

VALUE REPRESENTATIONS IN FOREIGN NEWS

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Abstract / The study articulates ‘a values approach’ to understanding foreign news coverage in a prestige American newspaper. A system of 13 values – including altruism and freedom, materialism and peace – is articulated, with values examined in terms of how foreign nations, groups and individuals were represented in news coverage. The study finds that values are clustered along two dimensions: (1) conflict; and (2) positive. In addition, values were distributed differently according to story type, story domain and focal nation. Specifically, Asia was depicted as materialistic, Western Europe as beautiful, Africa as consumed with power issues and the Eastern bloc and former Soviet states as concerned with security. The findings rise from a content analysis of 338 news stories.

Keywords / content analysis / foreign news / international communication / international news / values

Content analyses of foreign news have long relied upon topic domains and news frames as the primary tools for examining how the US media portray the world for the American public. Studies of this sort have critiqued foreign coverage as being inaccurate and incomplete – in demonstrating that foreign news is western-centric and consumed with violence, crisis and disaster (e.g. Weaver and Wilhoit, 1981; Wilhoit and Weaver, 1983; Kirat and Weaver, 1984). That foreign news coverage is inaccurate or incomplete in these ways suggests that American conceptions of the world may also be inaccurate and incomplete (Carey, 1986; Carragee, 1991; Hall, 1982; Galtung and Ruge, 1965; Gitlin, 1980).

The current study examines foreign news coverage in a new way, one free of the artificiality of domains and frames. Relying on sociological constructs, it sets forth and tests ‘a values approach’ to understanding foreign news, one that allows for the examination of how a prestige US newspaper covers the world and what type of knowledge and beliefs such stories present to the American public. Foreign news is explored in terms of cultural values, chosen via their use in previous research (e.g. Rokeach, 1973, 1980). The values are altruism, beauty, comfort, equality, freedom, friendship, materialism, morality, peace, power, spiritualism, security and wisdom.

The medium for analysis is the *Los Angeles Times*. The paper was selected because of its attempts to improve foreign news coverage for its minority majority

population. The newspaper has 41 foreign correspondents stationed in locations spanning the globe from Beijing to Mexico City (*Los Angeles Times 1997 Reader Survey*, 1997), and Los Angeles is a region of great ethnic diversity, with Latinos, Asian-Americans and African-Americans currently making up about 46 percent, 13 percent and 9 percent, respectively, of the population in Los Angeles County (California State Department of Finance, 1998). This diversification is continuing, with Latinos expected to comprise 64 percent of the county population by 2040, followed by Asian-Americans (15 percent) and African-Americans (6 percent). Because this ethnic evolution is pervading other metropolitan areas – with minorities now comprising more than 50 percent of the population in Philadelphia, St Louis, San Francisco, Houston and Atlanta (Frey, 1998) – how the *Los Angeles Times* maneuvers to inform and cover its diverse community foreshadows similar dilemmas that will face other metropolitan newspapers around the globe.

Although there have been various analyses of foreign news content, many of which are discussed later, we were unable to locate any individual report focusing solely on *Los Angeles Times* foreign coverage, or one that dealt with cultural values in this manner.

Values

Rokeach (1980) defined a value as ‘a type of belief, centrally located within one’s total belief system, about how one ought or ought not to behave’ (Rokeach, 1980: 29). Rokeach (1973, 1980) viewed values as needs and as indicators of the quality of life. Williams (1951) held that values define how we act and consider issues, and Chamberlain (1985) set forth an index of 32 values that ranged from love to prosperity, peace to religion. Atkinson and Murray (1979) found that social values such as love and friendship ranked higher than did economic values.

Inglehart (1977, 1990) framed values in terms of a dichotomy of materialism and postmaterialism. In this paradigm, values are social goals that prioritize an individual’s material or postmaterial needs – with materialists most concerned with affluence, control and security and postmaterialists most concerned with self-expression, a sense of community, and quality of environment. Inglehart argued that, as a nation moves ahead, its value priorities shift from issues of sustenance and safety to those related to quality of life. Thus, he suggests that developing nations would be concerned with materialism – while developed nations would focus on postmaterialist values such as beauty and comfort. Kidd and Lee (1997) expanded upon Inglehart’s work, showing that people in developing countries were less materialistic than those in developed nations – and, thus, were more willing to give monies to prevent environmental pollution.

The Importance of Values

Geertz (1973) saw symbols as the connective tissue among people, social structures, the physical environment and values. Maletzke (1970) suggested that

values are the basis for understanding most people and cultures, and Chamberlain (1985) held that cultures can be defined by their ways and values.

Rokeach (1973) argued that values should be central to research in all of the social sciences because of their essential role in culture. He wrote: 'Differences between cultures, social classes, occupations, religions, or political orientations are all translatable into questions concerning differences in underlying values and value systems' (Rokeach, 1973: 26). As Taylor (1977) noted, values determine 'why am I?'

Maletzke (1970: 481) explained that most social groups, populations and cultures 'consist of people with a similar realm of experience, with the same frames-of-reference and value-systems'. He added: 'The less common ground there is, the fewer frames of reference, then the more likely it is that there will be serious misunderstandings and non-comprehension' (Maletzke, 1970: 480–1). In other words, the greater the cultural difference, the greater the misunderstanding.

Schwartz (1992) determined that a common set of values can be applicable in different cultures, and Bae and Chung (1997), in a three-nation study, found associations between cultural values and work attitudes.

Values and Mass Communication

Selnow (1990) determined that American personal values were deeply embedded in prime-time television broadcasts. Relying on a taxonomy of values including self-esteem and courage, patriotism and democracy, he analyzed the content of prime-time shows and found more personal values (96.5 percent) than citizenship values (3.5 percent). He contended that value depictions could serve as a source of learning for viewers. In conclusion, he wrote: 'The personal values that are endemic to American culture are deeply embedded in the programming material of its most favored entertainment medium' (Selnow, 1990: 72).

Larson and Bailey (1998) found that, in terms of *ABC World News Tonight's* 'Person of the Week', American values such as individualism, heroism and unselfishness were more common than populism, capitalism and patriotism. Wang (1977) looked at the role of values in the Cultural Revolution, exploring socialistic values such as self-sacrifice, service to people, human will and determination. McLeod et al. (1998) explored worldviews, societal values and the role of the media, finding that social values did affect a person's media use.

Because it has been argued that cumulative exposure to mass media themes and patterns can affect perceptions of mainstream values (e.g. Gerbner, 1987; Gerbner et al., 1980), it makes sense that the presentation of values in foreign news stories could play a strong role in perpetuating stereotypes of foreign peoples and nations (Selnow, 1990).

Biases in Foreign News Content

A number of studies have found foreign news in US newspapers to be dominated by crisis, conflict and disaster (e.g. Adams, 1964; Lent, 1977). Wilhoit

and Weaver, in their classic 1981 and 1983 studies of American wire services, showed that this was especially the case in terms of foreign coverage of 'less developed' nations.

In their study of 1983 wire coverage, Kirat and Weaver (1984) found a dramatic drop in the proportion of crisis- or conflict-oriented news stories. This coverage had increased from around 14 percent in 1979 to about 27 percent in 1981 – but fell to 12 percent in 1983. For developing nations, the same held true, with the focus on conflict- and crisis-oriented coverage going from 47 percent in 1979 to 28 percent in 1981, and to 10 percent in 1983 (Weaver and Wilhoit, 1981; Kirat and Weaver, 1984). In his study of Israeli and Palestinian media coverage of the nations' dispute, Eldridge (1979) found that 60 percent of the coverage dealt with peace, the rest with conflict. In addition, 21 percent of the news was good, as compared to 34 percent bad.

Beaudoin and Thorson (2001) looked at story negativity, as well. In that study, of foreign news in the *Los Angeles Times*, text was shown to be negative in two ways: (1) headlines were largely negative, 39 percent as compared to 11 percent positive; and (2) in terms of presumed effect on the reader, stories were more negative than positive, 51 percent as compared to 28 percent. In addition, the developing world was depicted in more negative terms than the developed world.

Other studies have examined how women are covered in foreign news. Bridge (1997) demonstrated that women were portrayed in a stereotypically negative manner, and Miller (1975) found depictions of women to be the following: positive, 45 percent; neutral, 25 percent; and negative or mixed, 30 percent.

Hypotheses

The review of literature gives rise to a series of hypotheses that allow for the application of a values approach to foreign news as presented in a prestige American newspaper.

Because the developing world is often depicted in a more negative light than the developed world (e.g. Weaver and Wilhoit, 1981; Wilhoit and Weaver, 1983), it is hypothesized here that different values will be used to represent different regions of the world.

A second hypothesis holds that different values will be used in stories that depict women. This has support in previous research that indicates stereotyping of women (e.g. Bridge, 1997).

A third hypothesis suggests that there will be two levels to value bias in foreign news stories: (1) domain bias via story selection; and (2) non-domain bias via story completion. The first type involves how the *Los Angeles Times* may bias coverage of a certain region by only focusing on various topic domains. For example, possibly coverage of Asia is biased because of the high percentage of economic- and business-related stories focusing on this region. In this way, domains can be viewed as a confounding variable for values – with, for example, the value materialism more likely to surface in Asian stories because they are more likely to fit into the domains of business and economics. The second type of bias suggests that stories, even if dealing with the same domain,

may be honed differently by journalists depending on the focal nation. In other words, stories in the economics domain may be handled differently, with stories dealing with Western Europe being filled with positive values and those concerning Africa with other types of values.

A fourth hypothesis suggests that different values will be common in different domains. This hypothesis is based in the belief that different values are likely to occur in different topic domains (say, military vs human interest).

Similarly, a fifth hypothesis suggests that values will be clustered on various stories. For example, a human interest story may be more likely to possess positive values, while a military story may have the value of power.

In addition, a sixth hypothesis suggests that values occur differently depending on news types (breaking news, features and so forth). For example, feature stories – because of their greater length, context and detail – are expected to break from the journalistic norm of presenting news happenings in terms of conflict-oriented values such as power and security (e.g. Lent, 1977). These stories, we expect, will have more positive values because of their more personal and contextual nature. In contrast, we expect to find more conflict values in hard news stories.

Method

To examine the representation of values in foreign news coverage, a content analysis was conducted examining foreign news stories from four constructed-week samples of the *Los Angeles Times* home edition, from August 1997 through July 1998. A total of 338 stories composed the data set.

Three coders, who were graduate students in journalism, analyzed stories in the sampled days that focused on a foreign nation or group of foreign nations. Stories were considered foreign in nature if they dealt primarily with a foreign nation – regardless of dateline. Sports stories were excluded.

The following domains were identified: art/entertainment, business, culture, crime, economics, education, environment, education, disaster/accidents, legal/courts, medicine, military, politics/government, public health, religion, science/technology, human interest, social unrest and transportation. Stories were coded as breaking news, features, or editorials and commentaries, and the focal geographic region was identified for each story.

Most pertinent to this study, of course, was the creation and implementation of a set of cultural values. To articulate a value system, we first turned to the values set forth by Rokeach (1973, 1980). The 1980 study consisted of the following values: a comfortable life, a meaningful life, a world at peace, equality, freedom, maturity, national security, respect for others, respect from others, salvation, true friendship and wisdom. The 1973 study had the following additional values: an exciting life, a sense of accomplishment, happiness, mature love, inner harmony, pleasure, social recognition and true friendship.

A qualitative coding step suggested the applicability of some – but not all – of these values to an examination of foreign news content. This step supported our retaining the following Rokeachian values: equality, freedom, friendship, comfort, peace, security, spiritualism (or salvation) and wisdom. Next, we

turned to other value-related research (e.g. Johnson, 1978; Morris, 1956; Taylor, 1977). A second qualitative coding step supported the addition of the following values: altruism, beauty, materialism, morality and power. A final qualitative step led to the creation of a list of coding questions for each of the final 13 values.

The result was a system of values that offers a simple, yet comprehensive framework for understanding culture and how well news stories chronicle it. The values were as follows: altruism, beauty, comfort, equality, freedom, friendship, materialism, morality, peace, power, spiritualism, security and wisdom. Although a list of values cannot be complete or exhaustive, this simplified grouping was employed for the following reasons: (1) it allows for the determination of what cultural context journalists convey to readers; (2) it can be applied across cultural boundaries; (3) it can be intuitively applied to newspaper stories; and (4) it can be used to characterize what is perceived as important in the various societies of the world, whether pluralistic or closed, developing or developed.

As noted, questions were articulated to represent each of the cultural values and how they surfaced in foreign news stories (see Table 1). Coders considered these value questions in terms of a story's focal country – including its individuals, groups and government. The value questions were applied in terms of how a reporter portrayed a nation via analysis, depiction and use of sources. For example, if a nation were said to be at war, it would then be coded via the value of 'power'. If a resolution to such conflict were mentioned, then 'peace' would also be coded. If a value question was answered 'yes', that value was coded as being present. Values were not exclusive, so more than one value could be affixed to a single story.

Regions were defined as follows: the developed world as Canada, Asia and Western Europe; and the developing world as Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Russia and Latin America (which included Mexico and Central and South Americas). Overall coder agreement for each variable, via Scott's pi (Scott, 1955), was 89 percent – with all variables exceeding 75 percent agreement.

Findings

Breaking news comprised 73 percent of the foreign news stories, with feature stories making up 13 percent. The most frequently appearing geographic regions were Asia, 29 percent; the Middle East, 15 percent; Western Europe, 10 percent; and Russia and the former Soviet states, 9 percent. The most common story domains were politics and government (48 percent), economics (12 percent), crime (11 percent) and military and business (both at 8 percent).

Values occurred in stories at the following frequencies: altruism, 8 percent; peace, 32 percent; beauty, 11 percent; comfort, 12 percent; equality, 4 percent; freedom, 15 percent; power, 47 percent; friendship (between nations, individuals or groups), 20 percent; morality, 6 percent; materialism, 17 percent; spiritualism, 18 percent; security, 26 percent; and wisdom, 15 percent. (For a more specific rendering, see Table 1.)

TABLE 1
Value Questions – and Value Prevalence Ratios

	% of stories with value
Altruism	
Are people or a nation shown to want to help others?	7%
Is a nation viewed via its efforts to develop, fund or aid another nation?	2%
Is there mention of a nation's relief or humanitarian efforts?	1%
Beauty	
Are people or places described in terms of beauty?	8%
Is there mention of style or manner of dress (in a positive way)?	6%
Comfort	
Are there direct references to a person's health, fame or pleasure?	8%
Is there mention of a 'good life'?	6%
Equality	
Are people on equal footing in terms of getting jobs and moving ahead?	2%
Is there mention of the 'all races should be equal' concept?	1%
Freedom	
Is there mention of freedom of speech?	2%
Is there mention of fair and free elections?	4%
Is there mention of a nation's being independent?	4%
Is there mention of democracy being achieved or maintained?	4%
Friendship	
Are family ties or values mentioned?	11%
Are allies mentioned?	9%
Is one's love for another mentioned?	2%
Morality	
Are people said to be honest and good?	2%
Are people shown to have a sense of right and wrong?	5%
Materialism	
Are people or nations viewed in terms of the pursuit of wealth?	15%
Peace	
Are peacekeeping, peace talks or accord mentioned?	17%
Are solutions sought via passivism, diplomacy or non-aggression?	24%
Is a nation explicitly described as being at peace?	2%

TABLE 1

Continued

Power	
Are people described via authority or position or place in hierarchy?	22%
Is power explicitly mentioned?	15%
Does a nation or person use aggression – including war and conflict – to gain possession, control, advantage or rights?	29%
Spiritualism	
Are people described in terms of religious preference?	10%
Is there mention of nation or person's religion?	16%
Security	
Is there mention of protecting one's nation or borders?	13%
Is there mention of one's plight for individual security?	13%
Wisdom	
Is education mentioned – in describing a person or in another way?	7%
Is the quest for knowledge mentioned?	4%
Is justice held up as an important goal?	8%
Is education used as a tool for advancement?	3%
Is a person praised for having knowledge?	2%

Hypothesis 1

It was suggested that different values would be used to represent different regions of the world. The data supported this hypothesis.

Table 2 indicates that the values of peace, power, spiritualism and security were significantly more common in stories about the developing world – while materialism was more common in the developed world. In this table – and those that follow – ratios are given for two different regions, with the related chi-square significance listed to the right.

The appearance of values can also be examined in terms of specific regions. To begin with, Table 3 shows that Latin American coverage is dominated by the values of spiritualism and wisdom. Furthermore, Figure 1 indicates that the *Los Angeles Times* presents Latin Americans as valuing wisdom – and not being interested in spiritualism.

According to Figure 2 and Table 4, it is apparent Western Europe and Canada were depicted as being focused on beauty, but not security or power.

Figure 3 and Table 5 show that the nations of Eastern Europe, Russia and the former Soviet states were shown to be concerned with security, but not altruism.

Figure 4 and Table 6 indicate that depictions of Asia are dominated by materialism, but lacking in the values of power and spiritualism.

From Figure 5 and Table 7, it can be seen that the Middle East was depicted

TABLE 2
Comparison of Value Representations

	Developing World	Developed World
Peace	0.36	0.26*
Power	0.57	0.34***
Materialism	0.14	0.21*
Spiritualism	0.22	0.12**
Security	0.34	0.12***

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 3
Comparison of Value Representations

	Latin America	Rest of World
Spiritualism	0.08	0.20**
Wisdom	0.28	0.13**

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

FIGURE 1
Latin America

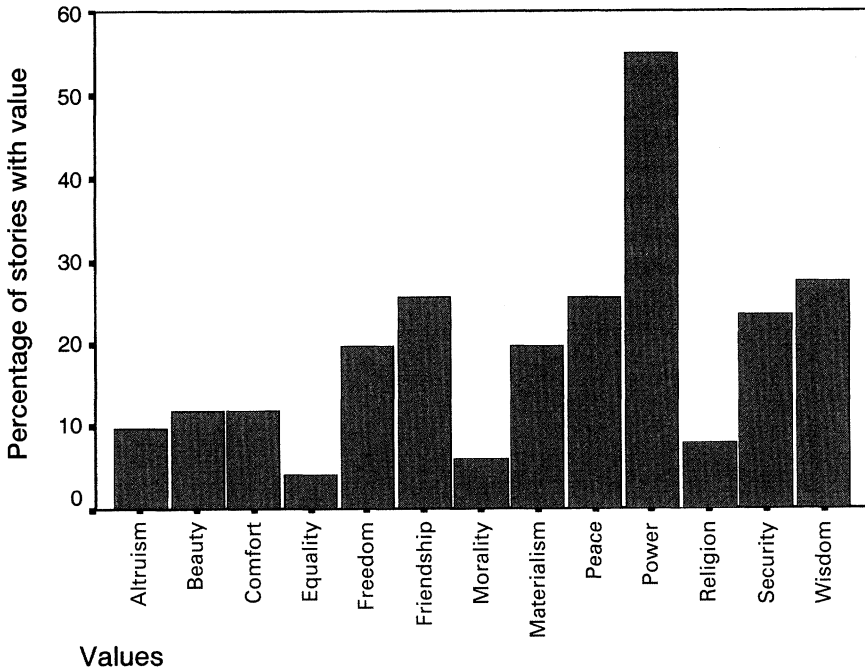


FIGURE 2
Western Europe/Canada

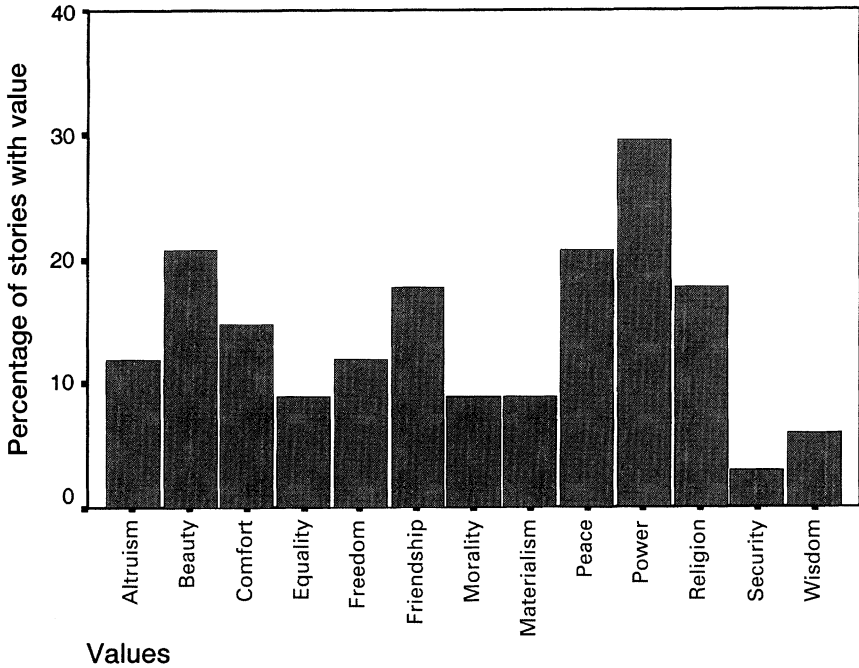


TABLE 4
Comparison of Value Representations

	West	Rest of World
Beauty	0.21	0.10*
Power	0.29	0.49**
Security	0.03	0.29***

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 5
Comparison of Value Representations

	Eastern Bloc	Rest of World
Altruism	0.02	0.10**
Security	0.40	0.23**

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

in terms of security, peace, power and spiritualism – but not in terms of beauty, freedom and materialism.

Finally, Figure 6 and Table 8 indicate that power and not peace were depicted in the coverage of Africa.

FIGURE 3

Former Soviet States and Eastern Europe

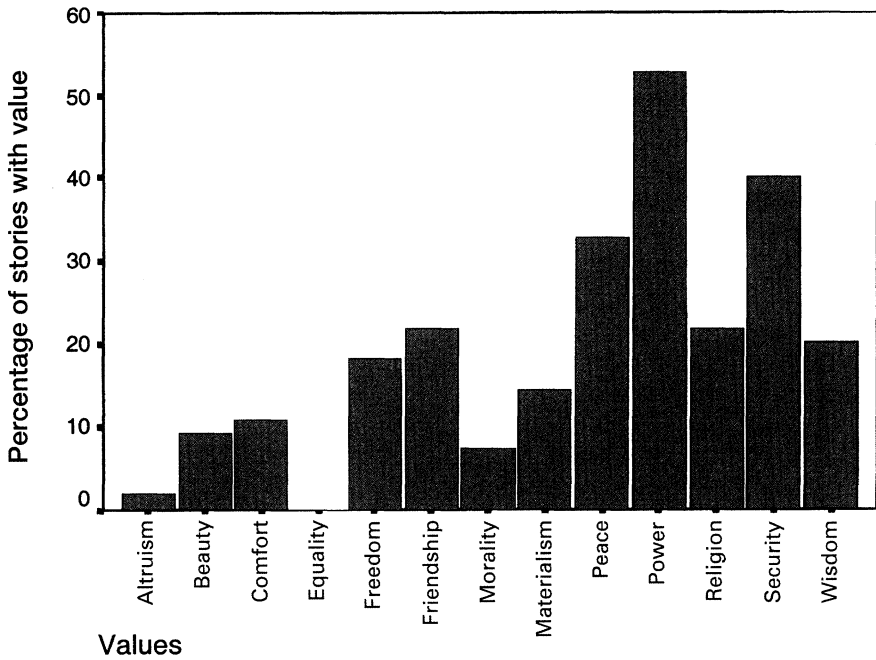


TABLE 6

Comparison of Value Representations

	Asia	Rest of World
Materialism	0.26	0.14**
Power	0.35	0.52**
Spiritualism	0.10	0.21**

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 7

Comparison of Value Representations

	Middle East	Rest of World
Peace	0.66	0.27***
Beauty	0.04	0.13*
Freedom	0.06	0.17**
Power	0.58	0.45*
Materialism	0.08	0.19*
Spiritualism	0.36	0.15***
Security	0.42	0.23**

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

FIGURE 4

Asia

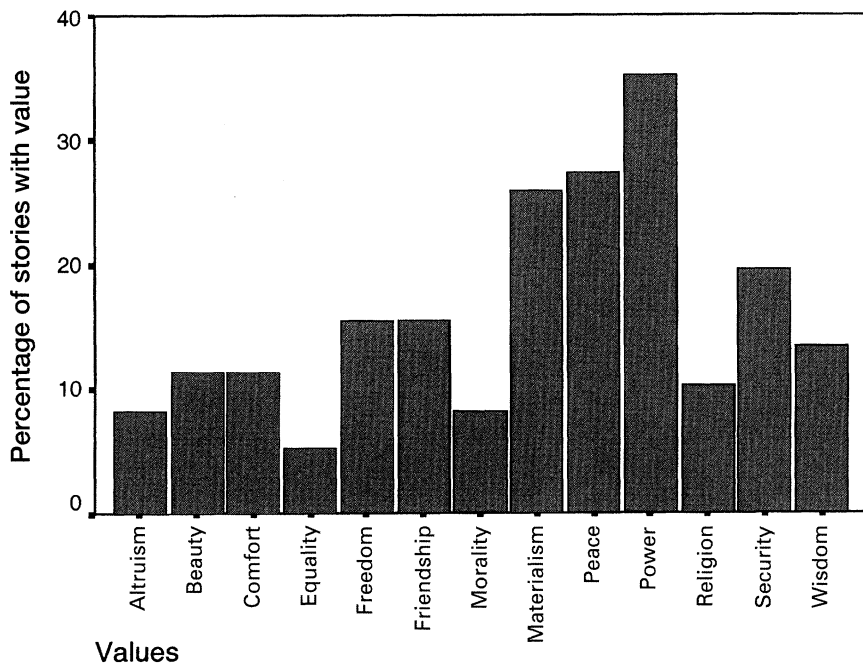


TABLE 8

Comparison of Value Representations

	Africa	Rest of World
Peace	0.16	0.33*
Power	0.68	0.45**

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis held that different values would be used in stories that depict women. This is supported in several cases. Table 9 indicates that stories with women more frequently referred to the values of equality and freedom, but less frequently to friendship.

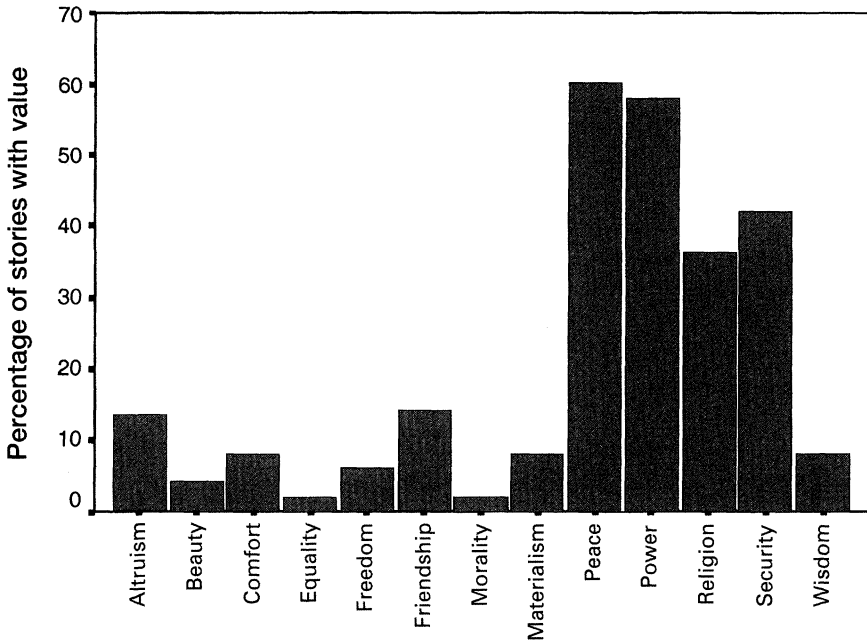
Hypothesis 3

This hypothesis suggested that there would be two levels to value bias in stories – domain bias and non-domain bias.

To explore the two types of bias, the same cross-tabulations were run, but for only stories within various domain groupings. Domains were broken into five groups: soft news (arts/entertainment, education, religion, human interest

FIGURE 5

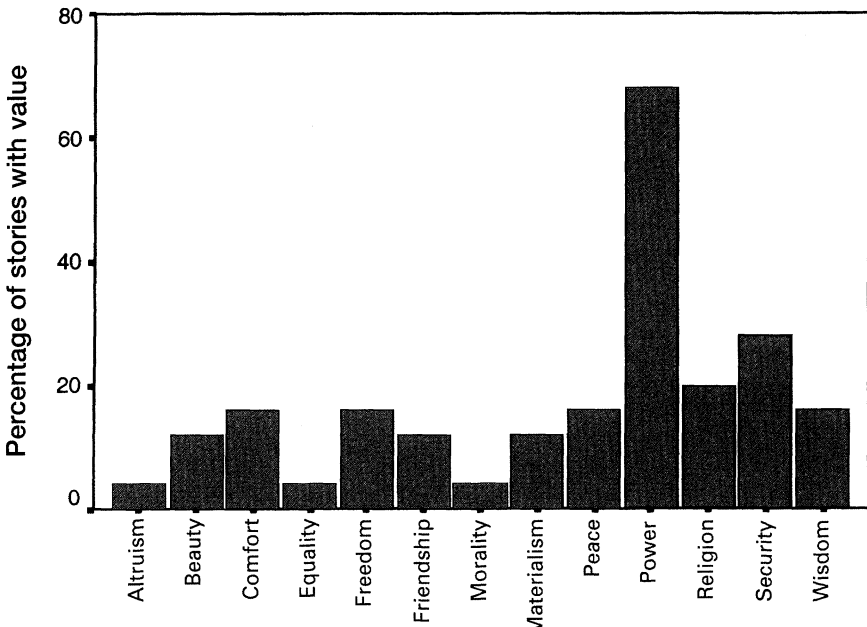
Middle East



Values

FIGURE 6

Africa



Values

TABLE 9

Comparison of Value Representations

	Women	Men
Equality	0.12	0.01***
Friendship	0.25	0.42**
Freedom	0.20	0.04**

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

and culture); money (business and economics); crisis and disaster (crime, disaster, military and unrest); science (science/technology, environment, medicine, public health and transportation); and government and courts (government/politics and legal/courts). In this manner, the study examined the presence of the second type of bias, one that is free of domain.

Both types of bias – that confounded by domain and that free of it – were present in coverage when the developed world was juxtaposed against the developing world. The first type of bias is present when our ‘controlling’ for domain brought about non-significant findings. The second type of bias – one free of the influence of domain – appears when our ‘controlling’ for domain brought about significant findings.

Domain-free bias was found in several cases involving the comparison of the developed world to the developing world (see Table 10). This indicates that the values of security, power and materialism appeared in stories in significantly different ways, even after ‘controlling’ for topic domain.

Table 11 demonstrates domain-free bias in terms of coverage of Latin America. It was apparent in terms of the value of wisdom. Table 12 shows that domain-free biases existed in terms of power and security in coverage of Western Europe and Canada. From Table 13, it can be seen that the non-domain bias appeared in coverage of Eastern bloc and former Soviet nations. In this case, it was confined to the value of security, but appeared in each domain grouping. Table 14 indicates the non-domain bias in Asian coverage. It appeared in the analysis of power, materialism and spiritualism. Table 15 shows the same bias in terms of Middle Eastern coverage in terms of the following values: peace, freedom, security, power and spiritualism. In African coverage, domain-free bias occurred in terms of power and peace (see Table 16). Finally, this type of bias was apparent in coverage of women (see Table 17). Even when controlling for topic domain, the study demonstrated the differing use of the values of equality, friendship and freedom.

These are examples of the non-domain bias. All other domains, because of their non-significant results, indicate the first type of bias – and that the relationship of values and region is, in these cases, confounded by domain.

Hypothesis 4

This hypothesis suggested that different values would be common in different domains. This hypothesis is supported.

Table 18 offers an overview of how certain values appear in stories of

TABLE 10

Comparison of Value Representations (with Control Domains)

	Developing World	Developed World	Control Domain
Security	0.18	0.04*	Soft news
Security	0.51	0.15**	Crisis
Security	0.38	0.23*	Government/courts
Power	0.47	0.24*	Business/economics
Power	0.76	0.31***	Crisis
Materialism	0.25	0.00**	Science

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 11

Comparison of Value Representations (with Control Domains)

	Latin America	Rest of World	Control Domain
Wisdom	0.26	0.08**	Crisis
Wisdom	0.36	0.15**	Government/courts

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 12

Comparison of Value Representations (with Control Domains)

	West	Rest of World	Control Domain
Power	0.36	0.68**	Crisis
Security	0.00	0.17*	Crisis

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 13

Comparison of Value Representations (with Control Domains)

	Eastern Bloc	Rest of World	Control Domain
Security	0.31	0.08**	Soft news
Security	0.50	0.13**	Business/economics
Security	0.64	0.36**	Crisis
Security	0.50	0.28**	Government/courts

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

different domains. For example, altruism is most common in soft news domains, including the environment, religion, science and human interest. In contrast, peace is most common in government, religion and unrest domains, but much less common in arts/entertainment, human interest and other soft news categories.

More specifically, power was in 60 percent of the stories that dealt with disaster, military and social unrest domains, as compared to just 45 percent of the other stories ($\chi^2 = 4.428$, $p < .035$). In addition, security was in

TABLE 14

Comparison of Value Representations (with Control Domains)

	Asia	Rest of World	Control Domain
Power	0.27	0.72***	Crisis
Materialism	0.26	0.08***	Government/courts
Spiritualism	0.07	0.24**	Government/courts

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 15

Comparison of Value Representations (with Control Domains)

	Middle East	Rest of World	Control Domain
Peace	0.50	0.16*	Soft news
Peace	0.46	0.19**	Crisis
Peace	1.00	0.19**	Science
Peace	0.72	0.43***	Government/courts
Freedom	0.50	0.16*	Soft news
Freedom	0.06	0.28***	Government/courts
Security	0.62	0.37*	Crisis
Security	0.44	0.28*	Government/courts
Power	1.00	0.22*	Science
Spiritualism	0.33	0.16**	Government/courts

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 16

Comparison of Value Representations (with Control Domains)

	Africa	Rest of World	Control Domain
Power	0.75	0.26**	Soft news
Peace	0.21	0.51**	Government/courts

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 17

Comparison of Value Representations (with Control Domains)

	Women	Men	Control Domain
Equality	0.22	0.05**	Soft news
Equality	0.12	0.00***	Crisis
Friendship	0.38	0.14*	Business/economics
Friendship	0.47	0.15***	Crisis
Friendship	0.36	0.17**	Government/courts
Freedom	0.24	0.09*	Crisis

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

TABLE 18
Value Prevalence By Domain

	All	Art/Ent.	Bus.	Cult.	Crime	Eco.	Edu.	Environ.	Disaster	Court	Med.	Military	Govt	Health	Relig.	Soc. Hum.	Int.	Unrest	Trans.
Altruism	8	8	8	0	3	15	0	15	0	6	0	7	10	0	13	17	16	6	0
Peace	32	17	15	23	8	26	0	15	20	6	0	30	52	25	31	50	16	39	0
Beauty	11	67	12	15	11	10	0	23	0	0	50	11	4	13	13	0	26	0	20
Comfort	12	38	15	46	11	10	0	8	0	6	0	11	9	25	6	0	42	0	0
Equality	4	8	8	23	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	6	0	11	6	0
Freedom	15	21	8	31	14	21	0	0	0	0	0	11	25	0	13	0	26	17	0
Power	47	21	31	23	75	36	50	31	20	56	50	81	61	25	50	50	37	67	20
Friendship	20	29	15	38	14	21	50	8	13	19	50	30	20	38	31	0	58	17	0
Morality	6	17	8	8	3	5	0	8	7	6	0	0	5	13	6	17	21	6	0
Materialism	17	21	62	15	17	41	50	8	0	6	0	4	13	0	6	17	21	17	20
Religion	18	25	4	23	25	3	0	0	7	13	0	11	20	0	94	0	16	22	0
Security	26	4	8	8	42	18	0	23	13	6	50	63	33	38	25	50	16	28	0
Wisdom	15	21	19	46	19	15	50	0	0	44	50	7	16	13	6	17	32	32	0

Cells indicate number of stories of value type per topic domain.

40 percent of stories that were in disaster, military and social unrest domains, as compared to just 23 percent of the rest of the stories (chi-square = 6.652, $p < .010$).

The same held true for other domains and values. Peace was in 16 percent of stories that were in the domains of art, culture, education and human interest, as compared to 34 percent of the other stories (chi-square = 6.225, $p < .013$). The value of beauty was in 47 percent of stories that were in these same domains, as compared to just 5 percent of the other stories (chi-square = 73.179, $p < .001$). Comfort was in 43 percent of stories that were in these soft news domains, as compared to just 6 percent of the rest of the stories (chi-square = 55.071, $p < .001$). Furthermore, peace was in 51 percent of stories that were in the politics and government domains, as compared to just 13 percent of other stories (chi-square = 57.491, $p < .001$). Beauty was in 4 percent of stories that were in the politics and government domains, as compared to 18 percent of the others (chi-square = 15.231, $p < .001$).

Hypothesis 5

The study also hypothesized that values would be clustered on various stories. This hypothesis is supported.

Factor analysis was used to explore the potential clustering of certain values with other values. It is important to note that this approach breaks from the 'normal' application of factor analysis. In mass communication research, factor analysis is usually applied to understand human decision-making or cognition, with people as the unit of analysis. In the current study, the unit of analysis is the story. Also, some statistical texts suggest that researchers should be 'wary' when using factor analysis to reveal patterns or clusters among binary variables, such as the value variables (present vs absent) in this study (Agresti and Finlay, 1997: 631). Because having a normal distribution is 'unrealistic' in terms of the occurrence of values in this study, we proceeded and employed principal-axis factoring with the intent to explore the patterns of interrelationships among cultural values as found in foreign news stories.

In terms of the value index, the highest correlation was .40 ($p < .001$) between beauty and comfort. Equality and comfort were correlated at .23 ($p < .001$); wisdom and comfort at .29 ($p < .001$); friendship and comfort at .29 ($p < .001$); and security and power at .29 ($p < .001$). Except for these links, the values were largely independent of one another.

Factor analysis, with Varimax rotation, identified four factors that accounted for 26 percent of the variance. Because the loading of Factor 4 was below .3, the factor was dropped. The remaining factors were as follows: Factor 1, comfort (.67), wisdom (.50), beauty (.49), friendship (.41), morality (.41) and equality (.39); Factor 2, power (.52), security (.50) and peace (.41); and Factor 3, friendship (.32). Factor 1 accounted for 8.5 percent of the variance, Factor 2 for 7.2 percent and Factor 3 for 6.3 percent. The value of friendship was then eliminated because of its cross-loading, thus leaving two factors. This analysis demonstrates that values were affixed to stories in two ways – (1) via positive cultural values such as comfort, wisdom, beauty, morality and

equality; and (2) via conflict and conflict resolution values such as power, security and peace. Thus, Factor 1 is labeled 'the positive value factor' and Factor 2, 'the conflict value factor'.

In addition, *t*-test analysis was completed. Stories, on average, contained 2.3 values. There was not a significant association between the number of values in stories and geographic region; however, there was significant correlation between the conflict value factor and region ($t = 7.47, p < .001$). The means for conflict values per region were as follows: Latin America, 1.0; Western Europe/Canada, 0.5; Eastern Europe, Russia and former Soviet States, 1.2; Asia, 0.8; the Middle East, 1.6; and Africa, 1.1. Thus, stories concerning a Latin American nation were likely to have twice as many references to conflict values than did stories dealing with a Western European nation. There was a correlation between the conflict value factor and region – with developing nations having 1.3 political values on average, as compared to 0.8 for developed countries ($t = 23.80, p < .001$). In terms of the peace value factor, there was not a significant difference – with the developing world and developed world having 0.45 and 0.52 positive values per story, respectively.

Hypothesis 6

This hypothesis suggested that values would occur differently depending on news story types (breaking news, features and so forth). This is supported by the data.

The study demonstrated associations between values and story type (see Table 19), with power the most common value in breaking news stories and beauty the most common in feature stories. There was a significant correlation between story type and the number of values per story ($t = 15.27, p < .001$).

TABLE 19
Associations between Values and Story Type

Value	Breaking News	Features	Editorial/Commentary	Significance
Altruism	5%	21%	12%	***
Peace	31%	16%	45%	**
Beauty	5%	51%	10%	***
Comfort	6%	37%	18%	***
Equality	42%	33%	6%	**
Freedom	10%	21%	35%	***
Power	49%	28%	55%	**
Friendship	16%	44%	18%	***
Morality	5%	12%	6%	–
Materialism	14%	33%	18%	**
Religion	17%	23%	16%	–
Security	26%	26%	29%	–
Wisdom	13%	21%	18%	–

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.

Breaking news stories had 1.6 values on average, features, 2.4, and commentaries and editorials, 2.9. Stories of different types received significantly positive values ($t = 27.59, p < .001$) and conflict values ($t = 4.43, p < .013$). In terms of the positive value factor, breaking news stories had means of 0.3 values, features, 1.3 and editorial or commentary, 0.6. In terms of the conflict value factor, breaking news stories had means of 1.1 values, features, 0.7 and other, 1.3.

Discussion

Because of the frequently negative nature of foreign news coverage (e.g. Weaver and Wilhoit, 1981; Wilhoit and Weaver, 1983; Beaudoin and Thorson, 2001), it would seem intuitive that conflict values would be more common than positive values. In the current study, there were strong links between the value of power and story negativity and the high prevalence of this value in news stories. Thus, it would be hard to say that the findings of the current study break from those of previous studies when it comes to story negativity. With peace and security the next most common values, it appears that cultural values – especially grouped in terms of power, peace and security – often appear in stories that deal with conflict and conflict resolution. The common occurrence of friendship in this grouping casts a positive light on *Los Angeles Times* coverage. In addition, the higher prevalence of the value of materialism in developed world stories goes against an Inglehartian (1990) perspective, which would have postmaterialist nations such as Great Britain less concerned with money and economic gain than less developed nations. In an intuitive sense, as well, it appears that western journalists view divergent (or developing) cultures via conflict, while viewing more similar (or developed) ones via esthetics, pleasure and liberation. In doing so, journalists may be creating an inferior *other* and a superior *self* in their coverage of international affairs (see Shah, 1993).

The cross-tabulation of values and story type adds to this understanding. It suggests that positive values (such as altruism, beauty, comfort, morality and freedom) were most likely to appear in feature stories. Materialism was also common in such stories. Breaking news stories, on the other hand, were dominated by power, peace and equality. This indicates that feature stories – because of their freedom and sense of timelessness – allow reporters to seek out and infuse more positive values into their reporting.

Largely, positive values were treated in a positive manner. The most common values in negative stories were power and security, which are common in stories about conflict and war. In contrast, domains such as art and human interest were far more likely to have positive values such as beauty and comfort than stories in other domains. Finally, stories in the politics and government domain were dominated by values that one would expect to find in the realm of politics: peace, freedom, power and security.

The current study also offers additional texture to the contention of previous studies that women are covered differently than men. The values of equality and freedom were most common in stories with women. Thus, it

appears that women are being presented in a manner that substantiates their growing role and rights in the world.

The analysis by region gives a picture of characterizations and stereotypes that underlie *Los Angeles Times* coverage of certain global regions. The coverage appears to emphasize the following dominant patterns of values: Western Europe and Canada: beauty; Asia: materialism; Latin America: wisdom; Africa: power and not peace; the Middle East: security, peace, power and spiritualism; and the Eastern bloc: security.

Some of these characterizations make intuitive sense. In terms of the Middle East, we posit that nations are ridden with conflict and, thus, in search of peace. Asian coverage does focus on business, and Africa is ridden with conflict. Furthermore, the Middle East is often articulated in terms of spiritualism, and Eastern Europe with security issues. That the coverage focuses on these values to this degree, however, perpetuates myths and fails to explore the gamut of life in the various nations of the world. Although Japan is an economic power, there is surely more to life in Japan than money. Much the same, depicting Africa in terms of only power (and not peace) may fail to characterize the nation's vast complexity of languages and cultures and its sense of harmonious gradualism.

In addition, as noted earlier, some of these characterizations surfaced free of the confounding nature of the domain variable. For instance, power was used more frequently to define the developing world than it was to depict the western world, especially in terms of domains that dealt with crisis and disaster. Examples like this support the earlier contention that there are two types of value bias in terms of how the *Los Angeles Times* covers the world: in both the domains of the newspaper's coverage of certain regions and in its coverage of regions regardless of domain. Thus, the newspaper appears to take a wrong step in two ways: (1) by covering various regions via only certain domains (which then affects which values are represented); and (2) by using different values to cover certain regions even when stories are of the same domain.

Despite the limitations of its application, the factor analysis step added depth to these findings. It demonstrated that positive values and conflict values were likely to appear in two distinct clusters. The positive cluster included comfort, wisdom, beauty, friendship, morality and equality – while the conflict cluster was composed of power, security and peace. The study also suggested that conflict value clusters were more common in the developing world than in the developed world, especially in terms of the Middle East and Africa.

The current study, thus, supports much what has been found in previous, more general studies of foreign news content, but does so via a new tool. In doing so, it offers depth to our understanding of foreign news coverage and delves further into the complex world of values and their application to the modern-day mass media. The study suggests that global media should pay greater attention to values and culture if they intend to provide their diverse audiences with a comprehensive view of the world today. For the mass media to do so, they should pay special heed to depicting nations via a mix of cultural values, one that steps beyond conflict and politics and offers a more complete picture of life in the lands beyond our borders.

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