was fundamentally wrong and immoral" (Reilly 4). As a result, the government believed the erosion of public support for the Vietnam War rested on the shoulders of the media. It's what Susan D. Moeller describes as "reciprocal circularity." She argues that "the more critical the press is, the less support a war receives; the less support a war receives, the more critical the press can become" (Moeller 6). This reciprocal circularity manifested itself in the "Vietnam Syndrome" and every administration since the close of the war has feared its return. As a result, these assumptions have drastically shaped governmental control over media from the invasions of Grenada and Panama in the 1980s through the first Gulf War in the 1990s, to the more recent Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq as well as Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

Government Response to the "Vietnam Syndrome"

Fear of a recurring "Vietnam Syndrome" prompted the U.S. government to invoke stricter measures against the media. Media coverage of subsequent wars and conflicts was not only limited, but in many cases altogether absent. The initial consequences of this were evident in the first Gulf War in 1991 and in the invasion of Afghanistan where heavy restrictions on the media limited coverage – both positive and negative. It wasn't just positive news coming out of the war, there was virtually no news. During the 1991 Gulf War, more than 500,000 American troops were on the ground, and yet newspapers relied on a pool of only 16 journalists (King, Lester 1). These 16 journalists were carefully monitored, leaving virtually no uncensored coverage. Responding to the heavily critiqued information-management efforts, the Pentagon subsequently sought an alternative approach to working with media in wartime. As a result, "a proactive media strategy began to cultivate media allies and target key programs through close consultation and other services, including supplying videos, photos, and media training in war survival. Contracts were negotiated for embedment assignments" (Schechter 26).

One policy, enacted in 1991 and only recently overturned in 2009, curtailed the public's access to a visual representation of war casualties at home. During the Vietnam War the government feared that a constant repetition of flag-draped coffins returning to the United States would become a daily reminder of the war's human toll.

Taking cues from previous conflicts, President George H.W. Bush banned media coverage of the return of service members' remains from war at the start of ground assault during the Persian Gulf War in 1991. The casket's arrival is handled by the Air

Force Mortuary Affairs Operations. The procedure for returning the body of a fallen service member, known as a dignified transfer, is described by the organization as a "process by which, upon the return from the theater of operations to the United States, the remains of fallen military members are transferred from the aircraft to a waiting vehicle and then to the port mortuary. The dignified transfer is not a ceremony; rather, it is a solemn movement of the transfer case by a carry team of military personnel from the fallen member's respective service. A dignified transfer is conducted for every U.S. military member who dies in the theater of operation while in the service of their country."

An unclassified document issued by the Office of the Secretary of Defense Crisis Coordination Center in February 1991 outlined public affairs guidance for Operation Desert Storm casualty and mortuary affairs, stating that "media coverage of the arrival of the remains at the port of entry or at the interim stops will not be permitted" (Sec. of Defense 1991).

The first Bush Administration cited family issues and privacy as the impetus for such a ban, and said that the new policy "in no way detracts from the service member's valor and sacrifice" (Sec. of Defense 1991). But many people who opposed the ban believed it denied deceased military personnel honor and respect. Military families agreed. According to the 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey, 51 percent of the military families surveyed said that, "allowing photographs [of the dignified transfer] would increase respect for the sacrifices made by the military." Only 8 percent of the sample believed the photographs would reduce respect.

The ban was firmly upheld. In 2004, a photo of 20 flag-covered coffins being loaded onto a transport plane in Kuwait was taken by a civil contractor and sent to the *Seattle Times*. The newspaper ran the image on its front page, costing the contractor her job. The photograph was the first photograph of fallen American soldiers in Iraq published in the United States.

An alternative theory for creating the ban on photographing military coffins relies on an embarrassing scenario on December 22, 1989. At the time, George H.W. Bush conducted a White House press conference to play up success in Panama. The press conference took a light-hearted turn as Bush joked with reporters while network cameras rolled. The broadcast coincided with the arrival of four coffins returning from Panama. ABC, CNN, and CBS chose to air both events using a split screen, with one half of the screen showing Bush joking with reporters, while the other half of the screen showed the solemn images of coffins being unloaded from planes at Dover Air Force Base. The White House asked networks to inform them when a split screen was in use, which the networks refused. Critics, the media among them, believed that the ban on media at entry points was designed to minimize the risk of another ill-timed press conference. The ban was rebuked by members of the media, who said it was designed to control public opinion. The ban, many said, was a blatant attack on the freedom of the press, guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution.

At times throughout the duration of the ban, the government made exceptions to media coverage of the return of remains, although most often they were of civilian, not military, casualties. The majority of the exceptions to the ban presented opportunities for the government to use arrivals at points of entry as a way to evoke patriotism and gain

favor for military interventions, including: the remains of U.S. Commerce Secretary Rob Brown and 32 additional Americans killed in Croatia, the bodies of Americans killed in embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, caskets bearing the remains of military personnel killed in the bombing of USS Cole, the remains of a 9/11 Pentagon victim, as well as the remains of space shuttle Columbia astronauts. However, in 2003, the Department of Defense further revised–and expanded–the policy to state "there will be no arrival ceremonies for, or media coverage of, deceased military personnel returning or departing from Ramstein Air Base or Dover Air Force Base."

The ban on photographing military coffins was contested in 2008 when Congressman Walter B. Jones (R-NC) introduced legislation that would restore the ability of credentialed media to photograph the dignified transfer ceremonies at a fallen service member's arrival. Act HR 6662, also known as the Fallen Hero Commemoration Act, would "require the Department of Defense to grant access to accredited members of the media at military commemoration ceremonies and memorial services for members of the Armed Forces who have died on active duty and when the remains of members of the Armed Forces arrive at military installations in the United States." Congressman Jones believed the act would not only give fallen service members the respect they deserved, but also remind Americans at home of the sacrifices being made abroad. In announcing the Fallen Hero Commemoration Act he said, "without a loved one serving in the military, it is sometimes possible for Americans to overlook the sacrifices that have been made–and continue to be made–by members of the Armed Forces on behalf of our Nation." Prior to the ban, "in 1985, the media covered a ceremony at Andrews Air Force Base for members of the Armed Forces killed in El Salvador; President Reagan attended

the ceremony and pinned Purple Heart medals on the flag-draped caskets. During the Vietnam War images of arrival ceremonies and the flag-draped caskets of our service members appeared regularly on television and in newspapers" along with local coverage of military personnel funerals (Fodor).

The act received support from press photographers, particularly among the National Press Photographers Association (NPPA) a U.S.-based organization that promotes photojournalism and advocates for freedom of the press. In a letter to Jones, NPPA's general legal counsel, Mickey H. Osterreicher, wrote that "to deny media coverage of the return of our fallen heroes is a brazen attempt by the military to deny history… A free, robust and unfettered press is as much a part of our history and culture as is the Constitution and the three branches of government."

Although the act was never passed, the momentum helped spur the Obama administration to revisit the ban. On February 26, 2009, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced a decision to allow photographs of caskets arriving at Dover Air Force Base for the first time in 18 years. The new policy, which mirrors that of the policy in place at Arlington National Cemetery, allows for photographs at the discretion of the family of the deceased. A press advisory, issued by the Department of Defense on April 3, 2009, said "journalists will be granted access to Dover Air Force Base, Del., to view the dignified transfer of the remains of service members returning from overseas… Media will be notified of and permitted to view transfers when the family consents to such coverage."

On April 5, 2009, the first coffin returning to Dover Air Force Base was photographed since the overturn of the Pentagon's 18-year ban. The coffin of U.S. Air

Force Staff Sgt. Phillip Myers of Hopewell, Virginia was the first to be photographed with the permission of his family. Myers was killed near Helmand Province in Afghanistan. Reuters photographer Joshua Roberts and Associated Press photographer Evan Vucci covered the event. Their photos moved on the networks at 11:47 p.m. EST. Other media in attendance included photographers from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Washington Times* and Getty Images (Winslow).

Despite the decision to overturn the ban, the media have been excluded from some of the most notable dignified transfers in recent history. In August 2011, 30 U.S. troops were killed when their helicopter was hit in Afghanistan by a Taliban rocket-propelled grenade. An additional eight Afghan troops were killed in the attack. The media was denied access to Dover Air Force Base, where remains of the fallen service members were met by President Barack Obama. There was some confusion surrounding the Pentagon's ban of media coverage of the service members' remains. It had been this same administration that lifted the ban only two years prior, and yet, when the remains of the service members killed in the deadliest attack in the decade-long war returned to the United States, the American media were barred. According to an Associated Press wire report on August 10, 2011, the Pentagon prohibited media "because the badly damaged remains were mingled, making it impossible to individually identify each of the war dead at this point." Later, the Pentagon claimed that the service members' families denied coverage, citing that 19 of the 30 families objected to media coverage.

An official White House photo of President Obama saluting the caskets was released, unbeknownst to the Pentagon, and raised criticism. Although the image did not include the caskets themselves, the Pentagon objected to any photographs of the dignified

transfer ceremony, including those of the president's attendance. While the photo was posted as the White House photo of the day, the Associated Press refused to transmit the image to its customers, which would violate its policy of "refusing government handout images of events it believes the media should have access to." Asked in a White House press briefing why the White House photo was distributed, Press Secretary Jay Carney said "the reason why we were able to release a photo is–it was carefully done so that none of the transfer cases that contained remains were in the picture. It's also the case that because of the units that were involved, there were members of classified units whose identities cannot be revealed publicly, who were in the ceremony and we–it has to be–they cannot be shown in a photograph. So we are able to put those restrictions and control the White House photographer so that the photograph that we released does not cause any of those problems. And obviously we couldn't, for the variety of reasons, bring in the press for the ceremony itself." Carney's statements lead one to believe that when the White House can't control the press at critical times, they omit the press from attendance altogether. This case demonstrates that while the government's ban was officially lifted, the policy currently in place leaves the door open for major milestones in the war's history to go unnoticed. At one of the most poignant moments in the war's history, the American media, and consequently the public, were prohibited from witnessing the return of the remains. At the time the Associated Press reported on the ban of coverage at Dover Air Force Base, the news organization acknowledged that it covered every dignified transfer ceremony in which the NOK have granted permission for media coverage. Through June 30, 2011, a total of 68 dignified transfer ceremonies had been

covered at Dover Air Force Base. However, for nearly two decades, the human cost of war was not only downplayed, it was vacant from the public eye.

Controlling the Context of Imagery: The Iraq War and Embedded Media

While the government placed blanket restrictions on all photos of coffins arriving at Dover, it took at different tact in how it restricted war coverage in the post-Vietnam era. Rather than completely blocking the release of images, the government chose to control the context in which the images were captured. By looking at two periods of conflict where the media environments and government controls greatly differed–Vietnam and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars–we can observe notable differences in both the resulting photographic evidence as well as in the public's reactions. Where the human cost of war played out in newspapers and on television screens in Vietnam, it was largely hidden from public view in these wars, as a result of both tighter government controls on the media and the media's willingness to adhere to those controls. A noticeable shift in the government's tactics of censorship and media control came during the 2003 invasion of Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Nearly 600 journalists from all over the world accompanied U.S. and coalition forces during that invasion. The reporters and photographers represented those news agencies that agreed to partake in the Bush Administration's new embedded reporters program, which the government hoped would quell any potential backlash to the Gulf War. The program, devised by the Department of Defense in February 2003, planted media with military units, where the media would "live, work and travel as part of the units with which they are embedded to facilitate maximum, in-depth coverage of U.S. forces in combat and related operations" (Sec. of Defense 2003).

While the program prompted opposing views of its purpose, the U.S. government billed it as a means to provide unprecedented access to the battlefield and create a level of

trust between military and media that was lacking in previous conflicts, most notably in Vietnam. The Department of Defense, in issuing the guidelines for embedded journalists, described the media as having an essential role in spreading democratic ideals and refuting propaganda campaigns created by the opposition. The Department of Defense said, "Our ultimate strategic success in bringing peace and security to this region will come in our long-term commitment to supporting our democratic ideals. We need to tell the factual story–good or bad–before others seed the media with disinformation and distortions, as they most certainly will continue to do. Our people in the field need to tell our story–only commanders can ensure the media get to the story alongside the troops" (Sec. of Defense 2003).

While the embedding program appeared to fix some of the previous tensions between government and media in recent wars, it also brought fresh criticism of the media's exact roles. Many people, including journalists participating in the program, were skeptical as to how the media can offer fair and balanced coverage if they operate as part of the war rather than as independent observers. It was hard to distill unbiased reporting from wartime propaganda when the media and the military were acting as strange bedfellows.

At the onset of the war, early coverage shows that some journalists had trepidation over entering the embed program despite their news organization's participation. They knew they needed access, but how would the Pentagon's boundaries shape their war coverage? In a March 2, 2003 *New York Times Magazine* article, reporter Andrew Jacobs acknowledged the Pentagon's self-interest at work through this "old-fashioned public relations" plan. Jacobs had just returned from a week at Embed Boot

Camp, where journalists received a crash course in military life and how to deal with the realities of war. Jacobs acknowledged that while the reporters relished in access to commanders, bonded with soldiers, and enjoyed a front-row introduction to high-tech weaponry, he knew it all came with a price. "The storied victories of the first gulf war were never captured by print or broadcast outlets; this time, Pentagon officials are hoping that the omnipresent television camera crews will beam triumphal clips to living rooms across the country" (Jacobs).

It appears the Pentagon's tactic to make war cheerleaders of journalists worked. The government effectively positioned itself in precisely the manner it hoped–to ensure that the commanders were conveying the story line, and that no one outside the military could offer a counter opinion. "The media could become eyewitnesses to the action while the government could count on far more supportive coverage as journalists and soldiers bonded under fire" (Schechter 27). At times the line between journalist and soldier blurred as members of the media became more entrenched in the military units they were placed with. Embedded journalists looking to remain objective in their reporting faced the reality of the program–they lived, worked, traveled, and, perhaps most important, placed their lives in the hands of the people who represented only one side of a war. This put photographers in a precarious position, as "the person who intervenes cannot record; the person who is recording cannot intervene" (*On Photography* 12). The embedding program further disturbs the distinction between the intervener and the recorder. When placed under the protection of his or her subjects, the photographer is unable to easily choose between capturing a photograph and saving a life. The drama that unfolded

through this only played to the system–intriguing viewers and feeding ratings–as if the nightly news had transformed into reality television.

What was billed as a win-win situation for the military and the media quickly became a win only for the military. A sociological analysis of the embedding program, appearing in the spring 2008 issue of the American Sociological Association's magazine, *Contexts*, determined that the embedding program was in fact a "victory" for the Pentagon. Through content analysis of 742 news articles written by 156 English-language print reporters during the first six weeks of the Iraq war, Lindner determined that the media emphasized the success of the military at the expense of covering the consequences of the invasion for the Iraqi people. "By examining the content of articles rather than the tone, and comparing embedded and non-embedded journalists' articles, it becomes clear that the physical, and perhaps psychological, constraints of the embedding program dramatically inhibited a journalist's ability to cover civilians' war experiences" (Lindner 33).

Lindner compared three types of journalists and their coverage of the war, including those journalists in the embedding program, journalists stationed in Baghdad, and journalists who operated independently of the administration, sometimes referred to as unilaterals. Lindner's findings show a great disparity in the types of stories covered by these three types of journalists. Most notably, his research shows that although civilian deaths were reported in half the articles by Baghdad-stationed reporters and in 30 percent of articles by independent reporters, and only 12 percent of articles by embedded reporters included the loss of life among the Iraqi people. Lindner says, "These findings strongly suggest the Pentagon's embedding program–the dominant journalistic

arrangement during the Iraq War – channeled reporters toward producing war coverage from the soldier's point of view" (Lindner 37).

An article by Norman Solomon on Fair.org compares coverage of two networks – CNN and ABC. While CNN used embedded correspondent Walter Rodgers and network employee United States Retired General Wesley Clark, ABC's *Nightline* spoke with reporter John Donovan, who operated outside the embedded reporters' boundaries. "In contrast to the multitudes of 'embedded' American reporters, the 'unilateral' Donovan was oriented toward realities deeper than fleeting images. Instead of zooming along on the media fast track, he could linger: 'in short, if embeds are always moving with the troops, unilaterals get to see what happens after they've passed through'" (Solomon). Donovan's version of events leaves a far different picture of the sentiment among the Iraqi people than the other networks. He explains, "Just because the Iraqis don't like Saddam, doesn't mean they like us for trying to take him out. To the contrary. Although people started out talking to us in a friendly way, after a while it became a little tense. These people were mad at America, very mad. And they wanted us to know why. It was because, they said, people in town had been shot at by the United States" (Solomon).

The new program brought fresh concerns about how closely journalists' coverage would be monitored. When the DOD issued the guidelines for embedded reporters, it carefully stepped around the idea that the military would be censoring or reviewing media coverage. Soon after the guidelines were issued, news organizations began closely scrutinizing the ground rules and how they might limit efforts to report the war. An article in *Editor & Publisher* called attention to section six of the guidelines, which concerned "Security." The article points out that "most of the section sounds reasonable

on the surface but the potential for severe restrictions on reporting becomes apparent under closer examination. In fact, it includes provisions for 'security review' and the removal of 'sensitive' information by the military. Also, reporters who do not agree to such review in advance many be denied access to certain information" (Mitchell).

But censorship comes in various forms, as *New York Times* photographer Holly Pickett acknowledged in an April 11, 2011 *New York Times* blog post titled "Embedistan: Unembedded vs. Embedded." Pickett spent 85 percent of her six months in Afghanistan as an unembedded photographer and she says, "embeds also allow journalists to see parts of the country that they couldn't otherwise visit. However, the military is only a piece, one perspective, of the story, and being embedded changes what you are able to report. Aside from the long list of tactical information we can't report or photograph, the soldiers and commanding officers censor themselves. They are afraid of the repercussions of saying the wrong thing, and are on the lookout for journalists with an agenda" (Pickett). If Lindner's analysis shows that the majority of stories from embedded reporters are channeled through a soldier's point of view, and that point of view is self-censored, then the American public is receiving a very narrow view of the war from home.

This narrow view is compounded by other factors. Critics of the embedding program also claim that by restricting a journalist's movement to those movements of a specific military unit, coverage fails to capture the greater picture, offering instead "a homogenized flavor and Pentagon echo to much of the coverage of this war" (Schechter 31). Television and print coverage end up showing only small glimpses of what's happening from an isolated vantage point. U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld warned that people were only seeing "slices of the war in Iraq." He said, "We're seeing

that particularized perspective that that reporter or that commentator or that television camera happens to be able to see at that moment, and it is not what's taking place. What you see is taking place, to be sure, but it is one slice, and it is the totality of that that is what this war is about" (Newshour).

Sourcing was an issue for the print and broadcast media alike. An April 2003 study by the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism showed that in 77 percent of the stories studied, reporters were the only source on camera. For broadcast networks, 83 percent of stories featured only the reporter, compared with 71 percent on cable networks. The study showed that cable networks were more likely to use soldiers and other sources in their coverage, most likely because they needed to fill more time than their network counterparts. But the stories primarily focused on the reactions and feelings of the soldiers in lieu of summarizing the day's events.

In a March 2003 *Newshour with Jim Lehrer* special examining the pros and cons of embedded journalism, Susan Stevenson of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* praised the reporting out of Iraq and said that the embedded reporters give a "sense of immediacy and humanity." She added, "From what a blinding sandstorm feels like to reporting how one of our embeds broke the unit's coffee pot, we're giving readers a better sense of the field." This personalization of the news also demonstrates how reporting is turning away from news and turning more toward reality television. "Personalized news refers to the attempts of news producers and writers to link national and international events to the 'real' lives of individuals in their hometowns" (Cloud 157). By humanizing the actions of the soldiers, viewers or readers at home can more easily identify with the people carrying out warfare on the ground–and with those covering that warfare.

The embedded reporters program that began back in 2003 at the start of the Iraq War is, in essence, a stroke of public relations genius. The George W. Bush Administration constructed a well-tuned propaganda machine that nearly every major newspaper, magazine, and television network signed on for. While the embedded reporters program was just one facet of a much larger information management plan, it has had considerable staying power in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The resulting media coverage, across a broad spectrum of sources, has changed how media disseminate information.

Despite criticism of the embedding program, both within and outside the media industry, participation in the program continues and the consequences still unfold. Schechter quotes Stratfor.com, a global intelligence consultant, which says, "The media have become cheerleaders…portraying the war as an unalloyed success. The reversal of roles between media and military creates public expectations that can affect the prosecution of war" (Schechter 27). As a result, Schechter says that there is a homogenized flavor and Pentagon echo to much of the coverage of the war (Schechter 31). Consequently, it's nearly impossible for the American public to decipher fact from fiction, news from propaganda, objectivity from subjectivity.

The embedding program restricts the dissemination of information by the media under the guise of transparency. With censorship disguised as "security review," fragmented coverage of a war, and the reliance on military experts as sources, embedded reporters captured but a small piece of the larger context of war. Even with nearly 600 reporters on the ground, feeding news agencies around the globe, there's more news coverage and less war knowledge.

Noam Chomsky, in an interview with *Z Magazine* in 2003, commented on the embedding program by saying, "It is interesting that journalists are willing to accept it. No honest journalist would be willing to describe himself or herself as 'embedded.' To say 'I'm an embedded journalist' is to say, 'I'm a government propagandist.' But it's accepted. And it helps implant the conception that anything we do is right and just; so therefore, if you're embedded in an American unit, you're objective" (Barsamiam).

Imagery as a Target for Censorship

Like reporters, press photographers–both those with media outlets and those working on a freelance basis–were placed under the embed program guidelines. While Vietnam-era photographers were permitted to move freely, the restrictions instituted through the new embed program limited not only what the public heard, but also what it saw. Fears of how photographs could derail the government's march to war were echoed by Melvin R. Laird, who served as the U.S. secretary of defense from 1969 to 1973. In an article about how lessons learned in Vietnam were applicable to the war in Iraq he said "the embedding of journalists with combat units in Iraq 12 years later was a solid idea, but it has meant that casualties are captured on tape and then replayed on newscasts thousands of times. The deaths of ten civilians in a suicide bombing are replayed and analyzed and thus become the psychological equivalent of 10,000 deaths. The danger to one U.S. soldier captured on tape becomes a threat to everyone's son or father or daughter or mother" (Laird 33). Sentiments such as Laird's suggest the government's justification for censorship.

Advancements in military technology and a shift from field combat to a greater reliance on military technology in the Gulf War, and later in Iraq and Afghanistan, did not eliminate the bloody, horrific scenes of death. For both wars in Iraq, "the visual perspective that the Department of Defense permitted to the media actively structured the cognitive apprehension of the war. And though restricting how any of us may see is not exactly the same as dictating a story line, it is a way of interpreting in advance what will and will not be included in the field of perception" (Butler 823). Restrictions put on a photographer's movements in the field, coupled with restrictions placed on the

publication of those images, ensured that the American public was unable to visualize the consequences of war, and therefore curtailed its ability to shape a well-informed opinion of that war.

Criticism of the photographs coming out of recent wars echoed Chomsky's concerns of objectivity and brought into picture the narrative already deeply woven into a photograph, a result of a photographer's willingness to operate under the embed program. A photograph taken under the guidelines of the embedded program "builds an interpretation… the political consciousness that moves the photographer to accept those restrictions and yield the compliant photograph is embedded in the frame itself. We do not have to have a caption or a narrative at work to understand that a political background is being explicitly formulated and renewed through the frame. In this sense, the frame takes part in the interpretation of the war compelled by the state; it is not just a visual image awaiting its interpretation; it is itself interpreting, actively, even forcibly" (Butler 823). Visual images produced through the embed program build an interpretation, albeit one that is both compelled by the state and incomplete. When images of war deaths are absent, such as during the embedding programs, people are forced to base their interpretations and understanding of war solely on the narrow selection of the images they do see.

When the embedding guidelines were created, they did not explicitly prohibit the publishing of photos of fallen Americans, so long as next of kin (NOK) had been notified. Section 4.H.2 of the guidelines states that "battlefield casualties may be covered by embedded media as long as the service member's identity is protected from disclosure for 72 hours or upon verification of NOK notification, whichever is first" (Sec. of

Defense 2003). However, although no explicit ban on such photographs existed, journalists operating under the embed program knew that creating these photographs and ultimately publishing them placed them at risk of being expelled from the program and from covering the war with the military's cooperation. The reality of this risk played out when freelance photographer Zoriah Miller took images of fallen Marines during a June 26, 2008 suicide attack in Iraq. After Miller posted the images to his website, the *New York Times*, on August 3, 2008, chose to publish one of Miller's images that the newspaper described as "a room full of death after a suicide bombing in June, with a marine in the foreground, his face covered and his uniform riddled with tiny shrapnel holes." The image was accompanied by an article that discussed the "longstanding tension between journalists who feel a duty to report war in all its aspects and a military determined to protect its own." That tension led to Miller's expulsion from working in areas of Iraq controlled by the Marine Corps and efforts by high-ranking officials to have him barred from military facilities worldwide. Miller was informed that he violated embed rules by publishing information that provides "any tactics, techniques and procedures witnessed during operations" or "provides information on the effectiveness of enemy techniques."

Miller's case illustrates the ongoing efforts of the government and the military to severely limit the images and information relayed to the public under the guise of protecting national and military security. The Public Affairs Guidance on Embedding Media says "commanders and public affairs officers must work together to balance the need for media access with the need for operational security" (Sec. of Defense 2003). The

scope of "operational security" was vast, as many photographers and reporters in the embedding program quickly learned.

However, the Miller case also clearly demonstrates the media's reluctance to publish such images, even when those images become accessible. According to an August 3, 2008 article in the *New York Times*, prior to the publication of the Miller image, 221 American soldiers and Marines had been killed in Iraq that year, and yet not a single image of one of their bodies had been published in that newspaper.

Perhaps more disconcerting than the government's efforts to curtail the information coming out of Iraq is the media's willingness to comply. In both Iraq and Afghanistan "the press was as eager to be of service to the state during the war as most everyone else" (Hedges 23). Government restrictions are but one of a number of factors contributing to the lack of information generated during recent wars. With a changing media landscape, and with many outlets, particularly among print media, strapped financially, more organizations are relying on a smaller pool of photographers. Questions emerged about First Amendment violations surrounding such restrictions in an embedding program, but justifications for the program cited the media itself. The restrictions imposed in such a program "are not prima facie violations of the First Amendment but instead a contemporary restructuring of the relationship between the military and the press, driven by a crowded media market, innovations in electronic communications, and the shift from traditional battlefield warfare to limited strategic operations" (Cooper 3). As a result, by the time the Miller incident occurred in 2008, "only half a dozen Western photographer were covering a war in which 150,000 American troops are engaged" (Arango).

The lack of photographic record, combined with a drop-off in media coverage of the war as a whole, created an information vacuum back home in the United States. The military's controls became an effective tool in minimizing public outrage over fatalities, and in fact, there's a correlation between the lack of images of war dead and a decline in public awareness of American military fatalities. The Pew Center for the People and the Press reported survey results on March 12, 2008 that find that "public awareness of the number of American military fatalities in Iraq has declined sharply since the previous August." By the time the survey was published, only 28 percent of adults were able to say that approximately 4,000 Americans had died in the Iraq war. That number fell from the previous August, when 54 percent correctly identified the fatality level, at that time about 3,500 deaths. The awareness of troop deaths declined among every demographic. Media coverage overall, not just photographs, waned as the war went on. The Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Content Index showed that media coverage of the war dropped overall. News stories devoted to the Iraq War dropped from an average of 15 percent of the newshole in July to just 3 percent in February. This absence of information and photographic evidence contributed to Iraq becoming an "invisible" war to the people at home.

Conclusion

Each war challenges the American people to reassess their opinions of war, and each war challenges the American government to create the lens through which they want people to view those wars. Vietnam demonstrated how single snapshots of death and destruction can be pieced together to form the larger, unspoken picture of war. If the Vietnam era demonstrated the power of photography as a medium, then the post-Vietnam era has demonstrated the great lengths to which the government and the military will attempt to stifle this medium's communicative power. But photography is subjective. The meaning of a photograph necessitates context and interpretation. It makes control over imagery all the more difficult.

The government's reluctance to allow the American people the opportunity to view the casualties that stem from war comes from decades of watching previous administrations grapple with the erosion of public support. It is too difficult to isolate images of casualties from the other influencers of public opinion, and yet the fact that these photographs are consistently absent from the public eye suggests that they are at least perceived to contribute to negative attitudes towards a war. Even if the images alone are not enough to spark anti-war sentiment, the government and the military will see to it that photographs of casualties will not feed anti-war rhetoric. Wartime controls such as the embedded reporters program and the ban on photographing dignified transfers have sanitized all forms of contemporary war. The media's willingness to comply with such controls compounds the problem. Waning media coverage of the Iraq War demonstrates that the two basic strategies the government employs to counter the potency of war imagery – context control and censorship – are highly effective. If, as Susan

Sontag claims, a photograph can't sway public opinion without an appropriate context of feeling and attitude, then the American government has found a way to avoid future iterations of the "Vietnam Syndrome" by manipulating that context of feeling and attitude that helps citizens interpret and understand photographs of war. Controlling the context of photographs helps to perpetuate the mythic realities, rather than the sensory realities, of war. Until the American public begins to see images like those created by Browne and Adams – captured and produced outside of the government's grasp – people will continue to suffer the significant side effects brought on by a lack of knowledge and ultimately, a lack of interest in the government's interventions abroad.

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- Write letters, articles and speeches on behalf of the president and members of senior leadership
- Develop and execute media relations campaigns to enhance visibility, research and reputation
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Weller Health Education Center, Easton, PA
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Apr 2003 – Mar 2007
Rodale Inc., Emmaus, PA
- Managed corporate internal communications, including Web site and daily Intranet
- Drafted HR communications
- Wrote memos and speeches on behalf of CEO and corporate executives
- Oversaw award-winning employee newsletter
- Developed and coordinated internal publicity for corporate/HR initiatives
- Wrote press release for corporate and brand announcements such as Men's Health International, Women's Health International and The Biggest Loser Club
- Developed, pitched and placed stories for Pennsylvania-based media outlets

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Associate Editor
Aug 2002 – Apr 2003
Health Ink & Vitality Communications, Boston
- Edited general health, wellness and compliance copy for national healthcare clients
- Wrote original health and wellness articles
- Served as a liaison between regional clients and corporate office
- Assisted in quarterly issue planning and help create ancillary pieces and online content

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Media Analyst
Aug 2001 – Jun 2002
LexisNexis/PR Solutions, Boston
- Researched media-related information for the public relations industry
- Interviewed and wrote profiles of editors, reporters, analysts and media organizations
- Contributed briefs to a weekly newsletter tracking industry news and trends
- Wrote and edited company products and newsletters

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Interactive News Reader
Jun 1999 – Aug 2001
The Wall Street Journal Online, Barron's Online, New York City
- Prepared print and newswire articles each evening for placement in the online edition
- Monitored newswires for breaking news
- Worked with staff to develop unique online content
- Wrote a monthly *Barron's* Online column
- Contributed original articles to the WSJ print and online editions
- Selected and prepared WSJ copy for placement on MSNBC.com

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Managing Editor
Aug 1997 – Jun 1999
Opus Communications, Marblehead, MA
- Developed and wrote all editorial content for two 12-page, monthly healthcare newsletters
- Executed print newsletter for the Assisted Living Federation of America
- Worked with team of editors to develop ancillary products for online channels

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Editorial Intern
Jun-Aug 1996
Nickelodeon Magazine, New York
- Provided support for editorial team including research, article development, interview transcription and reader services

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE – FREELANCE CLIENTS

- *Women's Health* Magazine
- *Allure* Magazine
- Rodale Corporate Communications
- *Lehigh Valley Style* Magazine
- *Boston Phoenix*
- *The Morning Call*
- Woodstone Country Club and Lodge
- DynAccess monoski

EDUCATION

Lehigh University
College of Arts & Sciences
MA, American Studies, 2012

Syracuse University
S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications
BS, Magazine Journalism, 1997

MEMBERSHIP

CUPRAP, The Association of Communicators in Education, Member

Lehigh University Council for the Arts, Member
Syracuse Alumni Club, Member

AWARDS

CASE District II Accolades Awards: Silver Medal for Online CD/DVD Content 2011
CASE District II Accolades Awards: Bronze Medal for Community Relations Programs, Projects, Special Events 2011
Council for Advancement and Support of Education

CUPPIE Bronze Award for Best Print Magazine 2009
The Association of Communicators in Education

Tradition of Excellence Award 2008, 2011
Lehigh University

Magnum Opus Grand Award for Achievement in Custom Publishing 2005, 2006
Publications Management