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Recording the Vietnam War: Photographic coverage in newsmagazines from 1964 to 1973

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RECORDING THE VIETNAM WAR:
PHOTOGRAPHIC COVERAGE IN NEWSMAGAZINES
FROM 1964 TO 1973.

A Thesis Presented to the
Department of Communication
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of the Arts
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by
Charlotte Niemeyer
Saint Louis, Missouri
October, 1990

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

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for the degree Master of Arts, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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Recording the Vietnam War:

Photographic Coverage in Newsmagazines from 1963 to 1974.

(Tet Offensive, Vietnam war, War Photographs)

Written, verbal and visual accounts of man's destructive measures on one another do not seem to detour the violence of war. Yet it is the visual images of a war that have best brought home the reality of war to the American public. This thesis focused on the Vietnam war, the first war where motion and still photography played a decisive part in the outcome of the war.

The purpose of this thesis was to determine if the image of war changed before and after the Tet Offensive in Vietnam during the time period of August, 1964, to August, 1973. Photographs of the war taken in Vietnam and published in Life, Newsweek, and Time, the leading newsmagazines during this time period, were reviewed. The scenes and primary subjects pictured, how the primary subject was portrayed and the perspective presented were analyzed for apparent shifts in coverage. The Tet Offensive was chosen as the mid-point since it marked the fundamental turning point in the war.

During the decade of Vietnam coverage reviewed, the newsmagazines shifted their focus of coverage in three areas. One shift was in the scenes captured in the Vietnam images. Prior to Tet, the American public was throw right into battle with the soldiers. Actual combat scenes were the norm. After Tet, scenes shifted towards more combat related and non-combat related photographs such as soldier camaraderie and visiting politicians.

A second shift occurred in the subject matter of the

photographs published. The American soldier was highlighted prior to Tet, showing numerous scenes of American boys rescuing fellow soldiers, troops storming up hills and general triumphant battle scenes.

The newsmagazines also concentrated on who our soldiers were fighting for, the South Vietnamese. Photographers captured moments of mothers cradling their blood drenched children and the destruction left from a bombing raid. Yet after Tet, these scenes fading away. In their place came scenes of the Allied soldier fighting the war which doubled in number after Tet. As photographs of American soldiers decreased a parallel increase in those picturing Allied soldiers occurred.

The final photographic shift noted was in the portrayal of the primary subject. A shift away from life threatening scenes was apparent after Tet. The public viewed a much more sanitized version of the war. Fewer dead or wounded individuals were portrayed after Tet, no matter what degree of danger was apparent in the scene.

Americans were given a sheltered view of the war following the Tet Offensive in 1968.

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To Dorothy Niemeyer and Dwain Sparks whose support
and encouragement enabled me to complete my Masters Degree
and to the memory of Robert W. Niemeyer.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

It is not a secret; people do die in wars. "Since 1945, more than 35 million human beings have died in 120 wars. Fifteen million tons of bombs were dropped on Vietnam alone-four times the quantity used in the entire Second World War and three million Vietnamese and around 58,000 Americans lost their lives."¹

And is the world at peace today? No. Has man learned anything from these past war experiences? It does not seem so.

"For many of the world's people, technology means an increased capacity for human inhumanity to our own kind."²

The numbers of those killed or bombs dropped to destroy the 'enemy' do not seem to deter violence. The written accounts do not seem to bring an end to wars. Even the visual accounts, both still and motion picture, of the tragedies of war have not brought the destructive forces man imposes on one another to an end. Yet, it is the photographic accounts, as opposed to statistics, prose or script, that have the power to visually

¹Rainer Fabian and Hans Christian Adams, Images of War: 130 Years of War Photography (London: New English Library, 1983), p. 28.

²Lance Woodruff, "Dreams of Peace," The Christian Century, 105:451 (May 4, 1988).

bring home the best understanding of an event.³ "Most people find it difficult to understand purely verbal concepts. They 'suspect' the ear; they don't trust it. In general we feel more secure when things are visible, when we can 'see for ourselves'."⁴ Photography, whether still or motion-picture, visualizes and verifies events for the world's audience.

Information concerning events, especially global affairs, is usually obtained indirectly. For example, it would have been impossible for every American to eyewitness the Vietnam war. Information was, therefore, obtained through the media. "In an age of credibility gaps and kaleidoscopic change, many individuals were admittedly skeptical of certain verbally described events concerning the war until they were able to view photographic accounts of them."⁵ It has been the visual images that have brought the battlefields of war home to us "with a greater emotional impact than anything the printed media --

³Several individuals have studied the power of photography as medium for conveying information: S. Baker, Visual Persuasion. (New York: McGraw-Hill 1961), p. 1; Harold Evans, Pictures on a Page (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), p. 5; R. E. Girvin, "Photography as Social Documentation," Journalism Quarterly, 24:207-20 (1947); Walter Lippmann, Public Opinion (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1922), p. 92; Kenrick S. Thompson, Alfred C. Clarke, Simon Dintz, "Reactions to My-Lai: A Visual-Verbal Comparison," Sociology and Social Research, 58:122-129 (1974).

⁴M. McLuhan & Q. Fiore, The Medium is the Message: An Inventory of Effects (New York: Bantam Books, 1967), p. 117.

⁵Kenrick S. Thompson and Alfred C. Clarke, "Photographic Imagery and the Vietnam War: An Unexamined Perspective," The Journal of Psychology, 87:280 (1974). See also Evans, p. 4-5.

excellent as much as the reporting has been -- has been able to convey."⁶

This is not to say that a photograph can bring every aspect of a war to those who are not there to witness the atrocities first hand. "No matter how powerful the images of war these photographs have captured, our fascination tends to outweigh our horror. Photography provides insulation along with access. Pictures don't carry the odor. War stinks. There is nothing worse than the stench of the unburied dead. If that smell could only somehow accompany the images."⁷

There is also the dilemma of 'truth' of a photograph.⁸

⁶"Pictures to Remember", Editorial, The Nation, (Feb. 19, 1968), p. 229.

See also Thompson, Clarke and Dintz p. 122-129; Oscar Patterson III, "Television's Living Room War in Print: Vietnam in the News Magazines," Journalism Quarterly, 61:35 (Spring, 1984); Michael D. Sherer, "Vietnam War Photos and Public Opinion," Journalism Quarterly, 66:391 (Summer, 1989).

⁷John Morris, "This We Remember", Harper's, p. 72 (September 1972).

⁸It has been argued that photography captures on film "reality", that is, the images pictured actually exist or did exist. One author views photographs as "miniatures of reality", whereas written prose is just an interpretation. Susan Sontag, On Photography (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1977), p. 4 & p. 154.

The issue of reality in documentary photography has been examined by Paul Blyton. He concludes:

"To establish meaning (and therefore reality) in a photographic image, we must therefore examine not only the information captured by the photographic process itself, but also consider the inactive process involving the aims and values of the photographer, the response of those being photographed and the way the photographer's symbols are read

Roger Butterfield, former Life writer, believes "photography can contribute to social betterment in two ways: by being honest, and having a heart... an honest photo can say much more than words."⁹ Photographs record history and the men and events that make it.¹⁰

During the Vietnam war, editors made the final decision of which stories and photographs to publish. Editors could more easily change the meaning of a reporter's story than they could alter a photograph. For instance, reporters Charles Mohr and Mert Perry of Time resigned in protest "over the egregious news management of editor Otto Fuerbringer."¹¹ Fuerbringer had rewritten both reporters' filed stories in the September 20, 1963, issue of Time so that the articles read the opposite of what the original reports had stated. Photographs, though, could not be altered as easily to say the opposite of what the negatives had pictured, as occasionally happened with the prose stories filed by reporters.

Editors made the decisions about page makeup and layout. Wire service photographers complained about internal censorship of their photographs. Yet, photojournalists such as those

by the viewer". Paul Blyton, 'The image of work: Documentary photography and the production of 'reality', "International Social Science Journal, 39:415-423, (August 1987).

⁹Girvin, p. 217.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 218.

¹¹Susan D. Moeller, Shooting War (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1989), p. 388.

covering the war for Life, rarely thought their images were misused.¹² Alterations of the photograph's size were necessary, but rarely done in such a way as to alter the original "meaning" of a photograph.

Photographs may vary depending on the photographer's camera angle, distance to a subject, timing and framing of subjects.¹³ A photo can also change meaning simply by the way the image is cropped, burned or dodged during printing. More serious is the advancement in today's computer technology. A photograph can be completely altered to fit any format through digital retouching, a computer system which enables objects in a picture to be moved, combined, deleted or even color changed. National Geographic, a leader in photographic story coverage, has utilized digital retouching twice, once to move a pyramid so it would fit the vertical cover of their magazine and a second time to combine two photos so a Polish man's hat would be complete.¹⁴

¹²Ibid, p. 388.

One study has shown that the more editors know about their viewing audience, the better they are at choosing photographs that the audience will agree with. Malcolm S. MacLean & Anne L. Kao "Picture Selection: An Editorial Game," Journalism Quarterly, 40:230-32 (1963). See also: Paul Hightower, "The Influence of training on Taking and Judging Photos," Journalism Quarterly, 61:682-686 (1984).

¹³Blyton, p. 416.

¹⁴The techniques of burning and dodging black and white photos has been in use since photography's existence. Editors state that with digital retouching by computer, they now can use these same techniques with color photos and with greater ease and accuracy.

For an in depth discussion see: Sheila Reaves, "Digital Retouching: Is there a Place for it in Newspaper Photography?" Journal of Mass Media Ethics, 2:40-48 (Spring/Summer, 1987).

The idea of photograph alterations has prompted many print publications to adopt a code of ethics for their staff. Many are modeled after the National Press Photographers Association's "Code of Ethics". This code contains two direct references concerning the need for truthfulness in the photojournalism profession.

1. "Photojournalism affords an opportunity to serve the public that is equalled by few other vocations and all members of the profession should strive by example and influence to maintain high standards of ethical conduct free of mercenary considerations of any kind.
2. It is the individual responsibility of every photojournalist at all times to strive for pictures that report truthfully, honestly and objectively."¹⁵

The need for 'reality' is augmented by the increasing number of persons depending on the mass media for information on current events, especially those occurring in other countries and involving conflict. The focus of this thesis is on one such event, the still photographic coverage of the Vietnam war. What did Americans view during the Vietnam war in newsmagazines? What scenes were captured in the photographic images and how were they portrayed? What subjects did the photographers shoot most often

¹⁵"Code of Ethics" News Photographer: National Press Photographers Association 1990 Directory, 45:32.

and what perspective did they use? These questions will be analyzed in this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

An elderly Buddhist monk is photographed by Malcolme Browne, June 12, 1963, burning himself to death in Saigon, Vietnam, in protest against persecution. Photographer Eddie Adams captured the moment Brigadier General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, national police chief, executed a man identified as a Vietcong terrorist during the Tet offensive in 1968. South Vietnamese children and soldiers are photographed fleeing Trangbang after a South Vietnamese Skyraider dropped a napalm bomb "accidentally" on June 9, 1973. These photographs were not typical American honor and glory portraits of war. Contrarily, through these photographs the American people became witness to what some categorized as "war crimes."¹ The worldwide protest actions against U. S. aggression in Vietnam were due, in part, to the fact that people could see in pictures what was going on there.²

Two media outlets provided Americans with these visual images, television and still photography. Several studies and reports have been published on the importance each medium played

¹Susan Moeller, Shooting War (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1989), pp. 412-413.

²Rainer Fabian and Hans Christian Adams, Images of War: 130 Years of War Photography (London: New English Library, 1983), p. 28.

during the war.³

The Vietnam war coincided with the establishment of television in the United States. In 1941, only 10,000 TV sets existed in America; by the Korean War there were 10 million and 100 million during the Vietnam war. Some researchers propose that American television decided the Vietnam war.⁴ Americans could view the war practically every evening from 1962 to 1973. "Since television has become the principal source of news for most Americans, it is generally assumed that the constant exposure of this war on television was instrumental in shaping public opinion. It has become almost a truism,... to say that television, by showing the terrible truth of war, caused the disillusionment of Americans with the war."⁵

Yet, such statistics as those regarding the number of television sets in American homes are all that speak for the

³Fabian, pp. 332-334; William H. Hammond, The Military and the Media, (Washington, D.C.:Center of Military History, U. S. Army, 1988); Sidney W. Head and Sterling Christopher, Broadcasting in America (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1982), pp. 537-539; Herbert Gans, Deciding What's News - A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time (New York: Pantheon Books 1979); Derrick Mercer, Geoff Mungham and Kevin Williams The Fog of War: The Media on the Battlefield (London: Heinemann, 1987), pp. 223-233. Oscar Patterson III, "Television's living room war in print: Vietnam in the news magazines, Journalism Quarterly, 61:35-9 and, (September 1984).

⁴Jay Edward Epstein, Between Fact and Fiction: The Problem of Journalism (New York Vintage Books 1975), pp. 210-233; John Mueller, War Presidents, Public Opinion (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), p. 167; Patterson, p. 35; and Mercer, pp. 224-227.

⁵Mercer, p. 210.

effectiveness of the television medium in shaping public opinion.⁶ Two-thirds of all U. S. citizens state that television never changed their opinion of the war.⁷ "It was the photograph that made the real wound in the public's consciousness."⁸ Television never showed the entire war, just excerpts cut to fit into an evening news slot. The physical size of the TV screen itself made the act of men only inches tall shooting at one another seem unreal.⁹ Therefore, the still photograph may have had a greater impact on the American public than television.

"You cannot switch a photograph off like a toaster. In recollection, TV pictures are always strange, 'imprecise', but photography is as sharp and clear as pain. The photograph of the South Vietnamese police officer executing a Vietcong on a street in Saigon aroused no trauma when it was a film sequence. It whizzed by like a shootout from a western movie, but as a photograph that scene of murder will be with us forever."¹⁰

⁶Phillip Knightley, The First Causality (New York and London: Harcourt, Boace Javarich), 1975 pp. 413-414.

⁷Jay Edward Epstein, News From Nowhere (New York: Vintage Books 1973).

⁸Fabian, p. 334.

⁹Michael Arlen, Living Room War (New York: The Viking Press, 1969) p. 8.

¹⁰Fabian, p. 334.

Still photography presented six memorable images of the war, four of which were published in magazines. These images included 1) the Buddhist monk immolating himself in 1963, 2) General Loan shooting the Vietcong suspect during Tet in 1968, 3) a little girl accidentally hit by napalm by South Vietnamese planes, 4) the Marine with the Zippo lighter, 5) the armored vehicles leaving the citadel at Hue with its cargo of wounded Marines, and 6) the single helicopter perched atop the U. S. Embassy in Saigon in April, 1975. The four images that appear to be best remembered for their magazine presentations are the Buddhist monk, General Loan and the Vietcong, the armored vehicle at Hue and the helicopter atop the U. S. Embassy.¹¹

Reporter Robert Elegant describes the war as "the first time in modern history that the outcome of a war was determined not on the battlefield, but on the printed page."¹²

THE POWER OF A PHOTOGRAPH

Many have studied photography and provided valuable insight into its importance.¹³ For instance, MacLean and Kao concluded

¹¹Patterson, p. 35.

¹²Robert Elegant, "How to Lose a War: Reflections of a Foreign Correspondent," Encounter, 57:73 (August, 1981).

¹³Several individuals have studied the power of photography as a medium for conveying information. S. Baker, Visual Persuasion (New York: McGraw-Hill 1961), p. 1, Harold Evans, Pictures on a Page (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), p. 5; R. E. Girvin, "Photography as Social Documentation," Journalism Quarterly, 24:207-20 (1947); Walter Lippmann, Public Opinion (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1922), p.92; and Kenrick S. Thompson,

that, "a good picture can tell a lot-fast-and with a big wallop that the reader won't forget...It can give him an understanding of a story he wouldn't get otherwise."¹⁴ As was stated earlier, Americans depended on 'pictures' to inform them of the Vietnam war and it was the print image that was most often remembered.

Further research has shown that a picture 3 columns in size, by itself, will stop two-thirds of the publication's readers.¹⁵ That is, readers will pause to view the photograph whereas a story, written prose, may simply go unread. Also, pictures that accompany stories offer a reader a better understanding and will encourage an individual to read the text.¹⁶

Pictures also have an emotional impact on viewers.¹⁷ The nature of a picture,¹⁸ its subject matter, including male and

Alfred C. Clark and Simon Dintz, "Reactions to My-Lai: A Visual-Verbal Comparison," Sociology and Social Research, 58:122-129 (1974).

¹⁴Malcolm S. MacLean and Anne Li-An Kao, "Pictures Selection: An Editorial Game", Journalism Quarterly, 40:230 (1963).

¹⁵Bert W. Woodburn, "Reader Interest in Newspaper Pictures," Journalism Quarterly, 24:201 (1947).

¹⁶Charles E. Swanson, "What They Read in 130 Daily Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly, 32:419 (Fall, 1955).

¹⁷W. R. Hazard, "Response to News Pictures: a Study in Perceptual Unity," Journalism Quarterly, 37:515 (1960).

¹⁸G. Norman Van Tubergen and David L. Mahsman, "Unflattering Photos: How People Respond," Journalism Quarterly, 51:319 (Summer, 1974).

female portrayal¹⁹ and its outline can influence attitudes of the individual viewer.²⁰

A photograph of a burned village or senseless shooting of innocent women and babies may not help those pictured, but hopefully those that view the photograph will be touched, reports photographer Eddie Adams. "I know the power of a still picture. I know what it can do. And if a picture can help somebody some way or another...that's pretty good. And to me it's important. Look, I'm not out to save any world. I never was. But I do know what a picture can do."²¹

¹⁹Roy E. Blackwood, "The Contents of News Photos: Roles Portrayed by Men and Women," Journalism Quarterly, 60:710-14 (1983); and Susan H. Miller, "The content of News Photos: Women's and Men's Roles," Journalism Quarterly, 52:70-75 (1975).

²⁰Jean S. Kerrick, "The Influence of Captions on Picture Interpretation," Journalism Quarterly, 32:177-182 (Spring, 1955); Jean S. Kerrick, "News Pictures, Captions and the Point of Resolution," Journalism Quarterly, 36:183-188 (1959).

For additional literature on the emotional impact of a photograph see Jennifer Brown, "News Photographs and the Pornography of Grief," Journal of Mass Media Ethic, 2:75-81 (Spring/Summer, 1987); Garry Bryant, "Ten-Fifty P.I.: Emotion and the Photographer's Role," Journal of Mass Media Ethics, 2:2:32-39 (Spring/Summer, 1987); Paul Hightower, "A Study of the Messages in Depression Era Photos," Journalism Quarterly, 57:495-97 (Autumn, 1980); Patterson, pp.35-39; Caroline Rees, "The Abuse of Picture Power," News Statesman, 108:8-9 (Sept. 1984); Thompson, Clarke and Dintz, 58:122-129; Kenrick Thompson and Alfred C. Clarke, "Photographic Imagery and the Vietnam War: An Unexamined Perspective," The Journal of Psychology, 87:279-292 (1974); Lesley Wizchman, "Dying on the Front Page: Kent State and the Pulitzer Prize," Journal of the Mass Media Ethics, 2:67-74 (Spring/Summer, 1987).

²¹Moeller, p. 394.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ACCOUNTS OF WAR

Photography of war has changed through the years according to the conflicts themselves, the environment of the battle and the participants involved. The battlefield has varied from pastoral landscapes to rank jungles. Fighting has fluctuated between trench warfare and guerrilla attacks. The sense of 'Duty' and 'Destiny' which prevailed during the Spanish-American War differed from World War I's goal of the 'War to End All Wars.' Coverage of one country fighting another differs from coverage of all-out world wars.²²

Various levels of censorship have been imposed throughout history.²³ Technological advances in military equipment and shifts in the ethics of war have also strongly influenced how (or whether) photographs of conflicts could be taken and how they could be presented to the public. These variations have ultimately affected the public's perception of each war as shaped by the press.

Photographic technology has also influenced war coverage through the years. Camera sizes, the lengths of lenses and film speeds have restricted photographers in the images they could capture. Photographers were restricted more by their cameras' bulky sizes and film speeds during the Crimean and Spanish-American Wars than by any imposed regulations. During the more

²²Ibid, pp. 4-6.

²³Ibid, p. 5.

recent Vietnam conflict, photographers enjoyed the leisure of highly advanced equipment and film along with limited restrictions on coverage.²⁴

Other factors have also affected war photography. Still cameras could never capture the sounds or smells of war. Night photography was limited to the fireworks of the artillery. Finally, shooting photographs during the daytime could be quite hazardous. A photographer had to be at the scene of action, with his head up, to see and photograph the actions of a battle. During the Vietnam war, from 1964 to 1973, "more than 85 percent of the newsmen wounded and 60 percent of those killed were either still or motion picture photographers."²⁵ Photographers have to be physically present to get their pictures, whereas a journalist may sit behind the lines in safety. This difference between the two media also gives credibility to the validity of photographic documentation.²⁶

All these factors have influenced the photographic coverage of each war throughout history. Only a few researchers have studied photographic coverage of wars.²⁷

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Michael D. Sherer, "The Khaki Colored Camera," unpublished paper, prepared for J511 Readings in Journalism History, Dr. Sharon Murphy (Fall 1980) p. 4.

²⁶Moeller, p. 9.

²⁷Patterson, pp. 35-39; Michael Sherer, "Invasion of Poland: Photos in Four American Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly, 61:422-26 (Summer 1984); Sherer, pp. 391-395; Thompson and Clarke, pp. 279-292; and Thompson, Clarke and Dintz, pp. 122-129.

The Crimean War

War photo records of our 'errors', if war can thus be called this, date back to the Crimean War, 1854-1856. Four decades had passed since the British had fought a battle. The approach to the Crimean War was thus one of leisure by both soldiers and civilians.

The truth of the battlefield was brought home to England by reporter William Howard Russel in his columns in The Times Newspaper. His stories raised much skepticism among the English people. Prince Albert realized that to restore confidence in the conduct of the war some form of counter-propaganda was necessary, and "what better form could there be than the newly discovered medium that never lied-the camera?"²⁸

Roger Fenton, Queen Victoria's court photographer, was sent to the Crimean to record what was "really happening". From Fenton's photographs it was learned that in most cases the camera does not lie directly, but it can lie brilliantly by omission. His photos portrayed a war "where everything looked ship-shape and everyone was happy. They showed well-dressed officers and men eating, drinking, or smoking; a convivial party between French and English troops; quiet scenes of a mortar battery; and the interiors of captured forts after the bodies had been removed."²⁹ He returned to London with 365 plates for

²⁸Knightley, p. 15.

²⁹Ibid.

development and was believed to be the first war photographer, even though his photos were more propagandistic in nature.

Actually, a Texas photographer was probably the first war photographer of record. This photographer, although his or her name is unknown, made ten daguerreotypes of General John E. Wool and his troops as they rode into the town of Saltillo, Mexico, in 1848.³⁰ These Mexican War daguerreotypes portrayed staged or static images of battle, since the equipment to photograph action or take several images at one time did not yet exist.³¹ The wet-plate images of the Crimean War and American Civil War also experienced these restrictions in coverage.

Although he may not have been the first war photographer, Fenton seems to have been the first to be supported by his government, the Royal family. He converted a wine merchant's wagon into a complete darkroom, with the words 'Photographic Van' printed on the sides. Poses during this time took from ten to sixty seconds. Therefore, the "most dramatic portrayals of war's realities that he could manage were taken after the battles."³² His only restriction from Prince Albert was not to photograph "dead bodies". Instead, his photographs portrayed the strategic happenings of the war.

American Civil War

³⁰Fabian, p. 77.

³¹Moeller, p. 24.

³²Fabian, p. 80.

Five years later, on April 11, 1861, the first shot was fired in the American Civil War. The situation was exactly the opposite of the Crimean War. "Instead of a correspondent, it was a photographer who documented the war for what it was."³³ Matthew B. Brady received letters of recommendation to cover the war from President Lincoln and Secret Service boss Alan Pinkerton.

Brady sent twenty photographers to the front during the war. "For a total of \$100,000 the impresario of civil war photography equipped each operator with a portable darkroom and had regular base camps set up near the major battle fields with depots for chemicals, glass plates and slides."³⁴ The pictures once again depicted preambles or aftermaths of soldiers and battlefields. Actually, combat or scenes of action could not be captured until faster films and smaller cameras evolved. Yet, the coverage of the Civil War was the first systematic attempt to document a conflict in its entirety.³⁵ Unfortunately, the technology for converting these photographs into half-tone blocks for use in newspapers was not yet available. Brady's photographs could only be seen at his New York studio.

Spanish-American War

³³Ibid, p. 83.

³⁴Ibid, p. 84.

³⁵Moeller, pp. 24-25.

On the evening of February 15, 1898, the battleship USS Maine blew up in the Havana Harbor, killing 260 of its crew. The press quickly blamed the Spanish colonial government in Cuba. President McKinley told Congress the war in Cuba must stop. On April 25 the United States declared war, voting to support the independence of Cuba.

The first published half-tones of a major conflict appeared in the press, causing a subtle shift in America's perception of war. A war could now be viewed through the press in one's own home.

Little censorship was imposed on the photographers who went to Cuba to discover the romance of war for themselves. Yet, when it became apparent that the press was acting as spies for the Spaniards through their publications, stricter enforcement of the censorship was imposed. The New York Evening Journal reported that a photographer who gave information on the strength of American fortifications could be levied a \$25,000 fine or 10 years' imprisonment.³⁶

During this war and World War I, battlefield photographs were used on photographic stereoviewing cards which sold by the thousands. A stereo card was two nearly identical photographic prints that were mounted on a rectangular piece cardboard and looked at with a binocular-like viewer. The two prints seen together produced an illusion of a three-dimensional image. Stereo cards were produced depicting technological achievements,

³⁶Ibid, p. 50.

scenes of natural beauty and prominent persons of the United States. Yet, the cards depicting scenes of war were the perennial favorites. Keystone View Company "sold more cards from its series on the sinking of the USS Maine than any other title in its extensive catalog."³⁷

Photographs most often pictured troops at a distance and death was never shown. The self-censored Spanish-American War photographs presented "the image of a glorious (American) mission to free Cuba from the degenerate colonialism of Spain."

The number of photographers covering the War was also limited. Newspapers and magazines sent dozens of reporters, but only a few sent photographers. Yet, those who were there are credited with covering the first war where photojournalism had a significant presence in the media.³⁸

World War I

In World War I, death was only for heroes. No one died in the mud, was blinded in a gas attack or torn apart by shrapnel in the published pictures of the press. The main task of photographers covering the western front was to compile a historical record, not provide newspapers with material; thus their 'realistic' photographs were never released.³⁹

The Signal Corps Section, established in 1917, was

³⁷Ibid, p. 25.

³⁸Ibid, p. 48.

³⁹Knightley, p. 99.

commissioned to oversee the military photography of events. Newspapers and magazines now had a second source of photographs to choose from besides those supplied by their contracted photographers.

All countries in the War-Austria, Germany, England, France, Italy and the United States-imposed restrictions on photographers and journalists and often banned them from the front and behind the lines. In 1915, photographer Jimmy Hare wrote that "to so much as make a snapshot without official permission in writing means arrest."⁴⁰

All photographs taken in the American zone were sent to the Signal Corps laboratory for developing, printing and censoring. During the American engagement in 1917 and 1918, publishers, editors, writers and photographers had to conform to the spirit as well as the letter of censorship. The freedom experienced during previous wars was gone. Still the American public demanded coverage, both written and pictorial, of the daily events. The Times established the Mid-Week Pictorial in 1914 to provide more extensive war coverage. Other publications, such as Collier's and the New York Times, often allotted half a dozen or more pages per issue to stories and illustrations.⁴¹

Yet, no photographs of dead Americans ever appeared in the press and only a few pictures of wounded soldiers were ever published. American property was never shown destroyed either,

⁴⁰Moeller, p. 110.

⁴¹Ibid, p. 133.

only that of the enemy. Photographs were approved for release to U.S. news publications by American Signal Corps censors only if they would not have a depressing effect upon the American public. "One of the most successful photos from the war was entitled 'There'! in reference to the popular song 'Over there, over there, send the word, send the word to beware, That the Yanks are coming...' The photo silhouetted soldiers running against backdrops of barbed wire and luring skies."⁴² The photo embellished what Americans back home believed about war: that it was dangerous but romantic.

World War II

In World War II, photographers were once again censored from the real carnage. "Bombs tended to fall in streaming sunshine and we were allowed to show just a little of the suffering caused, but not enough to evoke pity."⁴³ This was true of all the belligerent powers.

The professional war photographer was born on the battlefields of the Second World War. Civilian photojournalists were eyewitnesses to decisive battles such as Pearl Harbor and Rommel's defeat in North Africa, to the invasion of Normandy and the fall of Paris. Yet, General MacArthur had all journalists removed from Hiroshima prior to the atomic bombing, an event that changed the entire course of the war. "The citizens of America

⁴²Ibid, p. 146.

⁴³Fabian, p. 30.

had only been allowed to see what the military considered its triumphant signal, the mushroom cloud of the bomb."⁴⁴

Photography was used to create heroes, not to show the bloody reality of war. Any "unAmerican" derogatory photos were censored. Joe Rosenthal of the Associated Press took the best known photo of the war in the Pacific, the raising of the flag over Iwo Jima. This picture was used on a postage stamp, became the symbol of the seventh War Bond drive, was used on three and one-half million posters and over 175,000 car cards, and was the inspiration for the hundred-ton bronze memorial to the Marines at the edge of the Arlington National Cemetery.⁴⁵ Yet, this was a 'posed' flag raising. The conquer of the hill and original smaller flag raising had occurred three hours earlier. The 'posed' photograph, though, made for a more heroic picture.⁴⁶

KOREAN WAR

The Korean War began as a civil conflict among right and left factions of a formerly colonial state. Yet, "the war soon escalated into a superpower showdown and a brutal campaign of attrition."⁴⁷ The United States and its allies faced for the first time an unwinnable war. The war which the U. S. entered in

⁴⁴Ibid, p. 247.

⁴⁵Knightley, p. 295.

⁴⁶Fabian, p. 265.

⁴⁷Callum A. MacDonald, Korea: The War Before Vietnam (New York: The Free Press 1986), p. 3.

June, 1950, originally began as a North-South Korean dispute. This dispute was overshadowed by the Soviet and American power systems behind each nation. Unification, their common war aim, was never realized.

From MacArthur to the lowliest GI, there was a disastrous underestimation of the strength and tenacity of the advancing enemy. Yet, defeat was never considered by anyone. Whereas in World War II the soldier was portrayed as a hero, in Korea, he was shown as victim. Soldiers were pictured with looks of complete uncertainty about what they were doing.⁴⁸ World War II pictured Marines triumphantly raising the U. S. flag on Iwo Jima - "a symbol of America's Manifest Destiny."⁴⁹ Korea's most memorable photos include a man cradling another man, who had just lost a friend, in his arms.

The press photographers in Korea showed the tragedy from two sides: the uncertainty of the American soldiers and the atrocities faced by a country being torn in half.⁵⁰ The first correspondents were witness to major American and allied defeats. Marguerite Higgins of the New York Herald Tribune quoted a young lieutenant, "Are you correspondents telling the people back home the truth? Are you telling them that out of one platoon of

⁴⁸Alvin Pl Sanoff, "How photography shapes the face of battle," U. S. News & World Report, 106:62-63 (April 3, 1989).

⁴⁹Ibid, p. 62.

⁵⁰John Morris, "This We Remember," Harper's, p. 73-74, (September 1972).

twenty men, we have three left? Are you telling them that we have nothing to fight with, and that it is an utterly useless war?"⁵¹ Correspondents who did tell the story of those first few weeks received a harsh reprimand.⁵²

At first, a system of voluntary censorship existed for correspondents in the Korean Police Action. This voluntary code consisted of the "'ordinary Field Security catalogue' which requested nondisclosure of 'names and positions of units...figures of friendly casualties...strength of reinforcements...or any such information as may be of aid and comfort to the enemy.'"⁵³

Only one military telephone line existed from press headquarters at Taejon to Tokyo for use in transmitting stories. The military often bumped stories, claiming priority over the line. During the first six months, reporters found it easier to hand deliver their stories to Japan. Photographers had to send their images to San Francisco via the Army Signals Corps radio, at commercial rates. The military often bumped these transmissions as well.⁵⁴ By early August, 1950, 330 correspondents from 19 countries were covering the war. The United States alone had 163. The U. N. perimeter was only 120 miles long; thus the battlefield was crowded and competition

⁵¹Knightley, pp. 336-337.

⁵²Moeller, p. 256.

⁵³Ibid, p. 279.

⁵⁴Ibid, pp. 277-278.

among journalists keen.⁵⁵

On September 15, 1950, General MacArthur launched an amphibious landing at Inchon, an act he hoped would end the War. Although the military considered it an "outstanding" success, the complete lack of secrecy by allies had the press reporting it as a disaster. In Tokyo, the press club called it "Operation Common Knowledge". The military ferried the four news agency chiefs, personal guests of General MacArthur, to Inchon on board the command ship McKinley. MacArthur counted on these reporters to get the "official" word out quickly, but the military did not consult with the rest of the press before this mission. Therefore, although press barges loaded with daily newspaper correspondents were among the first assault wave, many did not get ashore until the second or third day.⁵⁶ This in itself upset many reporters and photographers and added to the confusion over what was happening during the mission.

Author Phillip Knightley states that "it needed the skeptical eye of a British correspondent, James Cameron of the Picture Post, to put all the inflated claims, hyperbole, bungling, and butchery into perspective.

'This was the operation to end the war. This was the pay-off to take the Thirty Billion Dollar Police Action out of the red at last. This was MacArthur's final argument in his personal one-man deal with destiny...Then when it came,

⁵⁵Ibid, pp. 274-275.

⁵⁶Knightley, pp. 340-341.

it stunned for a while. All the fear came first. Perhaps we shall never understand how it came off as it did, nor why the enemy failed to do any of the three things that could have crippled the whole enterprise. Anyhow, God was on the side of the big battalions; they were even that big.'"⁵⁷

Within weeks, allied and American soldiers recaptured Seoul along with the capitol of North Korea, Pyongyang. Yet, once North Korean forces were joined by the Chinese, the American and allied forces were faced with retreat from the capitol. Reporters began wondering if South Korea was worth saving. Extreme criticism towards the United Nations provoked MacArthur's headquarters to stop voluntary censorship on December 21 and impose full military censorship on news messages, broadcasts, magazine articles and photographs from Korea.⁵⁸ Now censors withheld all pictures of wounded for thirty days or until the next of kin could be notified. Photographs of large numbers of wounded and dead were banned unless some chance existed that they might "inspire patriotism or determination or otherwise contribute to the war effort."⁵⁹ (The absence of censorship in Vietnam made these guidelines unenforceable).

In December, 1948, the United Nations placed its seal of approval on the new Republic of Korea (ROK) organized by Syngman Rhee in Seoul, Korea. Rhee's new regime claimed to speak for all

⁵⁷Ibid, p. 341.

⁵⁸Ibid, p. 345.

⁵⁹Hammond, p. 237.

Koreans. The North Korean state, not wanting to receive an adverse appearance by South Korea's new political regime, established a Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in Pyongyang under Kim Il Sung. The DPRK claimed to be a national state, also.⁶⁰

Rhee's regime appeared strong enough to unite the two states, yet its military actions were not without question. The press pushed to show the true atrocities of this war between the two Korean countries. British photographer Bert Hardy pictured North Korean political prisoners, roped and manacled, crunched tightly in trucks on their way to execution by South Korean soldiers. These photographs were suppressed by the proprietor of one British newspaper, the Picture Post, as they were going to press. Contributing writer James Cameron subsequently resigned from the Post and sold a copy of his story to the Daily Worker, also a British newspaper. Similar stories and photos continued to raise questions about practices in Korea, especially those dealing with prisoners, in local branches of the UN Associations and the Labour Party. Foreign Offices tried to play down the stories, but there was concern that the actions of Rhee might "undermine public support for the war and alienate other Asians."⁶¹ Ernest Bevin, British Foreign Secretary, briefly raised this issue with Washington on October 5, 1950. No official condemnation of Rhee's tactics was ever made, "since it

⁶⁰MacDonald, p. 15.

⁶¹Ibid, pp. 60-61.

was believed that this would merely play into the hands of the communists."⁶²

As in previous wars, the climate played an important role in the coverage by photographers. Life photographer David Douglas Duncan accompanied marines on their retreat to Changjin Reservoir. The winds created subzero temperatures forcing Duncan to warm up his camera inside his clothes between each shot. One Marine he photographed was struggling to eat a can of frozen beans. Duncan quoted the Marine as wanting nothing more from God than "tomorrow".⁶³

Duncan and Carl Mydans, also a Life photographer, became two of the most famous journalists in Korea.⁶⁴ This was due in part to their ability not only to pictorially illustrate a scene, but to rhetorically describe a situation as well.

Press photographers used primarily the Speed Graphic Camera for shooting; 35mm cameras were employed only in exceptional circumstances. Yet, the military civilian photographers preferred the 35mm Leica or Bolsey camera. These were lighter, had more depth of field and held more film. Photographers were usually close enough to the action to use short focal length

⁶²Ibid, p. 61.

⁶³Knightley, p. 343.

⁶⁴Moeller, p. 273.

Carl Mydans describes photojournalism as the best job in the world. For a brief account of Mydans' career see: Carl Mydans, "The Best Job in the World," Time: 150 Years of Photojournalism, pp. 49-50, (Fall 1989).

lenses like the 35 or 50mm.⁶⁵

In summary, the photographer experienced three main obstacles in covering the Korean War:

1) The hazards of having to actually be at the scene of combat posed life-threatening situations for the photographers. If the enemy was not firing over the photographers' head, the freezing temperatures barred picture-taking. Film froze, broken shutters would stick and the photographers fingers would become too stiff to even load a roll of film.

2) After the Chinese entered the war, much of the fighting occurred at night hampering picture taking.

3) Finally, the photographer had to decide when to lay down his cameras and give aid to another. Carl Mydans states,

I have never known a good war photographer who was not a deeply compassionate man and who did not make his decision in such a circumstance on the side of compassion.⁶⁶

The photographers came to record the facts of the war, the brutality of man against man. Coming so soon after World War II, and being covered by so many of the same war photographers, few came hoping that their photographs would prevent future wars.

The Vietnam War

World War II ended with much fanfare - Americans had won yet another war. The Korean War was an unsatisfying conflict, "whose

⁶⁵Moeller, p. 282.

⁶⁶Ibid, pp. 289-290.

ultimate settlement was ambivalent but at least comprehensible in conventional terms."⁶⁷ The Vietnam war began with the same American spirit "for the cause", but this view never caught on. It became the longest war America ever fought. By the mid-sixties most doubted the political and military strategies of the war, and a large percentage felt the war itself was wrong after the Tet offensive in 1968.⁶⁸

Anti-war photographs were first published during the Korean and Vietnam wars. "In contrast to the Crimean War, where pictures were taken so as not to disturb the peace of the English fireside, to the First World War, where photographers worked for the glory of the Fatherland, and the Second World War, where the soldiers of the Allied power and the German Wehrmacht were portrayed as participants in some deadly Olympiad; in contrast to all the wars of the past, the war photographers who worked in Vietnam had every intention of nauseating, disturbing and shocking." ⁶⁹

Vietnam pictures portrayed the civilian rather than the soldier as the victim. Americans faced the fact that their own boys were killing innocent women and children.⁷⁰

The Vietnam war became the first that Americans could view daily on their evening news or in the print media. "Media

⁶⁷Ibid, p. 326.

⁶⁸Ibid, p. 327.

⁶⁹Fabian, p. 30.

⁷⁰Sanoff, pp. 62-63.

critics and historians seem to agree that it was only with the Vietnam experience that the media played a decisive role...in the way in which the war was won or lost."⁷¹ Major General Winant Sidle, chief of information for General William Westmoreland, believed more stringent rules were necessary when assigning reporters to Vietnam. "He argued, 'I believe reporting of the war would have been much more objective. And this might well have changed the entire outcome.'"⁷²

Vietnam war coverage originally focused on the American military initiative such as troop landings, air strikes, search-and-destroy missions. This coverage presented a picture of a slow but sure progress in the war. "With the Tet offensive in 1968, the focus changed radically to stories of chaos, confusion and near collapse."⁷³ Serious doubts about the United States' ability to win the war crept into editorials and story conclusions. "The Tet offensive was thus the last straw in a lengthy process of increasing uncertainty about the war."⁷⁴

On November 1, 1968, President Johnson announced a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam and the commencement of serious negotiations aimed at peace. Accordingly, the networks changed the focus of their coverage from the battlefields to the

⁷¹Patterson, p. 35.

⁷²Moeller, p. 350.

⁷³Epstein, p. 226.

⁷⁴Gans, p. 200.

negotiation tables of Paris.⁷⁵

Until late in 1967, an overwhelming majority of the American public approved of the Vietnam war according to opinion polls. The Gallup 'trend' poll indicated that "until mid-1967 the number of Americans who agreed with the decision to send American troops to Vietnam actually increased."⁷⁶ It was not until October, 1967, that the poll showed a higher percentage of people against the war than for it. By the time of the Tet offensive in 1968, "support for the war suffered a slow and somewhat ambiguous decline while opposition grew at a slightly faster rate."⁷⁷

On January 29, 1968, while the South Vietnamese celebrated Tet, the lunar new year, Vietcong units launched coordinated attacks on every major city in South Vietnam. The Americans suddenly found themselves besieged, and Saigon turned into a battlefield for the first time.⁷⁸ By February 5, 30 of the 44 provincial capitals had been attacked. The Communist offensive abruptly shattered the "impression created by the (media) coverage of an American military in control, gradually making progress and holding the initiative...Merely by stepping out of their hotels, correspondents found themselves willy-nilly in the midst of bloody fighting."⁷⁹ The war was increasingly seen to be

⁷⁵Epstein, p. 227.

⁷⁶Ibid, p. 211.

⁷⁷Moeller, p. 56.

⁷⁸Epstein, p. 220.

⁷⁹Mercer, p. 228.

a long, bloody affair, not one that American troops could bring to a hasty end.

Hallin reports that Vietnam coverage shifted from a balance quite favorable to administration policy prior to the Tet offensive, to a considerably less favorable balance after Tet.⁸⁰ This view was based on statements by journalists which "offered explicit opinions on the war, drew explicit conclusions about controversial issues (e.g. a conclusion that one side or the other was winning), or used strong evaluative language (words like 'butchery' or 'massacre') without attribution."⁸¹

Critical coverage from Vietnam began in 1961, when the New York Times sent veteran war correspondent Homer Bigart to Saigon. Bigart had received two Pulitzer Prizes covering wars, but hated war. "He gained the fame of legend as the mentor of a whole class of Vietnam correspondents who emulated his insistence on reporting demonstrable fact, his skepticism of official p.r., his lack of confidence in the whole enterprise."⁸² Bigart served as mentor to, among others, David Halberstam of the New York Times; Malcolm Browne, Peter Arnett and photographer Horst Faas of the

⁸⁰Daniel Hallin, "The Media, the War in Vietnam and political support: a critique of the thesis of an oppositional media," Journal of Politics, 46:2-24.

⁸¹Ibid, p. 7.

⁸²James Boylan, "Declaration of Independence. Vietnam: the first phase," Columbia Journalism Review, pp. 33-34, (November/December 1986).

Associated Press; and Neil Sheehan of the United Press International.

Vietnam, being the first daily "media" war, brought out different types of photographers. Accreditation could be easily acquired by anyone stating he was a free-lance photographer. This, along with two letters from news agencies or newspapers saying they would be willing to buy their photographs, was all that was needed to get a Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) card. The Associated Press wrote letters for almost anyone, with the second letter usually coming from the photographer's hometown paper. AP and UPI even furnished newly accredited photographers cameras, film, light meters, and instructions to get them started.⁸³ Yet most stayed only three months to prove they were willing to serve and get themselves promoted. Others came to avoid the draft.⁸⁴

Photographers Sean Flynn, son of Hollywood actor Errol Flynn, and Rick Merron and Dana Stone were classified as hippies by many colleagues. None of these men had any professional camera experience. Stone could not even change the film in his camera.⁸⁵ These journalists rode to the front line on Hondas and experimented with cameras mounted on rifle barrels. When a soldier fired, the camera shutter clicked, capturing a man being

⁸³Moeller, p. 359.

⁸⁴Lunn, p. 61.

⁸⁵Moeller, p. 359.

shot.⁸⁶ Flynn and Stone are both still listed as missing in action in Cambodia.

Photographer Tim Page also rode around with Flynn and Stone. Page arrived in Vietnam at the age of twenty. Although many classified Page as a hippie, also, he made quite a living for himself in Vietnam. A series of his photographs appeared in Life on September 3, 1965, covering six pages. Life paid him \$6,000 for these photos. Most of his photographs were taken in areas other photographers were not willing to go. Page states that although "no one wants to admit it, there is a lot of sex appeal and a lot of fun in weapons. Where else but Vietnam would a man get a chance to play with a supersonic jet, drive a tank, or shoot off a rocket, and even get highly paid for it?"⁸⁷

Yet, Page's daring efforts for such high paying photographs often resulted in personal injury. In 1969 he was assisting with loading wounded into a helicopter when shrapnel hit him in the head. It took him over eighteen months to recover and medical bills ran over \$136,000. Time and Life, the two publications which had bought most of his photos, undertook the paying of his hospital bills.⁸⁸

While recovering in the hospital, Page received an offer to write a book that would take the glamour out of war. His response: "Take the glamour out of war! I mean, how the bloody

⁸⁶Knightley, p. 419.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Knightley, p. 420.

hell can you do that?...Ohhh, war is good for you, you can't take the glamour out of that!"⁸⁹

Contrasting views were presented among the photographers. Whereas reporters were pressed to put something on the wire, some photographers had more lenient deadlines.⁹⁰ David Douglas Duncan, Life photographer, seemed to be dedicated to the American soldier and the burdens placed on him. He chose to present the military aspects of the war. By comparison, Larry Burrows portrayed the non-military and human consequences of the wartime situation. He was concerned with the entire human element. His imagery involved women, children or the aged. Duncan did not portray this side at all. Burrows was much more concerned with the intimate, personal-social effects of the war, while Duncan preferred to show a broader perspective in his images.⁹¹ A pivotal point in Burrows' career came while shooting the death of a Yankee Papa 13 helicopter crew member.

In January, 1964, one year before American ground troops were sent in to assist South Vietnam, Burrows requested permission from Life Magazine to do a photo essay concentrated on one helicopter company. Burrows stated that this would allow "a dramatic, candid close-in look at the most photogenic phase of the U.S. commitment in South Vietnam."⁹² It would show "the

⁸⁹Fabian, p. 321.

⁹⁰Moeller, p. 354.

⁹¹Thompson and Clarke, pp. 279-288.

⁹²Moeller, p. 393.

readers how big a part Americans were playing in the war and how hopeless it would be for the Vietnamese if the U.S. withdrew their help."⁹³

The essay received approval and Burrows began work on the story in April, 1965. The crew received orders to drop off South Vietnamese troops into a suspected enemy staging area. After their third drop under heavy fire, Yankee Papa 13 went to aid another company, Papa 3, that had gone down. Papa 13 Crew Chief Jim Farley tried unsuccessfully to rescue the pilot from his seat. The pilot had been shot in the neck and Farley believed he was dead. He was later rescued by another helicopter's crew. Farley returned to his own helicopter and was airlifted out with Papa 3's gunner and co-pilot, both of whom were badly wounded. The gunner of Yankee Papa 3 had a smashed left shoulder and the co-pilot had been fatally hit below his armpit and his flak jacket (a jacket worn to protect one's body from bursting shells). Burrows recalled later:

If there was any sound coming from the pilot's mouth, it was drowned by the noise of the helicopter. He looked pale and I wondered how long he could hold on. Then blood started to come from the mouth and nose; the boys worked harder. A glazed look came into the eyes and he was dead...I tried to find a way in which to hide the pilot's face when the boys were working on him, feeling that should a photograph be used, it would be harder on the family. Yet it would bring

⁹³Ibid.

home to many people that this was a war and people were getting killed. It was important to show such a scene and for all to realize that despite the pretty pattern that helicopters made when flying at 1,500 feet, life can be hell."⁹⁴

Seventeen of the 25 pictures actually used in the essay were taken from this one single mission. AP photographer Eddie Adams stated, "Up to that time (of the Yankee Papa 13 essay), I had always thought Larry Burrows was a so-so photographer...But from that time on...his pictures just became greater and greater...I don't know what it did to him-he always had a good drive. But afterwards, whenever he'd do anything, it was like this guy can't miss."⁹⁵ Yet, most photographers did not have such liberal deadlines.

The improvement in communications technology lessened the problem of taking photographs and transferring the images back to the states. No longer did photographers rely on the bulky Speed Graphic Cameras. The 35mm camera was now in universal use, providing a wider range of lenses and faster shutter speeds. Photographers were not restricted to black and white film since color film had been developed for use in a wide latitude of lighting situations. Finally, the facilities for covering stories and sending film or prints back home via radio circuits

⁹⁴Ibid, p. 394.

⁹⁵Ibid, p. 355.

or air transports were "unparalleled."⁹⁶ Dirck Halstead once stated, "Communications are so good, and we're so sensitive to communications, that when our news-side sends out a bulletin on a big story, we'll get a query back from New York within ten minutes, asking when the photographs can be expected."⁹⁷ In previous wars, simply getting one photograph was an accomplishment. During the Vietnam war, with the advanced camera equipment and film available, New York bureaus expected a constant flow of photographs. When a major battle occurred, the demand for photographs was immediate and insatiable.⁹⁸

The major transmission problem faced was that of securing time on the radio circuits in advance, and then hoping to have around 20 photographs to send back. Filling the time with usable photos forced photographers to concentrate on the immediate fighting in place of more in-depth coverage like that of Duncan. An in-depth photo essay could take days or weeks to produce. The photographers had to reserve air time daily to supply to their news services and therefore had to have photographs to send every day. Therefore, photographers spent most of their time running after the "hot" news story while a lot of the good feature photographs got away.⁹⁹

⁹⁶Ibid, p. 372.

⁹⁷Les Barry, "The New War Photographers," Popular Photography, p. 137 (March 1966).

⁹⁸Ibid, p. 138.

⁹⁹Ibid, p. 137.

Women also came to Vietnam. Many had simply tagged along with their boyfriend journalists. This was the first war in which such a large number of women covered the daily battles, several of whom were, or were to become, prominent journalists. Catherine Leroy arrived in Saigon in 1966 with \$500 and a Leica camera. She had no prior professional camera experience. Yet, The Associated Press's Saigon photography chief Horst Faas rated Leroy as "one of the best four or five freelancers" in Vietnam.¹⁰⁰

While photographing the Marines near the Demilitarized Zone, Leroy was hit by mortar. "Her jaw muscles were cut...and when she returned to the field a month later she could only open her mouth a little. That was why she carried baby food instead of combat rations".¹⁰¹ Leroy won an overseas Press Club award for her photographs.

Other prominent female journalists included Elizabeth Pond of the Christian Science Monitor, Kate Webb of United Press International and Michele Ray, a French freelancer. Each of these women was captured by the enemy and later released to write stories of her experiences. Dickey Chapelle, photographer for National Geographic, published the first picture of an "American ready for combat."¹⁰² Chapelle was killed in Vietnam in 1965.

At the beginning of the war only a handful of journalists

¹⁰⁰Moeller, p. 359.

¹⁰¹Lunn, p. 62.

¹⁰²Moeller, p. 359.

had been accredited in Saigon. By the climax of the Tet offensive, 637 war reporters were registered at the U. S. Army headquarters in Saigon. Yet, according to Malcolm Browne, who spent fourteen years in Vietnam working for the Associated Press, ABC, New York Times and as a freelancer, only a hard core of fifteen to twenty reporters supplied 99 percent of the important news and photography. Browne states,

"the rest were groupies and intelligence types and religious fanatics and (who) knows what. There were people who had come over on subsidized tours on behalf of their papers but really paid for by the Pentagon-- huge numbers of people like that who had really nothing to do with journalism...In television there are the correspondents who were involved and certainly cameramen, but there was also this gigantic infrastructure [of technicians, producers, and analysts] who were formally accredited as newspeople but who were in fact just there for working some of the ntis and bolts."¹⁰³

The journalists in Vietnam seemed to live a life of leisure. "The correspondent could take a taxi from Saigon in the morning, drive down Route 4 to the MeKong Delta, lunch at a French seafood restaurant on four courses and three wines, go on to discuss the military situation with a South Vietnamese officer, and be back

¹⁰³Ibid, p. 358.

in Saigon before dusk."¹⁰⁴ With a few days off, the journalist could go to Da Nang. Here one could shower, have a steak dinner and sun bathe on China Beach.

For many journalists the war was like a western movie staged for their cameras. When an American soldier's dormitory came under fire, the press showed up to film the incident. As if anticipating the media, the military police stood at the ready, with their backs against the five story brick building, M16's leveled and ready to fire. Two American camera crews raced around filming and setting up lights on various corners. It seemed that the real bullets were not allowed to hit the non-combatant cameramen in the middle.¹⁰⁵ Photographers and journalists were ushered to various battle sites by military personnel. Those who ventured into the battle zones soon realized the extreme danger of war. A journalist could easily lower his head during heavy firing, but a photographer had to have his head up, literally, to get the shot. For Don McCullin, holding his head up was part of journalistic mortality. "I don't believe you can see over the top unless you stick your neck out."¹⁰⁶ Obtaining action film was the reason that a large portion of the 63 journalists were killed in Vietnam. Photographers and cameramen also had to lug huge cameras around. Yet, taking on the dangers of a photographer and the added

¹⁰⁴Fabian, p. 321.

¹⁰⁵Lunn, p. 60.

¹⁰⁶Fabian, p. 324.

burdens of camera equipment meant big profits in Vietnam from the United States. Those killed were mostly non-Americans who chanced their luck with American TV reporters for \$600 a week, a salary four to ten times higher than most could earn elsewhere.¹⁰⁷

Transportation was more accessible for journalists during the Vietnam war than ever before. MACV personnel arranged more than 4,700 in-country trips for journalists from October 1965 to August 1966. Air Vietnam, the commercial airline, and the local train system were also available.¹⁰⁸

Photographers also had the leisure of deciding what they would cover. "'Troops are invariably only as good as their commander,' Horst Faas would say when he was weighing up the risks entailed in a mission."¹⁰⁹ This caution once saved his life. After viewing photos of a combat zone, he decided the mission was suicide. He was right. During the first few seconds of the landing, three soldiers were killed.

Other photographers used survival techniques as well. Some would smear night-fighting make-up on their chrome camera parts to avoid exposing themselves to the enemy at night by reflections in the moonlight. Ramano Cagnoni blackened his face. Catherine Leroy carried a sign in front of her with the words "French Press

¹⁰⁷Lunn, pp. 59-60.

¹⁰⁸Moeller, p. 363.

¹⁰⁹Fabian, p. 324.

from Paris" on it.¹¹⁰ All journalists wore the American military greens in order to resemble an American soldier so they wouldn't be shot by one.¹¹¹

Censorship was minimal during the war, but the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Public Affairs, issued a letter to all American media outlets demanding restraint. Photographers were not restricted from accompanying units, but were advised not to use photos of wounded men until their families had been notified. Also, shots of "operations in field hospitals and photographs that may stir up unpleasant thoughts, such as those of maimed bodies, obvious expressions of agony, serious shock, or circumstances that cast doubt on the patient's chances of recovery," were to be kept under wraps.¹¹²

South Vietnamese censorship during the last years of the Diem government proved more challenging and dangerous than that imposed by the United States. Following Browne's photograph of a Buddhist Monk's self-immolation, the Diem regime "recognized the immense propaganda value of pictures."¹¹³ Such photographs may negatively influence people concerning the regime. After publication of Browne's photograph, journalists were often beaten, arrested and had their film exposed before release. The U. S. implored the journalists to join the team and show more

¹¹⁰Ibid, p. 325.

¹¹¹Lunn, unpaginated photograph inserts.

¹¹²Fabian, p. 327.

¹¹³Moeller, p. 363.

restraint in their reporting.¹¹⁴

The photographers supplying the greatest percentage of coverage of the war knew what types of photographs their publications would accept. Yet, many photographers still submitted subjects that editors found necessary to censor. Burrows would take photos the magazine reader would just about be able to stand, because if the photographs were too horrifying, the reader would just turn the page.¹¹⁵ Faas pinned rejected photos from AP on his wall in Saigon, photos that were considered too shocking to use.¹¹⁶ Television news media censored film they feared would prompt evening dinner-hour viewers to switch stations.¹¹⁷

The American public did not see the photographic coverage of the massacre of My Lai, photographed on March 16, 1968, by photographer Ronald Haeberle, until twenty months after the incident. American soldiers entered the 700-person village, led by Lt. William L. Calley, Jr. As the first two platoons entered the hamlet, no one fired upon them or ran away; anyone running would have been assumed Vietcong and United States soldiers would shoot to kill. Haeberle photographed as soldiers gathered the

¹¹⁴Hammond, pp. 64-65.

¹¹⁵Fabian, p. 327.

¹¹⁶Knightley, p. 408.

¹¹⁷Hammond, p. 238.

residents and killed between 90 and 130 men, women and children.¹¹⁸ The New York Times report, based on the official version supplied to newsmen in Saigon, was published on the front page the next day. It stated that "two American Division companies had caught a North Vietnamese unit in a pincer movement, killing 128 enemy soldiers."¹¹⁹ The article stated the soldiers were met with heavy artillery barrages and that two American soldiers were killed and ten wounded. No mention of civilian casualties was made.

Haerberle developed some of his photographs from the My Lai to be sent to headquarters for release. He kept the remaining black and white and all the color negatives, knowing that none of the photos would ever be approved by American editors at that time.¹²⁰

It was not until November 20, 1968, that the photographs were presented to Americans in the Cleveland Plain Dealer. "My Lai made it clear to America that the moral cost of the war was too high."¹²¹

The disclosure of the My Lai massacre cleared the way for published accounts of previously witnessed American atrocities in South Vietnam. U. S. papers were eager to print stories about

¹¹⁸Seymour Hersh, My Lai 4: A Report on the Massacre and Its Aftermath, (New York: Random House 1970), pp. 47-48.

¹¹⁹Ibid, p. 79.

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Fabian, pp. 328-329.

civilian shootings in Vietnam.¹²² Life bought Haeberle's color photos and ran them with extensive eyewitness accounts of the incident.

American soldiers were shown as trigger-happy engineers of death in Phillip Jones Griffiths' photographs. His photographs depicted that which he witnessed, American GI's killing innocent women and children in Vietnam. But Griffiths also pictured GI's as delicate boys and shattered men.¹²³

The Vietnam war was, for the men in combat, a war with "no 'front', no 'rear' and it is absolutely impossible to tell friend from enemy without a program - even with one."¹²⁴

"To an increasing extent as the war progressed, being involved meant coming to an understanding of what the war was doing to the Vietnamese people. 'All over Vietnam you see the faces', wrote Burrows, 'more inscrutable and more tired now than I have ever known them to be...They are in the middle. The pressure on them is terrible and has existed for some 30 years.'"¹²⁵

¹²²Hersh, p. 140.

¹²³Fabian, pp. 329-330.

¹²⁴Moeller, p. 331.

¹²⁵Ibid, p. 382.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

It is obvious the media played an important role in the Vietnam War. The purpose of this thesis is to determine if there was a fundamental change in combat photographic coverage in news magazines before and after the Tet offensive in Vietnam during the time period of August, 1964, to August, 1973. The Tet offensive was chosen as a mid-point since it marked such a fundamental turning point in the war. Americans' impression of a "clean effective technological war was rudely shaken at Tet in 1968."¹

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Prior to the Tet offensive, some news personalities had already shifted their view to opposition of the war. On February 27, 1967, CBS anchorman Walter Cronkite reversed his support for the war by calling it "a bloody stalemate" and saying, "It is increasingly clear to this reporter that the only rational way out will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as an honorable people..."²

Americans were shown a "new" side of the Vietnam war after the Tet offensive. Media coverage shifted from American combat

¹Edward Jay Epstein, Between Fact and Fiction: The Problem of Journalism (New York: Vintage Books, Oct. 1975) p. 219.

²Ibid, p. 223.

operations and military equipment to "stories of chaos, confusion and near collapse."³ Public opinion polls began reflecting a decline in support for the war after Tet.⁴

The United States government, under the direction of President Johnson, sent American troops to assist in the Vietnam war to prevent 'Red' domination of Southeast Asia, believing South Vietnam was the strategic key. Yet the autocratic policies of the South Vietnamese government were unacceptable in Washington.⁵ In essence, the U. S. was engaged in saving South Vietnam for the South Vietnamese, yet rejected its present form of government.

As for the media, the government had no formal means to censor the reportage of foreign nationals without a declaration of war. Censorship would have been difficult due to the advent of television and satellite technology. In April, 1966, the Department of Defense issued guidelines on combat photography. After mentioning concern for the next of kin, the notice concluded:

"In the war in Vietnam complete reliance has been placed on news media representatives. There has been no effort to impose restrictions on movement of audio-visual

³Ibid, p. 226.

⁴Michael D. Sherer, "Vietnam War Photos and Public Opinion," Journalism Quarterly, 66:2:394.

⁵Susan Moeller, Shooting War (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1989), p. 329.

correspondents in the field or to require in-country processing, review and editing of audio-visual material produced by accredited correspondents. We hope to preserve these freedoms and ask that correspondents cooperate by:

- a. Not taking close-up pictures of casualties that show faces or anything else that will identify the individual.
- b. Not interviewing or recording the voices of casualties until a medical officer determines that the man is physically and mentally able, and the individual gives permission."⁶

The media followed these guidelines at first.

It was not until the Tet offensive of 1968 that the print press became thoroughly skeptical in its coverage of the war.⁷ News media coverage now began to focus on the Vietnamese military, peace negotiations and American withdrawal.⁸

Noting the shift in support for the war and the appearance of a shift in the way the war was being conducted, one might assume that a similar shift in the photographic coverage of the war also occurred.

Therefore, the fundamental question to be investigated by

⁶Ibid, p. 365.

⁷Ibid, p. 352.

⁸Derrik Mercer, Geoff Mungham and Kevin Williams, The Fog of War: The Media on the Battlefield (London: Heinemann, 1987) pp. 228-231.

this thesis is: did the image of war, as published in three leading news magazines, change following the Tet offensive in 1968? In order to answer this question, this thesis will seek answers to the following sub-questions:

1.) is there a difference in the scenes photographed in three leading news magazines before and after the Tet offensive?

2.) is there a difference in the primary subject photographed in three leading news magazines before and after the Tet offensive?

3.) is there a difference in the way in which the primary subject was portrayed in photographs published in three leading newsmagazines before and after the Tet offensive?

4.) is there a difference in the perspective presented in the photographs published in three leading news magazines before and after the Tet offensive?

METHODOLOGY

To answer these questions, photographs from Life, Newsweek, and Time that are Vietnam-related will be analyzed. Oscar Patterson utilized these three newsmagazines in his Vietnam study stating that these sources were "the major national news magazines of their type based on subscription, circulation and reputation" during the Vietnam war.⁹ Content analysis is defined

⁹Oscar Patterson III, "Television's Living Room War in Print: Vietnam in News Magazines," Journalism Quarterly, 61:36 (Spring, 1984).

as a "research technique that allows for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication."¹⁰ Content analysis studies utilize nominal scales, that is the assignment of numbers or symbols for the purpose of designating subclasses that represent unique characteristics. It has been used in several studies to analyze news photographs,¹¹ some of which specifically deal with photographs of war.¹²

It should be noted that although these news magazines give a

¹⁰Bernard Berelson, Content Analysis in Communication Research (New York: The Macmillian Company, 1952).

¹¹Several studies of news photographs have utilized the method of content analysis. Roy E. Blackwood, "The Content of News Photos: Roles Portrayed by Men and Women," Journalism Quarterly, 60:710-14 (Winter 1983); James Fosdick, "Picture Content and Source in Four Daily Newspapers," Journalism Quarterly, 46:368-371 (Summer 1969); Phillip C. Geraci, "Newspaper Illustration and Readership: Is USA Today on Target?" Journalism Quarterly, 61:409-413 (Summer 1984); Larry Leslie, "Newspaper Photo Coverage of Censure of McCarthy," Journalism Quarterly, 63:850-853 (Winter 1983); Susan Miller, "The Content of News Photos: Women's and Men's Roles," Journalism Quarterly, 52: 70-75 (Spring 1975); Michael Singletary, "Newspaper Photographs: A Content Analysis 1936-1976," Journalism Quarterly, 55: 585-589 (Autumn 1978). Glen G. Sparks and Christine L. Fehlner, "Faces in the News: Gender Comparisons of Magazine Photographs", Journal of Communication, pp.70-79 (Autumn 1986); Guido H. Stempel III, "Visibility of Blacks in News and News-Picture Magazines," Journalism Quarterly, 48:337-339 (Summer 1971); Kuo-jen Tsang, "News Photos in Time and Newsweek," Journalism Quarterly, 61: 578-584 (Autumn 1984).

¹²Content analysis was utilized in the following studies of war photographs: Patterson, pp. 35-39; Sherer, pp.391-395; and Kenrick S. Thompson and Alfred C. Clarke, "Photographic Imagery and the Vietnam War: An Unexamined Perspective," The Journal of Psychology, 87:279-292 (1975).

fair representation of the war, they were not the only visual news sources offering information concerning the war. Television and newspapers were present, as well as other news magazines. Therefore, this thesis will be looking for the presence of a change in coverage based on the three top news magazines during the study period and not the entire image of the war being presented to the public.

Magazine issues will be drawn from the period of August, 1964 to August, 1973. This time period is similar to that utilized by Dr. Michael D. Sherer in his study of Vietnam war photographs and public opinion. In his study Sherer concluded that "as public opinion shifted over time, so too did the image of war change."¹³ His three groups of coded photographs were time periods that were similar to those utilized in this thesis:

- a) January, 1965 to July, 1967,
- b) October, 1967 to December, 1967,
- c) February, 1968 to January, 1973.

Sherer's time period was expanded several months to include key events that marked President Johnson's decision to officially involve American troops in the war and coverage of U. S. bombing missions towards the end of U. S. involvement.

In August, 1964, General Westmoreland took over command of the rapidly increasing American forces in Vietnam, the first land-based jets arrived, and the United States Seventh Fleet was patrolling international waters off North Vietnam. During this

¹³Sherer, pp. 391-395.

same month, North Vietnamese torpedo boats allegedly attacked American destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin. President Johnson's decision to retaliate with Navy jets bombing selected naval targets in North Vietnam sent the United States into a full-scale war. The commitment was made by the U.S. government "to stop communist aggression wherever it raises its head."¹⁴ Thus the beginning date of August, 1964, was set for this thesis.

The ending date, August 1973, was selected because of the cessation of United States bombing in Indochina. Even though all U. S. ground combat forces were withdrawn from Vietnam by March 29, 1973, the U. S. bombing in Cambodia did not cease until August 15, 1973.¹⁵

Stempel has suggested that the analysis of a small, carefully selected sample of the relevant content will produce results that are just as valid as would analysis of a great deal more material.¹⁶ For a daily newspaper publication, increasing the sample size beyond twelve issues (for a single year) does not produce marked differences in the results.¹⁷ Jones and Carter also found that 12 issues a year compares closely enough with the averages of the actual content of the entire universe under study

¹⁴Epstein, p. 216.

¹⁵Patterson, p. 37.

¹⁶Guido Stempel III, "Sample Size in Classifying Subject Matter in Dailies," Journalism Quarterly, 29:333-334 (1952).

¹⁷Ibid, pp. 333-334.

as to make the sample representative of the entire universe.¹⁸

Following these guidelines, a random sample of twelve issues per year of Life, Newsweek and Time from August, 1964, to August, 1973, was analyzed. The author coded all of the images included in this study using actual magazine issues whenever possible. Microfiche and microfilm copies were used when a newsmagazine was not available for a particular date. Following this, intercoder reliability was measured by having a second person code a subset of the same images using the same categories.¹⁹

Although only a limited number of studies has been done on the content of photographs during the Vietnam war, those utilizing content analysis were reviewed for guidelines and categories for this thesis.²⁰ The categories used in studies by

¹⁸Robert Jones and Robert Carter, "Some Procedures for Estimating 'News Hole' in Content Analysis," Public Opinion Quarterly, 37:102-109 (1959).

¹⁹Frederick Williams, Reasoning with Statistics, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston 1986), p. 21.

An acceptable percentage of accuracy between the researcher's and the intercoder's results strengthened the acceptance of external validity for this study and showed a degree of reliability. External validity refers to the likelihood another researcher, using the same methods, could replicate the results of the study. Validity is "the degree to which researchers measure what they claim to measure." Reliability refers to "the external and internal consistency of measurement." For external reliability, another researcher must be able to replicate this study, using the same measurements, and reach the same results.

²⁰Patterson, pp. 35-39; Sherer, pp. 391-395; and Thompson, pp. 279-292.

Patterson, Sherer, and Thompson and Clark fit the format of this study and were therefore adapted for the coding process. The categories included:

1) SCENE- The moment captured in the photograph was coded as:

- a) Actual combat setting, troops under fire, military equipment in action.
- b) Combat related setting, pre/post combat setting or troop movements in combat areas, but not actually in combat when the photo was taken.
- c) Non-combat setting, out of the field of combat, in areas of relative safety such as cities, headquarters, etc.

2. SUBJECT- The primary subject of the photograph was coded as being:

- a) American soldiers which could be accurately identified as American.
- b) Allied soldiers assisting in the "American" cause, most often South Vietnamese.
- c) Enemy soldiers whether North Vietnamese or other nationality fighting against the American forces.
- d) American civilians which could be accurately identified as American.
- e) Allied civilians assisting in the "American" cause, most often South Vietnamese.
- f) Enemy civilians whether North Vietnamese or other

nationality fighting against the American forces.

g) American or Allied weapons/equipment/targets shown in Vietnam, whether in battle, transportation or rest.

h) Enemy weapons/equipment/targets shown in Vietnam, whether in battle, transportation or rest.

3) PORTRAYAL- The way in which the primary subject was portrayed was coded as:

a) Immediate life threatening situation with dead or wounded present.

b) Immediate life threatening situation with no dead or wounded present.

c) Situation depicting combat related discomfort/fatigue, but no immediate threat to life with dead or wounded present.

d) Situation depicting combat related discomfort/fatigue, but no immediate threat to life with no dead or wounded present.

e) Situation of relative safety without a sense of combat related discomfort/fatigue with dead or wounded present.

f) Situation of relative safety without a sense of combat related discomfort/fatigue with no dead or wounded present.

g) Weapons/equipment/targets shown in a state of destruction from combat.

h) Weapons/equipment/targets not shown in a state of

destruction from combat.

4) PERSPECTIVE- The way in which the photograph captured the situation was coded as:

- a) Close-up, small numbers of people/objects shown in tightly cropped views, closer than normal conversational perspective.
- b) Normal, views with emphasis on full body shots and/or equipment viewed in entirety, a normal conversational perspective.
- c) Distant, views where backgrounds are highly visible and people/objects occupy relatively small parts of the entire image.

Only photographs taken within Vietnam were coded.

Photographs such as formal portraits of military leaders, diplomats, file photos of people, equipment or facilities unless taken in the content of conflict, were omitted.

The photographs, once coded, were placed into one of following two categories:

- a) Photos published prior to the Tet offensive, August, 1964, to January 25, 1968.
- b) Photos published during and after Tet January 26, 1968, to August 15, 1973.

Following this process, a series of cross tabulations were run to determine if the images published in the news magazines

changed after the Tet offensive occurred.²¹

The nominal data collected for this content analysis met all three assumptions concerning cross tabulations.²² Inferences

²¹Williams, p. 110.

Cross tabulation is used to focus on the frequency of observations in each individual cell of a matrix. It is the primary test of statistical inference used in cross-classification analysis. Differences in table distributions will be noted in this thesis. A measure of association is shown by an acceptable significance level of Chi-Square. Chi-Square is designed to assess the degree to which a cross-classification matrix deviates from the assumptions of independence. Significance level refers to what you actually arrive after testing. The probability level is that which you set up before doing the test.

²²John Bowers and John Courtright, Communication Research Methods, (Glenville, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1984) p. 282.

Inferential statistics use statistics to test some theoretical hypothesis or prediction. These assumptions include:

1.) "The categories making up the individual nominal level variables must be mutually exclusive and exhaustive." Each observation, therefore, must fit into only one category and the categories must cover all relevant classes of the variable.

2.) Secondly, "the observations must be independently sampled. This requires that the category to which one observation is assigned should in no way be affected by the classification of any other observation."

3.) The final assumption deals with the expected frequencies for each cell: "What is the minimum size of the expected frequencies for each cell?" To avoid inaccurate statistical inferences concerning this assumption, the following minimum expected frequencies for each cell should be considered. "For matrices which contain more than a single degree-of-freedom, the minimum expected frequency in each cell for a valid Chi-Square test is 5. For matrices with 1 degree of freedom (i.e., 2 x 2 matrices), a minimum expected frequency in each cell of 10 is generally considered acceptable."

The Chi-Square values obtained for this thesis were compared to the appropriate critical value, depending on the degrees of freedom for each test. Critical value refers to

about the ChiSquare statistic were therefore accepted as valid.

the predetermined value. For the tests in this thesis which surpassed the critical value, the null hypothesis was rejected and the relationship was generalized to the population, therefore accepted as valid.

See also Appendix E, page 352 for the "Critical Values for the Chi-Square Statistic" Table.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Vietnam war stretched through an entire decade of American history. The print media kept the American public up-to-date with photographs and written reports. Photographs were used by newsmagazines to visually present the war since the general public could not witness it first hand. Yet, the image of war presented differed before and after the Tet offensive in January, 1968, in the three newsmagazines reviewed in this study.

Newsmagazine photographs of the war in Vietnam published from August, 1964 to August, 1973, were evaluated for their primary subject, scene, portrayal of the subject and the perspective of the photograph by the author. Intercoder reliability was measured by having a second person code a subset of the same images using the same categories. The intercoder test results for the four categories were as follows: Scene, .91; Subject .93; Portrayal, .87; and Perspective, .81. Finally, images published before and after the Tet Offensive were tested for shifts in coverage using cross tabulation analysis. The acceptable probability level was $p < .05$ for each test. This analysis revealed three distinct shifts in the photographic portrayal of the war.

One shift in photographic coverage was in the scenes captured in the Vietnam images (Table 1). Prior to the Tet offensive, the American public was plunged right into the

battlefield with the soldiers. Scenes of actual combat were readily available for the public to view. For example, Larry Burrows' photo essay of helicopter crew Yankee Papa 13 was shot in April, 1965, under heavy enemy gunfire. While the crew of helicopter Papa 13 struggled to rescue the crew of disabled Yankee Papa 3, Burrows photographed Papa 3's co-pilot dying on the helicopter floor.¹ Twenty-five of Burrows' photographs were used to tell this story, the first series of photographs since Robert Capa's last pictures from Leipzig in World War II where a man was shown in the moments immediately before and after his death.²

Following Tet, a definite shift away from actual combat images and toward more combat related scenes (settings depicting pre/post combat or troop movements in combat areas, but not actually in combat when the photograph was taken) and non-combat related photographs (out of the field of combat, in areas of safety such as cities, headquarters, etc.) was apparent. The public was not taken into the battlefield as often after Tet. A greater percentage of photographs of scenes taken during non-violent periods of the war or completely away from the actual battles were published after the Tet offensive. These non-combat photographs included images depicting soldier camaraderie and

¹Life, 58:15:32, (April 16, 1965).

²Susan Moeller, Shooting War, (New York:Basic Books, Inc., 1989), pp. 393-394.

political figures visiting Vietnam.³

TABLE 1
Primary Scene in the Photograph
by Percent

	Combat	Combat Related	Non Combat	
Pre Tet	26.23	34.43	39.34	N=366
Post Tet	16.40	39.12	44.48	N=317

$\chi^2=9.663$, $df=2$, $p<0.008$

The subject matter of the photographs also changed during the war (Table 2). Prior to the Tet Offensive, more emphasis was placed on the American soldier fighting the war. The public was able to view American soldiers in action, such as during the battle near Hill 484. Life published a series of photographs on this battle including Burrows' images of the death of a company's point man who had run to the top of the hill and "was shot dead."⁴ Four marines were pictured carrying the point man by his arms and legs to an evacuation helicopter.

The three newsmagazines also showed the public who our soldiers were assisting, the South Vietnamese Civilians. These

³Newsweek, 77:9:18, (March 1, 1971).

⁴Life, 61:18:37, (October 28, 1966).

photographs quite often depicted women and children being evacuated from their home after being bombed. Photographer Paul Schutzer photographed a mother clutching her blood-drenched child moments after jets strafed before landing.⁵ Several pictures depicted children playing in building rubble left from bombing raids.

These two subjects, American soldiers and Vietnam civilians, were pictured quite often prior to Tet. After the Tet Offensive, American soldiers did not receive as much attention and allied civilians received only a slight increase in coverage. After Tet, photographic coverage shifted from depicting the American soldier fighting the war to the allied soldier which jumped 100 percent. This increase, though, accounted for only a small portion of the total number of pictures published. Overall, as the coverage of the American soldier declined after Tet, a parallel increase in allied soldier coverage occurred.⁶ These results are consistent with previous research.⁷

⁵Life, 59:22:54, (November 26, 1965).

⁶Newsweek, 77:2:18, (March 1, 1971).

⁷This thesis reviewed the subject of Vietnam photography based on a pre/post Tet breakdown over the duration of the war. A similar study was conducted by Dr. Michael Sherer. Yet, Sherer's focus was on American public opinion and Vietnam photographic coverage. He reviewed images based on two-week periods of time when public opinion on the war was being measured. Sherer utilized the same three newsmagazines as in this thesis. He concluded that after public opinion shifted to opposition to the war, between December, 1967 and February, 1968, "the three news magazines carried a far greater percentage of images of allied forces and

TABLE 2
Primary Subject in the Image
by Percent

	American Soldier	Allied Soldier	Enemy Soldier	American Civilian	Allied Civilian	Enemy Civilian	Amer. *WET	Enemy *WET
Pre Tet N=366	38.25	7.92	5.74	4.92	18.85	5.74	13.66	4.92
Post Tet N=317	28.39	14.83	6.62	3.47	21.45	5.36	11.36	8.52

$\chi^2=17.907$, $df=7$, $p<0.012$

*WET= Weapons, Equipment and Targets

Finally, a shift in the portrayal of the primary subject was apparent in the three newsmagazines (Table 3). After Tet, the public was shown a much more sanitized version of the war. The focus shifted away from life threatening situations to scenes portraying situations that did not include such harsh reminders of the suffering that war involves. Photographs often depicted scenes of relative safety or, at most, scenes of discomfort or fatigue. Fewer dead or wounded individuals were pictured, no matter what degree of danger was apparent. Photographs of soldiers wearing peace symbols on their helmets and uniforms began replacing images of death and destruction.⁸ The public was shielded from the true destruction of the war as photographic

with less visual emphasis on American forces and equipment." Michael D. Sherer, "Vietnam War Photos and Public Opinion," *Journalism Quarterly*, 66:394 (Summer, 1989).

⁸Newsweek, 77:2:29, (January 11, 1971).

images portrayed a sense of safety to Americans who were so far away from the actual fighting.

TABLE 3
Portrayal of the Primary Subject
by Percent

	Threat To Life w/ dead	Threat To Life no dead	Fatigue Discomf. w/ dead	Fatigue Discomf. no dead	Relative Safety w/ dead	Relative Safety no dead	*WET Des- troyed	*WET Not Des- troyed
Pre Tet N=366	10.11	12.30	11.75	12.02	2.19	33.61	11.20	6.83
Post Tet N=317	5.05	7.26	10.41	17.03	0.63	42.27	8.83	8.52

$\chi^2=20.964$, $df=7$, $p<0.004$

*WET= Weapons, Equipment and Targets

No statistically significant difference emerged in the last category of perspective. Perspective refers to the way the photographs captured the situation, either as a close-up shot, a normal, conversational shot or a distant, more inclusive shot. Photographers used relatively the same perspective before and after the Tet offensive.

TABLE 4Perspective of the Primary Subject
by Percent

	<u>Close-Up</u>	<u>Normal</u>	<u>Distant</u>	
Pre Tet	26.23	50.27	23.50	N=366
Post Tet	25.55	51.10	23.34	N=317

$\chi^2=0.055$, $df=2$, $p<0.973$

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

After review of the Vietnam war photographs published in the three news magazines from August, 1964 to August 1973, it is evident that the image of war did shift after the Tet offensive.

Three noticeable shifts occurred in the images of the Vietnam war. Prior to Tet, only a 13 percent variance in the number of photographs depicting combat and non-combat related scenes was evident. Following Tet, a 28 percent variance was apparent. The American soldier received, by far, the most coverage by the newsmagazines. Finally, more photographs portraying life threatening situations with dead or wounded individuals included in the picture were published before the Tet offensive.

Following the Tet Offensive, stronger focus was placed on the allied soldier and civilian. Less emphasis was placed on life threatening images after Tet as the focus shifted towards scenes of relative safety. The American public was also shown more photographs of the weapons, equipment and targets being used in the war following Tet. Yet, these images were shown less often in actual combat and simply in maneuvers.¹

If it is true that a picture is worth a thousand words, that the photograph can explain in more detail than written prose the events of the world, then the American public was given a

¹Time, 94:23:23, (December 5, 1969).

sheltered view of the reality of the Vietnam war following the Tet offensive. Americans were shielded from viewing the destructive forces of bombs exploding on both the land and the people. Rarely did the public see a dead or wounded individual after Tet.

Why did such shifts in photographic coverage occur? It is this author's opinion that the newsmagazines felt a need to publish the most important events of the day in the limited space they had available. After Tet, space for Vietnam war coverage had to include peace negotiations and the gradual withdrawal of American soldiers.

Several questions requiring further research are prompted by the results of this thesis. First, why did coverage of combat photographs, often depicting dead or wounded, decrease after the Tet Offensive? Secondly, did the shifts in photographic coverage directly effect the war in some way? Finally, why were such photographs as Ronald Haeberle's scenes of the My Lai massacre originally censored by U.S. print publications and then released years later? Further research is necessary to answer these questions.