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## The Murrow Tradition: What Was It, and Does It Still Live?

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THE MURROW TRADITION:  
WHAT WAS IT, AND DOES IT STILL LIVE?

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
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in

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by  
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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation explores the differences in the quality of radio foreign news and foreign correspondents between CBS during World War II and NPR during the Iraq War II. Triangulating quantitative and qualitative methods (content analysis, historical research, and in-depth interviews), this study proposes a model of quality foreign news to help determine what the Murrow tradition means. The model is then used to test if that celebrated tradition lives on in a non-commercial setting at NPR. The two-pronged model pulls together theories of mass communication and historical accounts to assess (1) the quality of the foreign correspondents at the two organizations, and (2) the quality of foreign correspondence during the two eras. The study is the first to measure what the Murrow tradition means in a systematic, longitudinal analysis. It is important to compare the present against the so-called “golden age of foreign correspondence” because of a perceived decline in the credibility of news in general and in the quality of foreign news in particular.

The newsroom analysis found that the new generation of foreign correspondents at NPR match or exceed the qualities of the Murrow Boys. The content analysis found that the foreign news at NPR scores higher across all quality journalism variables, suggesting that foreign news is not an endangered species in subsidized settings. NPR correspondents further shared their insights and perspectives on the present and future of radio foreign correspondence.



## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

A plaque dedicated to Edward R. Murrow at the CBS headquarters in New York reads, “He set standards of excellence that remain unsurpassed.” Ever since Murrow and “his boys” helped shape tradition in broadcast foreign correspondence during World War II, historians and media critics (Alan and Lane, 2003; Brown, 1998; Culbert, 1976; Hosley, 1984; Zelnick, 2003) have compared subsequent correspondents and international news to those standards. Most of the times, they concluded that few if any journalists followed in the footsteps of the “golden-age” correspondents. “True enough, but also a bit depressing,” commented Deborah Potter, a former network correspondent (2008). That “depressing” conclusion, however, hasn’t been tested empirically in a comparative, longitudinal analysis, although recent studies documented the weaknesses of contemporary international news coverage in both print and broadcast media (Emery, 1989; Kalb, 1990; Hess, 1996; Fenton, 2005). Moreover, there isn’t a clear definition of what the footsteps to follow really are. This study analyzes *what Murrow did* to help media critics answer “What Would Murrow Do?” This was a popular question in 2008, a year that marked a century since Murrow was born and half a century since his famous speech that decried the decline of network news (at the Radio-Television News Directors Association, Chicago, 1958).

This study tests the argument that the Murrow tradition does not survive by comparing the quality of radio foreign news and correspondents at CBS during World War II (the Murrow era) to the foreign correspondence and reporters at NPR during the Iraq War II (the present). To examine the content of foreign news during the two periods,

this study proposes a model of quality foreign news that brings together variables suggested as essential to good journalism by several theories of mass media content, by histories appraising the Murrow years on radio, and by journalism textbooks.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this research is to establish what the Murrow tradition is and to see if elements of what many consider the golden age of foreign correspondence (represented by CBS News during World War II) live on in contemporary foreign reporting at NPR. To do that, the analysis will focus on three levels of news production at the two networks:

1. **Content** (foreign news at CBS radio during World War II and at NPR during the Iraq War II);
2. **Quality of reporters** (profiles focusing on careers, expertise, years spent overseas, education, training and other social demographics of the foreign correspondents working for the two networks during the times under study);
3. **Attitudes toward foreign news** (correspondents' and editors' philosophy about foreign news).

### **Why the Two Networks**

CBS News established itself as the premier radio newsgathering organization during World War II (Garay, 2003, p. 303; Hamilton, 2009, p. 296), and the Murrow Boys, the foreign correspondents that he recruited to cover the war from different points around the world, created what many consider excellence with their foreign news reporting. They are the epitome of the golden age of foreign correspondence (Smith, 1978). These correspondents became household names, recognized by people everywhere

in the United States (Godfrey, 1990, p. 164). They were practically the founders of broadcast journalism (Zelnick, 2003, p. 322). As Stanley Cloud and Lynne Olson put it in "The Murrow Boys" (1996) these journalists "invented broadcast journalism" (p. 2). Of the 28 of 500 American correspondents in London who were selected to accompany the troops on the D-Day Invasion, five were CBS reporters (Hamilton, 2009, p. 296). At the war's end, 600 radio editors voted that CBS had done the "Best News Job in Radio" in its coverage of V-E day, V-J Day, the Japanese surrender, and the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt (Paley, 1979: 374). Murrow exemplified and established the foreign news reporting tradition in broadcast news (Alan and Lane, 2003: xiv). He and his correspondents were the standard against which foreign broadcast reporting was assessed. "There were no precedents," said Eric Sevareid, one of the Murrow Boys. "We had to create the tradition" (quoted in Cloud and Olson, 1996, p. 2).

But what that tradition was, no one really explains. Murrow gave radio credibility (Hamilton, 2009, p. 298), but how? Biographies of key correspondents and managers of CBS radio correspondents offer insightful glimpses into what it was like to cover Europe during World War II. To date, however, no systematic analysis investigated the Murrow Boys' work, in terms of quality of newsgathering, and this is part of what this dissertation sets out to accomplish. Archival research and review of existing literature will offer a sketch of the Murrow tradition to be tested against and enhanced with systematic content analysis.

While CBS radio foreign news during World War II stands out as a logical starting point when trying to examine the evolution of radio foreign news, the choice of NPR during the Iraq War may not at first glance appear as an obvious representative of

modern radio foreign news. Several characteristics of NPR qualified it for this comparative study. While other news organizations downsized over the past several years, NPR News grew into a major media company with 750 employees, heard on more than 860 independent public radio stations. It added correspondents (the NPR website lists 23 foreign correspondents) and offices worldwide, and it now gathers and produces content from some 36 locations around the world, 18 of which are outside the United States. In a time when online news sources are heralded as stealing audiences away from traditional media, a survey showed that more people (28 percent) regularly listen to NPR than go online (25 percent) for news (April 15, 2007, Pew<sup>1</sup>).

The Iraq War II is the most recent (actually ongoing) lengthy international conflict that not only has domestic implications, such as U.S. actions abroad and American lives at stake, but also attracted considerable media attention, much like World War II. By comparing the foreign correspondence of the two networks, we can understand whether and how radio foreign news has evolved and, more importantly, from what into what, as no previous study has systematically and comparatively investigated the quality of *radio* foreign news during any of the two periods.

### ***The World Today and Morning Edition: A Short Presentation***

*The World Today* is one of the many titles carried by the CBS World News Roundup, next to “News From Europe” or “Today In Europe.” It first went on-air on March 13, 1938, at 8 p.m. as a one-time special in response to growing tensions in Europe - specifically the Anschluss, during which Adolf Hitler annexed Austria. The

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<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, “Public Knowledge of Current Foreign Affairs Little Changed by News and Information Revolutions.” April 15, 2007. Report available online at <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=319>).

March 13, 1938, program carried no definitive title - nor did it anywhere include the word "Roundup." It was introduced as a "radio tour of Europe's capital cities." When the show first went on the air it was hosted by veteran radio personality Robert Trout, and it included shortwave reports from Paris, Berlin, London, and Vienna. Soon, the show became a daily newscast, although not always heard at regularly scheduled time slots, and some days not at all. The Seattle CBS affiliate KIRO AM 710 recorded the entire series of newscasts, creating a priceless collection for researchers available in the Milo Ryan Phonoarchive. The station made copies of all the newscasts not because it recognized the historical value of the reports, but because Washington state was three hours behind Washington, DC, and the station wanted to air the show during the same time slot.

Godfrey (1990) argues that the CBS World News Roundup set the stage for the next half century in terms of broadcast news format. "Radio news grew up with World War II," said William S. Paley, CBS president during World War II (in foreword to Ryan, 1963, p. v).

With Europe on the brink of war, in 1938, Paul W. White, director of public affairs for Columbia, was the one who initiated the first roundup of news. Until then, because of the press-radio war, networks were not allowed but two five-minute bulletins a day (one in the morning and one late in the evening), commentaries and coverage of "special events." As William Shirer, European bureau chief in Vienna, put it (1984, p. 288), he and Murrow were busy in Europe "putting kid choirs on the air." Actually, newspaper correspondents held broadcasters in such low esteem at the time that they refused Murrow's application to join the American Foreign Correspondents' Association

in London (Ferrari and Tobin, 2003, p. 14). In December 1937, when the Press-Radio Bureau, which supplied the networks with news summaries, ceased its services, the need for in-house newsgathering became obvious (Godfrey, 1990, p. 168). Despite that, CBS executive William Paley and news director Paul White still did not allow Murrow and Shirer to report from Europe. They were afraid that reporting could easily lead to editorializing and taking sides. CBS was already in trouble with the Roosevelt administration because of Boake Carter's negative commentaries about the war (Olson and Cloud, 1996, p. 34). The German annexation of Austria on March 13, 1938, provided the occasion to change that rule, as millions of people were turning to radio to learn about the dramatic developments in Europe.

The day before, Edward Murrow, head of CBS's "foreign staff, a staff of one" (Paley, 1979, p. 131), was in Warsaw, Poland, arranging a special musical program for his network. Men in Nazi uniforms threw Shirer out of the CBS studio in Vienna, threatening him with revolvers. He soon received a call from Murrow, who urged him to fly to London and report what he knew, despite CBS' policy of not allowing its staff to report from Europe. Shirer arrived in London to hear that NBC's Max Jordan had already managed to break the news of the Anschluss from Vienna, having a special arrangement with the Austrian radio. The scoop prompted Paul White to change his rule against reporting, and he called Shirer, saying, "We want a European roundup *tonight*." The roundup would be the first radio newscast – a format still widely used in broadcast media today (Godfrey, 1990, p. 165). As Murrow and Shirer continued afterward to broadcast regularly scheduled roundups, they established the radio foreign correspondent as a new journalistic species (Kendrik, 1969, p. 161).

Shirer had eight hours on a Sunday afternoon to organize the roundup from a BBC studio (Cloud and Olson, 1996, p. 35). It had never been done before. He contacted stringers from already established print outlets, newsmen that he knew well. Edgar Mowrer of the *Chicago Daily News*, from Paris, had just been expelled from Germany, and he accepted the invitation. Pierre Huss of the *International News Service* agreed to report from Berlin. Frank Gervassi of the *INS* could not arrange a broadcast from Rome on such short notice, so he had to dictate his story over the phone for Shirer to read from London (Cloud and Olson, 1996, p. 35). Ellen Wilkinson, a member of the British parliament, also contributed with comments on Britain's annoyance with Hitler. Murrow had to fly from Warsaw to Vienna to substitute for Shirer and find a broadcasting station. He persuaded the Germans to give him a phone line from Vienna to Berlin, which could relay his broadcast by shortwave to New York. Robert Trout anchored from New York, and everything was done live, in an historic program that survived only in fragments (Godfrey, 1990, p. 170).

The World News Roundup was so successful that CBS called for a second the following night. In the years that followed that first broadcast – which for the first time brought international news live from several foreign capitals – the roundup became a nightly fifteen-minute program.<sup>2</sup> By December 1939, CBS had a full-time staff of fourteen men and women in Europe and many other correspondents on a free-lance basis, recruited by Murrow (White, 1941, p. 84). According to an annual report, in 1940, the

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<sup>2</sup> A typical intro of the roundup by an announcer in New York sounded like this: “The World Today [*emphatic*]. At this time the Columbia Broadcasting System calls in its correspondents in important world capitals for the news abroad direct by transatlantic shortwave radio. Tonight, Edward R. Murrow reports from London, Edward Chorlian reports from Cairo and Cecil Brown from Rome. But before going abroad for the news, here is a Press Association report from Washington.”

foreign staff alone had 27 members in Europe, Turkey, Egypt, the Far East, and Latin America.

In a 1940 report explaining how CBS prepared to cover the war, news chief Paul W. White admits having written in a CBS memorandum, “P.S. I don’t think it will work either.” “Happily, I was wrong,” he added, and went on to exemplify “the extraordinary merit of these broadcasters” who from September 1, 1939, to September 1, 1940, had close to 2,200 foreign pickups, most of which came through on schedule (White, 1941, p. 87). At the outset of the war, it was quite difficult for CBS to educate its foreign broadcasters to the exact timings necessary in bringing a program through successfully (White, 1941, p. 86), and the connection wasn’t always without problems. Now and then, a transmission was unintelligible, had too much static noise, or cut off unexpectedly in the middle of a broadcast. The anchor in New York would acknowledge the shortcoming and apologize.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout the war, several announcers, such as John Charles Daly, Quincy Howe, Bill Rogers or Jack Knell rotated positions. The first show occasioned Edward R. Murrow (Vienna) and William L. Shirer (London) to have their voices heard. In fact, it was the first time Murrow ever delivered a news report. The show, which typically ran for 15 minutes, consisted of roughly ten stories, including reports from foreign correspondents in two or more locations around the world, brought in through transatlantic shortwave radio, plus news and commentary from the CBS studios in New York and Washington, DC. The show actually still lives in a shorter 10-minute version,

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<sup>3</sup> For example, in the December 28, 1940, roundup, announcer Fielden Farrington apologizes after a transmission by Cecil Brown in Rome: “We regret that the reception from Rome was not clear, but we hope you found the broadcast sufficiently intelligible.” Brown’s broadcast was almost impossible to understand.



making it the longest running network broadcast program in the United States. The affiliates typically pick up only the first four or eight minutes of the show, which no longer focuses specifically on foreign news. Moreover, the audiences have decreased significantly. Still, a future study could look at how the show evolved over time. During World War II, CBS News had about 12 million listeners.

With nearly 13 million listeners, *Morning Edition* draws public radio's largest audience. The NPR news program airs Monday through Friday from 5 to 7 a.m. Eastern Time on more than 600 NPR stations across the United States, and around the globe on NPR's international services. The show debuted on November 5, 1979. Since May 3, 2004, the show has been co-hosted by Steve Inskeep and Renée Montagne, replacing Bob Edwards, who hosted the show for a quarter century. Inskeep reports from NPR headquarters in Washington, DC, and Montagne reports from the studio in Culver City, CA, a suburb of Los Angeles.

The program begins each hour with a sixty-second "billboard" highlighting stories to be covered in the hour. The standard NPR newscast follows for five minutes. After that, five segments, separated by promotional breaks or music, are dedicated to the most important stories of the day in national, world, health, culture, and sport news. Stations receive feeds with the daily rundown of stories before each program, which allows them to plan their coverage and decide what stories they wish to replace with local content.

A random search of the NPR archives on the NPR.org Web site as well as on LexisNexis revealed that a show typically covers 16 to 22 stories, four to ten of which are foreign news. So *The Morning Edition* covers slightly fewer international stories than CBS radio did in its World War II roundup. This is understandable considering that *The*

*World Today* was specifically designed to cover only foreign news. It is possible, however, that the fewer stories at NPR take as much time as the more numerous stories at CBS or run even longer than 15 minutes overall. This study will shed light into that as well.

For the purposes of this research, which focuses on foreign news, the author analyzed only the international news in the *Morning Edition* newscasts.

### **Contribution to the Field**

The *Encyclopedia of International Media and Communications* defines correspondents as “network news reporters in the fashion of Murrow’s globetrotting boys” (2003, p. 315), which in itself suggests nostalgia for the past. Several historians declare the foreign correspondent an endangered species (Emery, 1989; Hess, 1996: 105; Fenton, 2005) or even an extinct one (Kalb, 1990: xiv). In the last three decades, American networks closed their overseas bureaus and replaced correspondents with less experienced freelancers or parachute journalists. International news coverage decreased by an average of 50 percent. These trends continued even after September 11, 2001, and the war in Iraq (Hamilton, 2009). This study dissects the quality of NPR’s foreign correspondence in a historical context (in light of the standards the Murrow tradition set in broadcast foreign reporting) and thus tracks the evolution of foreign news in premier radio networks from its perceived heyday to the present.

In an historical piece documenting the birth of *The World News Roundup* at CBS and its impact in establishing a format that is still widely used in both radio and television today, Donald G. Godfrey (1990, p. 164) argues that “little has been written about the history of radio news, perhaps because it is so difficult to deal with historical materials

when the primary record is within a broadcast format. Most of the accounts of radio news have been biographical.” This research breaks away from the beaten path by looking at those broadcasts (indeed expensive and time-consuming to transcribe) in order to complete with actual data what we know about the Murrow tradition from biographical and other historical accounts.

By reviewing histories of CBS (Paper, 1987; Slater, 1988; Smith, 1990), specialized encyclopedias and memoirs, this study will uncover details about its foreign news department, the standards, practices and ethos about foreign news at CBS during World War II and will also sketch the profiles of the foreign correspondents of the time, dubbed “the Murrow Boys.” This research will look at the people behind the news in order to better understand not only what precedent was created, but also what kind of newsmen it took to create it.

Foreign news coverage by NPR during the Iraq War II will be the second focus of this research, which aims to track the evolution of radio foreign correspondence. Analysis of histories of NPR (McCauley, 2005; McCourt, 1999; Mitchell, 2005) as well as of available online information about the NPR newscasters will help paint the profiles of the modern foreign correspondents to be compared against the Murrow boys. After the data are analyzed, in-depth interviews offer some NPR editors and correspondents the chance to reflect on the findings of the comparative content and newsroom analysis.

In short, this dissertation zeroes in on two aspects of the Murrow tradition – the skills of the Murrow Boys and the content of their foreign correspondence during World War II. Those findings are measured against their equivalent categories at NPR: the new generation of foreign correspondents and their coverage of world affairs during the Iraq

War II. Historical research on the two networks and interviews with NPR correspondents and editors further explain the difference and similarities between the two eras, offering context to the content analysis and to the newsroom breakdown.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **What Is the Murrow Tradition and How Can We Measure Quality Journalism?**

Five different organizations<sup>4</sup> give annual awards that carry Edward R. Murrow's name. They honor individuals who exemplify the so-called Murrow tradition. The awards recognize journalists for their outstanding achievements and contributions in broadcast reporting, for committing to excellence that exemplifies the career of Edward R. Murrow, and for living up to standards of dedication, integrity, courage, and sensitivity created by Edward Murrow. The guidelines are very general, and previous research hasn't established what the Murrow tradition means either, although the phrase is used a lot to describe the golden age of foreign correspondence from the late 1930s to the mid 1940s, when Edward R. Murrow and his boys covered World War II for the then-new medium of radio. Because of his work in radio and then television, scholars and memoirs of peers have talked about a "Murrow legend and tradition" of courage, integrity, social responsibility, and journalistic excellence, as will be shown below.

David Halberstam (1979, p. 38) observed that Murrow was "one of those rare legendary figures who was as good as his myth." David Hosley (1984: xi) describes the foreign correspondence heard on American radio in the summer of 1940 as a Camelot, a time when the journalists, the medium, and the moment made a perfect combination. American radio commentators broke rules, innovated, and competed for exclusivity. In his analysis of six golden-age radio commentators (Boake Carter, H.V. Kaltenborn,

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<sup>4</sup> The Radio-Television News Directors Association since 1971; The Edward R. Murrow College of Communication at Washington State University since 1997; The Corporation for Public Broadcasting since 1977; The Overseas Press Club of America since 1978; and The Fletcher School at Tufts University, for public diplomacy.

Raymond Gram Swing, Elmer Davis, Fulton Lewis, Jr., and Edward R. Murrow), Culbert (1979) demonstrates both the brilliance and deficiencies of the 1930s' radio journalism. Although he points out mistakes, lack of preparation and occasional artificiality among the first five, the author has almost only reverent remarks about Edward Murrow, considering him the best of the lot. "And with reason: He was unique, and anyone who listens to commercial recordings of his broadcasts from those years is likely to agree *even if the listener is unable to explain precisely what makes them so good.*" (p. 207). This seems to summarize a recurring puzzle in the history of the Murrow tradition that this study aims to solve. What made the CBS broadcasts good? And how good were they? Culbert (1979, p. 207) goes on by arguing that Murrow's understanding of radio's potential to reach people and make them feel witnesses to far events is an epitome of Marshall McLuhan's concept of "the medium is the message" (Culbert, 1979, p. 207). But was that something that only Murrow did?

Writing in the London *News Chronicle* in 1941, Murrow explained how he went about his job. "The official news is perhaps less important than the more intimate stories of life, work, and sacrifice in Europe today." Murrow favored the human-interest stories, and the emphasis on the common man was part of his journalistic philosophy throughout his life (Smith, 1978, p. 59). He believed that the differences between broadcasting and the press made human-interest more suitable for radio. He saw the two media as complementary. On a BBC program, "The World Goes By," he explained:

For example, it's very difficult, if not impossible, for a broadcaster from London to discuss in detail a new budget – people just won't listen. That can be done in print. But broadcasting can describe the scene in the House of Commons, the atmosphere, and the comments of the man in the street in a way that print can't touch. The little human-interest stories which mean so much if you hear them wouldn't come alive otherwise, in print.

Some perceived elements of the Murrow tradition are common across historical accounts and studies. Historians say that Murrow's technique of focusing less on the official news and more on the intimate stories of life, work and sacrifice during the war became a standard fare. Murrow knew that in its own way radio was a picture medium, which put images in the head of listeners through sound and language (Doherty, 2003: 163). He was never a detached observer, getting always involved with the human side of the story he was telling. He had "an inner flame," as his colleague Richard C. Hottelet put it (Ferrari and Tobin, 2003, p. 15). "He absorbed what was going on. He wasn't talking through a pane of glass – a sort of sanitized, distant experience. He was in it. It was part of him" (p. 17).

Murrow's reassuring, baritone voice was steady even in the midst of chaos, and he knew the power of silence and of punctuation, explained his colleague Larry LeSueur (quoted in Ferrari and Tobin, 2003, p.16). Murrow Boy Eric Sevareid (1976, p. 176) remarked that Murrow's "physical, intellectual and moral performance in those deadly months *is not likely to be equaled by any reportorial voice or pen in this generation,*" another perception shared by several media critics. Keeping the nature of his audience foremost in mind, Murrow organized his broadcasts in such a way to "describe things in terms that make sense to the truck driver without insulting the intelligence of the professor" (Murrow, quoted in Brown, 1989, p. 187).

In an introduction to a collection of Murrow's scripts, Edward Bliss, CBS broadcast journalist who was part of the second generation of Murrow Boys, captured Murrow's style that would make him the number-one newsman in America: "Murrow's early shortwave reports from London were prototypes of all his broadcasts of the war

years to come: what is happening, how does it relate to the American, how does the common man feel” (Bliss, 1967, p. 6). In other words, Murrow’s recipe for success was presenting the news from both a localized angle (relevance to the U.S.) and human-interest angle (the impact on the common man). The following fragment from his September 13, 1940, broadcast is a typical example of Murrow’s ability to paint with words and convey the emotional tension of a situation:

This has been what might be called a ‘routine night’ – air raid alarm about nine o’clock and intermittent bombing ever since. I had the opinion that more high explosives and less incendiaries had been used tonight. Only two small fires can be seen on the horizon. Again, the Germans have been sending their bombers singly or in pairs. The anti-craft barrage has been fierce but sometimes there are periods of twenty minutes when London has been silent.... One becomes accustomed to rattling conditions and the distant sound of bombs. In these comes the silence that can be felt. You know the sound will return – you wait, and then it starts again. That waiting is bad. It gives you a chance to imagine things.

(From Brown, 1998: 187)

Another detail that contributed to Murrow’s legend was the fact that he often literally faced death in London. According to Dan Rather (in Alan, 2003, p. 7), “what separated Murrow from the pack was courage.” Although his studio was bombed several times, Murrow never went into an air raid shelter because he believed it was unmanly not to risk his life on a daily basis (Culbert, 1979, p. 190). “I was afraid of myself: I feared that if I did it once I could not stop doing it” (quoted in Severeid, 1976, p. 170).

His boys followed Murrow religiously because he was a “born leader,” a “fair man,” and because they “knew that he was the bravest of the lot, and that was part of the respect in which he was held,” according to fellow foreign correspondent Richard Hottelet (in Ferrari and Tobin, 2003, p. 17). Courage is hence another element of the Murrow tradition.



Courage, human-interest stories, and minimal reliance on official sources come across as important elements of the Murrow tradition. The CBS newsroom and content analysis will test these impressionistic remarks about Murrow's reportage and will also examine whether that "inner flame" characterized other Murrow Boys as well as the NPR correspondents.

Despite an intense discussion regarding the decay of journalistic quality (which is addressed in more detail in a later subsection), few studies have attempted to define quality journalism in a form that makes it possible to measure journalistic quality empirically (Meijer, 2001). Don Wycliff, a former *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune* editorial writer, argued in 2002 that journalists "need to begin thinking in hardheaded, concrete terms about how we can express in quantitative terms the value of quality journalism. Is there a way to measure those qualities? It may be that there are no such measures, no ways to quantify these things? But we owe it to ourselves and our craft to look for them" (Poynter.org). In an attempt to do that, this study will build on several mass communication theories of media content (presented below) and will try to combine variables suggested by them like pieces in a puzzle in order to determine the quality of foreign news reporting at CBS and NPR during the two periods.

Studies that measure trust in the media<sup>5</sup> ask respondents to evaluate newsmakers and news outlets based on *personal values and attributes*, *presentation and delivery*, and *experience and knowledge*. Trust is a measure of quality, and therefore this study borrowed notions from mass communication research that help ascertain the personal values, attributes, experience, and knowledge of the foreign correspondents under study as well as the presentation and delivery of foreign news.

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<sup>5</sup> As in the Project for Excellence in Journalism annual "State of the News Media" surveys.

In “The Elements of Journalism,” Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) express concern about journalism quality as well. They wrote the book after a group of twenty-five print, television and radio journalists as well as journalism educators gathered in June 1997 because they thought something was seriously wrong with their profession. They were alarmed that the public distrusted journalists more than ever. Surveys showed that the public thought that the press didn’t care about the people, its watchdog role, or democracy (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, pp. 2-3). As a result, the group, which then called itself the Committee of Concerned Journalists, organized the most sustained and comprehensive examination ever of newsgathering and its responsibilities. Researchers at the Project for Excellence in Journalism further produced nearly a dozen content analyses of news reporting. The conclusion of the study/textbook was that the role of journalism is to provide people with the information they need to be free and self-governing (p. 5). In order to fulfill that task, ten elements of journalism were proposed, some of which are applicable to foreign news, measurable, and in line with the journalistic philosophy of the Murrow Boys. Such elements include monitoring power and giving voice to the voiceless (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 139), being independent from faction (p. 113), and making the news engaging and relevant with human-interest anecdotes, context, and enough space devoted to stories to help the public understand them (pp. 186-190).

Taking elements from theoretical studies discussing media content (to be discussed below), from Kovach and Rosenstiel’s comprehensive work (2007) on the essential elements of journalism, and from histories appraising the Murrow years, this dissertation proposes a model for quality foreign news that looks both at the content of foreign correspondence and at its creators, the foreign correspondents (Figure 1).

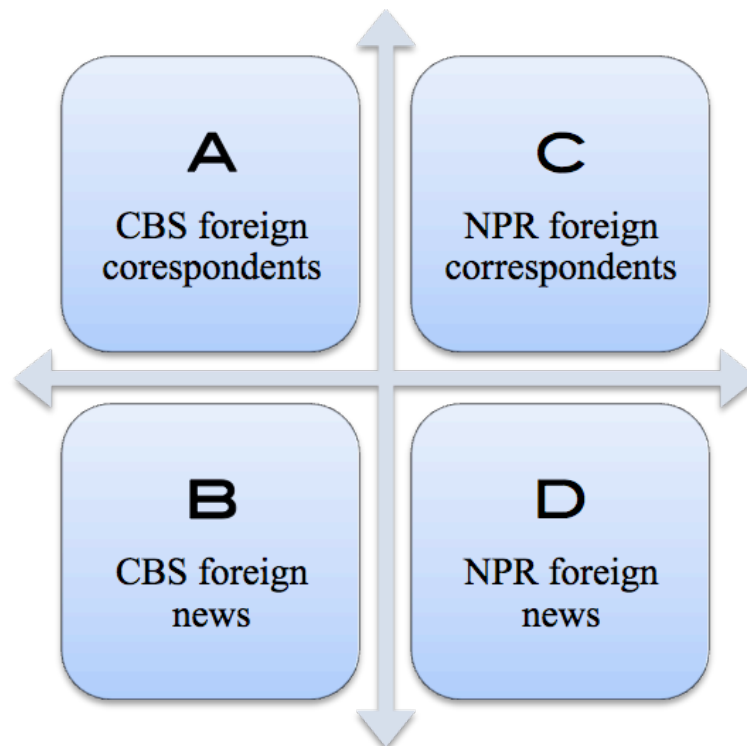
| 1. ADEQUATE FOREIGN STAFF:        |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| ⇒                                 | A <b>large corps</b> of full-time correspondents to cover different parts of the world   |
| ⇒                                 | Correspondents stationed in <b>many bureaus around the world</b>   |
| ⇒                                 | <b>Educated, well-trained</b> reporters  |
| ⇒                                 | Correspondents with previous <b>foreign experience</b>   |
| ⇒                                 | Demographically <b>diverse</b> staff   |
| 2. ADEQUATE FOREIGN NEWS CONTENT: |  |
| ⇒                                 | <b>Sufficient amount of time</b> dedicated to foreign news stories   |
| ⇒                                 | Keeping the audience informed by covering a diversity of <b>topics</b> (politics, economy, social, cultural, etc.) with different <b>news values</b> |
| ⇒                                 | Airing both <b>live</b> (for immediacy) and <b>recorded</b> (for depth and analysis) news  |
| ⇒                                 | Relying on a <b>diversity of sources</b> . Monitoring power but <b>giving voice to the voiceless</b> .   |
| ⇒                                 | Covering war through a <b>diversity of perspectives</b> (frames) and also using <b>human-interest</b> to help listeners relate to the story          |
| ⇒                                 | Covering more <b>event-</b> and <b>reporter-driven stories</b> than institutionally-driven stories   |
| ⇒                                 | Localizing foreign news by explaining <b>domestic connections</b>  |
| ⇒                                 | <b>Neutral reporting:</b> independence from faction, not taking sides  |
| ⇒                                 | <b>Original reporting</b> , relying as little as possible on other media and official communiqués and press releases                                 |

**Figure 1. A Model for Quality Foreign News**

Other less measurable elements, like courage, innovation, and autonomy from the home desk will be documented through historical research and interviews with NPR correspondents.

This model may not be exhaustive, but it is the first that seeks to quantify quality foreign news. It is not the purpose of this study to test the theories of mass communication from which it borrows well-tested categories of media content. It only takes cues from them about qualities good journalism should encompass.

Therefore, this study will not formulate any directional hypotheses but will instead ask open-ended research questions about the two news organizations. Based on the two-sided model of quality foreign news proposed in Figure 1, this dissertation conducts a 2x2 study that compares CBS and NPR at two levels: foreign news staff and foreign news coverage (Figure 2). Boxes A and B will help establish what the Murrow tradition was.



**Figure 2. The Road Map of the Present Study**

## **The Decline of Foreign News**

Why is it so important to know what kind foreign news listeners get today? Hess (1996), Norris (1995, 1997), and Arnett (1998) found a sharp decline in international news coverage in the U.S. media in the past decade. While new technologies such as communication satellites, electronic newsgathering, and the Internet helped elude constraints of time and space, they also contributed to the shutdown of a number of foreign news bureaus, escalating the number of “parachute journalists” who crisscrossed foreign news scenes with only limited knowledge of the events they cover (Arnett, 1998; Hachten, 1999; Norris, 1997). On March 10, 1987, Dan Rather wrote an op-ed page article for the *New York Times* - “From Murrow to Mediocrity?” - in which he condemned CBS staff layoffs. The network concluded that correspondents were underutilized and that the 250 percent increase in the networks’ news budget had not produced a proportional increase in coverage quality. Rather worried about a “product that may inevitably fall short of the quality and vision it once possessed.” “Our concern, beyond the shattered lives of valued friends is: How do we go on? How do we cover the world? Can we provide in-depth reporting and analysis with resources so verily diminished? Can we continue to do our job in the finest tradition of this organization? *In the tradition of Edward R. Murrow, Walter Cronkite, Eric Severeid, Douglas Edwards, Charles Collingwood?*” (Rather, 1987, p. 25).

Picking up on this theme, CBS senior foreign correspondent Tom Fenton (2005) argues that broadcast journalism as an industry fails in its most important job – to see what is coming down the road in terms of foreign affairs and alert the public to the risks. Americans suffer from a festering foreign news gap. They are not adequately informed

about the big stories, which come without warning, because correspondents do not make the connections between the incremental developments in far-off countries and don't provide context and explanation. On the eve of 9/11, for instance, the evening news was a mirror image of a nation "eager for titillation and fascinated with its own navel" (Fenton, p. 4). This is mainly because news organizations cut back on foreign staff and international newsgathering, he argues. Fenton (2005) lists a series of causes for the decline in foreign news coverage. First of all, news now has the status of a profit earner, a business, whereas in the golden age networks expected their news divisions to bring prestige and branding rather than profit. Now soft news is the cheapest to produce and can make a substantial contribution to the bottom line. Moreover, the industry's codes of standards have declined, following the "if it bleeds, it leads" maxim, rather than emphasizing professional news judgment. Gossip and entertainment journalism expanded massively as a revenue-earning genre, a situation that lasted into the Afghan and Iraqi invasions, when editors had to send gossip reporters to war zones for lack of qualified personnel or rely on parachute journalism (Fenton, 2005).

Supporting this gloomy picture, in 1995, the *U.S. News and World Report* detailed that the three American networks used up nearly 30 hours covering the O.J. Simpson trial, twice as much time that was "allotted to the Bosnian war in its most virulent year involving American air strikes and commitment of the American infantry to keep the peace." The *Tyndall Report*, a bimonthly newsletter that tracks the total number of minutes of network news coverage, reported a total 4,828 minutes of foreign news for 1989, when the Berlin Wall came down. The networks' use of foreign bureaus declined continuously from its peak in 1989 through 1996, when it bottomed out to 2,270 minutes.

By 2000, The Tyndall Report shows further decline. The three networks (CBS, ABC, NBC) spent a combined 1,382 minutes on foreign news – a decline of 65 percent from 1989. The networks' interest in international stories then stabilized at around 15 percent of the total news hole, with a change in 2005, when international crises (type of events that also brought Morrow to the top) somewhat revived foreign news coverage.

McChesney and Scott (2004), among others, challenge the assumption that the United States is the home of “press freedom” and “*fiery Fourth Estate guardians like Edward R. Murrow.*” According to them, journalism, as well as public discourse in general, is in a severe crisis. The increasing concentration of media ownership, the business mindset that governs the resources and rationales of newsrooms and the deregulation of 1980s and 1990s diminished news. “It is a nightmare for journalists and the public” (McChesney and Scott, 2004, p. 25).

Fenton (2005) argues that the zenith of the Americans' awareness ran from World War II through the Cold War. That period marked the high point of foreign news, when American newspapers and networks had bureaus and correspondents around the world. In those years, CBS News put more resources into covering Paris than Chicago (p. 53). From the collapse of communism until the attacks of 9/11, the networks showed limited interest in the rest of the world, and even 9/11 caused only a temporary change in this trend. Fenton worries that we are now still a long way from the golden age of foreign news, even with the addition of the CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC 24-hour news channels. The withdrawal from foreign news has been drastic across the American news media, but most noticeably in broadcast (p. 53). This study tests if this gloomy picture applies to NPR and if indeed foreign news has regressed “from Murrow to mediocrity.”

## Mass Communication Theories of Media Content

The elements included in the proposed model for quality foreign news (Figure 1) come from several theories of mass communication that explain what kind of news is generally covered, why, and how, and the effects those choices might have on audiences. These theories don't necessarily tell us what the media *should do*, but researchers discussed the implications of their findings on what media *do* and sometimes expressed alarm and recommended changes. That is why the proposed model of quality journalism (Figure 1, page 19) uses elements from these studies but also from historical appraisals of the Murrow era and from textbook-type works like "The Elements of Journalism."

Gatekeeping, one of the oldest theories of mass communication, is defined as "the process through which social reality transmitted by the news media is constructed" (Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim, and Wrigley, 2001, p. 233). News flows in channels containing several gates controlled by gatekeepers who screen each news item and decide whether to let it proceed along the channel to ultimately reach a larger audience. This theory is relevant to this study because it looks at what gets in, what doesn't, and why. Various levels of gatekeeping, as described below, can be captured through both content analysis and interviews with reporters.

David Manning White (1950) first introduced the construct of gatekeeping in mass communication, adapting Kurt Lewin's research on how food choices change in a community as they are filtered through "channels" (such as the garden or market), with each channel entrance (store manager, shopper) being a "gate." White (1950) set out to determine why a wire editor rejected or accepted for publication news stories at a "morning newspaper of approximately 30,000 circulation in a highly industrialized mid-



west city of 100.000.” The editor, “Mr. Gates,” was asked to comment on rejected stories during the period of one week. White (1950) found that decisions for rejecting a news item were highly subjective and marked by personal experience, expectations, and values. White concluded that gatekeeping is a process that happens at all stages of the news-making process. Moreover, the gatekeeper, as a “direct representative of his culture,” affects how the public conceives of its community and its world (p. 390). Essentially, then, the gatekeeping theory in mass communication assumes that the news making process shapes readers’ reality.

Later, Gieber (1956) found that 16 editors whom he examined were “caught in a strait jacket of mechanical details,” such as deadlines, a limited pool of press association wires, and other work routines (p. 432). This finding suggested a second level to the individual gatekeeping – the organizational constraints.

Seventeen years after White’s seminal work, Snider (1967) replicated the case study using the same “Mr. Gates” and found that he used thrice as many Associated Press stories than in 1949. Snider reported a “slump” in both national and international political categories. Gates’ main reason for discarding stories was insufficient space, another important organizational constraint. It is possible that such decline in original reporting and in international coverage may have happened on radio as well over time.

Bass (1969) further extended gatekeeping theory with a more sophisticated study on the U.N. radio that critiqued White’s study for being simplistic. He noted that White’s focus on the telegraph editor was misplaced because he was not “the key decision maker” (p. 71). Bass introduced the “double-action internal news flow” model that showed the flow from “raw news” into the “completed product” for news consumers. Bass argued

that “news gatherers” (reporters and line editors) are different from “news processors” (editors and translators). He urged researchers to pay more attention to *newsgathering* rather than to news processing, since stories that are not reported will never reach a point where they can be processed. Indeed, this study scrutinizes the foreign correspondents, their work, their routines and journalistic philosophies rather than the editors.

Similarly, Brown (1979) further criticized White’s study for failing to consider a fundamental methodological concept of Lewin’s gatekeeping theory, which clearly pointed out that a gatekeeper does not act independently but instead has power that is “interdependent with other channel regions and ranges of impartial rules” (p. 595). White’s methodology assumed that the wire editor was the only gatekeeper of the channel. Without focusing on the external pressures on a gatekeeper and the “rules” of gatekeeping, Brown argued, White missed a key point raised by Lewin’s seminal work.

Indeed, in a book that tracks the history of this theory, Pamela Shoemaker (1991) shows how gatekeeping is applied at the individual, communication routine, organizational, and institutional level. Moreover, the book concludes with a new gatekeeping model that acknowledges individual gatekeepers working within a single institution, pressured by internal and external forces along the channels, and also by feedback. The model, like other mass communication models, recognizes effects on gatekeepers from the individual to the organizational to the institution to society.

While early gatekeeping studies primarily focused on information selection and filtering patterns in daily newspapers (Tichenor et al., 1973; White, 1950), with time, more scholars began to test gatekeeping in electronic and broadcast media (Berkowitz, 1990; Carroll, 1985). Recent studies have identified a number of previously

underexplored variables or forces that influence the gatekeeping process, resulting primarily from social (Donohue, Olien, and Tichenor, 1989; Pollock, 2002), individual (Shoemaker et al., 2001), economic and organizational (Livingston and Bennett, 2003) realms.

Gates are often thought of as “decision points” at which information gets either selected or rejected. For instance, economic or business forces of gatekeeping make the news media select stories that have substantial consumer appeal. News content as a product must be manufactured and distributed in a way that effectively fulfills the demands of the marketplace and maximizes media outlets’ investment returns (Livingston and Bennett, 2003). Surveys have shown that editors consider anticipated reader interest as one of the most important factors in their professional decision-making (Chang and Lee, 1992). Research also indicates that media with strong market orientation run fewer stories about public affairs and more items about lifestyle and sports (soft news) than media with relatively weak market orientation (Beam, 2003). Since NPR is a public outlet, it is expected to cover more hard news. Interviews with NPR correspondents will explore both economic and organizational constraints.

Other critics of the gatekeeping theory, Reese and Ballinger (2001), said gatekeeping overlooks framing of the message and implies that the individual choices have no systematic pattern. That is why this dissertation examines the content of foreign news with variables suggested by both the gatekeeping and framing theories, while also acknowledging the role of the newsmakers and of the historical context.

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) described five levels of analysis in gatekeeping research. Two, the individual and routines, are at the micro-level, and three,

organizational, extra-media and societal, are at the macro-level. The individual level examines gatekeeper attitudes and patterns of authority and influence (White's examination of an editor's news decisions). Another example of this level of research is examining the *prestige of an individual reporter*. This dissertation will explore this by profiling the foreign correspondents at the two networks under study.

At a second level, routines facilitate processing large amounts of information and affect content selection, such as deadlines, the inverted pyramid, AP style, and news beats (specific areas assigned to reporters to cover). They are journalistic standards, ethics codes, and other medium-specific techniques. Shoemaker gives *news values* and deadlines as examples.

An examination of news values in the selection process is included in the content analysis part of this dissertation, whereas exploration of journalistic standards will be tackled in the interviews with reporters and editors.

The organizational level examines variables such as news flow, ownership patterns, and what routines are common across media, such as policies on covering topics in certain ways. The extra-media, or the social/institutional level covers areas outside of mass media that can influence what is selected or excluded, including government, advertising, and interest groups. Research on *sources*, which will also be examined in the content analysis part of this dissertation, is performed at this level. Finally, the social system level examines variables such as ideology and culture, which can be captured through historical research and interviews.

Also as part of the gatekeeping research, scholars have found that, because of anticipated preferences of the audiences or of advertising pressures, in the recent years

media tend to open their news gates for *soft news* rather than *hard news* (Scott and Gobetz, 1990, a development highly criticized by Fenton (2005). In a content analysis of a large sample of randomly selected news stories during the period 1980 to 1999, Patterson (2000, pp. 3–4) found that the proportion of soft news (that is, news that really isn't news, or is of little consequence and has no explicit public policy component) increased dramatically from less than 35 percent of all news stories in 1980 to roughly 50 percent in 1999.

The content of news shifted from substantial levels of reporting on political, international, science or health problems “to an increasing proportion of soft news features that resemble entertainment formulas more than they represent the kind of hard information that citizens might use in grasping the political events that affect their lives” (Bennett 2004, p. 283).

While some researchers like Patterson and Bennett are warning of the negative consequences of the proliferation of soft news, others are pointing out increases in factual knowledge associated with consuming soft news programming, at least among relatively apolitical segments of the public (Baum 2003, p. 187). For inattentive citizens, according to Jamison and Baum (2004), consuming soft news is a more efficient way to learn about unfamiliar public policy debates than consuming traditional hard news. Prior (2003), on the other hand, found that public demand for soft news is limited. Additional studies of local news stories in 50 television markets nationwide showed that “solid reporting and focus on significant issues actually produces better ratings, and reporting hard news stimulates viewer interest” (Just and Belt 2004, p. 20). In the content analytic part, the present dissertation will also examine the extent of *soft* versus *hard news coverage* during

the two periods. Soft news is not to be mistaken with human-interest stories. Soft news refers to a type of story, one that some media critics define as “fluff” news because it doesn’t deal with formal or serious events that people *need* to know about, but rather with slices of life, culture, or entertainment that people *want* to know about. Human interest, on the other hand, is operationalized as a technique in this study. That is, hard news can use human interest – zooming in on a person or anecdote that stands for the whole, in order to better explain a larger issue.

Important elements of gatekeeping at the routine level are newsworthiness aspects or news values. News values are not selection criteria invented this century. They have been observed and commented on as early as the late seventeenth century. In the 1695 work “Uses and Gratifications/Pleasures of Newspapers” (*Zeitungs Lust und Nutz*), reprinted in Germany in 1969, German author Kaspar von Stieler mentions two selection criteria, importance and proximity of events, and also notes that dramatic or negative events such as war and crime are bound to increase reader interest (Westerstahl and Johansson, 1994, p. 72). Walter Lippmann’s book on public opinion (1922) is considered the first modern American work about news values. In 1965, Norwegians Johan Galtung and Mari Ruge established a more systematic list of news values in the *Journal of International Peace Research*, and their paper, “The structure of foreign news,” has since been regarded as a landmark study of news values and news selection (Watson, 1998, p. 117). They set out to understand how events become news, and their final list of news values included *frequency* (the less often a type of event occurs, the more likely it gets picked up by the media); *threshold* (or impact, such as number of casualties); *unambiguity* (the event can be easily understood); *meaningfulness* (in cultural terms);

*consonance* (the extent to which events adhere to a pre-image of how things should be that news selectors have in mind before even covering the event; a news value hard to measure); *unexpectedness* (surprises); *continuity* (ongoing events that readers are already familiar with); and references to *elite nations*, *elite people*, and *negative* aspects.

Peterson, whose two studies on foreign news and international news selection (1979, 1981) asked for journalists' input, found support for the hypotheses advanced by Galtung and Ruge (1965). She conducted interviews with journalists at the London *Times* and concluded that, "news criteria shape a picture of the world's events characterized by erratic, dramatic and uncomplicated surprise, by negative or conflictual events involving elite nations and persons" (Peterson, 1979, 1981, cited in McQuail, 1992, p. 217).

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) compiled all these foundation studies and, based on them, proposed a more straightforward list of news values that journalism should meet, such as *prominence or importance of people involved*, *human interest*, *conflict/controversy*, *novelty*, *timeliness*, and *proximity*, all of which will be explored in this study.

A diverse pool of news values is ideal – not within the same story, but across the news content of an organization. Rosenblum (1979) and Hess (1996) argue that international news events covered by the Western media are predominantly concerned with conflict or violence. Hess (1996), for example, contends that the actions of foreign governments have a higher likelihood of being covered by the U.S. media if they are involved in violence and conflicts. There are several factors that determine coverage of international news. It is not only the conflict, but also economic and political relations, and geographic and cultural proximity, which ultimately determine what foreign news

events are covered. Another key factor is the desire of media consumers to know about powerful countries whose action could affect them (McQuail, 2005). Both World War II and the Iraq War II involve conflicts between powerful nations, and variables in the content analysis will capture not only the main location of each story, but also the number of countries mentioned in each story, to measure the geographic scope of each news item.

This dissertation operationalizes newsworthiness elements as they were defined by Shoemaker and Reese (1996). News values often correspond to frames (for instance, emphasizing human interest or conflict). That is why, in the content analysis, some news values were left out, as they were captured by other variables, such as locality (which tackles *proximity*), news type (if a story is coded as breaking news, then it is *timely*), and *human interest*, under framing.

### **The Importance of Framing to Quality Journalism**

Gatekeeping examines what gets in, what doesn't, and why. Framing examines how issues are evaluated, or from which perspective they are reported. The two theories are part of the sociology of news, which studies how media select and create news, with gatekeeping as a root. Just like with news values, diversity of framing is essential to good news reporting.

According to Entman (1993, p. 52), "To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described." Frames emerge in the media in the form of present or absent *key words* or *sources* of information (Entman, 1993). The way information is framed affects the way people come to understand that issue.



Within the context of this study, the framing of foreign news might advance certain perceptions of and even actions about the war or the foreign issues reported. Several researchers have shown how news framing influences individuals' information processing and social judgments (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997; Iyengar, 1991; Shah et al., 2004; Shah et al., 1996). These scholars argue that journalists emphasize specific orienting and organizing frames over others in their news coverage, subtly changing the perceptions about a topic among audience members (Pan and Kosicki, 1993; Price and Tewksbury, 1997). This process leads people to form individual interpretations of issues and act in ways that support these views.

In an analysis of how contesting and conflicting frames emerge in war coverage, a group of researchers noted that "the media can select to focus on the destruction of war as opposed to freedom from tyranny, can frame the event as an invasion versus attack, can emphasize the victims versus invaders, and can highlight a positive versus negative attitude toward the war" (Dimitrova et al., 2005, p 26).

Research has indicated that shifts between news frames (e.g., political strategy versus policy, episodic versus thematic) influence the process and outcome of social judgments ranging from political cynicism to political support (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997; Iyengar, 1991; Shah et al., 1996). Thus, the news media perform the role of political actor in public discourse, social movements, and political debates, because they have the capability to emphasize the significance of certain issues while downplaying others. "Frames invite us to think about social phenomena in a certain way. Framing studies have examined, for example, the effects of information emphasizing positive or

negative aspects, the individual or the collective, and the episodic or the thematic” (Reese, 2001, p. 27).

In war framing research, *tone of coverage* has been a popular variable. For instance, during the 1991 Gulf War, research found a definite positive bias toward U.S. military actions in the CNN coverage of the conflict (Kaid et al. 1994). In a comparative analysis of Iraq War II coverage, Dimitrova et al. (2005) found that online news in countries officially supporting the war were more positive in tone than in the countries opposing the war. More than 33 percent of the coverage in countries not supporting the war was negative as opposed to only 15 percent in countries officially supporting the war. The researchers concluded that the different tones, reflecting the position of dominant national actors and institutions, support McQuail’s (1994, p. 175) proposition that “mass media institutions are still overwhelmingly national in character, although the international flow of mass communication is large and growing in volume.” The present dissertation tests this proposition in the case of CBS during World War II and of NPR during the Iraq War II.

In a content analysis of television war coverage, Kang (2005) found news about the war in Iraq was more episodic than thematic and contained more positive than negative framing in affective attributes of the war news. Results also found that news attributes about the Iraq war showed similarities between the poll results and television news coverage, indicating an agenda setting effect and the importance of framing. In this study, *tone* was defined as positive if the coverage of the two wars included positive references toward the U.S. position on the wars. Antiwar references indicated negative coverage. A neutral or mixed tone category was also included to capture coverage that

was neither supportive of the war nor opposing the war. The same frames (episodic versus thematic) and tone will be captured in the present dissertation.

In 1991, political scientist Shanto Iyengar found that most television news is framed in terms of individuals, which he labeled “episodic.” As a consequence, audiences hold the depicted individuals (e.g., ill or poor people) responsible for their situation, without considering contextual factors. The episodic news frame “takes the form of a case study or event-oriented report and depicts public issues in terms of concrete instances” (Iyengar, 1991, p.14), while thematic frames provide broader societal context to issues and events. Examples of episodic coverage include the experiences of a soldier suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome, an isolated victory or conflict, or the bombing of a commercial airliner. Examples of common episodic frames in war coverage include the conflict frame and the human-interest frame (Li and Izard, 2003; Dimitrova, 2006). Examples of thematic frames include the prognostic and diagnostic frame. The former discusses the consequences of actions or events, while the latter provides background on the causes for actions or events (Dimitrova, 2006). Thematic frames are less common in breaking news coverage.

For instance, Pfau et al. (2004) used quantitative content analysis to study the framing decisions made by embedded American journalists during the Iraq War. They found that embedded journalists’ stories were more positive and used more episodic frames than stories produced by non-embedded journalists. Their analysis of four major U.S. daily newspapers also showed that coverage was event-oriented. Similarly, Lee (2004) examined the war coverage in three daily newspapers – *The New York Times*, *Arab News* and *Middle East Times* – and found that more than 88 percent of the sampled

items were episodic. Iyengar and Simon (1994), who studied the television news coverage of the first Gulf War, concluded that episodic framing dominated the war discourse. In war coverage, where events unfold, episodic frames are more common and as a consequence, during the invasion phase of Iraq War II, episodic frames dominated (Dimitrova et al., 2005).

Episodic stories fail to provide the audience the insight into the larger social and political circumstances contributing to the individual problem (Dorfman, Wallach, and Woodruff, 2005). Thematic stories, however, while still engaging viewers with a personal story or anecdote, provide the audience more background, consequences, and other context information. The thematic frame “places public issues in some more general or abstract context and takes the form of a ‘takeout,’ or ‘backgrounder,’ report directed at general outcomes or conditions” (Iyengar, 1991, p. 14). For military conflicts such as Iraq War II, which raised questions about the legitimacy and moral basis of the US-led invasion, thematic framing and contextualization became crucial in offering the public a fair picture of what was happening. Iyengar and McGrady (2005) argue that competition and concern for the bottom line explain the media’s propensity toward episodic framing. “Market pressures on news organizations have created a bias in favor of episodic framing. The constant pursuit of high ratings means that the news must capture and hold the attention of the audience” (p. 234). Episodic coverage, focusing on concrete incidents and events, are more “emotionally involving” and more likely to arrest people’s attention (Baum, 2003, p. 235) than in-depth analyses. Norris (1997, p. 13) argues that “the use of episodic rather than thematic frames may lead to less effective public deliberation about the serious policy problems facing the United States.”

The episodic vs. thematic framing research dovetails with another line of scholarship that looks at how event-centered news stories are. In a longitudinal content analysis of three U.S. newspapers that spanned a century, Barnhurst and Mutz (1997) rated on a 10-point scale the emphasis of stories from highly specific, event-centered coverage (1) to very general news analysis (10). They found that, while coverage included progressively more analysis over time, the stories overall were more event-centered than analytic, with the scale scores being consistently under 5.

Michael Schudson (1978, p. 120) argues that foreign correspondents at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century followed a strict empirical diet – just the facts – in an effort to achieve journalistic objectivity. After World War I, many journalists came to believe that facts were no longer enough. The rise of propaganda, the expansion of censorship, and the invention of public relations meant that news reports were increasingly seen as one-sided. Reporters could no longer regurgitate the information they heard. They had to evaluate it and put it in broader context.

Walter Lippmann (1931) wrote that especially news on foreign affairs required moving beyond facts to interpretation, “an exploration, tentative, sympathetic, and without dogmatic preconception” (p.163). In order to save readers from bewilderment and indifference, journalists must explain why and how things happened and what they meant. It was time to abandon the “almost fanatical insistence upon facts served so entirely without background as to be practically unintelligible” (Desmond, 1937, p. 8).

Barnhurst (2005, p. 257) argues that oftentimes events cannot speak for themselves, and left without interpretation or interrelation, they can confuse audiences. The coverage of the McCarthy hearings in 1950 was the crisis that once and for all

confirmed the limitations of event-centered news, according to Barnhurst (2005). When Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy mounted his attacks in early 1950, accusing industries, universities, and the broadcasters themselves of being secret communists, the media simply reported who said what. McCarthy dragged innocent people into the public eye, and his unfounded accusations harmed their reputation and lives. Thematic framing, therefore, can be essential in enabling understanding of complex issues.

### **News Domestication – Local Frames for Global News**

Edward Bliss (Bliss, 1967, p. 6) pointed to Murrow's technique of explaining how the foreign events he covered related to the American. Indeed, through framing, reporters can help make stories on global issues relevant to local audiences. Gurevitch, Levy, and Roeh (1991) introduced the notion of news "domestication" in a European study of international news. The researchers found in a content analysis of foreign news that media maintain "both global and culturally specific orientations. This is accomplished, first, by casting far-away events in frameworks that render these events comprehensible, appealing and 'relevant' to domestic audiences; and second, by constructing the meanings of these events in ways that are compatible with the culture and the dominant ideology of societies they serve" (Gurevitch et al. 1991, p. 206). The authors argue that, "in order to be judged newsworthy, an event must be anchored in a narrative framework that is already familiar to and recognizable by newsmen as well as by audiences" (Gurevitch et al. 1991, p. 207). Therefore, framing of events becomes even more important because it facilitates comprehension of the information conveyed. In order to test Bliss' (1967) description of Murrow's style and to gauge the level of "domestication" of foreign news during the two periods, this study will also capture local framing.

## **The Importance of Sources**

Source selection is a key component of the final news product, and it is important to consider the implications of using the same sources over time. While sources alone do not determine the news, “they go a long way in focusing the journalists’ attention on the social order... Neither do sources alone determine the values in the news, but their values are implicit in the information they provide” (Gans, 1979, p. 145).

Sources are of interest to both gatekeeping and framing scholars. Gatekeeping studies by Gieber (1964), Epstein (1973), and Dimmick (1974) found that news selection is influenced not only by the journalists’ individual preferences, but also by official sources, such as government and corporate officials. And journalists also engage in news framing by selecting certain sources and making them more salient than others (Entman, 1993).

A large portion of the news coverage consists of what a quite narrow range of news sources say and do on any given day. Decades of news research confirmed that sources in official or authoritative positions are more likely to get their voices heard (Gans, 1979, Cook, 1998, Bennett 1990). By selecting specific sources, reporters give them legitimacy and gain legitimacy themselves, while individuals who do not appear in news coverage must use alternate means to gain access to audiences. Along with officials, especially in more recent decades, business leaders or professionals have built a fairly solid relationship with the media, and their voices often appear in news stories. Other sources, such as grassroots groups or lesser-known interest groups, generally have to work harder to get their messages across. Scholars, such as Gans (1979), suggest that official sources seem to gain additional legitimacy within the media because of their

proximity to reporters. “The most regular sources develop an almost institutionalized relationship with the news organizations, for beat reporters are assigned to them. The beat reporters become virtual allies of these sources, either because they develop symbiotic relationships or because they identify with them” (Gans, 1979, p. 144).

Socialization and cultivation research suggest that media audiences learn about the world through media depictions (Bandura, 1977; Gerbner, 1994). This hypothesis applies even more to foreign news, which depicts realities that readers could never learn of first-hand. Source diversity is bound to shape their perceptions of remote places and events. Finally, source selection and diversity have been found to impact perceived credibility of stories and reporters (Cozma, 2006). In a study of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, Sigal (cited in Bennett, 1988) found that government sources were the main sources in nearly 47 percent of the items. Foreign news reflected a similar direction, with 27.5 percent of the sources being U.S. government officials. Upon reporting the findings of extensive use of official sources in the two newspapers, Bennett (1988) commented, “Even the best journalism in the land is extremely dependent on the political messages of a small spectrum of ‘official sources’” (p. 96).

A more recent study of Pulitzer Prize-winning foreign news at the *New York Times* spanning eight decades (Cozma, Hamilton, and Lawrence, 2008) found that the number of official sources has remained the same, while the voice of average witnesses has increased, and the citing of local media from foreign capitals has decreased. Foreign news in the past focused more on politics and included a stronger reporter’s voice. Radio is expected to follow a similar pattern, with a reduced reliance on official sources and local media during the Iraq War II compared to news coverage during World War II.



Another study focused on the framing of the war on terrorism in the 10 largest newspapers in the United States (Ryan, 2004). An analysis of editorials immediately after September 11 until the bombing of Afghanistan showed that editorial writers used official government sources frequently, relying most often on U.S. government officials. The framing of the war was often one-dimensional and suggested a binary split in the world. The editors implied that military attack was the remedy and the only possible response to the September 11 events (Ryan, 2004). Ryan also found that the moral and practical consequences (thematic frame) of the American military strikes were rarely discussed.

History of foreign news has also shown that the news media and the military have cohabited in a cozy relationship (Knightley, 2000), although at different stages friendships have become acrimonious, most notably during the Vietnam conflict (Hallin, 1986) and Iraq Wars I and II (Thussu and Freedman, 2003). Reliance on military sources will be explored in this study as well. The practice of embedded journalism during the Iraq War (news reporters being attached to military units involved in armed conflicts) is expected to translate into a higher number of military sources as well as in more frequent human-interest framing (the war presented from the soldiers' perspective).

Supporting this pattern of the prominent placement of officials in the news is another pattern that is rarely commented on by scholars: the simple fact that reporters are expected to make clear who their sources *are*. Given the growing concern with credibility, modern reporters are trained to attribute all statements and viewpoints to particular, identified sources (unless anonymity is granted under special circumstances). This habit of attribution has made researching sourcing patterns in the news relatively easy. Researchers count and categorize all the names listed in an article to whom

information or viewpoints are attributed. But recent research, however, has shown that reporters used to and still do things rather differently (Cozma, Hamilton, and Lawrence, 2008), using so-called *pseudo-attributions*, that is, insertions along the lines of “it’s been reported,” “This reporter was told,” or “sources in the know say” without specifying who the source actually is. The researchers found that this kind of unattributed assertion was equally common between 1930 and 1960, when reporters were given greater freedom to report their impressions as news, as it is in modern Pulitzer-Prize winning foreign news at the *New York Times*.

In their seminal content analysis of the *New York Times*’ coverage of the Bolshevik Revolution, Lippmann and Merz (1920) observed that “...even more misleading than the official statement purporting to be a statement of fact, is the semi-official and semi-authoritative but anonymous statement” (Lippmann and Merz, 1920, p. 41). They said that behind such phrases as “Officials of the State Department,” “reports reaching here,” and “it is stated on high authority” “may be anybody, a minor bureaucrat, a dinner table conversation, hotel lobby gossip, a chance acquaintance, a paid agent.” Obviously troubled by this practice, Lippmann and Merz argued, “it is time to demand that the correspondent take the trouble to identify his informants sufficiently to supply the reader with some means of estimating the character of the report” (1920, p. 41).

Indeed, among his guidelines for radio correspondents during World War II, Paul White, the news chief at CBS, cautioned in a memorandum: “We must at all times be careful to label information for what it is. We must try to distinguish fact from rumor, official information from semiofficial “high sources,” and so on, and from mere gossip” (White, 1941, p. 85). Quality journalism should therefore avoid pseudo-attributions.

This study examines the sourcing during both wars and also the reliance on pseudo-attributions. It also investigates whether the correspondents attribute their information at all. An *originality of reporting* variable was created to differentiate among stories that don't make their sources clear or known at all, stories that were clipped from other media outlets, stories that resulted from the reporter's observation (from a fixed point, without much newsgathering, or from a press conference), and stories that resulted from active newsgathering and interviewing of diverse sources.

To understand sourcing, one must understand the particular conventions governing it at any one time. What an editor might not allow today was standard practice a few decades ago. Correspondents of yore were elites, often with many years of experience abroad, very likely to see themselves as diplomats and to cultivate the powerful. Therefore, it is likely to find them quoting native and U.S. officials during World War II more often than they do nowadays. They were also more likely to be given leeway to occasionally speak in the first person in the 1940s (Cozma, Hamilton, and Lawrence, 2008).

Similarly, the use of unnamed sources is somewhat controversial nowadays. Research, however, has indicated that anonymous sources are critical to American journalism and more than a newsgathering tool, providing positive benefits to diversity of voices and thought in the marketplace of ideas (Blankenburg, 1992). It is likely, therefore, that the content analysis will reveal more such sources during World War II foreign news.

Last, but not least, the sheer amount of *space* dedicated to a story is bound to affect how well that story is told and how well it is understood by its target public. In

broadcast, the conventional wisdom is that ever-shortening attention spans require ever-shorter stories (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 190). The evidence, however, suggests that this perception is misguided and hurts journalism. A multiyear study of local television news by the Project for Excellence in Journalism found that newscasts that do more very-short stories of fewer than 45 seconds (which is about 100 words) tend to lose audiences. The networks that dedicate more than two minutes to a story (more than 300 words) tend to gain audiences (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 190). Longer stories aren't necessarily boring if they use that space to better describe and explain what happened and to make the news relevant to the audience.

### **Research Questions**

Building on the theoretical and historical framework reviewed above, and using the proposed model for quality foreign news as its central instrument, this dissertation sets out to answer the research questions below. Answers to questions 1 and 3 will help establish what the Murrow tradition was.

**RQ1. *Who were the Murrow Boys?*** Historical research and analysis of experts' evaluations over time will shed light on the professional ethos characterizing the Murrow boys and will establish who the Murrow Boys were. Profiles will focus on careers, skills, years spent overseas, education, training, editorial philosophy, and other social demographics of the foreign correspondents working for CBS News during World War II.

**RQ2. *Who are the NPR Boys and Girls?*** Following the pattern in RQ1, the author will determine the social demographics of the NPR foreign news department and compare them with the golden age group, as described by the answer to RQ1.

**RQ3. *What did the Murrow Boys report in their foreign correspondence?***

Content analysis of World War II foreign news coverage at CBS News will focus on story selection and length, news formats, story-telling techniques, framing and sourcing. Extensive readings of previous media content research and historical appraisals and criticisms of the Murrow era informed the categories included in the code sheet for the content analysis.

**RQ4. *What does the new generation of correspondents report in NPR's foreign news?*** The content analysis of modern foreign correspondence in NPR newscasts – “The Morning Edition” will employ the same variables as in RQ3.

**RQ5. *What accounts for the differences and similarities in foreign correspondence during the two eras?*** In-depth interviews with NPR correspondents and editors will offer context to the content analysis and biographical findings. Questions will concentrate on professional roles and practices, goals, careers, standards, constraints, and views on foreign correspondence, its evolution, and the Murrow tradition.

## **CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY**

To answer the research questions formulated above, this study employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques.

### **Historical Research**

Historical research was used to analyze the rise of CBS foreign news department and to profile the foreign correspondents of the time. Memoirs, biographies, archives and encyclopedias were studied to determine the journalistic philosophy of the correspondents and their socio-demographics - who the foreign correspondents were, their experience and training, their roles, goals and careers. The same was done for the NPR correspondents. Histories of NPR (McCauley, 2005; McCourt, 1999; Mitchell, 2005) were consulted for details about the birth, growth and maturation of NPR, as well as the political and cultural forces that led to the formation of the network, in order to capture the characteristics of the foreign news department and the journalistic philosophy about foreign correspondence at NPR. Interviews then filled the inherent gaps and allowed the NPR professionals to comment on the findings of the content analysis.

### **Content Analysis**

Content analysis, defined as “a research technique for the systematic, objective, and quantitative description of the manifest content in communication” (Berelson, 1952, p. 18), helped establish the quality of foreign correspondence at CBS during WWII and at NPR during the Iraq War. Variables that measure quality of foreign news were borrowed from several theoretical studies and combined in the model proposed in Figure 1 (page 16).

Why content analysis? First of all, because there's a large body of data (CBS newscasts) that tells an important story about the time it was produced and that nobody has looked at in a systematic way. The method helped consolidate research on coverage trends over time, and this is partly what this dissertation seeks to accomplish. Quantitative analysis, through reduction to numbers of large amounts of information and reliability checks, makes generalizations possible and allows discerning patterns in large samples of material.

Generally, content analyses concern only the manifest or surface content of communication because only this content can be studied "objectively" (Perry, 2002, p. 101). Researchers must describe precisely how they conducted the study, allowing other investigators to replicate it. The term *systematic* means that researchers may not select only those pieces of content that support their hypotheses, but must look at all that is relevant or at a representative sample.

Several scholars have complained about the large number of merely descriptive content analyses (Shoemaker and Reese, 1990; Riffe and Freitag, 1997). These studies usually concern issues of content, such as how much violence is on television and to what extent different media present stereotypical images of ethnic, sexual or age groups.

Shoemaker and Reese (1990, p. 649) warn that one-shot studies that are not linked "in any systematic way to either the forces that created the content or to its effects" will bring mass communication research at a dead end until integration occurs. That is why this study examines the people behind the news as well, compares two different eras, and asks contemporary foreign correspondents to reflect upon the results of the content analysis.

The analysis covered two years for each period (starting a year after the outset of each war – when the routines of covering the wars are arguably set in place). World War II foreign news stories were randomly selected for the period from September 1940 to September 1942, and for the Iraq War II from March 2004 to March 2006.

The sampling unit, that is, the physical unit selected for study, differed slightly between the two periods for reasons beyond the researcher's control. For the World War II period, this study analyzed a random sample of CBS world news roundups<sup>6</sup> ("The World Today") instead of regular newscasts because these are the only news programs saved systematically and exhaustively during that time by a local CBS affiliate, KIRO AM 710, in Seattle, WA. Copies are available in the Milo Ryan Phonoarchive at both Washington University and the National Archives. While copies or transcripts of other CBS news programs featuring the Murrow boys are available in different collections and books, these are disparate reproductions that cannot make a systematic sample<sup>7</sup>. The roundup newscasts run for 15 minutes each, so the full sample runs for 12 hours. Each newscast contains about ten stories, and the final CBS sample was  $N_{\text{CBS}}=471$ .

For the Iraq War period, I analyzed a random sample of morning newscasts ("Morning Edition"). I chose this newscast because, in radio, according to the Dictionary of Marketing Terms, prime time is considered the morning segment between 6 a.m. and

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<sup>6</sup> The World News Roundup was a radio newscast that aired weekday mornings and evenings on the CBS Radio Network. It first went on-air on March 13, 1938 at 8 p.m. Eastern time as a one-time special in response to growing tensions in Europe - specifically the *Anschluss*, during which Adolf Hitler annexed Austria. When the show first went on the air it was hosted by veteran radio personality Robert Trout, who introduced Edward R. Murrow from Vienna and William L. Shirer from London, among others. In fact, it was the first time Murrow delivered a news report.

<sup>7</sup> CBS itself only has a handful of major radio broadcasts. John Frazee, Senior Vice President, News Services, CBS News, recommended using the Milo Ryan Phonoarchive as the only collection of CBS broadcasts representative for World War II.



10 a.m. (driving time). With nearly 13 million listeners, “Morning Edition” draws public radio’s largest audience, placing it on par with CBS News during World War II, which had about 12 million listeners. Also, unlike “All Things Considered,” “Morning Edition” tends to contain more hard news and is more standardized, relying on a formula that arranges relatively shorter stories meant to serve an audience of commuters. “All Things Considered” is less tightly structured, which permits more variety and more long-form reporting. Over time, however, the two programs came to resemble each other, with the afternoon program adopting some of the patterns of its morning counterpart, and the morning program moving in the direction of longer-form reports (Barnhurst, 2003).

The units of analysis (coding units) for the study are the stories within a newscast. For the NPR newscasts, to focus on in-depth coverage, the coding and analysis excluded news summaries and teasers that open the programs and the recaps and next-ups that air each half hour. While all stories were acknowledged (to capture the proportion of foreign news), only foreign news were coded in detail. Foreign news is defined as copy about events and issues abroad – originating either from countries outside the United States or from Washington (e.g. foreign policy stories).

### **Sample**

For both networks, random stratified samples were developed for each year of study. Riffe, Lacy, and Fico (2005) suggest that randomly selecting two days for each month’s newscasts during the year is the most efficient form of sampling for broadcast news content. Having two networks with 24 days per year (2 random days from January, 2 days from February, etc.) for two years, the final sample was N=96 newscasts, with 471 stories from World War II and 273 stories from the Iraq War II. The author transcribed

the contents of the audio tapes from the Milo Ryan Phonoarchive at the National Archives (for World War II coverage) to make coding convenient. The transcripts for NPR's "Morning Edition" were available both on Lexis Nexis and in the online NPR archives, and the audio files on the NPR website.

### **Coding Scheme**

The elements of the proposed model for quality foreign news were recorded with a series of variables listed in APPENDIX B.

Among the manifest measures of quality foreign news, the author and an independent coder analyzed each news item for location (country in the world where the news is from) and other countries mentioned (geographic scope and domestication), reporting mode (live or recorded) and news type (hard versus soft news).

Schudson and Dokoupil (2007) argue that fast-breaking, popular, and informal *live* reporting is also measurably thinner, more opinionated, and less densely sourced than other news forms. It is the so-called "journalism of assertion," where reporters perform off the cuff or from hasty notes and where information is disseminated with only minimal attempts to check it out. We know from Paul W. White's reports that all news items in the world roundup were delivered live. This study aims to see how differently foreign news is presented today, and if that difference correlates with changes in news quality as well. For instance, according to the 2006 "State of the News Media" report (Pew Research Center), 60 percent of live stories on radio and television are based on a single identifiable source, and 78 percent include only one side, or mostly one side, of an issue. Forty-seven percent include reportorial opinion.

This study operationalized *news type* using definitions from Scott and Gobetz (1990). Stories were coded as hard news if they focused on issues of ongoing policy consideration, factual accounting of current public events, or social issues and controversies that concern members of the audience. They were coded as soft news if they focused on human interest topics or non-policy issues

Coders further coded stories for *timeliness* (an important news value) in order to differentiate between breaking (news stories that report current news events and are time-sensitive) and non-breaking news (stories that report information or events that occurred more than 24 hours before its presentation. Stories include features or analyses, as well as human interest stories that are less time-sensitive, such as the coverage of important social, economic, legal, or technological trends; investigative reports which uncover ongoing corruption, waste, or immorality; or discussion of unsettled political issues without any special reason).

Building on a radio content analysis by Barnhurst (2003), coders had to identify the *news format* of each story. Categories included anchor reader (news report read by announcer in the studio), actuality (sound bite from a source), reporter voicer (news report given by correspondent, without natural sound or sound bites), interview (by anchor or reporter), interview with guest foreign correspondent, package (news report combined with natural sound and sound bites), feature (a radio documentary covering a particular topic in some depth, usually with a mixture of commentary, sound bites, natural sound and even music), and commentary (analysis and interpretation of foreign affairs).

Based on Allen's categories (2005) for newspaper content, radio stories were coded for *news focus* as well. The content focus categories were political, social/cultural, economic, and other. Political stories focus on diplomatic and/or military activities that underpin governance of states and other political units. They may include human rights issues and violence related to politics (i.e., ethnic cleansing). Public health and environmental issues may be included if a political unit discusses the issue as a societal threat (i.e., AIDS or global warming). The social/cultural stories focus on crime, disasters, lifestyle/travel, religion, arts/media/entertainment, food; society news, science/technology, weather, and sports.

Coders selected the economic focus if the news item reported an event, problem, or issue in terms of the economic impact on an individual, group, institution, region, or country; if the item mentions financial gains/losses now or in the future; or if the costs/degree of expense involved is discussed. The item may refer to the economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action.

Finally, "other" stories could be about weather (excluding natural disasters) or other miscellaneous topics not covered by the first three categories.

Another variable captured the type of journalist that delivered the news (anchor in studio, reporter on the scene in the U.S. and reporter on the scene overseas).

The coders further had to ascertain *who initiated the news story* - whether a story was based on planned/ routine events, such as institutional proceedings (pseudo-events), on spontaneous events, or on the journalist's independent newsgathering (Lawrence, 2000; Livingston and Bennett, 2003). The planned, administratively managed, and coordinated events include press conferences, hearings, court cases, negotiations,

speeches, or meetings between officials. Unmanaged news reports activities are, at least at their initial occurrence, spontaneous and not driven by officials within institutional settings (such as violent acts, natural disasters, or accidents). Other stories, like features, analyses and investigations, originate from the journalists' independent newsgathering.

For *news values*, coders had to identify the presence or absence of some newsworthiness elements as defined by Shoemaker and Reese (1996), including *conflict* (if the item discussed a disagreement between or among parties or involved either physical or ideological disputes, disaster, crime, or violence), *impact* (if the information affects a lot of people), *unusual* (if the story is about something out of ordinary, bizarre or novel), and *human interest* (if the story is about children, animals, old people, regular people or soldiers living their lives, overcoming adversity, etc.). While all these values are important by themselves because they have been shown to attract the public's attention, comprehensive news coverage needs to meet as many of these news values as possible.

Based on Iyengar's framing dichotomy (1991), the coding captured whether the framing of the story was *episodic* (focusing on isolated news events, focusing on discrete cases, people or episodes) or *thematic* (providing broader societal context to issues and events, such as discussions of policy or possible political consequences, etc.). Thematic stories that go beyond the here-and-now enable a better understanding of complex or unfamiliar issues. To capture the framing of the two wars, the coding scheme of Dimitrova (2006) was adapted to examine whether the news reports used a *ground combat frame* (with focus on military conflict, victories and defeats), assessed *military forces*, strategies and tactics, focused on the *violence of war* (destruction caused by war

and casualties), advanced a *humanitarian frame* (with focus on rescue and relief efforts) or *human interest* frame, focused on *international relations*, *U.S. foreign policy*, *long-term effects of war* or *anti-war protest*. Again, use of diverse frames to portray a complex war advances a better understanding of the conflict.

The *tone of coverage* was captured as well. Both news organizations under scrutiny emphasize neutrality in their codes of ethics (at the time under scrutiny), and Kovach & Rosenstiel (2007) list independence from faction among ten important elements of journalism. Coders selected a negative tone if the story presented news unfavorable or disadvantageous to the U.S. or its allies. For instance, “the criticisms on the misleading U.S. intelligence about weapons of mass destruction linger” frames the news as unfavorable to the U.S. If the news was made of factual statements, as in “Brief battles near Kabala are reported,” it was coded as neutral. If the story presented war news favorable or advantageous to the U.S. and its allies or used demonizing language about the enemy, it was coded as positive. For example, “the 3rd infantry division is marching on the city and Iraqis are welcoming the U.S. troops” is favorable news about the U.S., as is a story about “heartless, calculated Nazis” bombing the “innocent British.”

Sourcing variables included *total number of sources*, *types of sources* (officials, organizations, military sources, dissidents, witnesses, experts, local media, and so on) and whether the officials were *American* or *other* and *named* or *unnamed*. As the literature review section pointed out, diversity of sourcing is essential to painting an accurate picture of what happened, and journalism should monitor power as well as give voice to the voiceless (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007, p. 139). The code book also captured the number of *pseudo-attributions* (sentences that give an impression of attribution and

introduce an utterance or statement of viewpoint or idea belonging to a vague common voice, such as “It is rumored...,” “it was announced...,” “it was hinted that...,” “authorities are said to...,” “reports say,” “reportedly,” etc.), because transparency regarding one’s sources is another important element in the proposed model of foreign news quality, also emphasized in the two organizations’ policies. The number *first-person statements* or references to self (e.g., “My impression is...,” “this reporter was told...,” or “As far as I know...”) was also captured, in order to see if a practice largely condoned in the print media of the past, when journalists enjoyed more autonomy (Cozma, Hamilton, and Lawrence, 2008) is present at the two networks. Second-person references were also coded in order to capture the level of reporters’ dialogue with their audiences.

Finally, coders were asked to rate the *originality of reporting* (confidence that the reporter got the presented information himself) on a scale adapted from Cozma, Hamilton and Lawrence (2008). The items on the scale were: I’m highly confident the reporter got the information himself by newsgathering (going in the field, interviewing, uncovering something unknown); I’m highly confident that the reporter got the information by himself, but it’s mainly observation from a fixed point (during live coverage, for instance, from a press conference, or in a commentary); I can’t tell where the reporter got the information from; I know the reporter didn’t get the information by himself - he clipped it from other media sources or news agencies.

## **Interviews**

To supplement the results of the historical/biographical research and the content analysis, semi-structured phone interviews with foreign correspondents and the foreign

editor at NPR were conducted (Appendix E has the questions that all correspondents received. Some were added depending on the region covered by each correspondent). The interviews used elements from Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes and Wilhoit (2007) who profiled the American journalist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and from Tunstall (1971), who did a sociologic study on British specialist correspondents, including foreign correspondents. These two studies collected baseline information about journalists' backgrounds, education and training, careers, work routine, and attitudes about their jobs, competition, cooperation, roles, and responsibilities.

The author asked the NPR correspondents about their journalistic philosophy, the evolution of foreign news, and the Murrow tradition, and their take on the theory that foreign news is an endangered species.

This triangulation of methods helped dissect the quality of NPR's foreign correspondence in a historical context (in light of the standards the Murrow tradition set in broadcast foreign reporting). Interviews with NPR staff were key in understanding the findings of the quantitative content analysis and putting them in context.

Various studies have examined the characteristics of television journalist-gatekeepers (e.g., Berkowitz, 1990, 1991) and how they differ from their newspaper counterparts (Johnston, Slawski, and Bowman, 1972; Weaver et al., 2007). No study to date analyzed radio gatekeeping, let alone gatekeeping in relation to international news. While the content analysis will answer questions related to framing, sourcing, and news values of NPR foreign news, biographical research and in-depth interviews at NPR explored:

1. Who are the foreign correspondents at NPR and how are they different from the Murrow boys in terms of demographics, training and expertise?



2. What are NPR radio journalists' attitudes toward international news?
3. How do different levels of gatekeeping - individual, routines of work, organizational, extra-organizational, and socio-cultural - influence international news selection by NPR journalists?

The semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted after all other data were collected and analyzed, during the first two weeks of April 2009. Several foreign correspondents from the pool in Appendix D were contacted by e-mail. Three showed interest in the study and agreed to answer the questions. Eleanor Beardsley is the NPR European correspondent based in Paris (a position she held during the 2004-2006 period as well), Deborah Amos covered Iraq and was based in Turkey during the time under study and is currently working in New York on a book on Iraqi refugees, and Jason Beaubien, currently NPR's Mexico City correspondent, was based in Johannesburg and covered Sub-Saharan Africa during the time under study (2004-2006). The three correspondents are qualified to address the issues under scrutiny in this study, and their diverse backgrounds make their answers even more enlightening. The one-hour interviews were conducted over the phone during the first two weeks of April 2009. Foreign editor Loren Jenkins was also interviewed, with a slightly separate set of questions, given his position of setting the tone of foreign coverage at NPR. All the interviewed correspondents indicated they perceived Jenkins as NPR's Edward Murrow.

## **CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS**

This section systematically covers all four boxes from the road map (Figure 2) presented on page 20. The first part examines baseline information about the CBS and NPR correspondents' backgrounds, education, training, journalistic and foreign experience, working patterns, and attitudes about their jobs, their roles, and their responsibilities (boxes A and C). The second part (content analysis) compares the foreign correspondence by the Murrow Boys during World War II (1940-1942) to the foreign news coverage by the new generation of foreign correspondents at NPR during the Iraq War (2004-2006) - that is, boxes B and D of the road map. The third and final part answers the fifth research question, about factors that may account for similarities and differences between the two eras, drawing from the answers provided by the NPR correspondents interviewed.

### **RQ1: Who Were the Murrow Boys?**

#### **Background Information**

In the 1920s, radio was finding its way. The Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) launched in 1927, a year after National Broadcasting Company (NBC), and Mutual Broadcasting System (MBS) was created in 1934. The networks soon began experimenting with broadcasts from abroad, but the few items that were aired usually consisted of musical programs or curiosities like the 30-minute singing of a nightingale in England in 1932 (Brown, 1998, p. 154).

Initially, CBS lagged behind NBC overseas. NBC's correspondent in Europe, Max Jordan, let his sources believe that NBC was *the* United States' national

broadcasting company, and Europeans were therefore more eager to work with it. When he heard that CBS was sending a new man to Europe in 1937, Jordan tried to arrange exclusive deals with state radio stations from Stockholm to Budapest (Hamilton, 2009).

When CBS sent Edward R. Murrow (1908-1965) to London in 1937 as “European Director,” he had no journalism experience at all. He had only worked two years as “Director of Talks” for CBS. His background was in public speaking and drama. But at the time, the networks were skeptical about the role of broadcasting in international politics, thinking of radio more as an entertainment medium. When Murrow asked to hire experienced print journalist William L. Shirer (1904-1993) to help him, New York was not impressed with the veteran reporter’s voice test but indulged Murrow in the end. Shirer, whom Murrow transferred from Berlin to Vienna, was to use his considerable contacts to compete with Jordan in the race to get “talks,” interviews, and other such events on the air.

While the abdication of King Edward VIII of Great Britain in December 1936 and the Spanish Civil War were the first European events to receive elaborate coverage from the three networks (with CBS correspondent Hans Van Kaltenborn [1978-1965] winning a prestigious National Headliner Award for his live broadcasts), it was the reporting of the March 1938 *Anschluss*, Hitler’s invasion of Austria, that forever altered the character of radio foreign correspondence.

In CBS’ first “European News Roundup,” which is presented in more detail in the introduction to this study, correspondents in several European capitals stood by the microphones to give their live reports on the evolution of events from their various vantage points. Bob Trout in the New York CBS studio coordinated sixteen such

roundups during the *Anschluss*, being in simultaneous telephone contact with Pierre Huss in Berlin, Edgar Mowrer in Paris, William Shirer in London and Edward R. Murrow in Vienna. According to CBS executive William Paley, in that *European Roundup*, Trout played a role which has since become familiar but was then unknown. He “may have been the first anchorman in the profession” (Paley, 1979, p. 133).

When the war began in September 1939, Murrow reported from London almost every day. During that time, which this dissertation captures, his legend started. His flash broadcasts, using human interest to get people involved in the tragic stories of war, made his voice as familiar as those of Churchill and Roosevelt. He brought to Americans the urgency and meaning of the war in Europe. “This is London,” he always began his reports, with an emphatic *This* that would later become a catch phrase for the network. The way that he manipulated accents, pauses, timing, nuances and shades of words made Culbert (1979, p. 185) call Murrow a “musician of the spoken word.”

Churchill allowed Murrow and Fred Bates from NBC to broadcast live during the Blitz in London, from a rooftop<sup>8</sup>. Their suspense-filled account made Americans feel the trauma of war, as air raids were in progress during the broadcast.

Murrow’s European broadcasts helped establish CBS leadership in radio news. Murrow “exemplified and established the anchoring tradition” in broadcast news. He and his correspondents were the standard against which foreign broadcast reporting was assessed (Cloud and Olson, 1996). In October 1940, Murrow won the Overseas Press

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<sup>8</sup> It was not easy for Murrow to convince the British censors that he was capable of broadcasting live during a bombing attack without giving away British military secrets. Hosley (1984: 137) quotes Murrow as saying, “I had to stand on a rooftop for six nights in succession and make a record each night and submit it to the Ministry of Information in order to persuade the censors that I could ad lib without violating security. And I did for six nights and the records were lost somewhere in the Ministry of Information, so then I had to do it for another six months before they would finally give me permission after listening to the second take of six, to stand on a rooftop.”

Club of America Award for his coverage in London, and later Shirer received the Headliner's Club Award for his broadcasts from Berlin (Hosley, 1984, p. 145).

Following the Munich crisis of September 1938, radio emerged as the major source of foreign news (Culbert, 1976). The sounds of foreign events suddenly gained dramatic appeal for the listener, who could now hear participants involved in far-off crises. After the crisis, Murrow expanded his staff of expert journalists in every European capital, in an intricate system of coverage meant to bring home the events of Europe to a "distant America that still remembered 1917" (Brown, 1998, p. 161).

Barnouw (1990, p. 154) argues that as a result of radio's extraordinary power to inform, America would be one of the world's most "news conscious and internationally-aware" countries by the end of 1941. It was the "golden-age" commentators that transformed the World War II into the truly first "living room war" in American history (Brown, 1998, p. 192), a term generally used to describe the Vietnam War.

Hosley (1984, p. 43) quotes a *Fortune* survey that shows that in 1938 radio was America's favorite leisure time. Another survey quoted by White (1941, p. 83) was conducted in the summer of 1939. To the question, "In what order would you rank the following news sources in their importance to you," 42 percent of the respondents said radio analysts ranked first, 23 percent said radio bulletins were the most important, and only 18 and 17 percent respectively answered that newspaper editorials and newspaper reports were more important. White concluded that radio had become "the nation's foremost news medium," a progress made possible by "radio's inventiveness and ingenuity" and by a "small but enterprising group of correspondents abroad" (White, 1941, p. 84). That small group of correspondents is the focus of this section.

## **The Murrow Boys and the Golden Age of Foreign Correspondence**

In a report documenting how CBS prepared to cover the war for radio, Paul White, the manager of Columbia News Service, describes the historical context that prompted the organization to start thinking about a newsgathering effort in war-torn Europe, the organizing of the staff, the qualifications required from the new group of correspondents, and the improvements as well as limitations in technology that shaped foreign transmission (White, 1941).

First, CBS began thinking about creating an adequate foreign staff in 1939, when the war became a distinct possibility. The three men that comprised CBS' full-time European staff in July 1939 – Edward R. Murrow, with headquarters in London, William L. Shirer, then assigned to middle Europe - Geneva, and Thomas B. Grandin, in charge of the Paris office, urged Paul White to obtain special correspondents, all Americans, in prospective trouble centers such as Warsaw, Rome, Scandinavia, the Low Countries, the Balkans and Turkey (minus Moscow, which had forbidden its short wave facilities to American broadcasters, and where string men, usually print reporters, were used).

To better tell the World War II story, Murrow put together a team of gifted correspondents -- later dubbed "Murrow's Boys," although not all of them were men – that included William Shirer, Eric Sevareid, Tom Grandin, Larry LeSueur, Charles Collingwood, Howard K. Smith, Winston Burdett, Bill Downs, Mary Marvin Breckinridge, Cecil Brown and Richard C. Hottelet. Appendix C lists all the full-time correspondents CBS used from 1940 to 1942, the period that this research scrutinizes. The correspondents' names became household words, recognized by people everywhere in the United States (Godfrey, 1990, p. 164). In fact, Culbert (1976, p. 10) points out that

the Murrow Boys were characters who loved public acclaim. They relished their star quality. For instance, at the end of his career, Eric Sevareid was disappointed when people didn't recognize him in restaurants (Hamilton, 2009, p. 306).

In recruiting his boys, Murrow, who had a magnificent voice – better than virtually any other commentator who has ever worked in radio and television (Culbert, 1979) - did not care much about voice quality (Hamilton, 2009). While he hired LeSueur, who sounded good on air, he also recruited Sevareid, whose voice test was worse than Shirer's. Writing "like an angel" got Sevareid hired (Olson and Cloud, 1996, p. 43). Grandin, who did not have either the voice or the journalistic experience, impressed Murrow with his intellect. Murrow was actually more interested in intelligence and knowledge than in journalistic credentials (Olson and Cloud, 1996, p. 42). When he installed Thomas Grandin in Paris in spring 1939, the man had both a terrible voice and no reporting experience.

News director Paul White was nervous about the lack of experience but agreed on the importance of voice. "There is little thought given to voice quality since it is obvious that in these days of such important news the emphasis should be upon content rather than on the manner of delivery" (White, 1941, p. 85). While he had no expectations of "polished diction,"<sup>9</sup> the one thing that White insisted upon above all else was "as complete an objectivity as can be mastered." This was to be achieved by not expressing any "editorial opinions about what this country or any other country should or should not do" and by maintaining "an unexcited demeanor at the microphone" at all times.

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<sup>9</sup> White confessed a fascination for the unprofessional, big, flat voice of former *Chicago Sun* reporter Chester Morrison, who joined the CBS staff to cover Cairo. His voice frequently gave professionals the creeps. White said to the *TIME* magazine: "That voice sounds like the voice of doom." (Aug. 24, 1942).

### **The Murrow Boys: Socio-demographics**

So who were the Murrow Boys? In order to answer the first research question, data on the CBS correspondents' careers, skills, years spent overseas, education, training, and other social demographics were collected from encyclopedias, dictionaries, memoirs, and magazine/newspaper articles.<sup>10</sup> During the two years scrutinized in the content analysis section of this study, a total of 21 foreign correspondents were identified at CBS (Appendix C). Of course, the random sample may have left out some names. The analysis also captured 12 announcers who often reported foreign news<sup>11</sup> and a few contributors/stringers from abroad.<sup>12</sup> For the purpose of this study, only the full-time foreign staff was researched.

According to the content analysis results, none of the CBS correspondents covered South America during the time under scrutiny. Only Eric Sevareid, who was actually stationed in Europe, occasionally traveled to Rio de Janeiro and Mexico. The rest of the Latin American stories (such as the conflicts by the coast of Uruguay) came from the wires or official communiqués. This finding comes in sharp contrast with a 1940 CBS report in "Networks of the United States" that lists 27 correspondents under its foreign staff, 11 of whom were supposedly stationed in South America (Figure 3). Not even one of these correspondents was found in the two-year sample (Appendix C).

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<sup>10</sup> Several editions/volumes of *The Scribner Encyclopedia of American Lives*, *Marquis Who's Who*, *Contemporary Authors Online* (Gale), plus the *Encyclopedia of World Biography* (Gale, 2002), *Dictionary of American Biography* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1995), *Historical Dictionary of War Journalism* (Greenwood Press, 1997), *TIME* magazine articles, and *New York Times* articles were consulted to compile the dataset.

<sup>11</sup> John Charles Daly, Linton Wells, Fielden Farrington, Jack Knell, Albert Warner, Albert Leitch, Warren Sweeney, Arthur Menken, Quincy Howe, Elmer Davis, Bill Rodgers, and Mark Hawley.

<sup>12</sup> Erskine Caldwell (Moscow), Spencer Williams (Bucharest), Margaret Bourke-White (Moscow), Edward Chorlian (Cairo) and Ralph Ingersoll (Moscow). Indeed, as Paul White indicated, CBS had no correspondents in Moscow.



| <b>Foreign Staff</b>                           |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| E. R. Murrow                                   | Chief of European Staff—London    |
| Larry Le Seuer                                 | London Correspondent              |
| Joseph Congress                                | Vichy Correspondent               |
| William L. Shirer,                             |                                   |
| Central European Representative—Geneva         |                                   |
| Harry Flannery                                 | Berlin Correspondent              |
| Cecil D. Brown                                 | Rome Correspondent                |
| Sigrid Roll                                    | Oslo Correspondent                |
| David Anderson                                 | Stockholm Correspondent           |
| Winston Burdette                               | Belgrade Correspondent            |
| Leigh White                                    | Budapest Correspondent            |
| Betty Wason                                    | Athens Correspondent              |
| Farnsworth Fowle                               | Correspondent in Turkey           |
| Edward Chorlian                                | Cairo Correspondent               |
| William J. Dunn,                               |                                   |
| Director of CBS Correspondents in the Far East |                                   |
| W. R. Wills                                    | Tokyo Correspondent               |
| John Raleigh                                   | Correspondent in Batavia, Java    |
| Alexander Garcia                               | Correspondent in Havana, Cuba     |
| Luis Alcivar,                                  |                                   |
| Correspondent in Guayaquil, Ecuador            |                                   |
| Jorge Mantillas                                | Correspondent in Quito, Ecuador   |
| Jack Fendell                                   | Correspondent in Bogota, Columbia |
| Franklyn Whaite,                               |                                   |
| Correspondent in Caracas, Venezuela            |                                   |
| John Adams,                                    |                                   |
| Correspondent in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil        |                                   |
| Carlos Griffin                                 | Correspondent in Santiago, Chile  |
| Herbert Clark,                                 |                                   |
| Correspondent in Buenos Aires, Argentina       |                                   |
| Claude Guyant                                  | Correspondent in Lima, Peru       |
| John Vebber,                                   |                                   |
| Correspondent in Asuncion, Paraguay            |                                   |
| Norman Stines, Jr.,                            |                                   |
| Correspondent in La Paz, Bolivia               |                                   |

**Figure 3. CBS Foreign Staff in 1940, as Presented in the Network's Annual Report**

Of the 21 full-time correspondents identified in the sample selected for content analysis, *complete* information could not be found on five reporters: Charles Barbe (who covered Rome, Bern, Berlin), Farnsworth Fowle (Turkey), Tom Worthen (Philippines),

W.R. “Bud” Wills (Japan), and Philip Brown (Greece). History seems to have forgotten about these correspondents. Future research could try to track them down and explain their disappearance from public conscience.

None of the 21 correspondents was female. Margaret Bourke-White (a photojournalist who covered Moscow) was among the voices heard at CBS during the time under scrutiny, but she was only a contributor to *The World Today*. This finding is not surprising. A study of listener attitudes at the time revealed that most Americans preferred to hear their radio news from a man. Women were acceptable only in commercials and dramas (Persico, 1988, p. 158). Murrow made exceptions, as with Mary Marvin Breckinridge, whom he hired as correspondent in Netherlands. He occasionally took on female reporters and photojournalists who fascinated him with their storytelling techniques and proved that they could handle themselves on the air. The absence of Mary Marvin Breckinridge from the list captured by this study is explained by the fact that the Netherlands correspondent left CBS in May 1940.

The average age among the CBS correspondents was 32. The youngest, 24, was Charles Collingwood (1917-1985). Collingwood’s profile in *The Scribner Encyclopedia of American Lives* says that Murrow hesitated at first to hire Collingwood because of his appearance as a “fashionable dandy.” Collingwood himself confessed about his interview at the Savoy that Murrow “said he was almost put off because I was wearing a very loud pair of argyle socks, plaid – you know, bright colors. Ed was very conservative in his dress, and he wasn’t quite sure what this meant about my character” (in Smith, 1978, p. 19). While he got the London job mostly because he fit Murrow’s idea of someone “not contaminated by print,” the young Collingwood (who had two years of experience with

United Press) did carry his own weight. Known for his competitiveness, he raced to be the first to get a story to the wire. He was the first to report the assassination of Admiral Darlan in December 1942. A February 1943 *Newsweek* article described Collingwood as follows:

“Only 25 years old, the husky, blond-haired reporter now holds the top spot among radio reporters. He teams news sense with a natural radio voice ... which many mistake for that of a man of 40. ... Newspapers in both America and Britain have quoted him increasingly.”

He was one of the many CBS correspondents who started their overseas experiences as Rhodes Scholars at University of Oxford, London. Collingwood received the Headliners Award in 1942 and again in 1948, and in 1943 he won the George Foster Peabody Award for the best foreign news reporting.

The oldest Murrow Boys were Chester Morrison (1900-1958), a mousy little man with a big voice from the *Chicago Sun*,<sup>13</sup> Harry Flannery (1900-1975), an experienced radio news editor, and William Lindsay White (1900-1973), the son of the famous editor of the *Emporia Gazette*. They were all 42 at the time under study (1942).

With the exception of Rob Trout (high school diploma) and William Dunn (some college) all the Murrow Boys had a college degree. Two correspondents had a master's degree and five had some post-graduate studies. Charles Collingwood, Farnsworth Fowle, Howard K. Smith and announcer and commentator Elmer Davis were awarded Rhodes scholarships at the University of Oxford in England. Throughout his life, Murrow would receive honorary degrees from 14 universities. In hindsight, it is ironic that Edward Murrow felt the need to embellish his résumé before applying for a job at CBS,

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<sup>13</sup> “Voice from Cairo,” *TIME* magazine, Monday, Aug. 24, 1942.

by adding five years to his age, changing his alma mater from Washington State University to the University of Washington, adding a master's degree from Stanford University, and claiming he had a political science major instead of speech (Hamilton, 2009, p. 294).

The average journalistic experience at CBS was of 12 years, but Harry Flannery, one of CBS' oldest correspondents, may have skewed that data with his 26 years of experience at the time under examination. Some correspondents, including Edward Murrow, had only three or four years of reporting experience in 1942.

Sixteen of the Murrow Boys had a print journalism background. At the time of the study, Eric Sevareid had been a reporter for five print outlets, including the *New York Times*. So had Harry Flannery. Of the correspondents who had worked for fewer publications, many had reported for the prestigious *International Herald Tribune* or the *Chicago Tribune*.

Nine of the Murrow Boys had worked for at least one wire service at the time of the study (six for the United Press International agency, two for the Associated Press, one for the Overseas News Agency, one for the Universal News Service, and one for the International News Service).

Only four CBS correspondents had some previous radio experience: Edward R. Murrow as a Director of Talks at CBS (1935-1937), John Raleigh as an NBC correspondent in Warsaw at the beginning of the war, Rob Trout, as a reporter for a CBS affiliate in Virginia since 1931, and Harry Flannery as a radio news editor at two local Indiana stations (1931-1933) and as an editor and analyst at a Missouri local station (1935-1940).

Six of the CBS correspondents had foreign experience as freelance reporters. They contributed articles to magazines like *Atlantic Monthly*, *Life*, *Harper's*, *Travel*, *Gourmet*, and *PM* magazine from varied locations in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East.

And most of them had lived abroad before joining the CBS team. William Dunn (1906-1992) had resided on as many as four continents. While many of the Murrow Boys had traveled to Europe for scholarships, summer fellowships, or newspaper jobs, some took odd routes to get to far places. Cecil Brown (1907-1987) worked as a sailor in Africa, Russia and South America, and William Shirer worked on a cattle boat to get to Europe, where he intended to stay for the summer and remained for fifteen years.

Eight of the Murrow Boys were book authors, and most of them wrote books after the war, based on their war reporting experiences. The CBS correspondents won a total of 12 journalistic awards for foreign news coverage by 1942, which is remarkable given that radio was still a young medium. Honors included prestigious awards like the National Headliners Award and the Overseas Press Club Award.

A separate column in the dataset noted special things about the CBS correspondents that the other socio-demographics could not capture. Six of the Murrow Boys were expelled from the Axis countries they covered (Cecil Brown, Charles Barbe, and John Raleigh from Italy, W.R. Wills from Japan, Winston Burdett from Finland and Yugoslavia, and Howard Smith from Berlin). W.R. Wills was also tortured, arrested and sentenced for espionage in Japan, 1942.<sup>14</sup> Among other unusual things, William Lindsay White was so affected by a blitz he witnessed in December 1940 that he adopted a 3-year

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<sup>14</sup> "U.S. Victims Detail Japanese Torture," by Otto D. Tolischus, *The New York Times*, August 16, 1942.

old orphan from London.<sup>15</sup> Winston Burdett (1913-1993), before joining CBS, worked as a spy for the Soviet Communist Party, with which he got disillusioned when the Russians killed his wife while she was a reporter in South Persia.<sup>16</sup>

### **Journalistic Philosophy at CBS**

A review of memoirs and biographies of key players at CBS helped establish the broadcast philosophy at the network during World War II. Its three foci were *objectivity*, a *reflective-mirror objective*, and emphasis on *common people*.

1. *Objectivity*. Central to the journalistic philosophy of CBS during the war was the policy of avoiding editorial views in the news. “In being fair and factual, those who present the news for Columbia must not only refrain from personal opinions, but must refrain from a microphone manner designed to cast doubt, suspicion, sarcasm, ridicule, or anything of that sort on the matter they are presenting,” the CBS policy ordered (White, 1947, p. 199). In the view of CBS executive William Paley (1979, p. 122), even if a reporter analyzed a situation, he was not to take any position. Opinion meant taking sides and had no place at CBS. Objectivity became Paley’s “avowed religion” (Persico, 1988, p. 128), and he clung to it like a true cross.

In the same memorandum circulated among all Columbia correspondents in which he demanded “as complete an objectivity as can be mastered,” news director Paul White (1941, p. 85) expressed the journalistic philosophy of the organization:

If all our own people presenting news will present it in this way and analyze it with due weight given to these factors, *we can keep the American public very well informed on every phase of things as they develop, help then continually to appraise and weigh the news, and make*

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<sup>15</sup> W.L. White wrote a book about the experience, “Journey for Margaret” (1941), which was the basis for the 1942 film featuring Robert Young, Laraine Day, Fay Bainter, and Nigel Bruce.

<sup>16</sup> “Winston Burdett, R I P. (journalist),” Obituary by Morris, Robert. *National Review*, June 21, 1993, v.45 n. 12, p. 22.

*them well aware of current opinion throughout the world.* It must be recalled that this opinion is, in itself, a fact. For instance, if the British people believe that the Germans are committing atrocities, the fact of their belief is important. That these atrocities are real, false, or unproven is another fact.

As a final word, it should be remembered that Americans should know everything we can possibly tell them about every phase of the situation, provided only that it is important that we put it out for exactly what it is, that we do our best to inform and explain with honesty and sincerity, and thus demonstrate once more that radio plays a tremendous part in the maintenance of all that is best in a democracy.

Despite the network's strict policy on editorializing, many CBS correspondents got involved emotionally in the conflict they covered and often expressed opinions. Many of them promoted interventionism (Socolow, 2007; Culbert, 1976). Philip Seib's book on the London Blitz (2007) actually tends to credit Edward R. Murrow for single-handedly leading America into war. And he sees no ethical or professional problem with that: "A journalist who sees evil has a responsibility to alert the world to it." He describes journalists as "the sentinels of conscience" (p. x).

Charles Collingwood said that Edward Murrow did indeed express opinions in his broadcasts but always let his listeners know about it. "There was nothing sneaky about the way he got his opinion through" (Collingwood, cited in Smith, 1978, p. 118). Murrow actually confessed his philosophy on objectivity in a broadcast in July 1940:

Occasionally, in reporting this war, the reporter is obliged to express his personal opinion, his own evaluation of the mass of confusing and contradictory statements, communiqués, speeches by statesmen, and personal interviews. It has always seemed to me that such statements of personal opinion should be frankly labeled as such without any attempt to cloak one's impressions or opinions in an aura of omnipotence. What I think of events in Europe is no more important than what you think, but I do have certain opportunities for observation and study.

(Bliss, 1967)

While Murrow tried to prevent his own prejudices and loyalties interfere between the audience and the information that was his duty to communicate, he did not believe in pure detachment and objectivity. “An individual who can entirely avoid being influenced by the atmosphere in which he works might not even be a good reporter” (quoted in Smith, 1978, p. 63).

As another example at CBS, correspondent Chester Morrison was quite explicit in his calling the United States to go to war. In a broadcast leading to his reports from Egypt and Libya, he said, “I’m going up to the desert where other people are fighting my battle - Englishmen and Indians and South Africans and New Zealanders. Let us know when you’re coming, Americans. We’ll bake a cake.”<sup>17</sup>

While the content analysis section of this study did not code for bias or propaganda (an endeavor planned for a future study), a “tone” variable captured a clear pro-British inclination among the CBS stories (see the content analysis findings section).

2. *Reflective mirror*. In a 1937 speech to the Royal Institute in London, four months before the Austrian *Anschluss* and the birth of the European Roundup, Edward Murrow presented his “reflective mirror” theory of radio journalism (Smith, 1978, p. 12):

We want to use this medium to hold an honest mirror to current conditions in England and in Europe. If there exists a vital difference of opinion, let us say on British foreign policy, we propose to reflect that difference of opinion.

When he hired Eric Sevareid, Murrow assured him that there would be no pressure to provide scoops or anything sensational. “Just the honest news, and if there wasn’t any, why, just say so” (Sevareid, 1946, p. 106). Indeed, some stories coded for this dissertation “just said so,” in a sincere disclosure that we would not hear today. On

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<sup>17</sup> “Voice from Cairo,” TIME magazine, Monday, Aug. 24, 1942.



August 20, 1941, Edward Murrow reported, “This is a night when correspondents search in vain for stories. The communiqués are, if anything, less informative than usual.”

Similarly, on May 2, 1942, announcer John Charles Daly blamed the weather for a slow news day: “There’s not much news from the European fronts. Bad weather has finally forced a big lull in the long continuing RAF offence against Nazi war production centers, and fighting in Russia continues on a fairly large scale, but neither side claims any large gains.”

News director Paul White urged his reporters to “beg pardon, please” if an error went on the air. In a style book included in his own 1947 radio news textbook called “News on the Air,” White recommended his reporters to “never be afraid to apologize and to correct the error as soon as possible.” According to White (1947, p. 73), every newsroom should have on hand a supply of mimeographed pages as follows:

Earlier in the broadcast I mistakenly said .....  
What I meant to say was.....

This emphasis on accuracy was necessary because all news at CBS was broadcast live until 1943, and mistakes were more likely to happen. While the NPR correspondents have the option of recording complex stories before they air, the emphasis on accuracy is even stronger, because of the increased scrutiny brought about by the Internet. Said NPR correspondent Jason Beaubien,<sup>18</sup> comparing the two eras:

You’re very aware that whatever you produce will be going out on the Internet, all around the world. Someone might call you on a fact and question you. It makes you realize that you have to make sure that everything is correct, that you are fair, that, if I’m doing a story about Cuba, Cuban government officials will be reading that piece too. Not that you necessarily would have fudged things in the past, but the level of accountability is much higher now. *In the past, when things went out on the radio, they just went out on the radio.* It could go right by somebody.

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<sup>18</sup> In an interview with the researcher, April 10, 2009.

But what you're doing now is going to be there forever or until those servers die. And I think that's good. It holds us to a higher standard.

3. *Human interest*. In the same 1937 speech in London, Murrow spelled out another element of his broadcast philosophy, which focused on realism, people and specifics (Smith, 1978, p. 13):

It is difficult of course to make generalizations, but I should say that we have had more success with those people who talk less in terms of ideals, which leave most people cold, than in terms of things and people with which the listeners are familiar at first-hand.

Murrow's focus on the ordinary people was one of the key elements of the so-called Murrow tradition, as perceived by historians and Murrow's colleagues.

As a young cub (he was only 26 when he started working for Murrow), Eric Sevareid learned about the importance of human interest early on, when he snapped at a French engineer after CBS cancelled his scheduled broadcast from Paris. What CBS didn't know was that Sevareid had the scoop that France would declare war on Germany that afternoon. Frustrated, he yelled at the engineer, who burst into tears, asking, what did it matter? The engineer had received his call-up notice that morning. He had fought in a previous war, had been injured three times, and had spent a year in a German prison camp. Sevareid understood that "war wasn't slogans and rhetoric and military strategy, and it wasn't scoops. War was people and what happened to them. It was a lesson he would never forget" (Olson and Cloud, 1996, p. 55).

## **RQ2: Who Are the NPR Boys and Girls?**

This section mirrors the precedent, offering background information on the NPR foreign news department, on the social demographics of the NPR correspondents, and on elements of their journalistic philosophy.

## **Background Information**

NPR stands out in three separate aspects, which confirm it is an important case to study. First, international news comprises more than one-third of NPR news (NPR.org, 2008) – which is significantly against the trend of reducing foreign news. Said foreign editor Loren Jenkins,<sup>19</sup>

About 30 percent of our news has to do with international affairs. That is higher than anywhere else in broadcasting in this country. We have constantly since I came here twelve years ago expanded our overseas operation. So we went from six bureaus to 17, and then we have a number of other roving correspondents on top of that. We've been growing when anyone else has been shrinking in terms of overseas operations.

Second, while foreign news is generally perceived as cost-inefficient (most radio programming consists of entertainment, talk shows and local news), NPR has registered an unprecedented success (more than 30 million listeners weekly in 2007, up from 2 million in the 1980s). In 2007 (Pew, 2007), 28 percent of the American population regularly tuned in on NPR for local and foreign news. Loren Jenkins said NPR's popularity is due precisely to foreign news and added that network executives who say the public doesn't care about foreign news are talking nonsense.

That's nonsense. That's absolute nonsense. They say that to justify that they're cutting it back. First of all, NPR's success is proof that that's nonsense. Our audience has been growing – it has more than doubled in the 10 years we've increased our international news operations. Our public, whenever we do surveys of our listeners, which now are reaching 30 million in the country, all say the main reason they come to NPR is for its foreign news. So there's a public out here that wants foreign news; the networks just don't want to provide it because it's costly and the economics of it don't work for them.

Third, while most contemporary foreign reporting tends to flourish in new settings, like news websites, blogs, and Youtube videos, and radio stopped being a

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with the researcher, April 14, 2009.

dominant source of news, NPR stands out through its status of a traditional, elite medium, where old-style international news can still find a platform.

When *Morning Edition* came along in 1979, *All Things Considered*, the afternoon news show, was widely viewed as *the* program at NPR (McCauley, 2005, p. 36). Frank Mankiewicz, the chief executive since 1973, managed to secure funds to revamp NPR,<sup>20</sup> to launch a new satellite distribution system and to start *Morning Edition*, which was supposed to attract listeners during the “morning drive,” the time of day when most people listen to radio. Mankiewicz hired audience researchers to persuade station managers around the country that the public wanted to listen to more than music in the morning.

After some internal negotiations and several imperfect dry runs<sup>21</sup> just days before the show premiered on November 5, Mankiewicz and his team (young journalist Barbara Cochran, then Cohen, who had recently been named managing editor at the Washington Star, and arts producer Jay Kernis) decided to take Bob Edwards from *All Things Considered* as the new morning host and to make Kernis the senior producer. The program would share the same staff of about 30 reporters and producers with *All Things Considered*. *Morning Edition* debuted at 5 a.m. Eastern time on Monday, November 5, one day after followers of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took 71 hostages. The crisis then fueled the program for a year. About 90 percent of the affiliate stations picked up at least parts of the show, and most of them reported significant increases in audiences (McCauley, 2005, p. 53). NPR reporter Scott

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<sup>20</sup> The NPR budget grew by 50 percent during the first 18 months of the Mankiewicz regime, which allowed the network to build a serious morning show (McCauley, 2005, p. 51).

<sup>21</sup> The Morning Edition pilots were too perky and “smelled of bubble gum,” lacking depth and analysis, according to McCauley (2005, p.52) and Collins (1993).

Simon noted that *Morning Edition* forever altered the nature of the company: “It made us shorter and punchier, but more to the point and more pertinent – more relevant. It turned us into a *news organization*” (McCauley, 2005, p. 53).

Part of the content analysis conducted in this study captures Bob Edwards as host of the program. Edwards left *Morning Edition* in March 2004, being replaced by a duo of hosts, Steve Inskeep and Renée Montagne. According to NPR foreign editor Loren Jenkins, *Morning Edition* draws on reporting from international bureaus in 17 countries around the world, plus a number of roving correspondents. According to a report by CBS news director Paul White, CBS had 14 full-time correspondents in Europe in 1941, plus numerous others on a free-lance basis. While the two groups of journalists are similar, they are not equally spread out. The NPR staff spans the entire globe, whereas the CBS correspondents first covered the war in Europe, crisscrossing the continent for their reporting (e.g. Mary Marvin Breckinridge, Tom Grandin, Eric Sevareid, or William Shirer). Later they moved on to North Africa (e.g. Cecil Brown), Iran and Iraq (e.g. Winston Burdett), and Asia (e.g. Eric Sevareid).

### **The New Generation of Foreign Correspondents – Socio-demographics**

In the 2004-2006 sample analyzed in this study, 23 full-time foreign correspondents were identified (they are listed in Appendix D). Again, part-time stringers and contributors were not included in the sample. The two groups of correspondents are hence comparable. Most of the NPR correspondents (13) joined the network after 2000, but many of them had previous foreign correspondence experience. Some of them are senior foreign correspondents, having been with the network since the 1980s and even the 1970s (Deborah Amos).

The NPR website offers a bio for each member of its on-air staff, but additional sources like encyclopedias, news articles, websites of schools whose alumni the correspondents are, and “Who’s Who in America” were consulted for additional information. Moreover, NPR removes bios from its site after the correspondents leave the organization. For five of the NPR correspondents, data on their age and years of experience could not be found.

Almost half of the NPR correspondents are women (11 of 23), in stark contrast to the Murrow Boys, who were, well, all boys in the investigated sample (the few women who joined the CBS team at the time were not captured in the two years sampled in this study). The percentage of women was higher at NPR than among all full-time journalists in the United States – 33 percent in 2002, according to Weaver et al. (2007, p. 8).

The average age at NPR was 42 in 2006, the period that this study analyzed. Hence, a typical modern correspondent at NPR was 10 years older during the Iraq War than a correspondent at CBS during World War II (32 years old). The CBS sample, however, was made of correspondents who had just joined the network. To make the comparison fair, the average age of the NPR correspondents when they joined the network was calculated. It turns out that the mean age was 32 as well, making the two networks identical in this respect.

The youngest of the NPR correspondents was Ivan Watson (embedded in Northern Iraq), 30 years old. In the meantime, he left NPR and joined CNN in January 2009 as an international correspondent based in Istanbul. He is a member of the new generation of correspondents who got significant on-the-job training covering the war (Sylvester and Huffman, 2005). His first overseas posting was in Russia, at age 22, and in

2006 he had already covered U.S. military action in Afghanistan and Iraq. Before that he had covered West Africa from Lagos, Nigeria.

The next youngest NPR correspondent, 31, was Jamie Tarabay, who started her foreign reporting at age 25 for the Associated Press in Jerusalem. She is one of the few female Western journalists to have made a career as a war reporter. In her NPR profile, she says that during her work overseas “she’s been arrested, proposed to by militiamen, interviewed everyone from world leaders to armed fighters, been shot at, felt the blast of an IED and the punches of demonstrators as well as police.” Being fluent in Arabic and French, she was the Baghdad Bureau Chief during the time under study.

The oldest NPR reporters were Sylvia Poggioli and Mike Shuster, both 58 in 2006. Poggioli is the Senior European Correspondent, stationed in Rome. She joined NPR in 1982, having served as an editor on the English-language desk for the Ansa News Agency in Italy. She first arrived in Italy after graduation, to study under a Fulbright Scholarship. Shuster is the typical “roving” foreign correspondent, having started his travels around the world as a freelance foreign affairs reporter in Africa in 1970. He joined NPR in 1980.

All NPR correspondents have a college degree. Seven have a master’s degree or postgraduate studies, and Sylvia Poggioli has an honorary doctoral degree from Brandeis University (2000).

The average journalistic experience at NPR was 16 years, but, just like in the case of CBS, one outlier (Poggioli, with 35 years of experience) may have skewed the data. So a typical NPR correspondent had four more years of experience than a CBS correspondent. The reporter with the fewest years of experience, Rachel Martin, the

Berlin foreign correspondent for a year in 2005 (after which she moved to D.C. as a religion correspondent), had seven years of journalism practice at the time under study. Years of experience was calculated for year 2006, to see the level of preparation of the journalists whose correspondence was analyzed *in this study*. The same was done for the CBS corps of journalists, which may seem an unfair comparison. The *World Today* had just been created at the time under study, whereas *Morning Edition* had been around for three decades. This dissertation could have explored the years of NPR correspondents' experience at the time they joined the organization, to compare the two groups at their debut, but then it would not have captured the people behind the analyzed news (see content analysis section).

**Table 1**  
Socio-demographics of CBS and NPR Correspondents

|   | <b>CBS correspondents<br/>1942</b> | <b>NPR correspondents<br/>2006</b> |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Average age at the time under study               | 32                                 | 42                                 |
| Age when they joined the network                  | 30                                 | 32                                 |
| Years of journalism experience as<br>of 1942/2006 | 12                                 | 16                                 |
| Female correspondents                             | 0                                  | 11                                 |
| College degree (master's)                         | 14 (2)*                            | 23 (7)                             |
| Print journalism background                       | 16                                 | 3                                  |
| Radio journalism background                       | 4                                  | 13                                 |
| Wire journalism background                        | 9                                  | 6                                  |
| Total journalism awards**                         | 12                                 | 49                                 |
|   | N=21                               | N=23                               |

\*Information missing for five CBS correspondents

\*\*The number of awards is provided only to show that both groups were outstanding. The comparison is not fair or accurate because not many awards were given in the 1940s.

Only three of the NPR reporters had a print background (compared to 16 at CBS), having worked for one publication each. Thirteen had worked in radio, most notably for



BBC World Service and Voice of America. Many had worked at affiliate stations. Seven correspondents had worked in television, for networks such as CNN, NBC, ABC, CBS and BBC. Six had worked for a news agency, and five had done freelance work, including for NPR before joining the network permanently.

Only three of the NPR correspondents had written books at the time of the study (compared to 8 at CBS), but their biographies indicate that some published books after 2006.

The NPR team of correspondents won a total of 49 journalism awards by 2006. That is an outstanding number, suggesting a stellar staff. Honors included several Alfred I. DuPont Awards (the equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize, through which Columbia University recognizes excellence in broadcast journalism), Edward R. Murrow Awards (through which the Radio-Television news Directors Association honors outstanding achievements in electronic journalism), Overseas Press Club Awards (for international coverage), and Peabody Awards (the oldest, most prestigious honor in electronic media, administered by the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication). While the number of awards at NPR is considerably larger than at CBS during the time under the study (12), one must keep in mind that the Murrow Boys were the pioneers of broadcast journalism, and by 1942 they did not have much time to collect honors. Moreover, they were significantly younger and less experienced as journalists, and not many such awards existed back then anyway.

Cheaper travel and advanced technology now allow correspondents to fly farther and faster than ever before (Cole and Hamilton, 2008). It is no wonder, then, that most of the biographical sketches of the NPR reporters note staggering numbers of countries that

these correspondents covered. For instance, Michael Sullivan worked in more than 60 countries on five continents by 2006. Most of the correspondents reported from several continents.

Just like at CBS, voice doesn't matter too much at NPR. "Nobody here is hired for voice," said correspondent Deborah Amos,<sup>22</sup> who's been with the network since 1977. A so-called "host whisperer" teaches on-air staff breath control, and a voice trainer shows correspondents – particularly women - how to control their pitch when they are nervous. "And all that can be taught," added Amos.

Covering World War II was in many aspects traumatizing for the CBS correspondents. Murrow's reports from the Nazi concentration camps speak of the shock and horror he and other witnesses experienced. Murrow risked his life by riding in bombers over Berlin and covering the blitz from London roof tops precisely to capture the drama and to fight his own fear – he was afraid that if he hid once during a raid, he could never go out again. Said Collingwood, "Ed's best broadcasts, and the thing I think he liked best to do, were always related to some aspect of reality that he had seen or personally experienced" (Smith, 1978, p. 43). In one broadcast, Murrow analyzed his emotions during the blitz:

This business of being bombed and watching air fights is the sort of thing which fails to produce the anticipated reaction. The sense of danger, death and disaster comes only when the familiar incidents occur – the things that one has associated with tragedy since childhood. The sight of half a dozen ambulances weighted down with an unseen cargo of human wreckage has jarred me more than the war of dive bombers or the sound of bombs.

(Persico, 1988, p. 171)

The harrowing immediacy of his broadcasts reporting on the horrors he witnessed did take its toll on Murrow. He was a dark, taciturn, gloomy personality (who only lit up

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<sup>22</sup> Interview with the researcher, April 17, 2009.

in front of the microphone), with bouts of depression, who was smoking three packs of cigarettes a day to sooth himself and his “potentially volcanic temper” (Persico, 1988, pp. 157 and 167). He suffered from regular respiratory infections that he would not have the patience to let heal because he was so eager to go out for stories.

The NPR correspondents get to cover an even larger pool of traumatizing events. Many of their colleagues at other media outlets have been killed in the recent years - 138 alone since the Iraq War started in 2003.<sup>23</sup>

Said correspondent Jason Beaubien about his coverage of the Sri Lanka tsunamis in 2005.<sup>24</sup>

One of the most frustrating things about this disaster is that in radio you can only tell one scene at a time. Covering these tsunamis -- part of what is so powerful about being here is that it's not just one town that's wiped out and suffering. The next town you drive to is also wiped out and then the next and then the next. Words do fail to convey the scope of this.

And the bodies... it's one thing to have one body, one family that's lost a father or a son. But to have body after body being pulled from the wreckage -- how do you convey the effect of the 13th body? It taxes you as a radio reporter to get across the essence of this story... which is that this isn't just about a tragic event. It's about a tragic event times one million...

Deborah Amos, Baghdad correspondent, has a similar approach when covering tragedies that affects millions:

I try to say to myself when I'm doing a story, “Who would I be?” so that it becomes a personal way of telling. What would I do in this situation, who would I be among the people that I'm now looking at? If I'm doing a refugee story in Somalia, and I'm looking at a group of people who've just left their homes because they were threatened, what would I have done? Who would I be? Would I be the really brave one, would I be the last one to leave? I kind of go through a mental process – I remember to see all of

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<sup>23</sup> Data as of April 2009, from *Committee to Protect Journalists*, accessible online at <http://www.cpj.org/reports/2008/07/journalists-killed-in-iraq.php>

<sup>24</sup> From an interview with Poynter Online, accessible at [http://www.poynter.org/content/content\\_view.asp?id=76547](http://www.poynter.org/content/content_view.asp?id=76547)

them not as a mass, but as individual people because audiences don't respond to mass. Two million refugees – OK, well, so? I need to know one of them. You personalize them with particular stories that stand for the whole.

Jason Beaubien went through the most terrifying experiences of his career in 2003, in Liberia, when the rebels took the capital under siege:

I can still remember hearing the whistling of the bullets through the wind as they were going over this wall that I was sitting behind. I remember thinking, “Wow.” I could actually feel them and they were two feet above my head. There was so much shooting. The bangs and explosions from shooting were so common that we weren't paying attention anymore.<sup>25</sup>

In an online live chat session with his listeners in December 2008,<sup>26</sup> Baghdad correspondent Ivan Watson described the dangers journalists face in Iraq, where they have a rule never to stay in one place for more than 15 minutes. A day before, he had just experienced a close call when a bomb destroyed one of NPR's armored vehicles. Watson and three members of NPR's Iraqi staff narrowly escaped the blast. “How can you report on a country when, for much of the last 4 years, it's been too dangerous to stay out on the street in any one place for more than 15 minutes?” he asked. “I've worked in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon... a couple of other war zones... Iraq is the deadliest and most dangerous by far... because everybody seems to be a target and there are no front lines. Until recently, the kidnapping and killings have forced reporters to rely on the US military to get around the country.”

When asked how he deals with post-traumatic stress, Ivan Watson answered humbly:

Whatever I'm going through pales in comparison to the troops and the Iraqi citizens who have had to live through this nightmare. Imagine living

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<sup>25</sup> Interview with the researcher, April 10, 2009.

<sup>26</sup> Accessible on the NPR website at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=97657652>

day in and day out with this fear and danger...having to watch their kids go to school each day, not knowing whether they'll come home?...What about the soldier who survives a road-side bomb, but then has to keep going out on patrol for another 11 months? ...I'm out of here in a week. I've got it easy.

Another Baghdad foreign correspondent, Deborah Amos, said<sup>27</sup> that job is simultaneously traumatic and therapeutic:

There are tons of emotional situations, and, in fact, we have had more than one lecture for the staff on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder because there's been some concern that we do internalize it. Here's what the people who are experts in this say: That human beings get PTSD in war zones. What mitigates what happens to us is that most therapy is called the talking therapy – you just talk to the therapist over and over again about what happened. But that's part of what we do for a living. We do it everyday. We process the information and we tell people. I think that that helps. And that's where the emotion goes. Yes, you've seen something horrible, but you process it – once you write it, you of course are really processing it; you're thinking about it, you're analyzing it. I do think that that's what protects us.

Watson says he experienced fear, uncertainty and dread on a regular basis in Iraq, because he did not know what was going to happen and whom to trust. He dealt with his stress and emotions with his colleagues, avoiding burdening his family at home with things they couldn't understand. "I want my mother to be able to sleep at night," he said (Sylvester and Huffman, 2005, p. 170).

A woman working in the same conditions, Baghdad correspondent Anne Garrels said she operates on gut instincts, a sort of "gambling," because there is always uncertainty about her safety. "I have turned down assignments because they were too bloody dangerous and with no chance of results," she said (Sylvester and Huffman, 2005, p. 177).

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<sup>27</sup> Interview conducted by the researcher, April 17, 2009.

Another thing that helps the correspondents cope with fear and emotions is the fact that their foreign editor Loren Jenkins often travels to Baghdad himself. “He goes there and he makes sure that his people are OK,” said Baghdad correspondent Deborah Amos. “This is quite remarkable.” It is the same type of leadership that the CBS correspondents appreciated in Edward Murrow.

Just like with Edward Murrow, the life of covering turmoil in far places has taken a toll on the NPR correspondents. Deborah Amos said her job makes her a loner always on the road:

To do this job, you have to be willing to give up having a family – as a woman - and when you do, then you cannot do it anymore. I would say it’s pretty much the same for a man, except it doesn’t seem so obvious. I think that it’s incredibly rewarding, but you will lose touch with a lot of your friends, you’ll be on the road, you will get a PhD in human understanding, but you will pay in your own personal life.

Dangers and familiarity with different cultures instilled humility in the NPR correspondents. South America foreign correspondent Julie McCarthy says humility is a quality you learn from covering locations abroad.<sup>28</sup>

Humility deepens empathy; empathy enlarges understanding; and understanding is the beginning of truth, which is what we seek as journalists. What we need is the courage to be humble in the world today if we are going to live in peace.

Unlike the Murrow Boys, the NPR correspondents don’t see themselves as elites. Deborah Amos tried to describe the modern foreign correspondent in a few words: “Rumbled; jet-legged; pissed off at the home office; latest, most efficient suitcase; telephone; backpack; walking shoes.” The emphasis on humility and empathy leads to the next section, which discusses the journalistic philosophy at NPR.

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<sup>28</sup> In an interview with Wisconsin Public Radio, accessible online at [http://www.wpr.org/about/Resonance\\_0507/mccarthy.htm](http://www.wpr.org/about/Resonance_0507/mccarthy.htm)

## **Journalistic Philosophy at NPR**

NPR has a long list of professional standards in its News Code of Ethics and Practices.<sup>29</sup> The correspondents internalize it as soon as they join the staff. “There’s an ethics guide at NPR that I’ve never read – but that’s mostly because I know it, because I’ve grown up here. I came here in 1977. We just know what the rules are,” Deborah Amos said. According to the code, reporting has to meet five qualities.

First, it has to be *fair*, by presenting all important views on a subject, in a conscious and affirmative way, and it must be timely if it is being accomplished over the course of more than one story. Second, reporting must be *objective*, or unbiased, separating personal opinions - such as an individual’s religious beliefs or political ideology - from the subjects covered. This is very similar to the CBS policy, and just like at CBS, it’s not always easy to obey. For instance, Ivan Watson, who was embedded with the Kurds in Southern Iraq, admitted that journalists had a hard time being objective because of their affinity with the Kurds. “We were definitely with the Kurds; we were alongside these people and were probably influenced by that to some degree, even when you are trying to be very objective... In the south, if you are working with any group of people and you are side by side with them and if you risk your life with them, there’s a bond that is very deep,” Watson said (Sylvester and Huffman, 2005, p. 173).

Jason Beaubien, Sub-Saharan Africa correspondent at the time under study, said<sup>30</sup> being objective doesn’t mean being removed or not caring, an attitude shared by Edward Murrow, who was always “in it,” absorbed by what was going on:

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<sup>29</sup> Available online at <http://www.npr.org/about/ethics/>

<sup>30</sup> Interview with the researcher, April 10, 2009.

In terms of being objective, I think it's not about being unresponsive to the subject matter. Yes, it's emotional; it affects you. And then, after you leave that, you go on and say, well, is this really what is happening, is there another side to it? It's the responsibility to take that information, verify it, get a response to it from the people who are involved or who allegedly are doing these terrible things, go to all the sources you need to go to - and that's what being objective means. It doesn't mean being detached, it doesn't mean being removed, it doesn't mean not feeling like your heart is dropping down through your stomach.

Eleanor Beardsley, Paris correspondent, confessed she is going through similar situations:

I get emotionally involved sometimes. Definitely. I was in Normandy doing this grave story, and I was crying. And I have to say that sometimes when I cover strikers I find them completely annoying because it's always the same, and I try to keep that annoyance out of my stories. You have to stay neutral. What you do is let the people tell the story and don't comment.

Deborah Amos said that being objective in the sense that NPR requires is not difficult, as it has become second nature to her:

I get angry at times about one thing or the other. But losing my objectivity... no. Here's a thing about being a journalist. If you're in a profession long enough, it begins to affect the way you see everything. Sometimes, I laugh at a journalist when we go to the grocery store: "Cheerios - good or bad?" Everything we do is a weighing of both sides. I have friends who are in the CIA, and everything they do is the worst possible scenario. You do a job long enough, and it becomes a way of thinking - and not just about the stories that you're working on, but everything. Everything you do is an "on the one hand, and then on the other hand." I've been doing this for 30 years, and I just think like a journalist. I do.

Next, just like CBS' reflective-mirror objective, NPR reporting has to be *accurate* and *honest*. It has to ensure that all statements of fact are correct, even if they come from sources, that errors of omission are avoided, and that language is not ambiguous.

Journalists must tell their listeners how and when they obtained their information. While other media organizations with a higher profile, like CNN, preferred not to cover certain



events for fear of becoming targets, as a radio journalist (“Iraqis don’t pay attention to radio per se”), NPR’s Anne Garrels said she could report more, albeit not always transparently. “I just reported what I saw. When you work in a police state, you can’t tell the listeners completely how you are getting information because then the people who are getting it for you or helping you get it will be killed. I feel I successfully protected my sources,” she said (Sylvester and Huffman, 2005, p. 184).

Just like Edward Murrow, Anne Garrels said that rather than focus on the political and military side of the war, she preferred to focus on the war’s effects on ordinary people. She received letters from listeners who encouraged her to continue to do so. (Sylvester and Huffman, 2005, p. 184).

*Focus on ordinary people* was a common theme in all three interviews with NPR correspondents. “I try not to talk to officials. I never go to embassies. I try to do very little official news,” said Deborah Amos. “Most of my work has not been exactly *the news*. I try not to do that. I try to do more analysis, more bigger picture, more cultural explanation, so that you get a deeper understanding. I don’t like *the news*. I always say it’s like covering the rain. Anyone can do it – it’s easy. But to actually put people in context, that’s hard.”

Jason Beaubien, who covered Africa and Latin America, feels that his work really matters when he covers ordinary people who care passionately about the subject that he’s interviewing them for:

They are people who don’t have a lot of voice or power in the world. Particularly on the foreign desk, you cover life-and-death problems that people are facing, like the tsunami in Sri Lanka in December 2004 or the famine and wars in Africa and other things like that. The problems that people are facing are absolutely huge and they’re so different from what our audience faces that I get a professional satisfaction out of reminding

our listeners – who are somewhat shielded middle-class people – how so many other people in the world live.

Beaubien admitted that he doesn't like covering high officials, that he doesn't find them interesting. "You can spend months setting these things up, and then you get 20 minutes with the president, and there might not even be anything substantial that comes out of that." While it's important to cover public figures and question their actions, "I find it easier to make that personal connection with ordinary people. And that's what I like to do the most," Beaubien said. Eleanor Beardsley, who has covered Kosovo and is now in Paris, agreed. "Sometimes I feel guilty because I should try to get to know these people – my husband is a French journalist, very well connected, who knows everybody – but I just don't have an interest in officials, honestly. You don't have to know the "right" people. You just have to go out and talk to the common people in order to get to know a country."

Beaubien said he makes his American audience care about foreign issues "by personalizing stories, by making sure that you don't just tell the story as an economic story, or a numbers story, but by bringing it home by showing how it's affecting people. I believe that that's what makes a good story and what makes people in Kansas or Michigan care about someone's crops failing in Malawi. If I can let those people see this person, this father struggling with this problem, then I think people will care about it."

Last, but not least, the NPR code of ethics says reporters have to treat their sources and listeners with *respect*, an open mind and sensitivity. The humility of the foreign correspondents as captured in the previous sub-section is part of that.

Common themes that emerged from the interviews, next to a propensity toward human-interest stories and a humble attitude, were the importance of being familiar with

the culture the correspondents are covering – “or else you get in trouble” – and the importance of knowing NPR’s audience really well. Said Eleanor Beardsley:

Because I know America pretty well, I can recognize good stories. I often think, ‘America would love to know about this. America should know about this.’ [...]

I’m glad I grew up American. I used to envy the kids who grew up in foreign countries. But when you grow up in your own country, you get to know it so well, so I feel like I know what would interest American people. I see things here that are sometimes so different. You’ve got to know the country you’re in, you’ve got to know the mindset.

NPR doesn’t have a high profile in most of the countries that these correspondents cover, and that works to the reporters’ advantage, according to Jason Beaubien:

For the most part, here, people have no idea what NPR is, so people are just talking to me just as a person. They do view me as a foreigner, as an outsider, but to some degree that is useful because people then stop and really explain things, which is good. If they feel you already know this, then they might not tell you some of the most obvious things, which are things that I need to know and my listeners need to know. It’s OK that people treat me as a foreigner, and I view that as part of what being foreign correspondent means.

At one point, officials in Johannesburg, South Africa, wanted to replace the foreign correspondents stationed there with local reporters. It was very difficult for NPR and other international outlets to convince some of the South African officials to give up this idea, added Beaubien:

It was this lack of understanding of what we, as foreign correspondents, do. Part of what we do is to be the foreign person in that country and view it with foreign eyes. NPR doesn’t necessarily want just the South African perspective on South Africa. They want someone to come in and be able to relate what it is about South African politics, South African life that would be of interest to an American audience. That’s what they want.

Similarly, Edward Murrow insisted to have only American reporters in his team, in order to be able to convey a relevant picture to the audience at home.

Baghdad correspondent Deborah Amos had to learn a lot about the importance of religion in the Middle East – “a cultural touchstone” – but she has to remind herself about what the public at home knows:

As a foreign correspondent, you have to remember whom you’re explaining things to. It’s very easy to get lost in the reality you’re covering – you learn so much, but you have to be aware that this is ultimately for an American audience. So you need to step back and remember what they don’t know.

But most of the time, NPR journalists don’t think like academics. “I don’t have a journalistic philosophy – that sounds a bit pretentious to me,” said Deborah Amos. “But I try to get out on the street, I try to put something funny in it if I can, and I try to put food references in, pick examples that people will connect to, I try to put culture in, I try to balance women as much as men, and I never tell you what color anybody is – you figure it out.”

When asked about how they perceive their role, the NPR correspondents emphasized the importance of keeping Americans informed and helping them understand how other nations are dealing with common problems in a globalized world. That is very similar to what CBS news director Paul White emphasized in his policy. NPR foreign editor Loren Jenkins expressed his standpoint on NPR foreign news department’s mission, while also explaining how things changed since Edward Murrow’s era:

Our vision at NPR is that we live in a globalized world, and, more than ever, it’s important that the American public be informed about the world they live in. Obviously, anything that happens anywhere else in the world has an impact here in a way that it didn’t in Edward Murrow’s time. He reported a lot about World War II in Europe, but not much about the rest of the world. It’s a much more complex world today than it was then. And our mission here is to try and do the best we can with our resources to inform the American public.

The vision is shared by Jenkins' correspondents. "I see my role as helping listeners understand the issues that are happening in my region, particularly as the world becomes more interconnected," said Jason Beaubien. "The connections are there in terms of communication, the connections are there in terms of shipping routes. There are criminal connections... The connections exist and they are incredibly powerful forces and it can be fairly easy to live in the Midwest or even Washington and New York and have no idea what is going on just across the border in Mexico or what's going on in Somalia. And then all of a sudden, your neighbor from Vermont is being held on a lifeboat by pirates on the coast of Somalia."<sup>31</sup>

While NPR has to cover a more complex, interdependent world, the visions about the role of foreign news at the two organizations under study come across as very alike. They both emphasize objectivity and fairness, they both believe in personalizing stories in order to make the audiences care, and they both believe in viewing the world with foreign eyes in order to be able to explain how events abroad relate to the American. Neither thinks that voice quality is a priority, and both CBS and NPR aim to inform the American public to the best of their abilities. The creation of the CBS foreign news department was due to Edward Murrow's belief in America's need to know what was going on in Europe way before the Anschluss or the war started. William Shirer was actually considering leaving CBS a few days before the first *European News Roundup* because of his frustration with CBS' policy of not having its European staff report foreign news (Olson and Cloud, 1996, p. 32). Only later did news director Paul White understand his European staff's urge to serve the American public with more than musical programs.

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<sup>31</sup> Interview taken on April 10, 2009, when the major foreign news was that an American cargo ship captain and crew were being held by Somali pirates after an armed attack.

The next section examines how the journalistic philosophy at the two networks translated into news content. The content analysis investigates the actual stories that the correspondents presented above reported during the two eras under study.

### **RQ3 & 4: What Did the Foreign Correspondents Cover during the Two Periods?**

This section compares the actual foreign correspondence by the Murrow Boys during World War II to the foreign news coverage by NPR correspondents during the Iraq War. The findings are based on content analysis of random samples of *The World Today* programs during 1940-1942 and *The Morning Edition* newscasts during 2004-2006. In other words, this section covers boxes B and D of the roadmap presented in Figure 2 (page 20).

### **The Time Frame of the Content Analysis**

The central part of this dissertation, the content analysis, was the most time consuming. After locating the CBS reels at the Library of Congress, an expert was contacted and paid to make copies of the random sample selected by the researcher. The CD copies were received after two weeks, in mid-June 2008. They were of broadcast quality overall, but some parts were totally unintelligible, not because of damage over time, but because the original broadcasts were themselves of very poor quality. The announcers in the studio sometimes interrupted a bad transmission from a foreign correspondent and apologized for the poor reception. The average length of a newscast was 15 minutes, which took the researcher between two or three hours to transcribe, depending on the quality of the broadcast.<sup>32</sup> Transcription took four months and was completed October 2008. Training a second coder and conducting the content analysis

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<sup>32</sup> By comparison, it took me the same amount of time to transcribe the one-hour interviews with the NPR correspondents.

and data entry of the CBS and NPR transcripts (a total of 96 newscasts - 744 stories) took three other months (from December to February 2009). Data analysis was conducted in March 2009.

The author and a second trained coder coded the same 5 percent of the sample in order to establish intercoder-reliability. Reliability coefficients using Holsti's Formula (for nominal/categorical data) and Pearson's Correlation (for interval data) ranged from .73 to 1 as follows: *word count* = 1, *location* = 1, *local referent* = .75, *reporting mode* = 1, *news type* = 1, *timeliness* = .9, *news format* = .95, *type of journalist* = .93, *news values* = .75, *framing* = 1 (thematic/episodic) and .95 (war frames), *focus* = 1.0, *source type* = .75, *pseudo-attributions* = .86, and *first-person statements* = .93, *tone* = .73, *originality of reporting* = 1.

### **Descriptive Findings**

A total of 744 stories were analyzed, 273 (37%) of which were from NPR (from March 2004 to February 2006) and 471 (63%) were from CBS (from September 1940 to August 1942). There are several reasons for the difference in the size of the two samples. First, the two newscasts had a different format (the CBS *World News Roundup* was entirely dedicated to foreign news, whereas the NPR *Morning Edition* is a regular news show that also includes foreign news). The length of the stories might also explain the larger number of CBS stories. A typical CBS story was shorter, with a mean length of 225 words (so more stories could fit in a newscast), whereas an NPR story was 755 words on average. T-tests indicated that the difference in story length was statistically significant between the two organizations ( $t=33.09$ ,  $d.f.=742$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Another explanation is the number of foreign stories per newscast. The average number of foreign

stories on *Morning Edition* was around 6, with a minimum of zero on September 5, 2005, when Hurricane Katrina stories dominated the newscast, and a maximum of 14 on July 21, 2005, when the London explosions received extensive coverage.

A typical *Morning Edition* show covers a total of 14-17 stories, which means foreign stories make a third of the newscast. The average number of stories in the *World News Roundup* was about 10 (9.8), with a minimum of 3 on November 11, 1940, when most of the newscast was dedicated to the presidential election, and a maximum of 17 on May 2, 1942.

All in all, during the two periods sampled, CBS dedicated a total of 106,312 words to foreign stories, and NPR dedicated 206,265 words, which is almost double. So again, the higher number of CBS stories does not mean that listeners got more international news during World War II.

### **Format**

The stories from the two networks during the two periods were significantly different in format across the board (Table 2).

*Anchor readers* – news reports read by announcers in the studio, without any sound bites or music (29 percent;  $X^2=85.84$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ) and *reporter voicers* – the same, done by correspondents (55 percent;  $X^2=219.35$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ) were the norm at CBS.

NPR reporting was dominated by *packages* – complex reports, with sound bites, natural sound and even music (44 percent;  $X^2=246.45$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ), *interviews with invited guests* (15 percent,  $X^2=61.05$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ), and *interviews with foreign correspondents from other media outlets* (24 percent,  $X^2=123.19$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ).



| <p><b>Table 2</b><br/> Cross-tabulations Results<br/> Differences in Format between CBS and NPR (% of cases within each network)</p> |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|
| <b>FORMAT</b>  | <b>CBS</b> | <b>NPR</b> |
| Anchor reader**  | 29%        | 1.5%       |
| Reporter voicer**  | 55%        | 1.5%       |
| Package**  | 0%         | 44%        |
| Interview**  | 1%         | 15%        |
| Interview with guest foreign correspondent**   | 0.2%       | 24%        |
| Feature**  | 2%         | 12%        |
| Commentary**   | 12%        | 1%         |
| <b>REPORTING MODE</b>  |            |            |
| Live   | 100%       | 38%        |
| Recorded   | 0%         | 62%        |
| <b>TYPE OF JOURNALIST</b>  |            |            |
| Anchor*  | 31%        | 41%        |
| Reporter in the U.S.   | 21%        | 21%        |
| Reporter abroad (foreign correspondent)**  | 48%        | 37%        |
|  | N=471      | N=273      |
| Chi-Square significant at *p<.05, **p<.001   |            |            |

NPR also aired significantly more in-depth *feature stories* (12 percent, compared to 2 percent at CBS,  $X^2=31.94$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ). On the other hand, CBS had more *commentaries*, which reflects the popularity of commentators during World War II mentioned by many radio histories (Garay, 2003, p. 301). Only one percent of the foreign stories at NPR were commentaries, compared to 12 percent at CBS ( $X^2=31.26$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ).

The formats don't necessarily speak of the quality of news at the two networks. They partly reflect the differences in technology between the two eras. A thoroughly researched voicer (factual report about an event, read by the anchor or the reporter on the filed, without support sound) can provide as much information as a complex package (which is basically a voicer illustrated by interview clips or by some sound recorded at an event). As Paul White, the general manager of the Columbia News Service, made clear

(1941, p.86), CBS used only live reporting. Sound-bites from sources could only air during live interviews.

At CBS, it took remarkable accuracy in setting up advanced schedules that were cabled to staff correspondents around the world, so their broadcast could come in on a “split-second schedule.” Technology in the early 1940s did not allow CBS to record complex packages or features like NPR can today, with diverse sound bites and natural sound or music. Figure 4 illustrates a typical roundup schedule, where each announcer and correspondent had an exact number of minutes and seconds allotted for each element in the program. timing was essential in bringing the roundup through successfully. The *Morning Edition* schedule (Figure 5) is timed to the second as well, but a local station will receive up to five updates of the program rundown within one morning, inserting, flipping, or discarding stories at the last minute, depending on breaking or ongoing news events.

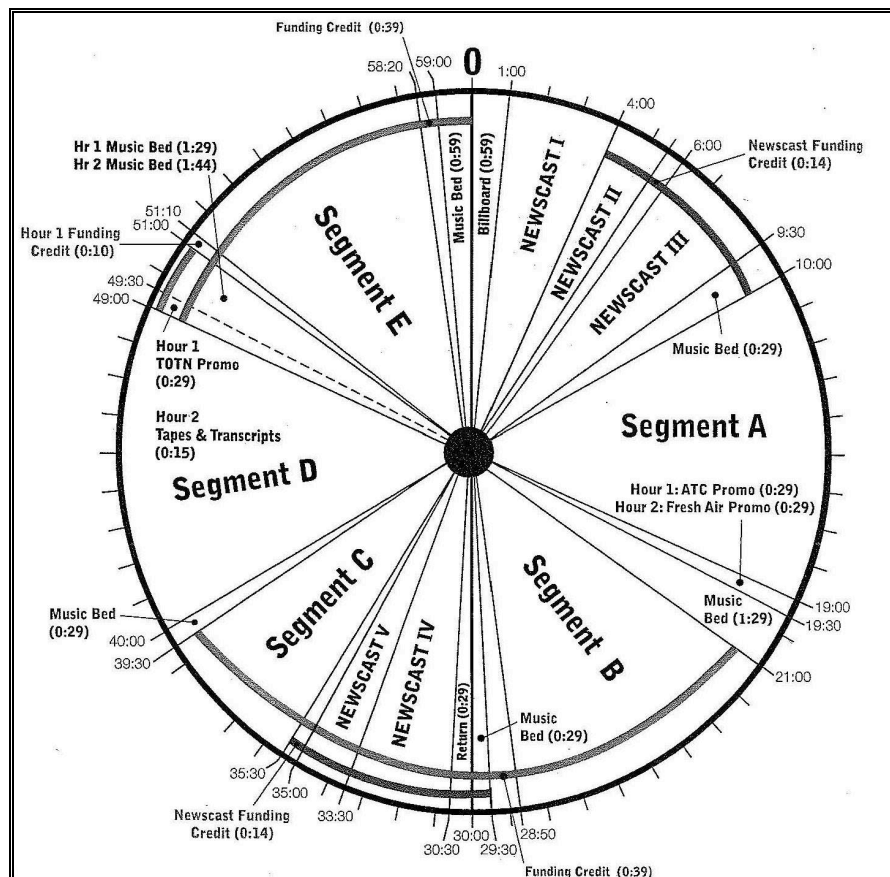
Unlike German radio, CBS and all American networks were not allowed to use recordings, except for music (a ban maintained until 1943). The stated reason was that anything less than a live broadcast detracted from radio’s fidelity (Persico, 1988, p. 220). Murrow occasionally violated the ban, by surreptitiously using recorded raid sounds.

As the cross-tabulations in Table 2 show, only 38% of the NPR stories were presented live during the two years under study (2004 to 2006). More CBS stories were presented by foreign correspondents (48 percent) compared to NPR (37 percent;  $X^2=8.22$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.01$ ). The number of foreign news introduced by a reporter in the U.S. was equal at the two media organizations (21 percent), and NPR had more foreign stories presented by anchors (41 percent compared to 31 at NPR,  $X^2=7.67$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.01$ ).

**EUROPE TONIGHT**  
**Sunday, September 1, 1940**  
**7.00-7.30 P.M.**

| <i>Greenwich Mean Time</i> | <i>Eastern Daylight Time</i> |   |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|---|
|                            | 7.00.00 – 7.00.30            | New York opening and introducing Elmer Davis                                  |
|                            | 7.00.30 – 7.01.00            | Elmer Davis calls in London   |
| 23.01.00 – 23.09.00        | 7.01.00 – 7.09.00            | Two-way conversation between Davis in New York and Edward R. Murrow in London |
|                            | 7.09.00 – 7.09.10            | New York introduces Berlin  |
| 23.09.10 – 23.14.45        | 7.09.10 – 7.14.45            | Berlin and William L. Shirer  |
|                            | 7.14.45 – 7.15.00            | New York introduces Rome  |
| 23.15.00 – 23.18.30        | 7.15.00 – 7.18.30            | Rome and Cecil Brown  |
|                            | 7.18.30 – 7.18.40            | New York introduces Bucharest   |
| 23.18.40 – 23.24.00        | 7.18.40 – 7.24.00            | Bucharest and Spencer Williams  |
|                            | 7.24.00 – 7.24.10            | New York introduces Washington  |
|                            | 7.24.10 – 7.29.15            | Washington and Albert Warner  |
|                            | 7.29.15 – 7.29.30            | New York closing  |

**Figure 4. A Typical Schedule for a European News Roundup.**  
 From White (1941, p. 86).



**Figure 5. A Typical Schedule for Morning Edition**

### **The Focus of Foreign Coverage at the Two Organizations**

This section analyzes the kinds of world news coverage provided by CBS and NPR during the two periods under scrutiny. For this examination, each network's output is tallied in four categories: political/war, economic, social/cultural, and "other."

At CBS, political/war content accounted for 89 percent of the foreign news stories, whereas NPR aired stories that were 65 percent political or war-related (Table 2). While the large percentages are not surprising, considering that this study covers two periods of war, the difference in the amount of political/war content is significantly different between the two networks ( $X^2=58.57$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ). In other words, NPR aired a more diversified pool of stories, whereas CBS focused mainly on politics and the war. NPR ran twice as many foreign stories with an economic focus (10 percent as opposed to 5 percent at CBS,  $X^2=6.74$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.05$ ) and five times as many international stories with a social/cultural focus (25 percent as opposed to 5 percent at CBS,  $X^2=21.41$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ).

**Table 3**  
Cross-tabulations Results

| Differences in Story Focus between CBS and NPR (% of cases within each network) |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|
| <b>FOCUS</b>  | <b>CBS</b> | <b>NPR</b> |
| Political/War**   | 89%        | 65%        |
| Economic*   | 5%         | 10%        |
| Social/Cultural**   | 5%         | 25%        |
| Other Focus   | 0%         | 0%         |
| <b>DOMESTICATION</b>  |            |            |
| Does not mention U.S.**   | 48%        | 26%        |
| Mentions U.S.**   | 38%        | 51%        |
| Mentions specific U.S. location**   | 14%        | 23%        |
| <b>TYPE OF NEWS</b>   |            |            |
| Hard News**   | 93%        | 78%        |
| Soft News**   | 7%         | 22%        |
|   | N=471      | N=273      |

Chi-Square significant at \* $p<.05$ , \*\* $p<.001$

NPR covered more social stories such as sporting events, science and health discoveries, air traffic accidents, and natural and man-made disasters like tsunamis, floods, or bombings around the world. While the grim and serious developments of World War II dominated the CBS news coverage, the Murrow Boys' stories weren't without candor or humor. Some stories covered sports, like golf or boxing matches. Here's a segment from a story by Edward R. Murrow on December 28, 1940:

A golf club near London, where I used to play occasionally before the war came, now has a new set of rules designed to meet German interference with the game. The first rule says that during gunfire, or while bombs are falling, players may take cover without penalty for ceasing play. And there's another rule which states that a player whose stroke is affected by the simultaneous explosion of a bomb or a shell or by machine gun fire may play another ball from the same place – penalty, one stroke.

At NPR, a similar "sports during war" story carries a different type of drama. On August 20, 2004, co-host Renee Montagne reported:

This weekend the Iraqi soccer team plays in the Olympic quarter finals: the Iraqis made the final eight. Players who were tortured by Saddam Hussein's sons have become symbols of their country's hopes and pride and they have won two out of their first three contests.

The Iraqi Olympic team gets a brief mention in an ad for President Bush. A campaign commercial airing in this country notes that there are two more free nations at the Olympics: Iraq and Afghanistan.

Several Iraqi players told the *Sports Illustrated* Web site that the president should find another way to advertise as far as they're concerned. And a spokesman for the president says the ad simply states that quote, "Democracy has triumphed over terror."

Many economic stories at CBS focused on the rubber drives during the war. President Roosevelt had urged Americans to turn in old tires, rubber raincoats, garden hose, rubber shoes, bathing caps, and so on at their local service stations, as Japanese conquests in Malaya and the Dutch Indies had cut off American access to natural supplies

like rubber. Here's what CBS anchor Quincy Howe reported on June 15, 1942, in a story about how Americans were helping with the war effort:

A filling station in Des Moines, Iowa, reports having received the following objects in its collection campaign of scrap rubber: a basket of toy rubber tanks and trucks from a small boy; from a grown man - one rubber band; from a dog - several rubber bones.

To analyze the domestication of radio foreign news during the two periods, coders noted whether a foreign article related to the U.S. in general or was "closer," with a more specific U.S. mention, meaning the article went beyond just a mention of the United States and its officials to more specific references to areas of the country and/or of residents and/or businesses. Significantly more NPR stories (74 percent compared to 52 percent at CBS) had a local angle. Fifty-one percent mentioned the United States generally and 23 percent had a closer local referent. By contrast, almost half of the CBS stories were not localized at all (Table 3).

Somewhat in line with the finding that CBS covered more political/war stories, the analysis revealed that Murrow's Boys also covered significantly more hard news compared to the modern boys and girls (93 percent versus 78 percent,  $X^2=36.77$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ). Soft news at CBS covered topics like how Manchester, the city of factories and the heart of England, looked and felt like during the war, compared to London. Edward Murrow dedicated 1,130 words to an atmosphere feature filled with cinematic scenes:

[...] The train to Manchester was crowded, filled with big red-faced men, many of them playing cards. There was much talk and good-nature laughter. I walked through three cars looking at these Manchester businessmen on their way to work. Three strangers spoke to me. It was the easy, hearty atmosphere of the North, so different from the south of England. More like the atmosphere on the trains in our own Middle West. Manchester is not a beautiful city, except perhaps for those who live here. But there's a vital thrusting quality about it. The city has been severely wounded, but it's still very much alive. It's a friendly place, where it's

easy to talk to people. I wandered about it for 12 hours, alone, unaccompanied by any official guide. As you know, the German bombers have done some work here. There have been two heavy raids and something like 200 air raid alarms. There's been much damage. Most of it by fire. Much of it near the center of the city. I've seen an entire block leveled to the ground. Businessmen told me the damage would have been much less, had an effective fire watch been enforced. And they say, too, that they'll be better prepared when the Germans come again. And everyone I talked to expects them to come again. The shops are still full of good clothes, shoes and food. Public services are functioning well. The telephone service is better than it is in London. Often you'll see a small sign on a pile of rubble saying, "so-and-so office moved to such-and-such an address.

[...] There's still music in the north. Manchester's famous Halle Orchestra continues to play German music, but no longer in the famous trade-free hall. That was destroyed during the last raid. These people have been said to be slow to anger. Certainly, there are a few surface signs of anger now. I've heard no one curse the Germans. The attitude seems to be that there's a job of work to be done, planes to be built, blankets and shoes to be made, and the thing to do is to get on with the job. I've asked several people how many more raids they think Manchester can stand. The generally say, "How do we know? Wait and see." There's no bravado here, no one saying Manchester can take it. The Manchester Guardian, one of Manchester's finest newspapers printed in any language, does no boasting about the city's toughness. It continues to write of the war and the British government with a candor and directness approaching detachment. Some people think London has received too much praise and too much glory for the way its citizens stood up to the bombing. And after today, I'm inclined to agree with them.

(Edward R. Murrow, *The World Today*, January 29, 1941)

Edward Chorlian covered a similar soft news story from Cairo, Egypt, where the major problem for Americans was the shortage of apples. Just like in Murrow's case, the writing is very evocative:

[...] Despite the war, Egypt, and Cairo in particular, has seldom been as busy and as cheerful as it is today. At this time, there are thousands of visitors touring the sites. They are having fun. They spend their money just like us, in hotels and "pensions" here in the Upper Egypt. Food is plentiful, and the results of the blackouts are hardly noticeable. But more than all, there is a general feeling of optimism. The invasion of Egypt has become a fading memory. The British community, which was never seriously wrecked, is enjoying a minor boom. The British are walking around with smiles on their faces. And in case you think this is too rosy a

picture, let me add that there's one problem that concerns all of us. Tonight's official communiqué puts the number of prisoners captured to date at 38,114, of whom nearly 25,000 are Italians. Where on earth are they going to be kept, is the question everyone is asking, and how many soldiers would it take to guard them? We the Americans present here have one minor problem: That of finding a substitute for American apples. They are the only thing of which there's a real shortage, and they cost 40 cents a piece. However, with oranges at six for a nickel, we are very well. I return you now to CBS in New York.

(Edward Chorlian, *The World Today*, December 28, 1940)

At NPR, soft news stories helped complete a dramatic picture of the Middle East.

On August 20, 2004, Israel correspondent Linda Gradstein described how 2,000 Palestinians and Israeli gathered in northern Israel to encourage their political leaders to restart the peace process. They did that through music, study and food:

Several dozen Israeli and Palestinian teen-agers are dancing under a tarp strung between two trees in Shuni Park in the small town of Binyamina. Nearby, a group of Arab and Jewish youngsters enthusiastically pound on darbukas, large drums. (*Soundbite of drums*) Their parents stroll between the trees and lounge on the grass in the late afternoon heat. In these times, after almost four years of Israeli-Palestinian daily conflict, it's rare to see Jews and Palestinians socializing like this. About 200 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza were able to get Israeli permits to attend the gathering, called a sulha, a traditional Middle Eastern ceremony of reconciliation.

### **News Values at CBS and NPR**

Based on the gatekeeping theory literature, this study set out to examine the news values that events had to encompass to be reported by the foreign correspondents from the two periods. The theory suggests that reporters and editors prefer stories with as many news values as possible in order to keep the audiences paying attention. Journalism textbooks point to the importance of news values as well, helping reporters decide what events to cover. But that doesn't necessarily mean that news values alone make journalism better. They are not categorically good or bad, and, as the following results



indicate, some of them contradict each other. This dissertation uses news values to tease out what kind of stories were covered more during the two periods, suggesting that reporting on a variety of stories with different news values is likely to offer listeners a more comprehensive depiction of the world. Yes, human-interest stories are good, but one may need to hear some larger picture stories in order to understand what is happening in far places.

Cross-tabulations for news values were again performed to check whether the differences between the two eras are statistically significant (Table 4). It must be noted, however, that the categories were not mutually exclusive, so the percentages will not add up to 100 as in the previous sections. A story could have several news values, and the coders checked all that applied. The more news values a story has, the better.

**Table 4**  
Cross-tabulations Results

| Differences in News Values between CBS and NPR (% of cases within each network) |       |       |
|---|-------|-------|
| NEWS VALUES   | CBS   | NPR   |
| Conflict**  | 90%   | 80%   |
| Impact**  | 52%   | 90%   |
| Unusual**   | 13%   | 27%   |
| Human interest**  | 11%   | 27%   |
| Timeliness**  | 95%   | 83%   |
|   | N=471 | N=273 |

Chi-Square significant at \*\* $p < .001$

Conflict was involved in the majority of stories at both networks, but significantly more foreign news at CBS (90 percent of the stories, compared to 80 percent at NPR,  $X^2=13.43$ , d.f.=1,  $p < .001$ ) were dominated by conflict. Dramatic or sensational conflicts are seen as factors increasing public interest, but simply focusing on clashes to shock and awe the audiences is one of the trends that media critics blame as contributing to journalism's decline (Hawkins, 2008, p. 194). In other words, conflict is good for

journalism because of its gripping effects, but is not sufficient for quality news. Impact, which measures whether the information in the story affects a lot of people (as opposed to only one person or a small group), was found in 52 percent of the CBS stories and in 90 percent of the NPR stories. The difference is statistically significant ( $X^2=113.482$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ). In other words, NPR covered fewer isolated incidents.

Thirteen percent of the CBS stories were coded as unusual/bizarre, and twice as many had this news value at NPR (27 percent,  $X^2=23.55$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ). For instance, on March 22, 1941, Harry Flannery described a Berlin policy regarding shoes: "Women's wooden-soled shoes may no longer be bought in Germany without a permit. Hitherto women have been buying wooden-soled shoes partly as a fad and also because other soled shoes may be bought only with permits. Some of the soles are divided into sections so that they bend at the instep and felt." In a February 22, 1941, story, Edward Murrow explained how the light inside a certain London cathedral made him feel safe amidst chaos:

Like many Americans, I've always been interested in cathedrals because of their great age. Once I even took shelter from an air raid in the Great Cathedral at Reim which is situated on Reux John D. Rockefeller in honor of its American rebuilder. But none of them, even the big Cathedral at Mets just back of the Mageneux line in Moraine, which has changed looks so often in history, none of them captured my imagination so much as the Cathedral at Salisbury, England. It was not only because its soft gray limestone spire soars higher than any in all England. It was because Salisbury Cathedral has an inner light and a bond with England's future. I discovered this when I entered the old chapter house in the center of the Cathedral and found that the women of Salisbury had fitted it up as a nursery for the bombed out children of London. Those little cotton-voices I heard inside in Salisbury Cathedral light.

At NPR, unusual stories covered science topics like the unearthing of a mummy in Egypt (March 21, 2004) or the dangers of earthquakes in third-world countries (June 2,

2004). Unusual stories did not include news along the “man bites dog” lines, but rather uncovered unknown and surprising facts about far cultures and civilizations. For instance, a story on August 30, 2004, documented the trail of donated used clothes around the world:

STEVE INSKEEP, host:

People around the world may be unhappy with America right now, but that is not stopping them from buying American merchandise. You may see it if you travel overseas. You arrive in Montu Pitu and meet a soda vender who's wearing a Chicago Bulls T-shirt. The United States exports more than 1,000 tons of used clothes per day to brokers around the world. That is more than any other nation. NPR's John Burnett followed the used clothing trail to the US-Mexico border.

JOHN BURNETT reporting:

You may not realize this but almost half of the billion pounds of clothing the goodwill industries receives every year is sold to used clothes brokers who ship it to a hundred and fifty-six different countries according to the US Commerce Department. All the big charities including Salvation Army do it. They use the income for operating expenses. As for the clothes? Well, remember that old Argyle sweater you donated last year? Today, it may be hanging in an open-air market in Lome, Togo or Wei Wei Tango, Guatemala [...].

The news value of human interest was defined as emphasis on personal stories of the human participants in the story (local civilians, troops, morale, discipline, family, benefits, medals of honor, drug use, relationships, etc.). Human interest was a central value in both networks' journalistic philosophies, as indicated by the previous section. The content analysis found that eleven percent of the CBS stories had human interest, significantly fewer than at NPR, where 27 percent of the stories focused on personal stories ( $X^2=33.83$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ).

In terms of timeliness, 95 percent of the stories at CBS were breaking news, suggesting that the Murrow Boys generally took advantage of the medium's immediacy

to bring the news as soon as it happened. NPR covered significantly fewer breaking news stories (83 percent,  $X^2=25.38$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ), a finding that goes in line with the higher number of feature stories, which usually sacrifice timeliness for depth and insight.

To measure the diversity of news values at the two networks, a scale was created by adding up all the binary news-value variables (which were coded as 1 if the news value existed and 0 if not). A higher score (the maximum could be five, because the content analysis captured five possible news values) indicated a more newsworthy story. T-tests revealed that the mean newsworthiness score for CBS was 2.6 (s.d.=.7), and for NPR it was 3 (s.d.=.6). So a typical story at NPR encompassed 3 out of 5 news values, which was slightly more than at CBS. The difference between the means was statistically significant ( $t=9.21$ , d.f.=742,  $p<.001$ ).

This means that the NPR stories are likely to be more appealing to a more diverse audience. After all, news values are criteria that determine whether a story is relevant to the public and likely to attract and keep that public.

### **The Framing of Foreign News at the Two Networks**

Another comparison explored the possible differences in the use of several frames in the foreign news coverage at the two networks. The results are presented in Table 5. First, the general framing of stories as suggested by Iyengar (1991) captured whether the radio news at the two organizations were episodic or thematic. Episodic stories focus on the here and now and usually zoom in on a single case (like an individual's story or an isolated incident), whereas thematic stories provide the audience more background, causes, consequences, and other context information. Cross-tabulations revealed that 13 percent of the CBS stories used thematic framing, while more than half of the NPR

stories (55 percent) did so. The difference is significant ( $X^2=150.1$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ). In a second step, the coding scheme captured more specific war frames. Only 6 percent of the CBS World War II stories were not related to war, whereas a sweeping 48 percent of the foreign stories at NPR covered topics other than war ( $X^2=176.51$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ).

Moving on to the war stories, the first observation is that both stations completely ignored the diagnostic frame (explaining the causes of the war). This finding may be due to the researcher's specific choice of sampling stories a year after each war started, when the routines of covering the wars were presumably set in place – and when the reporters probably no longer felt the need to explain the reasons leading to the war.

| <b>Table 5</b>  |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|
| Cross-tabulations Results   |            |            |
| Differences in Framing between CBS and NPR (% of cases within each network) |            |            |
| <b>GENERAL FRAMING</b>  | <b>CBS</b> | <b>NPR</b> |
| Thematic**  | 13%        | 55%        |
| Episodic**  | 87%        | 45%        |
| <b>WAR FRAMING</b>  |            |            |
| Not about war**   | 6%         | 48%        |
| Ground combat**   | 31%        | 3%         |
| Military strategy and tactics**   | 20%        | 10%        |
| Violence of war**   | 2%         | 8%         |
| Humanitarian frame  | 1%         | .7%        |
| Human interest  | 7%         | 9%         |
| International relations and diplomacy**                                     | 24%        | 11%        |
| U.S. foreign policy   | 1%         | 3%         |
| Diagnostic frame  | 0%         | 0%         |
| Prognostic frame  | 3%         | 3%         |
| Anti-war protest  | 1%         | 3%         |
| Other war frames  | 2%         | 2%         |
|   | N=471      | N=273      |

Chi-Square significant at \* $p<.05$ , \*\* $p<.001$

Of the eleven war frames investigated (Table 5), four frames significantly differ between the two radio networks. War coverage at CBS is dominated by stories focusing on ground combat (31 percent compared to 3 percent,  $X^2=82.11$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ), military

strategy and tactics (20 percent compared to 10 percent  $X^2=11.86$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ), and international relations and diplomacy (24 percent compared to 11 percent,  $X^2=19.33$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ). NPR had significantly more stories focusing on violence of war (8 percent compared to 2 percent,  $X^2=14.92$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.001$ ).

NPR almost ignored the humanitarian frame (less than 1 percent), and CBS did not cover the war from a humanitarian angle either (1 percent). Both networks had very few stories (1 to 3 percent) focusing on U.S. foreign policy, the long-term effects of the war (prognostic frame) or anti-war protest. The human interest frame was roughly equally present in the war coverage of the two radio networks (7 percent at CBS and 9 percent at NPR,  $X^2=.59$ , d.f.=1,  $p<.5$ ).

Other war frames (2 percent at both networks) included stories focusing on issues such as defense and national security, the rubber, paper or gas shortage during World War II, and press censorship, war propaganda, and unreliable or inconsistent communiqués. For instance, on July 10, 1941, when American correspondents were not allowed to enter Iceland, Edward Murrow reported:

Today, British reporters have been laughing at Americans in London, saying that we are now drinking medicine from our own bottle. It is quite clear that the order prohibiting correspondents from traveling to Iceland came from Washington rather than London, although no one here will admit it.

American reporters here share a sense of surprise - that they should've been stopped by their own government from viewing American troops, however few there may be in the European war zone. Some of them wonder whether the safety department, or whatever department is responsible for the issuance of the order, understands how much British confidence and reliability of their own news reports has been undermined by similar action.

This is a thing known as military censorship, designed to prevent correspondents from revealing information useful to the enemy.

Most of us over here have worked under that sort of censorship in several different countries before the war began. When we complained about British censorship, officials here in London said, “Wait until you see what your own government does.

Also from London, on February 21, 1942, Robert Trout commented on the confusion among foreign correspondents produced by contradictory sources of information:

London would like to know more about the American and Dutch sea and air attacks on Japanese ships off Bali. The trouble is, London knows too much. Communiqués have been coming in all day from a number of places.

At first the battle seemed clear enough, but as each new communiqué arrived with different details, London reporters began to realize they did not know what had happened in the waters around Bali. Reports of this sea battle were received here from General Wavell’s headquarters, from Netherlands East Indies Authorities, from the Batavia radio, and, finally, a communiqué from Washington.

And the latest report has not always referred to the latest event. London now thinks that two Japanese cruisers and two destroyers were heavily damaged, probably another Japanese cruiser blew up, two more enemy destroyers sunk, one Ally destroyer sunk. All of this not counting enemy supply ships and transports. But we’re not sure that all the reports refer to the same battle.

This lack of coordination among the various agencies putting out the Far Eastern war reports that reach London is not a major war issue. But it does help to increase the feeling here that we don’t really know what is happening in the Pacific.

Other CBS stories described fashion in Berlin during the war, compared salaries in Britain to those in the United States, listed the kinds of foods available in Russian stores, or complained that there was no news to report (although the newscast was filled with events). For instance, on August 20, 1941, Edward Murrow reported, “This is a night when correspondents search in vain for stories. The communiqués are, if anything, less informative than usual.”

## **The Sourcing of Foreign News during the Two Wars**

For this section, data analysis was conducted using independent samples t-tests in order to capture differences in sourcing between the two periods. First of all, the total number of sources per story more than doubled over time, a statistically significant increase (from 1.8 sources per story at CBS to 4.5 at NPR,  $t=17.69$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The increase paralleled the longer average story length in the modern period (an average of 755 words per story at NPR) than in the past (225 words on average). Sheer number of sources, however, is not necessarily an indication of news quality. The types of sources matter a lot too. While fine journalism has to monitor power, it also has to give voice to the voiceless and present perspectives from a variety of sources.

Table 6 shows t-test results comparing both the absolute number of sources per story and the percentage of each type of source per total number of sources. This was done for three reasons.

First, the absolute mean values are very small and they may appear irrelevant because of that. Second, they are hard to interpret. What does it mean that there are .2 organization sources per story? It means that this type of source will appear in two of ten stories. This is hard to process at first sight.

Third, and most important, the mean values tell a misleading story, because the number of sources has increased so much between the two periods. Yes, there are more official sources at NPR (1.2) than there were at CBS (.8), but those .8 officials make almost half of all sources at CBS, whereas the 1.2 at NPR represent only a third of the total. Indeed, if we look at the percentages, we see that 45 percent of the CBS sources are officials, compared to only 27 percent at NPR. So the relative number of official sources



has actually decreased over time, and significantly so ( $t=-5.9$ ,  $p<.001$ ). This section will hence discuss both the absolute and relative values for each type of source.

**Table 6**  
Independent Samples T-Test Results  
Differences in Sourcing between CBS and NPR

|                                | <i>Mean value</i> |            | <i>t</i> | <i>Percentage</i> |            | <i>t</i> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------|----------|-------------------|------------|----------|
|                                | <b>CBS</b>        | <b>NPR</b> |          | <b>CBS</b>        | <b>NPR</b> |          |
| Total Number of Sources        | 1.8               | 4.5        | 17.69**  | 100               | 100        |          |
| <b>TYPE OF SOURCE</b>          |                   |            |          |                   |            |          |
| Officials (total)              | .8                | 1.2        | 4.41**   | 45                | 27         | -5.9**   |
| <i>Named U.S. officials</i>    | .2                | .3         | 1.93*    | 12                | 7          | -2.3*    |
| <i>Unnamed U.S. officials</i>  | 0                 | .2         | 6.41**   | 1                 | 4          | 2.37*    |
| <i>Named other officials</i>   | .2                | .4         | 3.39**   | 13                | 9          | -1.81    |
| <i>Unnamed other officials</i> | .4                | .4         | .28      | 19                | 7          | -5.43**  |
| Organization                   | 0                 | .2         | 6.98**   | 0                 | 4          | 5.64**   |
| Military                       | .3                | .4         | 1.05     | 18                | 7          | -4.61**  |
| Dissident                      | 0                 | .1         | 4.98**   | 0                 | 2          | 3.7**    |
| Expert or industry             | .1                | .9         | 13.39**  | 6                 | 21         | 8.34**   |
| Witness/average people         | .1                | .9         | 11.5**   | 4                 | 17         | 7.93**   |
| Local media (print, radio)     | .4                | .4         | -.36     | 22                | 11         | -4.45**  |
| News wires                     | .1                | 0          | -3.69**  | 4                 | .3         | -3.85**  |
| Religious sources              | 0                 | .1         | 5.21**   | 0                 | 2          | 4.19**   |
| Arts and sports                | 0                 | .1         | 4.54**   | 0                 | 3          | 4.3**    |
| Other (police, documents)      | 0                 | .2         | 6.35***  | 2                 | 4          | 2.8*     |
|                                | N=471             | N=273      |          | N=471             | N=273      |          |

Significance levels \* $p<.05$ , \*\* $p<.001$ . Percentages are computed by total number of sources.

Table 6 shows that the proportion of U.S. officials (both named and unnamed) was almost equal at the two networks. Thirteen percent of the sources in CBS foreign news were U.S. officials (12 percent named and 1 percent unnamed) compared to 11 percent at NPR (7 percent named and 4 percent unnamed). This means that the reliance on U.S. officials has remained the same over time -- and not very high. But CBS relied more heavily on other foreign officials (32 percent total) compared to only 16 percent at

NPR (half the fraction). Foreign officials were actually the dominant type of source at CBS. When we weigh the numbers for each type against the total number of sources, we find that CBS correspondents were significantly more inclined to clip from local media (22 percent in the past versus 11 percent at NPR) and to quote military officials (18 percent compared to 7 percent at NPR). By contrast, NPR correspondents are more likely to quote expert and industry sources (21 percent versus 6 percent in the past), and witnesses / average people on the street (17 percent compared to 4 percent at CBS).

CBS also quoted more *unnamed foreign* officials (19 percent compared to 7 percent at NPR), but NPR employed more *unnamed U.S.* officials (4 percent compared to only 1 percent at CBS). Correspondents at NPR started giving a voice (significantly so) to organizational sources (such as transnational organizations or non-governmental organizations), dissidents (grass-roots, out-of-power individuals, and activists), religious and arts/sports sources, as well as others (which were, most of time, police sources or documents). These types of sources were hardly if ever used in the past. On the other hand, press agencies almost disappeared from the foreign news coverage at NPR (less than a third of a percent, compared to 4 percent at CBS).

To sum up, the top three sources that the two networks were most likely to draw from were, in the order of their importance, foreign officials, local media, and military sources at CBS, and experts, witnesses and foreign officials at NPR. NPR attributed information to more sources, which were also more diverse. The balance was tilted in favor of official sources at CBS and in favor of ordinary citizens and experts at NPR.

Now that data are available both on reporting mode (Table 2 - 38 percent of the NPR stories were presented live) and on sources (Table 6), t-tests were performed to test

Pew Research Center’s contention (2006) that live stories on radio and television are overwhelmingly based on a single identifiable source and include only one side, or mostly one side, of an issue.

Indeed, Table 7 shows that the recorded stories contained significantly more sources than the live ones (an average of 5, compared to 3). On the other hand, the live stories tended to draw on slightly more official sources (a difference that approached significance at  $p=.1$ ) and twice as few non-official sources (an average of 2 compared to 4 in recorded stories). So this study finds partial support for the Pew research and also explains the fewer sources overall and the more official sources in particular at CBS. The live format (which was *enforced* across networks at the time) is one that tends to favor that precise pattern of less scrupulous attribution. As Table 2 shows, 38 percent of the stories at NPR were presented live.

**Table 7**  
Independent Samples T-Test Results  
Differences in Sourcing between Live and Recorded Stories at NPR

|                         | <b>Live</b>       | <b>Recorded</b> |          |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------|
|                         | <i>Mean value</i> |                 | <i>t</i> |
| Total number of sources | 3.4               | 5.2             | 5.43**   |
| Official sources        | 1.5               | 1.2             | -1.38    |
| Non-official sources    | 1.9               | 4               | 7.31**   |
|                         | N=105             | N=168           |          |

Significance level \*\* $p<.001$

Moving on to the use of pseudo-attributions, Table 8 indicates that while at CBS a typical story would contain on average one such vague attribution (“authoritative sources say,” “we are told that,” “people in the know say,” etc.), only one in two stories at NPR would use pseudo-attribution, a decrease that is statistically significant. A closer look at the descriptive statistics for the two networks found that the maximum number of

pseudo-attributions was 11 at CBS and 7 at NPR. As Lippmann and Merz (1920) argued in their seminal study, this type of hazy attribution should be targeted for extinction in quality news.

**Table 8**  
Independent Samples T-Test Results  
Differences in Pseudo-attributions between CBS and NPR

|                         | <b>CBS</b>        | <b>NPR</b> |          |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------------|----------|
|                         | <i>Mean value</i> |            | <i>t</i> |
| Pseudo-attributions     | 1                 | .6         | -3.95**  |
| First-person statements | 1                 | 2          | 4.83**   |
| Second-person addresses | .4                | .1         | -4.03**  |
|                         | N=471             | N=273      |          |

Significance levels \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .001$

The practice of reporting in the first person, found by previous studies (Cozma, Hamilton, and Lawrence, 2008; Hamilton, Cozma, and Lawrence, 2009) to be especially condoned in the past, has actually doubled over time. A typical NPR story would use two such first-person statements on average per story, compared to only one at CBS. The increase is statistically significant. The finding is unexpected considering that the descriptive statistics showed that the maximum number of first-person statements was 30 at CBS and 16 at NPR. The finding may be explained by the fact that a quarter of the stories at NPR were interviews by the announcer in Washington with the correspondent abroad. The anchor would ask the reporter what is happening and what he knows.

On the other hand, CBS correspondents were more likely to address their listeners directly. Four of 10 stories at CBS used a second-person address (you), compared to only one in 10 at NPR. The drop is statistically significant. The finding is unexpected because modern radio guidelines encourage reporters to talk directly to their audience, but it is explained by the format of the *Morning Edition*. As mentioned previously, most

correspondents at NPR were in dialogue with the announcers in Washington, and often addressed them by first name before starting their report (as in, “Hello, Renée,” rather than “Hello, audience”).

The model of quality foreign news also proposes that reporting should be initiated by journalists or driven by unexpected events rather than by officials. Previous research has shown that routine news events generally dominate the media content. These are events that are planned or sponsored by politicians and other officials to manage the news and communicate with the public (Lawrence, 2000, p. 7). Boorstin (1977) calls them “pseudo-events” – events that come about “because someone has planned, planted, or incited” them (Boorstin, 1977, p. 11). Because they can be anticipated, administratively managed, and coordinated with the organizers of the event, journalists are attracted by pseudo-events. Press conferences, for example, with their pre-established schedule and script, facilitate news production routines and deadlines. These staged, intentional events produce the so-called “institutionally driven news.” Accidental events are the events that at least at their initial occurrence are not managed by officials within institutional settings (accidents, spontaneous acts by other groups, etc.). They are the basis for what the literature calls “event-driven news” (Lawrence, 2000; Livingston and Bennett, 2003). In this analysis, if the story was driven neither by officials, nor by spontaneous events, but it was the result of the reporter’s investigation, analysis and observation, it was coded as “reporter-driven.” Event- and journalist-driven news stories are more diverse and dynamic than institutionally driven news. Such stories range beyond the routine news beats, and draw on a variety of sources and perspectives. Hence, examining what/who initiated the stories at the two networks is as important as investigating sourcing.

| <b>Table 9</b>   |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|
| Cross-tabulations Results  |            |            |
| Differences in Story Initiation between CBS and NPR (% of cases within each network) |            |            |
| <b>INITIATION</b>  | <b>CBS</b> | <b>NPR</b> |
| Institutionally driven stories   | 32%        | 36%        |
| Event-driven stories   | 63%        | 49%        |
| Reporter-driven stories  | 5%         | 15%        |
|  | N=471      | N=273      |
| Pearson Chi-Square= 29.88, Cramer's V=.2 (moderate association), p<.001.             |            |            |

Table 9 shows that almost two-thirds (63 percent) of the CBS stories were event-driven, compared to half (49 percent) at NPR. While NPR aired slightly more institutionally driven news (36 percent versus 32 percent at CBS), it also aired more reporter-driven stories (15 percent versus 5 percent at CBS). This finding goes against the trend found by Livingston and Bennett (2003) in CNN international desk stories from 1994 to 2001. They found that event-driven news stories were more common in 2001 than in 1994, but officials seem to be as much a part of the news as ever.

| <b>Table 10</b>   |   |                         |   |                         |
|---|---|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Cross-tabulations Results   |   |                         |   |                         |
| Differences in Official Involvement between CBS and NPR (% of cases within each type of initiation story) |   |                         |   |                         |
|   | <b>CBS</b>                                  |                         | <b>NPR</b>                                  |                         |
|   | Event-driven stories                        | Reporter-driven stories | Event-driven stories                        | Reporter-driven stories |
| Official involvement  | 41%   | 9%                      | 51%   | 14%                     |
| No official involvement   | 59%   | 91%                     | 49%   | 86%                     |
|   | N=133                                       | N=42                    | N=297                                       | N=22                    |
|   | Pearson Chi-Square= 54.58                   |                         | Pearson Chi-Square= 49.06                   |                         |
|   | Cramer's V=.34 (strong association), p<.001 |                         | Cramer's V=.42 (strong association), p<.001 |                         |

A closer look at the involvement of officials in the unmanaged news found that official sources were involved in 41 percent of the event-driven news and 9 percent of the reporter-driven news at CBS. At NPR, officials were involved in 51 percent of the event-

driven news and in 14 percent of the reporter-driven stories. In other words, NPR covers slightly more managed stories, and officials dominate unmanaged stories more as well (Table 10).

### **Tone and Originality of Reporting at the Two Networks**

The last section of the analysis examined the tone of the stories (Table 11) and the extent to which correspondents relied on independent newsgathering or on other information sources, like press agencies or official communiqués (Tables 12 and 13).

Tone measured the extent to which correspondents expressed a favorable or negative opinion about the combatants or their tactics and policies. As noted earlier, both organizations have strict policies against taking sides.

| <b>Table 11</b><br>Cross-tabulations Results<br>Differences in Tone between CBS and NPR (% of cases within each network) |            |            |
|--|------------|------------|
| <b>TONE</b>  | <b>CBS</b> | <b>NPR</b> |
| Negative toward U.S. or allies   | 7%         | 8%         |
| Neutral/non-partisan   | 74%        | 91%        |
| Positive toward U.S. or allies   | 19%        | 1%         |
|  | N=471      | N=273      |
| Pearson Chi-Square= 55.34, Cramer's V=.27 (moderately strong association), $p<.001$                                      |            |            |

Seventy-four percent of the CBS stories were neutral - considerably fewer than at NPR, where 91 percent of the stories did not express a judgment one way or the other. A fairly equal proportion of stories had a negative tone toward the U.S. or its allies (7 percent at CBS and 8 percent at NPR), but more CBS stories (19 percent) had a positive tone toward the U.S. or its allies compared to NPR (1 percent). Overall, the balance is tilted in favor of the U.S. and its allies at CBS (a more patriotic or war-supportive stance), whereas NPR is more critical of the country's role in the Iraq War, albeit more non-partisan in general.

A scale that was pre-tested in a previous study was used to measure originality of reporting at the two networks. The lowest level of originality – zero – indicated stories where the coders could not assess where the information came from. The reporter was not transparent at all about sources of information. The next level – one – represented stories that were based on information clipped from news sources like wires and official communiqués. The following level – two – was assigned to stories that coders were confident resulted from the reporter’s observation on the scene of an event, without further investigation. Repeating what an official said at a conference or senate meeting or describing the surroundings from a fixed point (like on a roof top or in a piazza where an event is taking place – but without participating or interviewing people) are examples of observation. The highest level – three – was assigned to stories that were thoroughly researched through independent newsgathering.

**Table 12**  
Independent Samples T-Test Results  
Differences in Originality Levels between CBS and NPR

|                    | <b>CBS</b>        | <b>NPR</b> |          |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------|----------|
|                    | <i>Mean value</i> |            | <i>t</i> |
| <b>Originality</b> | 1.3               | 2.8        | 24.06**  |
|                    | N=471             | N=273      |          |

Originality scale: 0 = Can’t tell where the information came from; 3 = Newsgathering.  
Significance level \*\*p<.001

Table 12 shows that, on the scale from 0 to 3, the NPR stories reached almost maximum originality (2.8), whereas the CBS stories scored slightly under the median point (1.3). The difference was statistically significant (t=24.06, p<.001).

To better understand the differences in the patterns of newsgathering, the frequencies for each type of story were cross-tabulated in Table 13.



**Table 13**  
Cross-tabulations Results  
Differences in Originality of Reporting between CBS and NPR (% of cases within each network)

| <b>ORIGINALITY</b>   | <b>CBS</b> | <b>NPR</b> |
|--|------------|------------|
| Can't tell where the info came from  | 20%        | 2%         |
| Clipped from other media   | 40%        | 1%         |
| Confident - observation  | 23%        | 4%         |
| Confident - newsgathering  | 17%        | 94%        |
|  | N=471      | N=273      |
| Pearson Chi-Square= 410.51, Cramer's V=.74 (very strong association), p<.001 |            |            |

We see that 40 percent of the CBS stories were clipped from other media and/or official communiqués, compared to only 1 percent of the NPR foreign news. Actually, a sweeping 94 percent of the NPR stories were clearly produced through original newsgathering. At CBS, only 17 percent were the result of independent reporting. Another 23 percent were the result of observation, and for 20 percent the coders could not tell where the information came from. The Cramer's V test, which is appropriate for tables that are larger than 2 x 2, where at least one of the nominal variables has three or more categories (originality has four), indicates an alarmingly strong association between network and originality (Cramer's V=.74). The unusually high score is most likely due to the disproportionate levels of originality at NPR – where the lower levels are almost nonexistent.<sup>33</sup>

As Table 2 showed, many of the stories at both networks were presented by anchors (31% at CBS and 41% at NPR). While transcribing and then coding the anchor readers at CBS, the researcher noticed that many of these foreign news stories presented from the studio in New York did not specify where the information came from. To test

<sup>33</sup> This finding suggests that the four categories could be collapsed into two: original reporting versus non-original reporting, in order to have more comparable groups.

that impression, analyses of variance were computed for the two networks, to see if the level of originality differs by type of journalist (anchor versus reporter at home versus reporter overseas).

Table 14 shows that type of reporter does not make a difference at NPR. AT CBS, however, the stories presented by anchors scored almost minimum on the originality scale (M=.7), a significant difference from the other two types of stories, according to Tukey post-hoc tests. The stories presented by foreign correspondents were the most original (M=1.6, on a scale from 0 to 3), but the difference was not statistically significant from the foreign news stories presented by reporters in the U.S. (M=1.4).

**Table 14**  
Univariate ANOVAs Results  
Differences in Originality Levels by Type of Journalist at CBS and NPR

|                           | <b>Anchor</b>                          | <b>U.S. reporter</b> | <b>Reporter abroad</b> |          |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------------|----------|
|                           | <i>Mean value (standard deviation)</i> |                      |                        | <i>F</i> |
| <b>Originality at CBS</b> | .7 (.5)                                | 1.4 (1)              | 1.6 (1)                | 44.08**  |
| <b>Originality at NPR</b> | 2.85 (.5)                              | 2.87 (.4)            | 2.96 (.3)              | 1.70     |

Originality scale: 0 = Can't tell where the information came from; 3 = Newsgathering.  
Significance level \*\*p<.001

It is also worth noting that the NPR stories presented by foreign correspondents scored almost maximum (M=2.96) on the originality scale.

#### **RQ5: What Accounts for the Similarities and Differences between the Two Networks?**

The results presented above show that the two groups of correspondents are very much alike. While the NPR reporters are slightly older and more experienced, they are also examined thirty years after *Morning Edition* premiered, unlike the CBS staff, which was specifically put together at the time under study to deal with the European conflict.

Moreover, Murrow, who had no journalism background, cared primarily about intelligence, knowledge, and writing skills. As radio was a young medium, he could not expect professional broadcast credentials, although most of the Murrow Boys had print, freelance or wire experience. With radio being a mature medium, NPR's foreign editor Loren Jenkins indicated in a personal interview in April 2009 that he has clearer standards when hiring his correspondents:

An NPR foreign correspondent is first of all a great reporter with an ability to do great radio, which requires an additional training [Indeed, considerably more NPR correspondents have a radio background]. Beyond that, we want someone who's got experience in working and living around the world, who has an understanding of the world, who, hopefully, knows foreign languages. Someone who's not locked into thinking in a very American way, who can see that there are other ways of approaching the world and that other people have different ideas, and who can be empathetic of them and understanding – to be able to go out and see the world and report honestly and objectively without an agenda.

The CBS group also comes across as more glamorous. The Murrow Boys became household names and saw themselves as celebrities. Many of them were handsome and elegant, and quite “successful with the ladies” (Olson and Cloud, 1996). They were also more likely to cultivate the powerful, as the sourcing results indicated. Murrow would occasionally have dinner with Churchill and Roosevelt, proving Murrow's importance as a diplomatic and political figure for both administrations (Socolow, 2007, p. 118). While being “authorities on foreign affairs” (Hamilton, 2009, p. 306), many of the Murrow Boys were elites, and anytime they visited the United States, photographers would tail them, and magazine writers would clamor for interviews (Olson and Cloud, 1996, p. 104).

The NPR correspondents have comparatively less star quality and they said in the interviews that they don't enjoy covering officials and officialdom, although they have to

do it (and the content analysis found that they indeed draw from considerably fewer official sources compared to CBS – 27 percent versus 45 percent. Deborah Amos scoffed when asked about being elite: “First of all, nobody can afford to pay you the elite lifestyle. That doesn’t happen. [...] I think that is a very old way of foreign corresponding. I don’t know anybody – anybody – who’s in that elite position anymore.”

While Murrow received direct orders from New York, he enjoyed a lot of autonomy and often neglected the indications from the CBS home desk. He did that because he and William Shirer soon realized that news director Paul White, for instance, did not understand that workings and difficulties of reporting overseas until he visited London (Olson and Cloud, 1996, p. 54). The NPR correspondents say they benefit from the same kind of autonomy, albeit technology makes the home desk’s arm longer. Baghdad correspondent Deborah Amos, who’s been with NPR since 1977, described how cable news affected her job:

I covered 1991, when CNN came on the scene, and for the first time my editor thought that he knew as much as I did. He was watching CNN. So he would say, “But I just saw such and such...” And that process has pretty much gone unabated since ’91. But you know, I think it’s funny, now that I think about it, because there’s so little foreign news on American television: that only happens in a huge international story. I’m often in Beirut or I’m in Damascus, and I realize they have no idea what is going on where I am. But I have to file all the time because we’re a 24-hour news organization. And I pretty much have autonomy. The news is the news, and if I’m in the middle of something, [I will cover it]... I was in Beirut in May 2008 when Hezbollah took over West Beirut. Nobody had to call me and tell me it was time to file. There was no discussion about what I would do. We all knew. But for the most part, I know what I’m going to do before I go. I have a series of stories that I’ve been thinking about that I want to go and do, that I have seen and I know that nobody else has done. And I discuss that with my editor before I go.

Paris correspondent Eleanor Beardsley said 70 percent of her stories come from her or her ideas. “Now, that I’ve worked for NPR for almost five years, I can almost do

any story I want,” she added. Foreign editor Loren Jenkins said he trusts his correspondents:

I don’t tell our correspondents what to cover. Mostly, they are telling us what they are seeing, and we encourage them to do it. Every now and then, sitting here, we might hear something and send it back to them, saying, “What about this?” But, ideally, you want the people in place to tell you what the story is. I’m sitting in Washington right now, and I trust my person in Pakistan to tell me about Pakistan more than I can learn here in Washington.

The fact that information is easily accessible online from several other sources does add to the pressure. “Certainly there’s more pressure on us to get our material faster, there’s also pressure on us to get photos, to be getting images and even video that will go to our website,” said Jason Beaubien. “Ultimately, I think it’s good. I think it’s making us a better news organization.”

Technology also affects the format of the stories. NPR emphasizes the importance of sound in radio storytelling. Said Eleanor Beardsley, after five years with NPR:

Now I really think like a radio reporter. I really think about sound. There are two types of stories. The stories that you have to do quickly, and you just do the best you can with what you’ve got. Like the story I did this morning about pirates – I used some TV sound and I didn’t really have natural sound, and I did what I could. And then there are the stories that you go exploring for. You need people’s feelings and reactions, real people. Radio is not going to give you the most in-depth story. If you want to know all the details, you read the *New York Times*. But radio is going to take you there. You’re not going to have all the details of a print story, but you’re going to feel it. I build my stories around sound and people’s sound bites. You take the best of what your sources say and build around that.

Ability to record sound and sound bites presents a great advantage compared to the Murrow era, when reporter and anchor pieces were typically presented live from the studio, without any support sound. That is what drew Murrow to streets and rooftops – the fact that he could take his listeners to London with both narration and sound.

As Table 3 shows, more stories at CBS were *hard news* focusing on *politics* that *did not mention the United States* at all, despite Edward Murrow's philosophy of focusing on the human aspect of events and of explaining how the news in Europe related to the listener at home. The explanation is found both in the historical context of the time and in NPR correspondents' approach to foreign news. While Murrow favored human-interest stories, a lot of political events took Europe by storm that needed to be explained. The foreign news focused exclusively on the war, and CBS' professed mission was to keep the public informed about the conflict's evolution – hence the propensity toward ground combat stories. NPR, on the other hand, tries to find interesting connections across continents with a large spectrum of stories in a world it sees more globalized as ever. Only half of the NPR stories are about war (Table 5). In the words of foreign editor Loren Jenkins:

Good storytelling has to be interesting. You're reaching people through their ears, which makes it a real challenge to keep their interest up. If you write a bill story, people turn off after about a minute of listening. You have to find voices, descriptive elements, and make people feel they are there when it happens – you want to see the environment, to hear the environment. That is done with sound, it's done with narration. And we cover anything. We do serious stories, we do less serious stories, we do features, we do hard news – *anything and everything*. Cultural news, literature, films, things that make people understand other cultures and what motivates them.

Looking back at the content analysis findings, it can be said that the Murrow Boys did practice what they preached, but at a significantly lower rate than their NPR counterparts. The NPR stories hit almost all the right notes judging by the proposed model for quality foreign news. Their reporting is more diverse in terms of topics, countries, sourcing, framing, and news values. The NPR stories give more voice to the voiceless. They are longer, and more time altogether (twice as much) is dedicated to

foreign news at *Morning Edition*, despite the fact that the program is not specifically dedicated to foreign news. While the NPR boys and girls cover slightly more institutionally-driven stories (36 percent compared to 32 percent at CBS), they also do more reporter-driven reportage (15 percent compared to five percent at CBS), use fewer pseudo-attributions, more thematic framing, and considerably more original reporting.

The NPR stories are also significantly more neutral. This is partially explained by the nature of the two wars. World War II was the good war, one that the CBS journalists actually thought was worth fighting or joining. The CBS policy that newscasters must never reveal emotion or prejudice on the air made the Murrow Boys' jobs difficult. For instance, while covering the Polish crisis, Eric Sevareid's voice cracked with emotion, which promptly got him reprimanded by New York (Cloud and Olson, 1996, p. 59). The Murrow Boys felt that the CBS policy was unreasonable. "It did not take into account human nature or the astounding moral inequality between the sides at war. How could an honest reporter parrot the Nazi line about Poland? It wasn't possible to be morally neutral in this war" (Cloud and Olson, 1996, p. 59).

Given this insight, it is worth going back to what news director Paul White (1941, p. 85) said about the CBS journalistic philosophy: "It must be recalled that [world] opinion is, in itself, a fact. For instance, if the British people believe that the Germans are committing atrocities, the fact of their belief is important. That these atrocities are real, false, or unproven is another fact." From the interviews with the NPR correspondents, it became immediately clear that simply relaying opinion - what some people feel or think about a situation - is not enough for good journalism anymore. Reporting must be fair, and every accusation must be thoroughly confirmed.

NPR correspondent Jason Beaubien reflected, “Sometimes I’m on the verge of crying when I hear all these heart-breaking stories. Then, the burden is on me to step back after an interview and make sure that this person was honest. And then [...] you go on and say, well, is this really what is happening, is there another side to it? It’s [your] responsibility to take that information, verify it, get a response to it from the people who are involved or who allegedly are doing these terrible things, go to all the sources you need to go to.”

When looking at the results showing that the CBS reports fell short across most of the variables proposed in the model of quality foreign news, one must remember that the Murrow Boys did the best they could with limited resources and independence. Considering the inability to hear each other over the air, frequent relays of broadcasts across third and fourth nations or even continents, atmospheric interferences, power outages, fading radio signals, improvised transmitting facilities, and the need to be punctual to the second in unpredictable or hostile conditions, it seems a miracle that the Murrow Boys’ reports were even heard at all in the U.S.

The unforeseen circumstances added both to the hardships and, when overcome, to the satisfactions. Oftentimes, sun would blot out cabled scripts or the light attached to the microphone would go out, leaving the correspondents in the dark. They would ad lib or fill the time with spoken commentary, instead of resorting to the familiar domestic technique of returning to the studio or cutting to a musical break (Kendrik, 1969, pp. 166-167). When the CBS firm rules (about objectivity or live broadcasting) or the limitations of the new medium didn’t restrict the Murrow Boys’ freedom of following their journalistic principles (which, as seen in the comparison of the two journalistic



philosophies, are about the same in the present), Nazi censorship put a ceiling on the CBS correspondents' reportage (Cloud and Olson, 1996, p. 59). The Murrow Boys had to constantly adjust their scripts to pass censorship across Europe.

Several enabling factors, besides cheaper travel, better transmitting technology and more portable equipment, allow the NPR correspondents to keep that tradition alive and even outshine it. NPR foreign editor Loren Jenkins has an explanation for his correspondents' prowess:

Edward Murrow was great *in his time and his moment*. I think that journalism in general has evolved; it's got much more sophisticated, much more nuanced than in his age. I think that across the board, correspondents today are better educated, more experienced. I think the general nature of news has improved.

One characteristic of the Murrow Boys' correspondence that this dissertation could not measure is the quality of the writing. The examples offered throughout this study indicate the lyrism and evocative power of the Murrow Boys' reports. When they did not simply relay the information from official communiqués about battlefield developments, the golden-age correspondents described scenes from war-torn countries graphically.

As they could not record sound bites to build their stories around, the CBS correspondents zoomed in on an aspect of the life in the country they covered. They described in perceptive detail the atmosphere, people or buildings, taking the listeners by the hand and making them feel witnesses to events in remote and unfamiliar places. And indeed, Edward Murrow favored thoughtful, analytical, and beautiful writing skills to other qualities that might generally seem more important in radio, like voice or journalism background. "Today's correspondents so often are limited to writing captions

for pictures,” complained Charles Collingwood when he retired (Cloud and Olson, 1996), as broadcast writing became increasingly focused on action rather than on meditation and insight.

The NPR corps of correspondents, however, seems to favor the same type of writing. Instead of focusing on breaking news, the correspondents interviewed said they prefer “emotional stories that can touch people” (Eleanor Beardsley), analysis and cultural stories that “put people in context” (Deborah Amos), and “social pieces” (Jason Beaubien). Interview bites, however, tend to take more story space than the reporters’ voice. When that voice is heard, it does remind the listener of similar reports by Edward Murrow. Here’s a fragment from a piece by Deborah Amos (August 3, 2005) that presents the political and social changes in Syria. The story is more than 1,000 words long and is packed with facts, description, and sound-bites from six different sources:

On a hot Saturday afternoon, with ornate ceiling fans whirling over thick carpets, a group of women gather for an Islamic study group at a mosque in Damascus. (*Sound bite of woman singing in foreign language*) The modest dress is fashionable--Islam with flair--some head scarves of bright pink. A few wear jeans. These popular groups are one sign of an Islamic revival. Another is this computer and book shop, the House of Knowledge, with displays of digitized Korans, hand-held and wide-screen size. Find any verse with the touch of a button... *Unidentified Man: Just a little touch. (Soundbite of man singing in foreign language)* ...with a choice of six famous Koranic readers. [...] Damascus still seems a secular, tolerant city. While Friday prayers are packed, so are Damascus nightclubs. Satellite dishes sprout from every rooftop. But everyone feels change is coming. A new law is expected soon opening the way for political parties to challenge the ruling Baath Party, in power for 40 years.

As another example, in April 2005, veteran correspondent Michael Sullivan traveled from north to south on Vietnam’s Highway 1 for a five-part series on how Vietnam was faring three decades after the bitter Vietnam War. Here’s how the series debuted (April 25, 2005):

The town of Lang Son is only a few miles from the Chinese border, surrounded by limestone hills and green paddy fields, just a hundred miles from Vietnam's capital, Hanoi. (*Soundbite of rooster crowing*) Lang Son, like almost every large town in Vietnam, has a cemetery for its war dead. This one is about a mile from the town center near the car dealership. A couple of roosters loiter outside. There are nearly 500 small, neatly kept graves here. Along each headstone, along with the name, is the inscription (foreign language spoken) or martyr. (*Soundbite of woman speaking foreign language*) Some of those resting here died fighting the French, others the Americans. But the vast majority here, says the cemetery's caretaker, Nong Ti Huang, died in Vietnam's short but bloody border war with China, just four years after the end of the war with America.[...]What the Vietnamese call the American War lasted more than a decade. The border war with China, sparked by Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in 1978, was over in a matter of weeks, but it caused far more damage in Lang Son than by anything done by the Americans. Sixty-year-old restaurant owner Voo Biktwi(ph) remembers the day the Chinese troops arrived in her town.

*Ms. VOO BIKTWI (Restaurant Owner): (Through Translator) When the Chinese attacked, all the women and children were told to evacuate. After the Chinese withdrew, we came back here and saw most of the buildings had been destroyed.*

Over the next decade, border skirmishes were common, more names for the cemetery on the hill. By the early '90s, however, the relationship had warmed considerably. The Chinese are once again flooding across the border, and this time they're welcome. [...] China sends more tourists to Vietnam than any other foreign country. But the economic benefit of tourism is only a fraction of a much bigger trade relationship: consumer goods flooding across the border. [...]

A worthy future enterprise would be to find a way to compare the quality of writing at the two networks, to see if NPR follows into the Murrow tradition's heels in that important respect as well.

### **Summary of Findings**

This study's major findings are summarized as follows:

- Journalism quality may have been an elusive concept in previous research, but by exploring what historians and researchers value in an era that epitomizes reporting excellence and by teasing out relevant elements from journalism textbooks and

theoretical studies, it is possible to come up with a model that allows us to compare the present against the golden age of radio foreign correspondence.

- The Murrow tradition *as measured in this study* lives up only partially to the expectations created by historical appraisals and does not justify the media critics' contention that modern foreign correspondence is an endangered species that fails to follow in the footsteps created by its pioneers.
- By looking at both the quality of the foreign news and at the quality of the correspondents reporting it, this study found that NPR's international news operation during 2004-2006 matched or outshined the Murrow Boys' performance during 1940-1942.
- Interviews with NPR correspondents find support for the ongoing discussion about the decline in foreign news quality in U.S. media but also indicate how news organizations can take advantage of the changes (since Murrow's era) in society, technology and journalism to advance central elements of the Murrow tradition.

Discussion and conclusions follow in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Overview**

Looking back at the proposed model of foreign news quality, this study found that NPR fares better than CBS on most of the variables in that model. The fact that the Murrow Boys were the first to create a format for covering a world war for radio with limited resources but solid journalistic principles is what gave birth to what professionals and historians call the Murrow tradition.

The evidence collected in this study shows that a central element of the Murrow tradition is the large corps of full-time foreign correspondents (21, which is more than most media outlets have today) concentrated in a foreign area of interest to the listening public (mainly Europe, at least initially). Most of them were well educated (had a college degree or more), had extensive journalistic practice (12 years on average) and overseas experience. They were good writers (many of them had written books by 1942 and many more wrote books after the war) and had good connections in world capitals. As a result of those connections, they were more likely to cover political stories (almost 90 percent) and hard news (93 percent), and draw on official sources and local media in the countries they covered, despite Murrow's professed preference for human-interest angles. In fact, only 11 percent of the CBS stories focused on the human side, the vast majority favoring conflict-laden events that impacted a lot of people. The majority of the stories was episodic (87 percent) and focused on ground combat or military strategy angles of the war. As the radio was the first source of information about the developments in Europe, these findings make sense. Listeners could get further details from the newspapers and interpretation from the separate CBS programs of commentary. Most of the stories that

the Murrow Boys covered in the European roundup were event-driven (63 percent) rather than institutionally-driven (32 percent). Three-thirds of the World War II stories were neutral, and the stories reported by correspondents in the field were more original (from a newsgathering standpoint) and transparent about their sources than the anchor-presented stories.

There is obviously more about the Murrow tradition that this study could not capture or measure. Maybe no study can achieve that, but this is an important first step. Based on the snapshot taken by the content analysis and socio-demographic research in this study (two years of CBS foreign correspondence and the profiles of the Murrow Boys as they were during those two years only), it can be concluded that the foreign news heard on radio during that period did not live up fully to the idealized image proposed by historical appraisals. While Murrow and his boys did do at times what they said was important to them, they didn't or couldn't do it all the time.

By comparison, the NPR foreign news reflects more of the Murrow's journalistic philosophy's principles and scores better on almost all variables proposed in the model of foreign news quality. They used more voices overall and gave more voice to the powerless in particular, covered a more diversified pool of stories, including more human-interest news, mentioned U.S. connections more often, used diverse frames to report on the complexities of the war, used more thematic reporting, and did more original foreign news-gathering.

These findings suggest a need to take all the criticism against modern foreign correspondence with a grain of salt, a caution also warranted by works taking reverential trips down memory lane.

The findings of this dissertation give credence to Culbert's observation that Murrow was an epitome of Marshall McLuhan's concept of "the medium is the message" (Culbert, 1979, p. 207). Murrow had a vision of what he could achieve with the new medium if he employed talented people – for which he had to fight when they repeatedly botched microphone tests. H.V. Kaltenborn was another CBS correspondent to acknowledge the unique opportunities provided by radio. He was one of the few reporters who covered the Spanish Civil War live. He argued that "describing an event second-hand," as most news reporters were doing, "failed to utilize one of radio's prime advantages" over other media (Brown, 1998, p. 157). As early as July 1936, he broadcast from a haystack near the Franco-Spanish border, as Loyalist and Republican forces clashed around him. His microphone was connected to a telephone in a nearby farmhouse.

The NPR correspondents say that they never think of Murrow and the example he set when they do their jobs. The fact that they share a similar journalistic philosophy, however, could be because Murrow was the first to articulate it, and then it got passed down to younger generations more or less consciously.

### **Major Findings and Implications**

The findings of this dissertation suggest that: 1) The Murrow tradition as perceived by broadcasters, scholars, and historians was born from the ideals of a select group of innovative people, but its execution was limited by external pressures (remember gatekeeping) like imperfect technology, censorship, or network rules. 2) Unlike what media critics contend, the Murrow tradition, or its standards as measured in this study, is not dead and it has actually been surpassed. 3) There seems to be a larger

discrepancy between the NPR foreign news operation and the state of correspondence as decried by scholars than between the NPR foreign news and the correspondence during the Murrow era. 4) We should not think so unequivocally about the supposed unreachable standards set by the Murrow tradition and instead look at other models of doing foreign news, as exemplified by the NPR operation. At the same time, such models need to acknowledge that textbook definitions cannot account for less measurable elements (like courage, innovation and improvisation in unprecedented circumstances) or for gatekeeping variables beyond the journalists' control (like technology limitations, censorship, or commercial pressures).

Looking forward rather than back may be useful for several reasons. First of all, broadcasting has advanced. Correspondents can concentrate their efforts on telling the story rather than on figuring out how to make a broadcast possible in the first place. One time, William Shirer had to travel more than a thousand miles by plane, boat, truck, and horse-ridden carriage to file a report (Brown, 1998, p. 163). The novelty of the technology also made the correspondents more vulnerable to censorship. For instance, during the Munich crisis, because of a lack of efficient shortwave facilities in Prague, programs had to be conveyed by land wire to Berlin, where the transmitters were powerful enough to take them by shortwave across the Atlantic (Brown, 1998, p. 163). Reporters filing stories from Berlin had to send three copies of each script for approval (to the propaganda office, military censor, and the foreign office) before it could be broadcast. Shirer learned to use tone, inflection of voice, unnatural pauses, and American slang hard to understand by non-native speakers in order to indicate truths or official lies. That kind of delivery tricks would probably be hard to gauge today.



Second, journalism in general has advanced. Foreign news is no longer defined as the official rhetoric of the capitals, and it doesn't focus exclusively on war either. Foreign correspondents no longer see themselves as diplomats, but instead aim to reflect the social, cultural, economic, scientific and technological progress in other countries, which, more than the political, transform the world society that is more interconnected than ever.

Third, as the world is more globalized, the attitudes of other peoples toward Americans have changed too. While both wars presented dangers to the correspondents covering them, Americans are not as loved as they used to be (Cole and Hamilton, 2008). The Iraq War is not as popular as World War II was. In the interviews, the NPR correspondents talked about having to claim they were Canadian at times in order not to rile people up, and they were even denied insurance (Eleanor Beardsley) in zones like Serbia, where Americans were at heightened risk. As the world is more complex and the enemy or evil side is harder to pinpoint, the NPR correspondents also find it easier to be neutral.

The audiences have changed too, or so the network executives like to think. Edward Murrow reported in a manner that "both the truck driver and the professor" could understand. He reported for an insatiable audience whose main source of information was radio at the time. Today, networks have to compete for a less attentive public, although, say the NPR correspondents, this perceived lack of interest in foreign news is just the result of a vicious circle. Said Eleanor Beardsley:

We think that Americans don't care about foreign news, so we're not going to give it to them. So we propagate this: they never hear it, they don't know about it, so they're not interested. Baloney! It's the media's job to do it. Maybe CNN, who's only relying on commercials, is not going to do it. That's why a public broadcaster like NPR *has* to do it. It *has* to tell people about the world, it *has* to tell them what's going on. And when

you start to hear about things, you take an interest. And the more you know, the more you're likely to take an interest.

And the NPR correspondents see their audience in pretty much the same terms as Edward Murrow did. "I'm not writing for an expert, but I'm not writing for a complete ignorant either," Beardsley said. "When I cover my stories, I always think about my father as the target public – someone who wants to know more and has some basic knowledge - but you also have to peak his interest." Similarly, veteran Baghdad correspondent Deborah Amos said: "When I think of my audience, I usually envision my family because it's too hard to do mass. So I imagine I'm explaining this to my parents - educated people who have a curiosity about the world. I try to focus on what I think might interest them, so then I can explain a broader picture."

Arbitron audience statistics for public radio in 2007 show that while news at NPR generates more listening than all its other formats put together, it also attracts an elite audience: 72 percent of NPR's news listeners are college graduates, and more than a half live in households earning at least \$75,000 per year (Public Radio Today, 2007 Edition, Arbitron, [www.arbitron.com/study/publicrt.asp](http://www.arbitron.com/study/publicrt.asp)). Almost half of NPR's news audience is in the 45-64 age group, and another 21 percent are 65+. In terms of gender, the audience for NPR's news is fairly balanced (48 percent women, 52 percent men). A survey conducted by CBS in 1938 among 75,000 telephone subscribers and analyzed by Paul Lazarsfeld at the Office of Radio Research (1940, p. 204), showed that news had a larger audience than other programs, such as music and speeches. In the same year and for the same office, Daniel Katz of Princeton University compared the news coverage between radio and newspapers at the time and found that radio gave more attention to the foreign scene. "The difference is so great that in spite of the greater general coverage of

newspapers, the absolute number of items on foreign affairs on the radio is greater than in the newspaper (Lazarsfeld, 1940, p. 211). This might explain radio's popularity at the time, when the proportion of people listening to radio news was the same across all income levels (lower income groups were more likely to listen to radio in general, but were less interested in news in particular). Gender made a difference by locality during World War II. Metropolitan men listened more to radio news than metropolitan women, whereas rural women listened more than rural men. (Lazarsfeld, 1940, p. 225).

Another thing that changed is the perceived power of radio and journalism in general to make a difference. The Roosevelt administration paid careful attention to what the radio networks were doing in their World War II news coverage and commentary because it believed that the broadcasters of the time can influence public opinion (Garay, 2003, p. 304). The fear of further regulations made network executives enforce strict policies against editorializing.

While the NPR correspondents strive to make their listeners care about the suffering of people around the world or to show how the same universal problems can be approached differently, they ultimately don't see themselves as agenda-setters. Said Deborah Amos:

[From my experiences in the Middle East], I guess that the most important thing that I learned is that journalism can't change anything. I used to think so, but I don't anymore. Very rarely. I still do it for the same reason that I watch and read the news – because I want to know. Because I want to know how human beings react and respond, and I have a giant understanding of the world that's like a big sketch in front of me and I'm plugging details all the while to try to get my vision correct. And that's important to me – to have this understanding of the world – outside of myself and my own country. [Foreign news cannot change much] because that's not how power works. That's not how influence works. It's simply a mechanism to inform.

NPR foreign editor Loren Jenkins said another thing that changed is the need for foreign news – and not only war coverage.

Living in a globalized world, there's not only a need, but a growing need to have more foreign reporting. The tragedy is that the commercial networks and institutions are shrinking their coverage for economic reasons. That's bad. I think we need more of it, and it's really harmful to the United States and to democracy to have less information. We should have more. That's what's changed. You know, when I became a journalist 30 years ago or more, there were far more foreign correspondents from the United States abroad than they are now. The number has shrunk. I think that's really tragic and really bad for the future.

What accounts for NPR's success is that its foreign news operation is not tied to advertising, an important factor that puts NPR in advantage. The network is a non-profit organization, subsidized by philanthropists and foundations, and hence is not pressured to please commercial interests. NPR receives funding for overseas coverage from the German Marshall Fund and other charitable foundations. While he thinks that foreign news can certainly be better today, NPR foreign editor Loren Jenkins shares the opinion of media critics and complains about the state of international news coverage at other media outlets, a perception shared by all the NPR correspondents interviewed:

It's all about money. Network news – they're businesses. And they're increasingly controlled by larger corporations. When Disney owns ABC, their corporate interests aren't necessarily news or social responsibility. Their responsibility is to make more money for their shareholders. And the most expensive operation in any news organization is the international one. So when they want to maximize profits for their shareholders, they've been slowly whittling down international news to make money.

The shareholder at NPR, Jenkins said, is the public. "We view our responsibility as to serve the public, and any money we can raise goes into the operation rather than paying off any shareholders." The fact that Edward Murrow could excel at CBS and bypass the commercial pressures of his network is what makes his work even more

remarkable. He focused on what he thought good journalism should be: a public service rather than a profit-making product. Said war correspondent and historian Theodore White (in Sperber, 1986, p. xi):

Murrow bequeathed a sense of conscience and importance with which neither management nor government might interfere... And at CBS, a huge corporation more vulnerable than most to government pressure and Washington reprisal, he left behind a tradition that the reporting of news ... was to be what its correspondents and producers wanted it to be, not what management sought to make it. It was as inconceivable for [Paley or Stanton] to lift the telephone and tell a Cronkite or a Seavareid what to say as, for example, the Elector of Saxony to tell Johann Sebastian Bach how to compose his music...

In light of the research (reviewed in a previous section) indicating an overall decline in foreign news in the United States, NPR's foreign news may be able to operate in a manner that would probably make Edward Murrow proud precisely because it is produced in a non-commercial setting. That is an exception among broadcast outlets in the U.S. Most other nonprofit models that excel in original foreign news-gathering are print entities (Hamilton, 2009, p. 485). Baghdad correspondent Deborah Amos expressed shock at the narrow world perspective available on American networks:

In the U.S., the foreign news is shrinking, and shrinking, and shrinking. When you are abroad, you are so aware of it. Even in my hotel in Lebanon, I can watch the BBC, I can watch Al Jazeera in English, I can watch Sky News, I can listen to the VOA.

It is extraordinary how much broader the perspective is everywhere else but America. It's just appalling. And that's because the networks have abdicated their responsibility. I think the people will watch it if you give them the chance. Part of the reason that we have 30 million listeners at NPR is that we do foreign news. There's no doubt about that.

Amos thinks that NPR is going against the stream in its coverage of foreign news because the network has an "institutional commitment" to it.

The next section lists future potential studies inspired by this research, as well as limitations.

### **Limitations and Suggestions for Future Study**

A lot of questions and variables were left out of this study in order to make the analysis manageable. The unique CBS newscasts dataset warrants several research directions that I would like to pursue in the near future.

- *Writing quality.* An important element of the Murrow tradition that the instruments used in this dissertation could not capture was the quality of the writing. While examples indicated very vivid and graphic writing abilities, a future study should explore if that was the norm across the World War II stories and if writing has changed over time.
- *Delivery style.* This study only analyzes the text of the foreign news during the two periods. The *War of the Worlds* incident in 1939, when radio listeners panicked thinking New Jersey was invaded by Martians upon hearing a mock newscast, is often attributed to the radio's power to condition audiences. A further study could look for non-verbal elements pertaining to delivery, such as voice, intonation, tone of voice, pace, projection, resonance, vocally produced sounds, etc., in order to better understand that incident. How has delivery style changed over time?
- *Qualitative analysis* would help break away from the tyranny of the average as measured with content analysis. Maybe Murrow and his boys employed specific recipes for specific situations. A qualitative study could look for nuances and context. Murrow covered golf or boxing matches along with his rooftop reports. He argued that there's nothing wrong with doing a story on Marilyn Monroe's closet as long as afterwards

reporters also look into a nuclear scientist's laboratory. What narrative styles did he use for different types of stories?

- *CBS Radio news today*. Given the discussion about the limitations of network news, a future longitudinal study could explore how *The World News Roundup* changed from World War II until now and how different foreign news is at CBS compared to NPR today.
- *The Murrow tradition on television*. Edward Murrow created tradition for radio as much as he did for television. A future study could analyze all the existing CBS television tapes with Murrow's shows. CBS and the Vanderbilt Archives don't have complete collections.
- *How have audiences changed?* A future study could examine who is listening to NPR today compared to CBS radio seventy years ago. For instance, Seymour Topping, former New York Times foreign correspondent and Pulitzer Administrator, said that newspapers that excel at foreign news usually have an elite readership (Hamilton, 2009, p 484). Is that true for radio as well?
- *Could the Murrow tradition be only Murrow?* A future study could identify a longitudinal sample of reports by Murrow only to compare them to the foreign correspondence by the other journalists at CBS. His reports might stand out from the rest.
- *Propaganda and media bias*. Using material from the Roosevelt Library, NBC papers and Office of War Information papers, Socolow (2007) concluded that, during World War II, the chief vehicle for conveying government-sanctioned (and censored) war-related information over the airwaves turned out not to be government propagandists, but rather the first generation of broadcast journalists at CBS and NBC. Ultimately, the Roosevelt administration elected not to operate a domestic network for propaganda

purposes because the commercial networks effectively performed that function. Socolow, however, did not look at news content. I would like to test his contention by looking for bias and propaganda in the CBS Radio reporting during World War II.

In social science research, our values influence the topics we select, the questions we ask, and the way we interpret our data. Not even the more objective section of this study – the content analysis - could escape some of my biases, as I was the one selecting the elements for the model of journalism quality. The proposed model is not a definitive one, and some of its existing variables can be further fine-tuned. For instance, after I finished coding all the stories, I realized that there is another level of official sourcing that the code book left out. This study only distinguished between U.S. officials and foreign officials. But not all foreign officials are equal. Future studies should differentiate between ally officials, enemies, and third-party foreign officials, especially when analyzing sourcing in conflict reportage.

I specifically sought to understand what the Murrow tradition meant to the broadcasters of the time and to the historians appraising it so as to create an instrument of measuring it that is not too modern or too influenced by my time and the journalism school that I've just attended. As I started working on this dissertation, three portraits of Edward Murrow hung on my office walls provided inspiration and probably infected me with the sense of awe and reverence of the history books documenting the Murrow tradition. As I finished my content analysis and talked to the NPR correspondents, new-found optimism shook off the bitter taste left by the research showing a decline in foreign news elsewhere. This study did not set out with a theory and marshal facts to fit it. It asked open-ended questions and gathered facts through three methods of inquiry to find



out the truth or at least some facets of it in an effort to reduce bias. The way this study assesses “adequate” professional standards and the way it explains and evaluates an era by its contributions to present journalistic standards may not be the best or the only way to answer the thesis of this research.

### **Closing Remarks**

The findings of this study suggest that more research is necessary to understand the evolution of media in general and of foreign correspondence in particular. We should question over-glossing statements that glorify the past as much as we should indicate solutions and other ways of doing foreign news to the critics who reprimand news media for their failure to live up to abstract standards. We should not be satisfied with the romanticized perception of times past, but instead find instruments to objectively assess and understand the history and present of foreign news. We might be in for a surprise, as we uncover new and better models to serve the public interest and keep audiences informed about a world that is more interconnected than ever.

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## **INTERVIEWS**

Amos, Deborah, NPR Iraq Foreign Correspondent, phone interview, April 21, 2009.

Beardsley, Eleanor, NPR Paris Foreign Correspondent, phone interview, April 17, 2009.

Beaubien, Jason, NPR Mexico City Foreign Correspondent, phone interview, April 10, 2009.

Jenkins, Loren, NPR Senior Foreign Editor, phone interview, April 14, 2009.

**APPENDIX A**  
**RANDOM STRATIFIED SAMPLES FOR CBS AND NPR**

CBS: September 1940 - August 1942 / NPR: March 2004 – February 2006

*The World Today / Morning Edition*

|                         |                          |                         |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1940/09/05 / 2005/09/05 | 1941/05/23 / 2004/05/23  | 1942/01/05 / 2005/01/05 |
| 1940/09/27 / 2005/09/27 | 1941/05/28 / 2004/05/28  | 1942/01/22 / 2005/01/24 |
| 1940/10/03 / 2005/10/03 | 1941/06/02 / 2004/06/02  | 1942/02/17 / 2005/02/17 |
| 1940/10/22 / 2005/10/24 | 1941/06/13 / 2004/ 06/14 | 1942/02/21 / 2005/02/21 |
| 1940/11/05 / 2005/11/07 | 1941/07/03 / 2004/07/05  | 1942/03/09 / 2005/03/09 |
| 1940/11/06 / 2005/11/08 | 1941/07/10 / 2004/07/12  | 1942/03/19 / 2005/03/21 |
| 1940/12/17 / 2005/12/17 | 1941/08/20 / 2004/08/20  | 1942/04/23 / 2005/04/25 |
| 1940/12/28 / 2005/12/28 | 1941/08/30 / 2004/08/30  | 1942/04/28 / 2005/04/28 |
| 1941/01/25 / 2006/01/25 | 1841/09/03 / 2004/09/03  | 1942/05/01 / 2005/05/02 |
| 1941/01/29 / 2006/01/29 | 1941/09/30 / 2004/09/30  | 1942/05/02 / 2005/05/03 |
| 1941/02/18 / 2006/02/18 | 1941/10/23 / 2004/10/23  | 1942/06/15 / 2005/06/15 |
| 1941/02/22 / 2006/02/22 | 1941/10/28 / 2004/10/28  | 1942/06/29 / 2005/06/29 |
| 1941/03/22 / 2004/03/22 | 1941/11/01 / 2004/11/01  | 1942/07/21 / 2005/07/21 |
| 1941/03/31 / 2004/03/31 | 1941/11/22 / 2004/11/22  | 1942/07/25 / 2005/07/25 |
| 1941/04/14 / 2004/04/14 | 1941/12/12 / 2004/12/13  | 1942/08/03 / 2005/08/03 |
| 1941/04/29 / 2004/04/29 | 1941/12/22 / 2004/12/22  | 1942/08/17 / 2005/08/17 |

NOTE: The same dates were picked for both samples, but when a date fell on a weekend, the next weekday was automatically chosen.

## APPENDIX B OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS / CODEBOOK

1. Coder. Your first name.
2. Radio network. Check whether 1.CBS or 2.NPR.
3. Newscast date: MM/DD/YYYY
4. Story number --- Stories within a newscast are numbered consecutively. They are separated from each other by a star \*. Each story has a designated number.
5. Length – word count (NPR transcripts already include a word count).
6. Location – country in the world where the news is from. If a story spans more than one location, choose the one that seems to represent the major focus or dominant location of the story.
7. Countries mentioned – geographic scope. Don't forget to mention U.S. if there's a local referent. NOTE: If article only mentions a city in the country and you're unsure about the country, write in the city and underline. I'll look up the country.
8. Local referent (hometown connection) - Domestication
  1. **Yes** (U.S. OR closer)
  0. **No**

If you check yes, then note if the story is "U.S." (mentions only the U.S.) or "closer," with a more "local" or relevant mention; i.e., state, city, individual who doesn't represent the federal government)

9. Reporting mode
  - 1 **Live** – of-the-cuff, unscripted reporting, typically consisting of reporters on the scene interviewing an expert or witness, or just offering preliminary information on a breaking/ongoing news event.
  - 2 **Recorded** – prewritten, edited and recorded in a studio.
  - 3 **Can't tell**
10. News type
  - 1 **Hard News** – stories that focus on issues of ongoing policy consideration, factual accounting of current public events, or social issues and controversies that concern members of the audience.
  - 2 **Soft News** – stories that focus on human interest topics or non-policy issues

## 11. Timeliness

- 1 **Breaking news** – stories that report current news events and are timely/time-sensitive (the information has developed within the past 24 hours).
- 2 **Non-breaking news** – stories that report information or events that occurred more than 24 hours before its presentation. Stories include features or analyses, as well as human interest stories that are less time-sensitive/timely – such as the coverage of important social, economic, legal, or technological trends; investigative reports which uncover ongoing corruption, waste, or immorality; or discussion of unsettled political issues without any special reason. Anniversaries, holidays, the end of a year or season, or the end of the first 100 days of an administration, can make some stories time-sensitive, but provide more of an opportunity for reflection and analysis than any actual “news” to report). Non-breaking news can still be Hard news if they report on events of consequence.

Code Breaking or Non-breaking based on the dominant aspect of the story. For instance, if the story is predominantly a breaking news story but includes some feature or human interest information, it should be coded as Breaking news. Alternatively, if human interest story mentions in passing a recent event, it is still a Non-breaking news story.

## 12. News format

- 1 **Anchor reader** – the anchor reads live on the air a script in which no actualities are to be played.
- 2 **Actuality** – portion of an interview or sound-bite, generally lasting from 10 to 20 seconds.
- 3 **Anchor reader + actuality** (sound-bite)
- 4 **Reporter voicer** - without sound-bites; a piece read by reporter; can be live or recorded.
- 5 **Package** - packaged report – wraparound. Recorded report in which a journalist's voice occurs at the beginning and end, and an actuality is played in between; the report is "wrapped around" the actuality.
- 6 **Interview** – includes both the reporter's voice (interviewer) and the interviewee's voice. It is usually introduced by the anchor.
- 7 **Interview with a guest foreign correspondent** who has expertise or more information on the topic.
- 8 **Feature** – a radio documentary covering a particular topic in some depth, usually with a mixture of commentary, sound bites, and natural sound. Some radio features, especially those including specially composed music or other pieces of audio art, resemble radio drama in many ways, though non-fictional in subject matter, while others consist principally of more straightforward, journalistic-type reporting – but at much greater length than found in an ordinary news report.

- 9 **Commentary** - Commentaries are pieces in which reporters provide their opinions about and analysis of international affairs in news segments or programs clearly identified as comment, as distinct from reportage. They are equivalent of newspaper columnists—and of what we would term today “op-ed” contributors.
- 10 **Other**

### 13. Type of journalist

- 1 **Anchor/announcer in studio**
- 2 **Reporter on the scene in the U.S.**
- 3 **Reporter on the scene overseas**

### 14. News focus

- 1 **Political:** diplomatic and/or military activities that underpin governance of states and other political units; violence related to politics (i.e., ethnic cleansing, riots); human rights issues.
- 2 **Social-cultural:** crime; disasters; accidents; lifestyle/travel; religion; arts/media/entertainment; food; society news; births/deaths; science/technology; health; and sports. For example, the natural death of an Irish labor leader and the pregnancy of a Dutch royal would be coded in this category.
- 3 **Economic:** the story reports event, problem, or issue in terms of economic consequences it will have on an individual, group, institution, region, or country; mentions financial gains/losses now or in the future; costs/degree of expense involved; refers to economic consequences of pursuing/not pursuing a course of action. For example, a “Money market” story that lists increases/decreases in rates would be economic.
- 4 **Other:** weather (excluding natural disasters); the environment (unless a political unit is discussing issue as societal threat); and any other topics not included above.

### 15. Based on planned/routine events?

- 1 **Yes.** Story reports routine institutional proceedings (pseudo-events): anticipated, administratively managed, and coordinated events. These include press conferences, hearings, court cases, negotiations, speeches, meetings between officials.
- 2 **No.** Story reports activities that are, at least at their initial occurrence, spontaneous and not managed by officials within institutional settings (such as violent acts, natural disasters, or accidents).
- 3 **Not applicable** – Story is driven neither by officials, nor by spontaneous events, but is the result of the reporter’s investigation, analysis and observation (feature-type stories that look at trends and long-term, complex phenomena).

#### 16. News values

- 1 **Conflict:** Yes // No. Mark Yes for political crisis/conflict/war/ revolution or if there is a disagreement between or among parties; stories that involve either physical or ideological disputes, disaster, crime, or violence.
- 2 **Impact:** Yes // No. Mark Yes if the information affects a lot of people. A proposed income tax increase, for instance, has impact, because an income tax increase would affect a lot of people.
- 3 **Unusual/Bizarre/Novelty:** Yes // No. Mark Yes if the story is about something weird, out of the ordinary (like man biting dog).
- 4 **Human interest:** Yes//No. Mark yes if story is about children, animals, old people and people living their lives, overcoming adversity, etc.

#### 17. Episodic/thematic framing

- 1 **Episodic**
- 2 **Thematic**

Episodic news frames are references to isolated news events, focusing on discrete cases, people or episodes, while thematic frames provide broader societal context to issues and events (may include discussions of policy or possible political consequences, etc.)

#### 18. Generic war frames/story angles

- 0 N/A - Not about war
- 1 **Ground combat** frame – focus on military conflict, victories and defeats
- 2 **Assessment of military forces, technology, strategy and tactics**
- 3 **Violence of war** frame - focus on the destruction caused by war and casualties
- 4 **Humanitarian** frame – rescue and relief efforts
- 5 **Human interest** frame - emphasis on the personal stories of the human participants in the war; local civilians, troops, morale, discipline, family, benefits, medals of honor, drug use, relationships
- 6 **International relations**, diplomatic activity, negotiations, international support
- 7 **U.S. foreign policy**; impact of U.S. entering or withdrawing from conflict
- 8 **Prognostic** frame - emphasis on long-term effects of the war
- 9 **Anti-war protest** frame - emphasis on anti-war protesting worldwide.
- 10 **Other**

#### 19. Tone of coverage

- 1 **(0) Negative** – story presents the war news unfavorable or disadvantageous to the U.S. For instance, “the criticisms on the misleading U.S. intelligence about weapons of mass destruction linger” frames the news as unfavorable to the U.S.



- 2 **(1) Neutral or mixed** – the news is made of factual statements, as in “Brief battles near Kabala are reported”
- 3 **(2) Positive**- story presents war news favorable or advantageous to the U.S. For example, “the 3rd infantry division is marching on the city and Iraqis are welcoming the U.S. troops” is the favorable news about the U.S.

20. Sources – indicate the number for each type of source:

- 1 Named U.S. government official or party member \_\_\_\_
- 2 Named other official - local/native government officials, institutions/agencies, party members, or third-party government official (for instance, the president of Russia in a story with a China dateline) \_\_\_\_
- 3 Unnamed U.S. official (including categories such as vague references to “A White House source”/ “Pentagon sources”) \_\_\_\_
- 4 Unnamed other official - native government official (“A high-ranked Chinese official, who asked to remain unnamed, said that...” or third-party government official (“sources in the Russian Duma...”)) \_\_\_\_
- 5 Transnational organization officials (like UN or OPEC) or nongovernmental organization representatives (google names if unsure) \_\_\_\_
- 6 Military sources \_\_\_\_
- 7 Dissident/out-of-power/grass-roots/non-official/activist – belonging to organized groups \_\_\_\_
- 8 Academic or expert, business or industry – used for their expertise, not simply because they happened to be witnesses. If not used for their expertise, code as 9.
- 9 Average people - eye witnesses or people on the street, normal civilians. \_\_\_\_
- 10 Local/native press or other media outlets \_\_\_\_
- 11 Press agency \_\_\_\_
- 12 Religious sources \_\_\_\_
- 13 Artists or sportsmen \_\_\_\_
- 14 Documents (like laws, treaties, contracts, books, signs) \_\_\_\_
- 15 Other/ unknown \_\_\_\_
- 16 **Total number of sources** \_\_\_\_\_

21. Number of pseudo-attributions - These are sentences that give an impression of attribution and introduce an utterance or statement of viewpoint or idea belonging to a vague common voice. You can’t quite tell who the reporter refers to, but you can tell that he heard someone uttering the statements he used in his story (people, certain groups of people, sources). For example, “It is rumored...,” “it was announced...,” “it was hinted that...,” “people think/believe...,” “authorities are said to...,” “reports say,” “reportedly,” etc.

22. Number of first-person statements – to link the reporter directly to the event; “eyewitness” accounts. Count all references to the reporter (“I” or “told *me*” or “this correspondent”) that show up in the copy.

23. Originality of reporting - Rate your confidence that the reporter got the info by himself:

1. I’m highly confident the reporter got the information himself by newsgathering (going in the field, interviewing, uncovering something unknown)
2. He got the information by himself, but it’s mainly observation from a fixed point (during live coverage, for instance)
3. I can’t tell where he got it from
4. I know he didn’t get it by himself - he clipped it from other media sources or news agencies

## APPENDIX C

## THE POOL OF CBS FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS, 1940-1942<sup>34</sup>

|    | CORRESPONDENT           | COUNTRIES COVERED   |
|----|-------------------------|---|
| 1  | Cecil Brown             | Rome, Singapore, Cairo, Yugoslavia                              |
| 2  | Charles Barbe           | Rome, Bern, Berlin  |
| 3  | Charles Collingwood     | London, North Africa  |
| 4  | Chester Morrison        | Cairo, Libya  |
| 5  | Edward R. Murrow        | London, Manchester, Vienna, Berlin,                             |
| 6  | Edwin Hartrich          | Berlin  |
| 7  | Elmer Davis             | London  |
| 8  | Eric Sevareid           | Rio de Janeiro, Paris, London, Mexico                           |
| 9  | Farnsworth Fowle        | Ankara  |
| 10 | Harry Flannery          | Berlin  |
| 11 | Larry LeSueur           | London, Kuibyshev   |
| 12 | Leigh White             | Bucharest, Budapest, Balkans                                    |
| 13 | Tom Worthen             | Manila  |
| 14 | William Lindsay White   | London, Finland   |
| 15 | W.R. (Bud) Wills        | Tokyo   |
| 16 | William Dunn            | Australia, Manila, Batavia - the Pacific Ocean and the Far East |
| 17 | William L. Shirer       | Berlin, Vienna, Prague  |
| 18 | Winston Burdett         | Ankara, Cairo, Belgrade, Rome                                   |
| 19 | Howard K. Smith         | Berlin  |
| 20 | John McCutcheon Raleigh | Sydney, Batavia - the Pacific                                   |
| 21 | Philip Brown            | Athens  |
| 22 | Alexander Woolcott      | London  |
| 23 | Rob Trout               | London  |

## APPENDIX D

<sup>34</sup> These are the correspondents that authored the stories examined in the content analysis. The random sample may have left out many names. Also, the announcers that presented foreign news from New York and Washington, DC, were left out from this table.

## THE POOL OF NPR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS, 2004-2006<sup>35</sup>

|    | <b>CORRESPONDENT</b>   | <b>COUNTRIES COVERED</b>                      |
|----|------------------------|---|
| 1  | Anne Garrels           | Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Middle East      |
| 2  | Anthony Kuhn           | China, England                                |
| 3  | Deborah Amos           | Lebanon, Iraq, Syria                          |
| 4  | Eleanor Beardsley      | France  |
| 5  | Emily Harris           | Iraq  |
| 6  | Eric Westervelt        | Gaza, Wash., Iraq                             |
| 7  | Gerry Hadden           | Mexico, Haiti                                 |
| 8  | Ivan Watson            | Kashmir, Iran, Syria                          |
| 9  | Jamie Tarabay          | Iraq  |
| 10 | Jason Beaubien         | South Africa, Congo                           |
| 11 | Julie McCarthy         | Brazil, Israel, Palestine                     |
| 12 | Lawrence Sheets        | Russia, Ukraine                               |
| 13 | Lourdes Garcia-Navarro | Haiti, Mexico, Iraq                           |
| 14 | Martin Kaste           | Bolivia, Brazil, Canada                       |
| 15 | Michael Sullivan       | Bali, Islamabad, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam |
| 16 | Michele Kelemen        | England, Germany                              |
| 17 | Mike Shuster           | Saudi Arabia, England, Iran, Iraq, Gaza       |
| 18 | Ofeibea Quist-Arcton   | Liberia, Ghana, Dakar                         |
| 19 | Peter Kenyon           | Iraq, Egypt, Gaza, Israel                     |
| 20 | Philip Reeves          | India, Iraq                                   |
| 21 | Rachel Martin          | England                                       |
| 22 | Rob Gifford            | Taiwan, China                                 |
| 23 | Sylvia Poggioli        | Italy, Spain, Serbia                          |

## APPENDIX E

<sup>35</sup> These are the correspondents that authored the stories examined in the content analysis. The random sample may have left out many names. Also, the anchors were left out from this table.

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What made you become a foreign correspondent?
2. What kind of stories do you like to cover? How much liberty do you have in choosing your stories?
3. How often do you communicate with your office in D.C.?
4. How would you describe your daily routine?
5. What kind of stories do you wish you could cover more? Why?
6. It may be hard to choose only one, but what is your favorite among the stories you've told? Why?
7. For whom do you report? How do you see your audience? What kind of feedback do you get from your listeners?
8. Does the medium (radio) change the way you operate as a correspondent (your relationship with sources, the effort you put into making stories more vivid, etc.)?
9. Did you ever feel threatened or have any close calls? How do you handle stress, worries and fear (if applicable)? Who do you go to for advice or support?
10. What do you do to unwind and have fun? What's the occupation of your five closest friends?
11. What do you think it takes to be a (good) foreign correspondent? Take, for instance, Edward Murrow. He had no journalism background and followed his instinct when it came to telling stories. His colleagues said that he had "an inner flame." He absorbed what was going on. He wasn't talking through a pane of glass – a sort of sanitized, distant experience. "He was in it." It was part of him. Do you see yourself in that description at all?
12. How do you respond to the statement that foreign news is an endangered species and that listeners/media consumers care less about international news than ever before?
13. What do you think is the role of foreign news? How can you make your listeners care about it?
14. What would you say to a young college graduate who wanted to become a correspondent? What is beautiful and exciting about this job? What can be frustrating or daunting?

15. How important is it to be familiar with the culture you cover (take, for instance, parachute journalists who cover a story in an unfamiliar place with minimal background or preparation)?

16. Being permanently stationed abroad makes one more sensitive to foreign perspectives and issues. Do you ever feel a tension between being an American and depending on people and events from another country to do your job? In other words, do you ever get defensive/patriotic or, on the contrary, “go native”?

17. How involved (emotionally, intellectually) do you get with the stories you cover? Do you believe in objectivity?

18. How open/helpful/cordial are your sources? What kind of sources do you prefer to talk to for information? Why? What demeanor do you find necessary to adopt when approaching certain kinds of sources? (caution, discretion, patience, toughness, deference, etc.)

19. How would you describe your relationship with official/government sources in the country/countries you covered?

20. Is there competition for exclusive news between you and your colleagues at other media outlets? Is there cooperation? Do you exchange tips, advice, facts, leads, etc.? What’s your relationship with other foreign correspondents?

21. How do you balance work and being on the road with family? Do you still have to be a loner who travels light in order to be correspondent nowadays?

22. In 1897, a magazine observed about the growing sophistication of correspondents:

“Whereas formerly, only men half-educated but possessed of good 'horse sense' and a keen scent for news were employed as special correspondents, now the ablest men are chosen as ambassadors of the great dailies to every part of the world. They are at once men of knowledge and men of the world, capable of holding their own with the ablest.”

Do you think that is true in 2009? How would you describe the typical 21<sup>st</sup> century correspondent to your NPR audience?

Any additional comments you’d like to make?

## **VITA**

Raluca Cozma graduated from the University of Bucharest, Romania, in 2003, with a bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communication. In 2005, she received the Charles P. Manship Outstanding Graduate Student award and her master's degree from the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University. Her research focuses on foreign correspondence, health and science communication, political communication, and broadcasting. She has worked as a reporter and video editor for several TV stations in Romania. Cozma served as an intern at the International Center for Journalists in Washington, D.C., in summer 2005. She has accepted an assistant professor position at Iowa State University, and she will start teaching broadcast newsgathering and editing in August 2009.