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Exploring Influences on Gender Equality in Photojournalism: Is the Field Picture-perfect?

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EXPLORING INFLUENCES ON GENDER EQUALITY IN PHOTOJOURNALISM: IS THE
FIELD PICTURE-PERFECT?

A Thesis

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

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Abstract

America prides itself on having a free press. Ideally, this free press would look like the communities in which they cover. However, research shows that gender discrepancies are quite common in newsrooms (Anderson 2014; Briscoe 2012; Norris 1997; Willnat and Weaver 2014). Women often have a marginal presence in newsrooms, and this is troublesome, because scholars have noted that men and women approach newsgathering and reporting differently (Beam and Cicco 2010; Briscoe 2012; Grabe et al. 2011; Weaver 1997). While research has focused on gender discrepancies in various types of media, little to no research has looked at the field of photojournalism specifically. This research aims to examine the gender demographics of photojournalism in American newspapers, as well as the organizational factors that could influence the amount of women in the field. Using census data provided by the American Society of News Editors, I was able to find support for three out of four hypotheses. Women are quite rare in the field of photojournalism, and factors such as the previous year's demographics and a newspaper's circulation impact the amount of women present in photo departments. With this research, I hope individuals working in newspapers examine their news organization's approach to women in photojournalism, and that newsrooms will aim to create a newsroom that is friendly to both genders and that reflects the communities in which they cover.

Introduction

Historically, women have had to make great efforts to achieve rights, opportunities and treatment that have been naturally given to American men. For a greater part of America's history, women were not encouraged to work outside the home or even allowed to cast a ballot in their democracy. While government has attempted to intervene in the past with the executive order enacting affirmative action, or currently with striving to close the gender pay gap, gender equality is not a reality for America. Sapiro (2003, 603) notes, "Scholars have not identified a historical or contemporary society in which gender is irrelevant to dividing up social, cultural, economic, and political tasks." Gender has played a relevant role in dividing up who should serve as journalists in America.

As newspapers have grown and shrunk in size over time, women have consistently made up approximately one-third of news organizations (Fleming 2013). As of 2013, only ten states had a population where men were in the majority, yet our newsrooms always have a majority of men (United States Census Bureau 2014). The American newsroom is extremely far off from mirroring society. More women have entered the workforce, and yet they choose not to enter or stay in field of journalism. Why is that?

Research has noted that working in sex-segregated occupations has psychological factors. Women choosing to work in the atypical environment of news media may experience some of these difficulties in their careers. These factors include feeling left out of the social environment at work (Lawless and Fox 2005). Being a minority also makes a person more visible, causing greater pressure to succeed or greater stress when not performing well (Kanter 1977). People often feel as if their work is devalued when they make up the minority in their work environment (Kling et. al 1999; Lawless and Fox 2005). Research would support this psychological feeling of

being devalued as a woman working in the news media. Consistently, female journalists earn significantly less than their male counterparts (Willnat and Weaver 2014).

Why would it matter who is making our news? Journalists value objectivity, so who creates the news should not matter, right? Wrong. Research has noted that men and women approach journalism differently. Having women in the newsroom hierarchy can determine where stories are placed in the newspaper, or even if stories are covered at all (Briscoe 2012; Mills 1997; Marlane 1999). Women are more likely to have female sources in their news coverage, and are less likely to be driven by sensational news (Briscoe 2012; Beam and Cicco 2010; Weaver 1997).

Research has also noted that women provide different news frames than their male counterparts (Briscoe 2012; Grabe et al. 2011). Framing is an important part of political communication, because a frame can tell people how to view an issue, which can ultimately impact their actions on an issue. Erving Goffman (1979), who is credited with being the first to study framing, examined gender in advertisements. He argued that the way advertisers choose to display women, has “homogenized how women are publicly depicted” and because of these homogenous depictions, the general public has certain expectations about gender and acts accordingly (Baran and Davis 2012, 334). Because men and women provide different news frames, and these frames have the potential to shape how we think and act within a democracy, Americans should strive to have a diverse news media, a media that reflects the communities in which they cover.

Framing research is not limited to print or broadcast media. Scholars have noted that still photographs can impact how individuals think about public policy issues. Specifically, Gilens (1999) shows that the images that accompany news stories regarding welfare have a significant

impact on how Americans view policy regarding the poor. Grabe and Bucy (2009) also note that image handlers in campaigns work hard to place candidates in visual environments that will please voters. These public relations specialists also have strong control over how photojournalists will visually document and frame political candidates.

Ultimately, a photojournalist has extensive control over how issues are visually framed. Grabe and Bucy (2009) note that photojournalists put great thought into what lens to use, where to point the camera, and how to edit an image. The product a photojournalist brings to the newsroom will give most news consumers their only glimpse of what current events look like. Because of the power photojournalists have on public opinion, and because men and women approach journalism differently, it is important to understand where photo departments stand in terms of gender demographics.

This research aims to do just that. My first research exploration aims to examine the overall gender demographics in the profession of photojournalism. My next three hypotheses look at organizational factors that could influence gender makeup in photo departments. These factors are the gender makeup of previous years, the size of the news staff and the circulation size of the newspaper. My results show support for three out of four of these hypotheses. Women are in extreme minorities in photojournalism. Previous years' demographics and circulation size significantly impact the amount of women found working for American newspapers as photojournalists.

With these results, I hope newsrooms across the country examine the gender makeup in their newsrooms and consider why there might be a gap in their photo departments. I also hope journalism programs in colleges strive to reach out to female students and to provide them with the tools they need to have lasting careers in photojournalism. I also hope this encourages groups

such as the National Press Photographers Association to start initiatives to promote the work of women in photojournalism and to provide help and encouragement for women who have chosen photojournalism as a career path.

Literature Review

Framing

The idea of framing is an important part of political communication literature. For this paper, framing will refer to “presentation styles a speaker uses to relay information ” (Klar et al 2012, 3). Presentation styles can include visuals (Klar et al 2012), and this research works under the assumption that men and women in the newsroom often frame their stories differently, including visually. This work also assumes that diversified newsrooms are ostensibly better for America’s democracy. Media organizations should strive to have newsrooms that reflect the populace in which they are covering in order to have an accurate diversity of perspectives represented in news coverage.

Framing occurs because there are often many ways to tell or interpret the same story (Kinder 2003). Kinder (2003) states that frames often don’t supply new information, but instead organize information that offers a particular perspective. Frames are not neutral, and take on the role of defining the essential issue in a story and implying what should be done (Kinder 2003). Nelson, Clawson and Oxley’s 1997 study on framing is a common example showcasing what framing is and how it can impact media consumers. Participants in their study were given different frames regarding a Klu Klux Klan rally. Some saw the story that emphasized how the KKK members were exercising their right to free speech. Others saw the story that emphasized the public disturbance the KKK rally would cause. Participants were then asked to rate their support for allowing the KKK rally. This study helps explain that there are several ways to tell one story. Its results show that framing has consequences on how media consumers think and act within their communities. Nelson, Clawson and Oxley (1997) found that participants who saw the free speech frame were more tolerant of having the KKK rally in their community. Research

shows that when provided with different frames, people are more likely to express the opinions given in those frames and those opinions are often more stable over time (Kinder 2003).

The framing literature mostly focuses on words, written or oral, impacting how a story is presented. However, stories can be framed differently using visuals too. Grabe and Bucy (2009) note that political campaigns frequently work on framing their candidate with a particular visual in mind. “Flags or military settings to convey patriotism and security, scenes of the great outdoors to associate a candidate with environmentally friendly positions, or appearances before enthusiastic throngs of young voters to signal popularity and change” are common examples in how candidates can be visually framed (Grabe and Bucy 2009, 98).

The technical parameters of image generation also impact how a visual could frame a story differently. Photojournalists take into great consideration as to what lens to use while shooting, the best angle to shoot from, and what editing techniques to apply to an image (Grabe and Bucy 2009). For example, a photograph shot with a 70-200 mm lens is going to look different than the same photograph shot with a wide-angle lens. A photograph shot from above is going to look different than the same photograph shot low to the ground. Where the photojournalist chooses to point the camera obviously creates different images, and different images could lead to different frames. Pointing the camera at a politician at a podium tells one story, but pointing the camera at the empty or full crowd arguably tells a different story.

Image framing can impact how people view public policy debates. Gilens (1999) describes how images, especially still photographs, create an atmosphere favoring antipoverty policies. He shows that newsmagazines are more likely to display photographs depicting poor African Americans than poor whites (Briscoe 2012; Briscoe 2014, “Photojournalism”; Gilens 1999). During the time frame of Gilens’ (1999) studies, African Americans were found in 53.4%

of photographs of the poor, while the true population of poor African Americans at the given time was 29.3% (Briscoe 2012; Briscoe 2014, “Photojournalism”). The photographs of poor African Americans were most commonly found in negative news stories. These perceptions have an impact on how Americans view welfare programs. When asking both the general public and photo editors, Gilens (1999) found that people overestimate the amount of poor African Americans in their communities (Briscoe 2012; Briscoe 2014, “Photojournalism”). In a survey conducted by CBS/*New York Times*, over half of the participants believed most people on welfare were African American and had negative views of welfare recipients (Briscoe 2012; Briscoe 2014, “Photojournalism”; Gilens 1999).

Framing theory would suggest that as researchers and as news consumers, we should care about the demographics of our newsrooms. Stories can be told in multiple ways, and these frames can impact public opinion and/or the desire to act within a democracy. Because of this, we should want to know who is creating our news. If the newsroom consists of a nearly homogenous group, the news will potentially be framed in a homogenous manner. What is the point in having a free press if there is one dominant voice providing information to news consumers?

Framing Diversity

Research supports the notion that demographics can impact the content of news coverage. Male and female journalists report on the world differently, including how to tell or frame a story. Women are more likely to use feminine or gender-neutral frames in their news coverage (Briscoe 2012; Grabe et al. 2011). Scholars have also noted that female journalists are more likely to incorporate female sources into their news stories (Briscoe 2012; Beam and Cicco 2010; Weaver 1997). In election coverage, female reporters are more likely to identify with female

candidates because both work in an area made up of predominately men (Briscoe 2012; Mills 1997). Female reporters are less likely to ask questions about balancing work and family to female candidates because they share similar life experiences (Briscoe 2012; Mills 1997).

In general, men and women approach newsgathering differently. Men are more likely to approach objectivity in news stories by a sense of detachment to their subjects, while female reporters are more likely to show concern for the emotions of their subjects (Beam and Cicco 2010; van Zoonen 1998). Male journalists are more inclined to sensationalize stories and rely on scoops than their female counterparts (Beam and Cicco 2010; van Zoonen 1998). In election coverage, male reporters are more likely than female reporters to cover campaigns from the horserace perspective (Briscoe 2012; Grabe et al. 2011).

Having women in the newsroom hierarchy can determine if certain issues are prominently placed or even covered at all (Briscoe 2012; Mills 1997; Marlane 1999). Past research states that newsroom values are traditionally masculine, and for female journalists to succeed, they must adapt and accept these values (Briscoe 2012; Beam and Cicco 2010).

The research on the significance of women in the newsroom also applies to the field of photojournalism. A quick examination of newspaper archives can show that female photojournalists and male photojournalists can create a very distinct product. A striking difference can be found in the 1940s, after the *Atlanta Constitution* hired Georgia's first female photojournalist, when comparing Carolyn McKenzie's photographs and captions to her male counterpart's, H.J. Slayton. A 1940 photo caption of McKenzie's reads as, "Women voters took along their knitting, their cigarettes, their enthusiasm to the city council meeting yesterday to brush up on their knowledge of the city's government..." "I'm coming again." was the unanimous chorus as they left after a long session." While McKenzie would choose to showcase women

getting involved in government, Slayton chose a route which focuses on the femininity of women even as they enter the workforce, with one of his captions stating, “Atlanta women by the hundreds continued to register yesterday for defense...the jobs they register for such as ambulance drivers, radio operators, nurses, air raid wardens, motor mechanics and bomb dousers affords little protection to their wave sets and manicures” (Briscoe 2014, “Carolyn”).

Literature shows that men and women bring diversity to the newsroom, including what stories are told, or not told, and how stories are framed. Research also shows that visuals can be used as a means of framing a story, with the potential to impact how people view their government. Arguably, then, male and female photojournalists could potentially frame stories and issues differently, based on the images they produce and use in coverage. Because these images have the potential to impact how citizens view and act within their democracy, it is important to study where newsrooms stand in terms of photojournalism and gender demographics. It is also important to not only know the statistics in terms of photojournalism and gender, but to also understand what would cause a news organization to favor one gendered photojournalist over the other.

Women in Media

Because men and women provide different stories and frames in the media, it is important to examine the gender makeup of the news industry. The goal for the American Society of News Editors in terms of diversity is to “have the percentage of minorities working in newsrooms nationwide to reflect the percentage of minorities in the nation’s population by 2025” (Fleming 2013). As of 2014, American newsrooms have a way to go for their newsrooms to reflect the country’s population.

The most common journalists are white, middle-class men (Briscoe 2012; Norris 1997). The amount of women in media fails to grow over time. In 1998, women made up 37% of all newspaper staffs (Anderson 2014). This number actually decreased to 36% of newspaper staffs in 2012 (Anderson 2014). Even as newsrooms shrink in size as they compete with new technologies and struggle with creating a new business model, the proportion of men in the newsroom remains at a steady two-thirds (Fleming 2013). In 2013, there were only ten states with a male population of more than 50% (United States Census Bureau 2014), while during that same year the American newsroom was 63.7% male (ASNE 2014). In 2013, women made up approximately 37% of journalists, while women made almost 47% of the U.S. civilian workforce (Willnat and Weaver 2014).

As of 2014, the most common medium for female journalists to be represented in is television, making up 42.4% of the medium (Willnat and Weaver 2014). Weekly newspapers are a close second with 42%. Women are 38.1% of radio journalists, 36.9% of wire service journalists, 34.9% of daily newspaper journalists, 33.3% of newsmagazine journalists, and 31.5% of those working in online news media (Willnat and Weaver 2014). For photojournalists working in newspapers, women would be more likely to work for a weekly rather than a daily. This would mean that out of all the images being produced, assuming that daily newspapers produce more images in a week's worth of papers than the single edition of the weekly, media consumers are more likely to see visuals produced by a man. As stated previously, men and women often frame issues differently, which impact how Americans view public policy debates and act within their democracy. Because of this, it is important to see who is creating the visuals of our government.

According to the American Society of News Editors, a research organization that conducts a yearly census of newspapers, in 2013, less than 25% of photographers/artists/videographers were women. This area of the newsroom had the lowest percentage of women. In 2013, 34.6% of newsroom supervisors were women, 39.9% of copy editors and online producers were women, and 37.8% of reporters were women. The photographers/artists/videographers area of the newsroom peaked in the years 2004 and 2005 with women making up 27.4% of its population. With the exception of one year, the numbers have steadily declined for women in this area since 2005.

Historically, women have wanted to be photojournalists for several decades. Jessie Tarbox Beals is noted as the first female photojournalist who photographed for the *Buffalo Inquirer* in 1902 (Brannan 2007; Briscoe 2014 “Carolyn”). Carolyn McKenzie Carter took on the label of “girl photographer” in 1940 when she was hired as the first female reporter-photojournalist at the *Atlanta Constitution* (Briscoe 2014 “Carolyn”). Marion Carpenter was being added as the first female photographer for the White House Press Corps at the same time, and Margaret Bourke-White had already been on the scene for about a decade (Brannan 2007; Briscoe 2014 “Carolyn”).

Even when women are found in the newsroom, female journalists still struggle to get past the general assignment reporter position (Briscoe 2012; Marlane 1999). Men still typically occupy newsroom management positions (Briscoe 2012; Beam and Cicco 2010). In 2009, only 34% of newspaper supervisors were women (Briscoe 2012; Beam and Cicco 2010). As stated previously, women higher in the newsroom hierarchy can impact if certain issues are prominently placed or even covered at all (Briscoe 2012; Mills 1997; Marlane 1999). That kind of environment, an occupation where women do not see themselves being promoted past a

general assignment reporter, would probably be discouraging to work in and create an atmosphere where women decided to leave quickly.

Research backs that idea up. In a 2014 study released by Indiana State University, female journalists tend to leave the profession earlier than men. When journalists have the least experience, zero to four years, men make up 50.6% of journalists and women make up 49.4% of journalists, almost an even gender makeup close to the actual population (Willnat and Weaver 2014). However, as time passes, and people work in the newsroom longer, women are not as proportionate to men. With five to nine years of experience, women make up 44.3%, 41.2% at the ten to fourteen years mark, 39.7% at the fifteen to nineteen years mark, and only 33% at the twenty or more years of experience mark (Willnat and Weaver 2014). Assuming that women enter the profession of journalism right out of college, and these trends stay constant, by the time women are in their mid-forties, 33.2% will have left the newsroom.

Why might women want to leave the field of photojournalism? Lawless and Fox (2005) analyze why women do not consider themselves qualified for political office, and those that do, often leave the field quicker than their male counterparts. Applying their logic to the field of photojournalism might help explain why women leave the field more quickly than their male counterparts, or choose not to enter the field to begin with. Traditionally male-dominated fields can often result in a sexist working environment (Lawless and Fox 2005). A Tennessee law firm principal stated in the Lawless and Fox (2005, 103) study, “Due to the sexism and the backwards attitudes of many people in the office, the women who come in are treated poorly and think they’ll never get promoted. It makes sense that they don’t end up staying long.” Their research notes that women working in predominately male fields are often left out of office bonding activities which can result in being hurt emotionally as well as professionally (Lawless and Fox

2005). Lawless and Fox's (2005) study also found that across the fields of law, business, education and activism, their respondents mostly believed that it is more challenging for women to climb the corporate ladder. These findings may apply to the field of photojournalism. The male dominated field may create a sexist environment where women do not feel included or respected. Along with that, women in photojournalism might feel as if they are stuck in salary and position in the newsroom. All of those factors could create an environment where women do not want to work professionally.

Overall, women in journalism earn less than their male counterparts, which could create a discouraging atmosphere for women, causing frustrated female journalists to leave the field. From 2001 – 2012, the median salary for all journalists increased 12.9%, from \$43,588 to \$50,028 (Willnat and Weaver 2014). This percentage does not even represent half of the inflation rate experienced during this decade, which was 29.5% (Willnat and Weaver 2014). In 2012, the median salary for a female journalist was \$44,342, or 83% of men's median salary of \$53,600 (Willnat and Weaver 2014). This is an increase from 2001, where women in the newsroom made only 81% of what their male counterparts did (Willnat and Weaver 2014). The pay gap could be shrinking as promising statistics for new female journalists show that journalists with less work experience make similar salaries, regardless of gender. Women in the newsroom with less than five years experience actually have a slightly higher median salary making \$25,761 compared to their male counterparts who's median salaries are \$24,167 (Willnat and Weaver 2014). For journalists with five to nine years of experience, men only make 2.4% more than their female counterparts (Willnat and Weaver 2014). As time passes, and women make strides in equality in the workforce, newsroom managers could potentially be making more sound decisions about salary equality for men and women as young journalists enter the profession. These statistics

should be encouraging to women studying photojournalism, knowing that the pay gap is small or even reversed in their favor as they graduate college and enter the field. While women who were hired ten or more years ago, experience a larger pay gap and might choose to leave the field from frustration, this new generation of female journalists may not have to experience those frustrations if the median salaries of both genders do not differ significantly. Only history will tell what this generation of young journalists will do. As for the overall group of women in journalism, the \$9,258 median salary difference is an atmosphere not friendly for women in the newsroom.

Overall, research shows that women are not as common as men in the newsroom. This could be attributed to salary differences, promotion differences or a sexist working environment, or another unknown factor. While this research does not look at the specific psychology of women who work in photojournalism extensively, it will examine organizational factors that correlate with fewer women working in the field of photojournalism. By discovering the organizational factors, such as the size of the newsroom staff and circulation, which are related to fewer women in photo departments, this research can make newsrooms aware of their potential gender biases.

Gender and the Workforce

While this research does not specifically dig deep into the psychology of female photojournalists, it does examine workforce psychology that could potentially create a sexist environment. Why would the field of journalism showcase such gender gaps, from the demographics of the newsroom to the pay gaps between male and female journalists?

The similarity attraction paradigm is an overarching theme to the women in the workforce literature and will be applied extensively to this research. Often associated with Byrne

(1971), the similarity attraction theory asserts that people are attracted to others who are more like them, contrasting the common notion that opposites attract. Research shows that people are more attracted to others who share similar attitudes, especially when dealing with important issues such as attitudes on the home and family (Berscheid and Walster 1969; Byrne 1971). Some research stretches the similarity attraction paradigm as far as to people with similar personality traits, socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, social habits, ethnicity and intelligence (McPherson et al 2001). This phenomenon is important to understand because the field of photojournalism could be predominately one gender, which in return, would continue to remain one gender because of the cycle the similarity attraction paradigm provides.

Research points to several different reasons as to why individuals are attracted to similar people. One answer is that surrounding yourself with similar people creates a sense of predictability about what others might do (Berscheid and Walster 1969; Byrne 1971). This logic could explain why more women are not hired as photojournalists. If men are most often in newsroom management positions, they might feel as if they know what to expect from men and their work as photojournalists. Especially if the photo department is already predominately male, psychologically, newsroom managers would know what to expect when dealing with male photojournalists and desire that predictability within their newsroom. If the newsroom is not attracted to diversity for fear of the unpredictable nature of others, gender discrepancies will continue to exist.

Another explanation to the similarity attraction paradigm is that people assume that similar people are more likely to favor them than dissimilar people (Berscheid and Walster 1969; Byrne 1971). Again, because newsroom management is predominately male, those in charge may be hiring male photojournalists with the hopes of creating a news team that likes

management's ideas about what to cover in the news as well as how to cover it. Hiring a female may create an instance where someone might not agree with the male management's vision. If newsroom managers strive to build a strong team by only hiring those who are most similar to them, the gender gaps of the media will continue to exist.

A component of research in the same family as the similarity attraction paradigm is the field of sex segregation. Sex segregation is an area of research that examines why some careers are male dominated and others are female dominated. The issue of sex segregation is still common in the workplace today. Oddly, sex segregation is more common in "economically developed countries with liberal gender ideologies than in less developed countries with more traditional gender ideologies" (Lippa et al 2014, 1). In the United States, for all workplaces to have equal gender representation, 50 percent of the employed population would need to be reassigned to a different job (Lippa et al 2014). As previously stated, newsrooms have a more highly saturated male population than most other careers, making the media a highly sex segregated occupation.

Pfeffer and Davis-Blake (1987, 2) claim that the United States has institutionalized the idea of "women's work" which "includes the idea that work done by women is less valuable and can be paid less than work done by men." Occupational sex segregation is one of the reasons women have different work experiences than men regarding prestige, pay and power (Jarrell and Stanley 2004; Cech 2013). If the field of photojournalism is highly segregated, it could impact the pay and work experience of women within the field. Photojournalists in the minority would more than likely experience working harder for prestige and respect, but would receive less monetary rewards for their efforts when compared to co-workers. These difficult circumstances

would not encourage minorities to stay within the field, thus creating a cycle of gender disparity within the profession.

Government has attempted to intervene to help improve these gender gap issues, but it can only do so much (Cech 2013). In 1964, an executive order signed by President Kennedy created what is commonly called affirmative action, meaning businesses would make an effort to hire qualified minorities, including women. During the 2014 State of the Union, President Obama stood before the country declaring equality for women in the workforce, stating that for every dollar a man made, a woman made only seventy-seven cents (Jacobson 2014). Cech (2013, 748) argues that sex segregation will persist as long as men and women “aspire to gender-conforming occupations and fields of studies.” If Cech’s (2013) statements hold true, the field of photojournalism could be predominately male today, because it was historically male, and men feel comfortable aspiring to that career. Sex segregation will continue in the field of photojournalism as long as it is labeled as a man’s job. Women would have to be comfortable with breaking stereotypes and aspire to a career outside of gender norms. Not only would they have to initially be brave by entering the field, women would have to persist through difficult times of scrutiny and pay gaps to continue to inspire women who come after them in the field to leave a lasting mark in the demographics.

Sex segregation is important to study not only because of the differences men and women bring to a company, but also because of the impact sex segregation can have on a person’s life. Working in a field that violates gender expectations has psychological impacts (Cohen and Huffman 2003; Cook and Minnottee 2008; Kanter 1977; Pfeffer and Davis-Blake 1987). The relationship between work and family life is impacted when people hold atypical gender occupations (Cook and Minnottee 2008). Kanter (1977) states that minority members often

experience boundary heightening, meaning they are less likely to be accepted by the majority. Being in the minority also means “increased visibility and performance pressure, which presumably leads to unusually arduous working conditions and reduced performance in work roles” (Kanter 1977, 5). If the field of photojournalism is already saturated with men, new women leaders breaking into the field will work in a less than pleasant work atmosphere. They would be less likely to be accepted by their male counterparts, and because of their minority status, would experience more pressure at work to do well.

Whether women are accepted in the workplace or not, women *feel* more supported by their co-workers when they work in a female dominated field (Cohen and Huffman 2003; Cook and Minnottee 2008). Cohen and Huffman (2003) show that the more male dominated a work environment is, the more likely women’s work roles are devalued. Research has shown that women often devalue themselves in the workforce, and are less likely to express confidence in themselves or their skills when compared to working men (Kling et. al 1999; Lawless and Fox 2005). Lawless and Fox (2005, 107) state, “Existing in traditionally sexist professional environments leads many eligible women candidates to conclude that they need to be more qualified than men to compete evenly.” Even though their research is discussing women running for political office, the logic can still apply to the profession of photojournalism. If the field is highly saturated with men, qualified women may actually think they are not qualified to work in photojournalism.

The psychological factors working in professional settings should be considered when examining gender demographics of photojournalism. If the field is already predominately male, it is important that the men currently working do not devalue future women that might be hired on. Many of the women who are working in the field, may feel as if they need to be more

qualified than their male counterparts, or question if they are good enough for the position they have been hired for. That is why a working environment friendly to women is important to have if men already dominate the field of photojournalism.

Theory and Hypotheses

The statistics laid out show that women are not very common in the newsroom (Willnat and Weaver 2014). The data made available from ANE also suggests that a female photographer/videographer/artist is a rarity (ASNE 2014). This research examines factors that could systematically influence the number and percentage of women in photojournalism. A quick examination of ASNE's most recent census would show that there are fewer women than men in photojournalism, and this research will look at this trend from 2012 – 2014. What are the demographic patterns of photo departments across the country? If photo departments are like the rest of the newsroom, they will be filled with more men.

H1: Photojournalists are more likely to be men than women.

The similarity attraction paradigm suggests that people like to be around those who are similar to them (Berscheid and Walster 1969; Byrne 1971). This would lead to men enjoying work environments with more men, where women would enjoy working with women. This psychological phenomenon would create a cycle that continues to encourage occupational sex segregation.

Literature already shows that newsrooms are predominately male, and that news manager positions are also more likely to be filled by men. The similarity attraction paradigm suggests that people like to be around those similar to them because of the predictability associated with being surrounded by like-minded individuals (Berscheid and Walster 1969; Byrne 1971). In a work environment, especially in an environment as unpredictable as the news, being able to predict the product of the individual photojournalist might be comforting to a hiring manager. When working on a deadline, or in a breaking news environment, a news manager would probably like to know and predict a certain product from their newsroom. In terms of the social

aspect of work, since the newsroom is already predominately male, hiring managers might want to continue hiring men because they can predict what the addition would do to the newsroom culture. Hiring a female photojournalist could potentially mess with the guys' night at the bar after work, or the shared camaraderie of being fathers. Continuously hiring men would create a more socially homogenous group that the newsroom is already familiar and comfortable with. Regardless if the reasoning is professional or social, research would support the idea that newsrooms made up of mostly men would desire to hire more men in the future.

H2: The number of women in a photo department at time t is inversely related to the number of men in the department at time t-1 and positively related to the number of women at time t-1.

Research has found that as newsrooms have downsized, the photo department has suffered the greatest loss (Anderson 2013). As stated previously, men are often in the position in the newsroom to make hiring and firing decisions (ASNE 2014). The similarity attraction paradigm states that people like to be surrounded by people who are like them. This phenomenon may incline the men in charge to keep their newsrooms more male. For social reasons, they might not want to keep a male co-worker in which they've bonded with. If the female photojournalists on staff don't want to go on the weekend staff golf tournament, it might be easier to let them go when those difficult decisions are placed in front of newsroom managers. The similarity attraction paradigm also suggests that people like to surround themselves with similar people, because doing so creates a sense of predictability (Berscheid and Walster 1969; Byrne 1971). These male newsroom managers may find it more difficult to fire male photojournalists, because as a man, they can predict how another man might act to the devastating news of job loss.

H3: As the size of newsroom staffs decreases, the number of female photojournalists in the photo department will also decrease.

Newspapers work under a business model, where circulation impacts advertising sales, which then impacts money available to run the newspaper (McManus 1994). Having more expendable money could also translate into the ability to take more risks within the newsroom without the fear of financial consequences. The similarity attraction paradigm argues that people like to be around others like them, because it creates a more predictable environment (Berscheid and Walster 1969; Byrne 1971). With smaller circulations, and fewer financial resources, the management of smaller news organizations may desire to have a more predictable news staff, including the photo department. The more predictable the staff is, ostensibly, the more predictable the product will be. This would mean that if the newsroom is already predominately male, which literature would suggest that it probably is, hiring male photojournalists, or choosing to keep male photojournalists would be the smaller financial risk because of their assumed predictability. With more resources, newspapers with larger circulations might be more willing to branch out from the stereotypical male photojournalist and take a chance on adding a female photojournalist on staff.

H4: As circulation of newspapers increases, the number of female photojournalists on staff also increases.

Data and Methods

Dependent Variable and Sample Information

The dependent variable of interest is the number of women in the photo departments in newsrooms. The goal is to examine sex disparities in photo departments and to identify their key determinants. Examining the demographic information provided in census material made available by the American Society of News Editors can determine this variable. The data contain newsroom-staffing breakdowns by race and gender across multiple newspapers and years, including the raw numbers of the number of men and women working as photojournalists in newsrooms.

The ASNE has collected these data since 1994, but only provide data broken out by gender since 2012. All news organization data and photo departments were examined from 2012 until 2014, three years of data in total.

Independent Variables

To examine the various hypotheses in question, several independent variables were included. The three independent variables related to newsroom staff are the number of women working on a photojournalism staff, the number of men working on a photojournalism staff and the total size of the news staff. I hypothesized that the number of women in the photo department is related to the number of women in the department in the past. I also hypothesized that as newsrooms shrink, the number of female photojournalists will also shrink.

Results

The goal of my first hypothesis is to examine the overall gender makeup of photo departments. Are there more male photojournalists than female photojournalists? Using the annual census data provided by ASNE, I graph the mean number of men and the mean number of women in photo departments by circulation size. Figure 1 provides this breakdown.

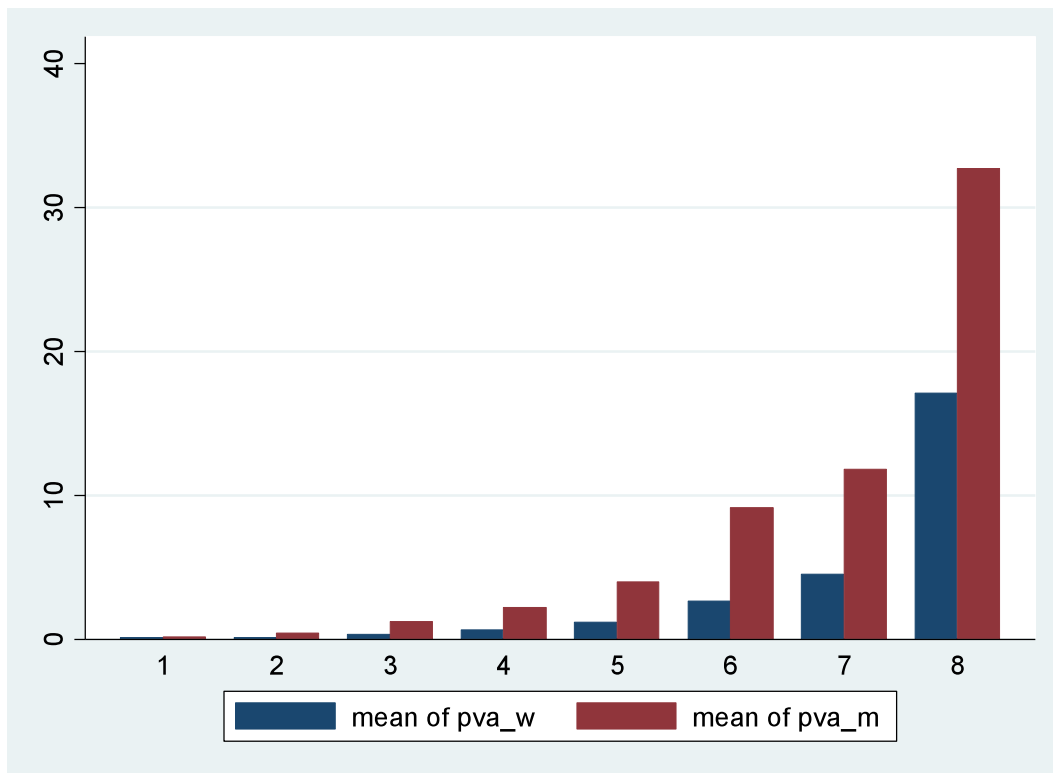


Figure 1: Mean Number of Women and Men in Photo Departments

Figure 1 reveals the differences between the number of men and women in photo departments, controlling for circulation size. In news organizations of every size, the mean number of men in the department is nearly twice that of women. In addition, a paired t-test comparing the mean of men and women in photo departments reveals that the difference between the mean of men and women in photo departments is significantly greater than zero, $\Pr(T > t = 0.000)$. These results provide support for the first hypothesis.

My second hypothesis aims to discover whether two key organizational factors influence the amount of women in the photo department. If there were more male photojournalists than female photojournalists last year, does that correlate to a male dominated photo staff in the present? The goal of my next hypothesis is to see if the size of the newsroom staff impacts the amount of female photojournalists in the newsroom. When staffs downsize, are female photojournalists exiting the photo department more often than the male photojournalists? My final hypothesis aims at discovering if circulation can impact the amount of female photojournalists in newsroom photo departments. As circulation increases, are news organizations more willing to take an assumed financial risk and hire a female photojournalist?

Table 1 presents negative binomial regression estimates modeling the number of women in the photo department as a function of the number of women in the photo department at t-1, the number of men in the photo department at t-1, circulation size, and news staff size.

Table 1: Negative Binomial Regression, Number of Women in Photo Departments

	Number of Women Photojournalists
Number of women, lagged	0.114** (0.038)
Number of men, lagged	-0.053** (0.018)
Circulation	0.673** (0.039)
News staff size	0.001 (0.001)
Constant	-3.168** (0.158)
lnalpha	-1.713** (0.442)

N=1,479

*p<0.05; **p<0.01

The results reveal several interesting findings consistent with the hypotheses offered. The positive and significant correlation for the lagged indicator for the number of women in the photo department one year before (at time t-1) suggests that the more women you have in earlier years positively impacts the number of women you have on staff later. Similarly, the significant and negative sign for the number of men shows that the more men on a photojournalism staff a year before negatively influences the future number of women we would expect on a photojournalism news staff. These findings support Hypothesis 2. The coefficient for news staff size does not reach statistical significance; therefore, the results suggest no support for Hypothesis 3. Finally, the positive and significant correlation for the circulation variable suggest that circulation is positively and significantly related to the number of women in the photo department, supporting Hypothesis 4.

Conclusion

Imagery is an important part of political communication, with several components influencing the images news consumers see. Research shows that people are more likely to remember the political information they see when compared to the political information they read (Grabe and Bucy 2009). This phenomenon leaves photojournalists in a position of great power.

Photojournalists have great control over how communities and the political world are visually framed. When given an assignment, where does a photojournalist point his or her camera? What the photojournalist chooses to fill their frame with leaves news consumers with an image to associate with a particular policy debate or community issue. Gilens (1999) shows that most news consumers thought most recipients of welfare were African American, because photojournalists filled their frames with African Americans when covering poverty.

Photojournalists are often put into situations where they are documenting events that public relations specialists have carefully thought out. Image handlers in campaigns work hard to place their political candidate in front of American flags, or crowds of enthusiastic supporters. How photojournalists photograph these contrived situations can also impact how news consumers view their government. Not only what, but how, photojournalists choose to photograph an event or issue can impact the image news consumers are provided with. What lens did the photojournalist use? What angle did he or she photograph from? These technical parameters can greatly influence what image news consumers see.

Because of the great influence images can have on our democratic society, it is important to understand who is creating these images. Research has shown that men and women frame news stories differently (Briscoe 2012; Grabe et al. 2011), and it can be assumed that this logic

applies to visual framing as well. As participants in a democratic society, we should, therefore, be concerned about the gender makeup of photo departments in newsrooms. Why desire to have a free press, if only one gender is providing news information? Similar to wanting female politicians elected to help provide a voice to women in government, news consumers should want their news provided by both men and women. Ideally, a newsroom would look like the communities in which they cover. However, data time and time again shows that newsrooms are predominately male (ASNE 2014).

That is why my first hypothesis in this research aims to get a general understanding of the gender makeup of photo departments in newsrooms across the country. My results show that men almost always double the amount of women in photo departments, regardless of circulation size. These findings are significant for several reasons. Even though very few states have a majority of men in their population (United States Census Bureau 2014), it is almost guaranteed that the newsroom in any given community has a photo staff that is predominately male. Can you expect balanced and fair coverage when newsrooms don't look like the communities they serve?

Because research shows that men and women provide different news frames, it can be assumed that Americans are receiving very limited visual frames due to the lack of diversity in photo departments across the nation. Research shows that female journalists are more likely to incorporate women in their news stories (Briscoe 2012; Beam and Cicco 2010; Weaver 1997). If there is double the amount of men in photojournalism, news consumers might be deprived of visuals showcasing women in their communities. Female journalists are also more likely to show compassion to their subjects, than men who view objectivity as a cue to detach themselves from those they are covering (Beam and Cicco 2010; van Zoonen 1998). Because of this, our visuals might look extremely different if more women were in the field.

Because the field of photojournalism is a sex-segregated field, women who choose to enter the field may experience psychological affects associated with working in an atypical environment. When photographing in the field, women may feel more visible, because they stick out when standing with mostly male photojournalists. Female photojournalists may feel that because they are more visible, they have little to no room for mistakes, an emotional stress male photojournalists may not experience. Many female photojournalists might even feel as if they have to work harder than their male counterparts to be rewarded professionally. Some women may monitor how they choose to photograph events, for fear of appearing too aggressive for their gender. Research would also show that many of these female photojournalists would make less than their male counterparts as time passed, and this financial discrepancy between the sexes could create an environment that encourages women to leave the field. This financial gap could also reinforce women to devalue their worth in their working environment. All of these psychological factors should be considered with these findings, but specifically with my first hypothesis that shows that the field of photojournalism is highly segregated in terms of gender.

My next three hypotheses aim to answer *why* this gender discrepancy occurs in newsrooms. Using the theory behind the similarity attraction paradigm, I argued that photo departments probably favored men because people are attracted to people who are similar to them. Similar people create not only a social environment that is comfortable, but also creates a predictable environment that could be desired in terms of newsrooms dealing with deadlines, breaking news, and ethical situations. Research has already been laid out stating that men predominantly makeup the newsroom staff, and most importantly saturate newsroom management positions. This framework fueled the thought processes for my final hypotheses.

My second hypothesis suggested that a photo department is male dominated, because it was mostly men who occupied photojournalism positions in the previous year. My results support the notion this is true. A photo department is more likely to have more men currently because in the previous year, more men occupied photojournalism positions than women. These results have significant implications. If having a male dominated staff currently impacts the future gender demographics of the photo department, then the current state of American photo departments is troublesome. These patterns suggest that the male saturated environment in newsroom photo departments is a cycle, and because our photo departments have men outnumbering women significantly, drastic changes would have to occur in the hiring process for newsrooms to have photo departments whose gender reflect the communities they cover.

This cycle would also be discouraging to women who are currently in the field. It would appear that without significant changes, their working environment would continue to be male dominated. The psychological factors of working in an atypical field would persist throughout their careers. These women might not ever have a female companion in their photo department. The female photojournalists might always have to cover a press conference being the only woman there. These women might also have to work twice as hard to receive recognition from male photojournalists or even newsroom managers.

The findings for my third hypothesis did not yield significant results, however, this finding proves to be interesting as well. My results show that the size of the newsroom staff has no significant impact on the amount of women found in photo departments. According to this data, it can be inferred that women will be uncommon in all photo departments, regardless of how big or small the news organization may be. Had my hypothesis proven to be correct, female photojournalists could strategize professionally and try to work in newsrooms with larger staffs.

However, because staff size has no significant impact on the news organization hiring women, female photojournalists can anticipate facing difficulty being hired or potential difficulty working in an environment where the culture is not typically welcoming to women regardless of the size of the news organization. These findings show that gender discrepancies in photo departments are consistent across newsrooms in the country. Small news organizations have not reached gender equality in their photo departments, but neither have large organizations. For changes to occur, newsrooms across the board would have to make a conscious effort to be more welcoming to women.

While the size of the news staff does not impact the amount of female photojournalists, the results to my fourth hypothesis show that circulation size does significantly impact the amount of women in photo departments. A higher newspaper circulation is correlated with more female photojournalists on staff. As suggested earlier, because of their rarity, female photojournalists might be seen as a financial risk. Because of the similarity attraction paradigm, men, who are often in newsroom management positions, might be more favorable towards male photojournalists because their shared gender could create a sense of predictability. Because newsrooms work in a high intensity environment, due to deadlines, breaking news, and constant ethical decisions, a sense of predictability is desired. Also, as newsrooms struggle to find a new business model while competing with new technologies, having a predictable staff would be desirable, because editors and managers know what kind of product to expect from their photojournalists.

Because circulation is a source of revenue for newspapers, it would make sense that newspapers with smaller circulation would want to avoid a financial risk. If women are perceived financial risks because their male editors or managers can't predict their actions as

easily, newspapers with smaller circulations would be less likely to have female photojournalists on staff. If this logic holds true, to combat this problem, men in newsroom would need to stop perceiving women as financial risks. Having diverse news coverage should be viewed as a reward.

While support was found for three out of four hypotheses, this study still has its shortcomings. The study only examines three years of newsrooms because of the limited data made available by the ASNE. While this information can definitely show patterns over the past few years, it does not show any long-term trends. This study would need to be reexamined after data on gender is continuously collected throughout the years. This study can only show patterns, but future studies could examine the long-term trends, to showcase a bigger picture on gender demographics in photo departments. Specifically, my second hypothesis would greatly benefit from more years of data. Having more data available, would give this research a chance to look at the field overtime as older photojournalists retire, and as new photojournalists enter the professional career. Newsrooms probably don't make significant staff changes in a three-year period.

The ASNE also categorize photojournalists, videographers and artists into the same category. While in the digital age, photojournalists are embracing video more often, it would be a stretch to assume that a photojournalist would serve as a videographer and an artist. The ASNE should make these categories more distinct as to provide a more accurate picture of the newsroom. For the sake of this study, I assumed most professionals in this visual category would consider themselves photojournalists. Because this is an assumption and not a fact, this presents a limitation to this study.

Several factors that could also impact the amount of women in photojournalism were not tested. For example, women may choose to leave photojournalism because of the lack of predictable work hours the lifestyle of photojournalism brings. If a woman decides to become a mother, the unstable schedule would not be compatible to a newborn child. Women may seek visual jobs outside of the newsroom once becoming mothers. Or, geography could impact the amount of women in photojournalism. Particular parts of the country could be more inclined to keep traditional gender roles, which would impact whether women feel comfortable entering a typically male dominated field such as photojournalism.

This study only scrapes the surface of factors influencing the amount of female photojournalists in the news industry. This study makes various assumptions about psychological factors, such as the similarity attraction paradigm, but does not actually test them. Without extensively interviewing male and female photojournalists, we cannot fully understand the psychological influences impacting newsrooms and photo departments. To get a complete picture of the culture surrounding women in photojournalism, in-depth interviews would need to be conducted beyond this research.

While this study showcases the stated weaknesses, it does provide a solid framework for organizational factors that correlate with the amount of female photojournalists on staff. News organizations could examine these results and reevaluate their hiring process. News organizations could make an effort to reach out to more women when positions are available. Male photojournalists could also make an effort to complement their female counterparts when they do well, or to include them in social outings so they feel welcomed by their coworkers. This study shows that the sights look grim for women interested in photojournalism, but news organizations could change this with a conscious effort.

This study could also make photojournalism programs in colleges more aware of the state of photo departments across the country. Photojournalism professors could make a conscious effort to promote their courses and degree programs to women. Photojournalism professors could teach students on the current state of photo departments in terms of gender demographics. The learning environment could encourage female students to be brave and enter the field, and prepare them with how to deal with the sex segregated work environment. Professors could also take the opportunity to educate their male students on the gender demographics, and to encourage them to not become a factor that influences women to not want to enter the field of photojournalism or to leave the profession. Student chapters of the National Press Photographers Association could help pair female photojournalism students with female mentors already working in the field. If a female student has someone who understands what it is like to be a woman in the highly male saturated work environment, that student would have someone to talk to throughout their career about the struggles women face in the field. This female companionship may be an important factor missing from the working environments of women in photojournalism.

In general, journalism schools could make an effort to have both men and women teaching photojournalism courses as to provide a diverse set of teaching. In the classroom, photo professors can make sure gender is not a factor when considering the quality of the students' work, and that classroom discussions are productive in terms of gender equality. Professors of photojournalism could also invite successful female photojournalists to guest lecture, so students can see that women can thrive in this profession.

Non-profit organizations such as Women Photojournalists of Washington (WPOW) have the goal of helping women succeed as photojournalists, as well as educate the public on the role

of women in photojournalism.¹ With the results this study has provided, more female photojournalists should be motivated to network in their local communities. Having a support system of women could provide a sense of encouragement and motivation to succeed in the industry. Organizations such as the NPPA could also push initiatives involving women in photojournalism. With their resources, the NPPA could start a mentoring program, or regularly hold conferences honoring the work of women, or provide legal counsel to women experiencing discrimination in the workplace.

Men working in the field of photojournalism could examine these results and reflect on the culture of the sex-segregated industry. Many men may be unaware of their behavior creating an environment unwelcoming to female photojournalists. This research may shed light to men who didn't know the organizational and psychological factors that impact the daily working life of female photojournalists. Together, men and women can work to create a culture that is friendly to others regardless of their gender, and that respects the diverse work different photojournalists bring to the newsroom.

¹ <http://www.womenphotojournalists.org/#!/index>

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Appendix, Variable Information

Variable	Measure	Summary Statistics
Number of women in the photo department (PVA_W)	Raw count of women in the photo department	Range: 0.59 Mean: 0.59 St. Dev.: 2.73
Number of women in the photo department, lagged by 1 year (L.1 PVA_W)	Raw count of women in the photo department, lagged by 1 year	Range: 0.58 Mean: 0.58 St. Dev.: 2.56
Number of men in the photo department, lagged by 1 year (L.1PVA_M)	Raw count of men in the photo department, lagged by 1 year	Range: 0.97 Mean: 1.74 St. Dev.: 4.86
Circulation category (Circ_num)	Categorical measure determined by ASNE; they do not make include the raw circulation numbers as a variable in the data. 1: >500K; 2: 250K-500K; 3: 100K-250K; 4: 50K-100K; 5: 25K-50K; 6:10K-25K; 7: 5K-10K; 8: <5K.	Range: 1.8 Mean: 2.68 St. Dev.: 1.40
Size of news staff, total number of newsroom journalism workers (Total)	Raw count of journalism employees in the newsroom	Range: 1, 1091 Mean: 25.3 St. Dev.: 66.6
Obs= 1479		

Vita

Andrea Briscoe, of Commerce, Georgia, received dual bachelor's degrees in journalism and political science at the University of Georgia in 2012. Afterwards, she entered graduate school in the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University. After completing her first year of course work and serving as a research assistant to Dr. Chris Weber, she was offered a position as Governor Nathan Deal's photographer. After taking a semester off from school, she was able to continue working in the governor's office while finishing her degree long distance. She will receive her master's degree in December 2014 and plans to continue her political photography work before pursuing an academic career.