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Recommended Citation
Geertsema, M. (2009). Women and News: Making Connections between the Global and the Local. Feminist Media Studies, 9 (2), pp. 149-172.

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Women and News: Making Connections Between the Global and the Local

Margaretha Geertsema, Butler University

Abstract: In an era of increasing globalization, women continue to be underrepresented and stereotyped in national, international, and global news media. The problem is exacerbated when traditional geographic boundaries are crossed and the media in one country report on issues and events, particularly those that impact women, in another country. The question addressed in this article is how news organizations can best represent women and our diverse lives within this new global context. In an effort to bridge the local-global dichotomy, this article aims to make connections between macro-level theories of cultural globalization and micro-level theories of feminism. Three scenarios of cultural globalization, as proposed by Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2004), are extended to show their relationship with journalism, feminism, and story stances. The article shows how the clash of civilizations scenario relates to nationalistic news practices, patriarchal representations, and story stances that only include the voices of the dominant group. Similarly, it shows how the scenario of cultural homogenization relates to cultural imperialism, "global feminism," and a story stance that homogenizes women's lives. Finally, it shows the relationships among cultural hybridization, glocalized journalism, transnational feminisms, and story stances that give voice to underrepresented groups.

Keywords: Cultural globalization, feminism, journalism, theory, representation, women

Introduction

Globalization, or an increased worldwide interconnectedness, has become the defining condition of the world in the twenty-first century (Tony Schirato & Jennifer Webb 2003). Yet, the impact of this changing world on women needs to be questioned because of continued inequalities and divisions. Macro-level theories of globalization typically focus on political and economic aspects of national politics without attention to the micro level of identity politics and gender issues (Carla Freeman 2001). In fact, feminists have pointed out that women are often excluded from globalization debates (Annabelle Sreberny 2001) and that globalization language is offensive to women (J.K. Gibson-Graham 1996).

The question addressed in this article is how news organizations can best represent women and our diverse lives within the context of globalization. As such, the article will show connections between theories of globalization that operate on the macro level of national politics, and feminist theories that operate on the micro level of identity politics. More specifically, this article will show how approaches to journalism correspond with versions of feminism and ultimately representations of women in the news media. The scenarios for cultural globalization set out by Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2004) will be developed further here as they relate to feminisms and Ruth Seymour's (2003) story stances of the representation of minority groups in the news media.

When thinking about the representations of women in the news media, several geographic levels of analysis will be taken into account. The first level considered is how women and women's issues are represented in the news media of a nation, for example how Indian women are represented in the Indian media or how US women are

represented in US media. The second level considers how a nation's media represent women from another nation or region, for example how South African women are represented in US media, or how US women are represented in Saudi media. The third level of analysis, and the one most relevant within the context of the changing media landscape, is how women are represented in media that are produced and consumed across national boundaries, for example through international news agencies or other globalized forms of journalism.

The typology developed here does not have clear-cut boundaries but should rather be seen as dealing with degrees on a continuum. For example, in differentiating between local, global, and local-global (glocal) journalism, and especially in extending these to the representation of women in the news, a variety of factors should be considered: the location of the news organization, reporter, and sources; the inclusion of women; and story stances employed. In the best-case scenario of glocal journalism, where news is produced and distributed for global consumption, the news organization does not have a strong national affiliation but rather depends on local bureaus and reporters; includes sources impacted by issues and events, particularly women; and employs progressive story stances. Since the nation-state remains strong, very few news organizations do not have a strong national base. However, even if only some of these characteristics are visible, journalism can be seen as becoming glocalized. While I realize this project is rather ambitious and perhaps sometimes reductive in an attempt to make the various positions fit into chosen categories, I believe the typology can make an important theoretical contribution to our understanding of the relationship between globalization and women's representation in the news media.

Globalization and Feminisms

In the age of globalization, the question about the nature of multicultural/global/transnational feminism(s)/womanism is attracting increasing attention from scholars (for example Amrita Basu 1995, 2003; Chandra Mohanty 2003a, 2003b; Nancy Naples 2002; Uma Narayan 1997; Susan Okin 1999). As Naples (2002) states: "The terms global, transnational, international and 'the' grassroots remain hotly contested among postcolonial, Third World, and international feminist scholars. The terms Third World and postcolonial are themselves contested constructs" (p. 5).

The discussion of feminism as a local or global phenomenon is closely tied with other discussions of the intersections between the local and global. However, several feminist scholars have challenged this local/global dichotomy as well as other binary pairs (Gloria Anzaldua 1999; Amrita Basu 2003; Marianne Dekoven 2001; Carla Freeman 2001; Angharad Valdivia 1995). Freeman (2001) challenges the local/global dichotomy that reproduces the binary pairs of female/male, feminine/masculine, domesticated/worldly, static/mobile, homebound/cosmopolitan, traditional/modern, consumer/producer, informal sector/formal sector, and feminist ethnography/grand political and economic theories by showing how these dualisms are crossed and erased in the life of one young woman. Dekoven (2001) challenges the dualisms of practice/theory, nonwhite/white, periphery/center, the rest/the West, and particular/universal. Indeed, Freeman (2001) argues that the dichotomies of indigenous/transnational, particularism/breadth, provincialism/universality, and South/North should be erased. In these binaries, Freeman points out, "the local … is always the victim of global capitalist domination" (p. 1015).

Several of these dichotomies also appear in the scenarios of cultural globalization discussed by Pieterse (2004), for example local/global, tradition/modernity, the rest/the West, and the clash of civilizations/homogenization. While these scenarios will be used as a framework for further discussion, it should be kept in mind that they are not simple binaries and that they instead overlap and intersect in multiple ways. Indeed, Valdivia (1995) argues that it might be more fruitful to view these binary pairs as spectrums and continuums. Questioning the idea of essential differences between men and women also can increase our understanding of the impact of gender differences in the newsroom.

Female Reporters and the News

Romy Fröhlich (2007) argues that the lack of women working in the media is a serious problem for democratic media worldwide. In fact, Fröhlich believes that while female journalists around the world made some inroads during the 1980s, their position in the media deteriorated since the mid 1990s. Yet, even when female reporters enter newsrooms, the content of news does not necessarily become more gender sensitive. On the other hand, male reporters are also able to report news from a gender sensitive perspective.

The idea that male and female journalists bring something different to the reporting table seems to intuitively make sense to many of its advocates. For example, some editors believe having women in a newsroom makes a difference (Marion Marzolf 1993). Women journalists are seen as being more comfortable reaching out to audiences and trying new styles of journalism, such as public journalism (Jan Shaffer 2003). Female reporters “drew upon a greater diversity of sources, stereotyped less, and wrote more positive stories than did male reporters” (Shelly Rodgers & Esther Thorson 2003, p. 658).

Yet, several scholars and professionals insist that women do not have different news values than their male counterparts (Michael Schudson 2003; Glen Bleske 1997; Ann Sebba 1994). In a study of British journalists, Anthony Delano (2003) states that "women journalists had become so completely assimilated into the journalistic workforce that they need no longer be regarded as a separate group---save for the factor delicately referred to by one authority as the 'gendered restraints of reproductive responsibilities'" (p. 274).

Liesbet van Zoonen (1994) suggests that the reason for this apparent lack of influence on the individual level has to be situated in higher levels of analysis. Indeed, Pamela Creedon (1993) argues that workplace routines and norms force reporters to conform to dominant values. Also, young reporters setting out to prove themselves typically adapt to workplace norms and learn to internalize and rationalize these norms (Creedon 1993). Linda Steiner (1993) argues that the hierarchical and bureaucratic nature of newsrooms renders reporters powerless. Unfortunately, a "macho" newsroom culture seems to be quite stable across countries (Carolyn Byerly & Karen Ross 2006). One can see here the limitations of simply increasing the number of female journalists in the newsroom without fundamentally challenging the way news works. As Lana Rakow and Kimberlie Kranich (1991) point out: "Any improvements in women's treatment in the news will require not simply more coverage of women or more women journalists … but a fundamental change in news as a narrative genre" (p. 9).

<insert Table 1, Extention of Pieterse's scenario's of cultural globalization>

Scenario 1: Vertical Orientation

Cultural Globalization: Clash of Civilizations

The first scenario of cultural globalization offered by Pieterse (2004) is Samuel Huntington's (1993) idea of the clash of civilizations, which involves conflict and rivalry because of cultural difference. Huntington argues that international conflicts in the future will be the result of cultural, historic, ethnic, and religious differences that make civilizations unique. Central to this "West versus the Rest" argument is the tension between traditionalism and modernism, similar to the tension found in Benjamin Barber's (1996) Jihad and McWorld and Thomas Friedman's (2000) Lexus and Olive Tree. Quite often, it is societies that use tradition to oppress women which are seen as the "carriers of the cultural purity of the particular group" (Charlotte Bunch 2001, p. 134).

Nationalist Journalism

The clash of civilizations scenario of cultural globalization relates to news practices that are based in colonialism, ethnocentrism, nationalism, and patriotism. Stephen Reese (2005) refers to this form of journalism as the traditional "vertical" orientation of journalism within the nation state. British scholar James Curran (2002) has, for example, critiqued the Four Theories of the Press developed by Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm (1956) for its "self-absorption and parochialism" (p. 166). Even today, the news media still commonly maintain their national focus, as can be seen in the adoption of a nationalist and patriotic frame of reference by the US news media in response to terrorism (Reese 2003; Silvio Waisbord 2002). Reese (2003) has pointed out that US news coverage of the Second Gulf War promoted a "narrow nationalistic, 'us vs. them,' frame of reference" (p. 6).

Non-feminism: Patriarchy

In this scenario, the dominant group (men) does not take the interests of the less powerful group (women) into account. As such, this approach is not feminist but instead it is patriarchal. In this case, women would be ignored, trivialized, sexualized, and stereotyped in the news media.

Story Stances: "1950s Traditional" and "Service Stories for Larger Group"

In a course handout included in materials for a "Diversity across the Curriculum Seminar" at The Poynter Institute, Seymour (2003) writes that coverage of non-mainstream groups is often created from a dominant group's perspective (also see Lillian Dunlap 2002). This dominant group, while not necessarily the largest group in terms of numbers, is the group that holds power in society. Seymour identifies six story stances, or ways of approaching news stories, and argues that only three of them provide new and fresh perspectives. The story stances are illustrated here with Seymour's examples of news coverage of people with disabilities.

The first two story stances, which Seymour calls "1950s traditional" and "service stories for the larger group," refer to stances the news media traditionally have used and often continue to use today. In "1950s traditional stories," mainstream media pay attention almost exclusively to white, straight, able-bodied, Christian America. This story stance ignores people with disabilities in the news media. In calling them "1950s traditional stories," Seymour emphasizes how outdated this perspective is.

"Service stories for the larger group" uses a similar approach by only providing useful information to members of the dominant group---in this case able-bodied people. These two story stances not only "symbolically annihilate" those who are part of the less

powerful group; they also tend to stereotype them when they are included. These stances show similarities with the "West versus the Rest" ideology discussed earlier in this article.

Application to Women in the News

Based on the discussion above, news in this context is locally/nationally produced and consumed, reporters are local and sources are local. Women would typically be excluded or stereotyped and the "1950s traditional" or "service stories for larger group" story stance would be used.

Unfortunately, there are many examples of the lack of representation of women and of negative or stereotypical representations, whether on the national, international, or global level. In fact, at the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, Section J of the Platform of Action specifically addressed the continuing problems that women across the world face with regard to access and representation in the news media.

The news media commit both sins of omission and sins of commission (Patricia Made, Colleen Lowe-Morna & Alice Kwaramba 2003). Too often, women are simply ignored. More than twenty-five years ago, Margaret Gallagher (1981) said the most important image of women in the media across the world was a non-image: "It is the absence of women in the media output which becomes most striking, once it has been highlighted" (p. 72). Today, the continuing non-image of women is well illustrated by a finding of the most recent Global Media Monitoring Project, which included seventy-six countries, that women still constitute only 21 percent of news subjects---those interviewed or whom the news is about (WACC 2005). Gender-blind reporting, in which

the media fail to report on the impact of issues or events on women, contributes to the lack of women in the news (Made, Lowe Morna & Kwaramba 2003). Not only do women remain ignored, but issues of importance to women's lives continue to be ignored (Leslie Steeves 1997).

When women are included in news discourse, the media often commit sins of commission. As Gaye Tuchman (1978) points out, women are frequently subjected to symbolic annihilation. The Global Media Monitoring Project (WACC 2005) found that women are more than twice as likely as men to be portrayed as victims, and that they primarily appear in the news as celebrities, royalty, or "ordinary people" (p. 17). Women are also frequently represented within their domestic roles and sexual appeal to men (Mieke Ceulemans & Guido Fauconnier 1979), or as wives and mothers, sex objects and glamour girls, virgins or whores, or passive, dependent, and indecisive (Gallagher 1981). In fact, Byerly and Ross (1996) argue that the limited and negative ways in which the news media frame women is a "global phenomenon that has endured over time and media form" (p. 54).

Representations become more complicated when they cross national boundaries, as Edward Said (1979) showed in his work on Orientalism. The focus in international news is typically on political problems, disasters, conflicts, and war, and very little is reported on the lives of women in the limited space dedicated to international affairs (Fran Hosken 1996). The Global Media Monitoring Project (WACC 2005) found that women are less likely to appear in international news (18 percent), than in national (19 percent) or local news (27 percent). Yet, when women are represented in international news, "othering" frequently occurs. Perhaps the most visible case is representations of

Arab women and veiling in the US media (Linda Steet 2000; Karin Wilkins 1995). According to Valdivia (1995), postcolonial women are forced to remain silent partly because of "the Western press's inability to envision such women as speaking subjects on public issues" (p. 15). Rashmi Luthra (1995) argues that the mass media embody modernity whereas women embody tradition: "Thus it appears that when the framework of modern media encounters traditional women, we get a nearly inevitable underrepresentation or absence at the level of artifact because conceptually women are precluded from modernity" (p. 16). The intersection of race and gender contributes to the othering of women, as news reports about the Third World often create an us/them dichotomy, with the "other" represented as unstable and violent, while "us" are being shown as industrialized, ordered, and stable (Peter Dahlgren 1982). Jo Ellen Fair (1993) also found that the US media represent Africa and Africans, whether men or women, in general in negative, stereotypical, and condescending ways. Representations of US women in news media of other countries also tend to be problematic. In a study of the representation of US women in the Saudi press, Smeeta Mishra found that they were represented as "promiscuous and morally unreliable" (2007, p. 270).

On a global level, feminist scholars have written about the lack of content on or about women produced by international news agencies. In particular, Gallagher (1981) points to a 1970s study that found only between 1 and 1.5 percent of stories from mainstream news agencies were about women. In response to the lack of coverage of women by major news agencies in specific and other news organizations in general, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) helped develop five women's feature services between 1978 and 1983 (Byerly 1995). These

services, according to Byerly (1990), for the first time introduced a systematic approach to cover women's issues in international news. Feature stories, in contrast with spot or breaking news, give writers the opportunity to look beyond the often superficial coverage of events and to address underlying structural issues. However, even when the Caribbean Women's Features Syndicate (CWFS) provided mainstream news agencies with ready-made stories on women, agencies did not carry them. The reason, according to Ramona Rush and Christine Ogan (1989), was that feature stories do not fit the "traditional spot and late-breaking news format" (p. 274).

The Inter Press Service, a global news agency founded in 1964, stated since its inception that it would give voice to those who were marginalized, illiterate, unemployed, poor, young people, peasants, trade unionists, and church members (Anthony Giffard 1983; Al Hester 1979). Yet, it chose to support the feature services as a separate source of news about women instead of incorporating women into its own coverage. In particular, IPS participated in the creation of the services in Latin America and Africa (Byerly 1990). After UNESCO funding for the feature services was cut in 1983, these two services were combined into one IPS Women's Feature Service (WFS) in 1986 under the leadership of Anita Anand in Rome. In 1991, WFS became an independent entity based in New Delhi, India. At that time, Giffard and Catherine van Horn concluded that "the most overlooked actors and sources in IPS reports are women, who appear only one-tenth as frequently as male actors and sources" (1992, p. 167).

Realizing this weakness, IPS implemented a "Strengthening Gender Perspectives in IPS News Coverage" project from 1994-1999 with the understanding that this work would continue beyond the initial implementation phase (Patricia Made 2000, 2005;

Patricia Made & Faria Samhungu 2001). A study of news coverage of the Millennium Development Goals by five international news agencies found that IPS "featured by far the highest number and proportion of women actors" with 71.2 percent of men as actors and 28.8 percent of women as actors (Anthony Giffard & Nancy Van Leuven 2005, p. 25). The study also found that IPS paid at least three times as much attention to issues of gender equality than the other news agencies. Yet, the study excluded stories that did not deal with the MDGs and therefore probably not with women's or gender issues. It is therefore impossible to know from this study how women were treated within the total number of stories written by the agencies.

Scenario 2: Horizontal Orientation

Cultural Globalization: Homogenization

Pieterse's (2004) second scenario of cultural globalization is the homogenization of culture as a result of standardization and uniformization brought about by consumerism. This scenario has also been referred to as Americanization, Westernization, modernization, McDonaldization, Coca-Colonization, or Disneyfication. The fear is that cultural differences will disappear and that instead one unified world culture will emerge. Theorists of cultural imperialism (Herbert Schiller 1991; John Tomlinson 1991), dependency, and world systems (Immanuel Wallerstein 1991) have expressed concern about the influence of the West (the core countries) on developing countries (the periphery). Yet, while these macro-level theories point to the inequalities among nations, they typically fail to investigate the impact on women's lives (Joya Misra 2000).

"Global Journalism" and Cultural Imperialism

Reese (2005) discusses global journalism as extensions of the national frame of reference in that "American" or "capitalist" journalism becomes universalized on a global scale. Reese argues that global journalism today struggles with the tension between the traditional "vertical" orientation and a "horizontal" orientation that transcends the framework of the nation state. Global news, according to Reese, might have become deterritorialized, including media such as CNN and the BBC that produce and distribute news for global consumption. Yet, these news organizations continue to have a Western point of view.

Indeed, media critics often blame the global media corporations and news agencies for cultural homogenization because of their adherence to Western news values and focus on Western news (Oliver Boyd-Barrett 2000; Edward Herman & Robert McChesney 1997; Chris Paterson 1998; Terhi Rantanen & Boyd-Barrett 2004; Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi & Karl Nordenstreng 1985). The fear of homogenization was a major element in the New World Information and Communication Order debates of the 1970s, where scholars critiqued the relentless flow of information from the North to the South (Herbert Altschull 1995; Oliver Boyd-Barrett & Daya Thussu 1992; Sean MacBride & Colleen Roach 2004). In this context, development journalism was one of the remedies suggested to give voice to the voiceless. Yet, development journalism in its varying interpretations continued to exclude women's voices (Jo Ellen Fair 1988; Margaret Gallagher 1985; Hannah Pandian 1999; Hemant Shah 1990; Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi 1996).

"Global Feminism"

Some interpretations of "global feminism" relate closely to the ideas of homogenization, cultural imperialism, and hegemony. Most often, the original idea of a "global feminism" is attributed to Robin Morgan, who in her Sisterhood is Global anthology wrote that women share a "common condition" (1984, p. 4). With specific reference to this kind of Western (particularly US) feminism during mainly the 1980s, critics have argued that "global feminism" is homogenizing, hegemonic, narrow, Eurocentric, and imperialist (Amrita Basu 1995; Inderpal Grewal 1998; Inderpal Grewal & Caren Kaplan 1994; Trinh Minh-ha 1989; Chandra Mohanty 2003a, 2003b; Uma Narayan 1997; Hannah Pandian 1999; Kamala Visweswaran 2004). For example, Basu (1995) states that many women are uncomfortable with the idea of feminism because it is seen as bourgeois or Western: "Women from postcolonial states worried that feminism represented yet another form of cultural imperialism, while Western women felt that they were the only feminists" (p. 18). This "global feminism" emerging in the United States, Grewal (1999) argues, constructs US women as saviors and rescuers of oppressed women elsewhere. Yet, not all interpret "global feminism" as hegemonic. Bunch (2001) says the term is useful to refer to the growth of feminism around the world:

> When I speak of the "global" in global feminism, I don't see it in opposition to the "local." This is one of those false dualisms that we must transcend. The greatest strength of women's movements in every region of the world, including the United States, is in the wide diversity of particularized local activity that women do. (p. 133)

While keeping in mind that not everybody understands “global feminism” as potentially homogenizing, sufficient criticism exists to include this term in relation to Pieterse’s (2004) second scenario of homogenization of culture.

A related concern is that the current discourse of women’s rights as human rights, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, homogenizes and simplifies women’s lives (Grewal 1999). One critic, Eva Brems (1997), has called human rights discourse Eurocentric, Western, and individualist. Another critic of the language of human rights, Visweswaran (2004), argues that it “recreates patterns of cultural deviance which fall disproportionately upon some nations and geographical areas, and not upon others” (p. 484). Indeed, Grewal (1998) points out that “discourses of North America as a site of freedom and human rights creates ‘American subjects’ who uphold this belief and assert it through their relations, feminist and non-feminist, with others around the world” (p. 340). Unfortunately, conservatives have used arguments of cultural and religious diversity to attack the very idea of the universality of women’s human rights to limit women’s rights. Bunch and Susana Fried (1996) argue that these groups tried to manipulate the debate about women’s human rights at the Fourth World Conference on Women by claiming that “feminist imperialism” disrespects religion and culture:

> This is not a new debate, but women need to learn better how to argue for universality of rights without employing homogenization, especially around religion and culture, which can be positive for some women … Women must create a more nuanced conversation that can address the tension between calls for recognizing the universality of women’s human rights and the respect for and nurturance of local cultures and oppositional strategies. (p. 203)

The universality of women's rights, as Mallika Dutt (1998) points out, does not necessarily contradict respect for local cultures and difference.

"Neo-traditional" Story Stance

In Seymour's discussion of story stances (2003), she describes the "neo-traditional" story stance as an improvement over the so-called "1950s traditional" story stance and "service stories for the larger group." While the "neo-traditional" stance intentionally includes non-mainstream or non-dominant groups in news coverage, these stories are still written from the perspective of the more powerful group. Part of the problem with this stance is that the writer lacks access to and sufficient knowledge about issues within non-dominant groups. As a result, these members are often portrayed as homogenous and their group as monolithic. Seymour gives the following example: "Debbie Wilbourne is deaf, but she is a successful psychotherapist. (How does she do it?)" (p. 1). This story shows Debbie Wilbourne as the "other," the disabled, and considers how she is able to assimilate into mainstream society. We presumably won't learn much about how people with varying hearing disabilities deal with their career challenges. When this story stance is applied to women in the news, we find that women are "othered" as the less powerful group, often as victims, and that their specific conditions or differences are not interrogated. This stance, then, shows parallels to the homogenization scenario of cultural globalization.

Application to Women in the News

In this category, news is typically produced by a Western news organization, from a Western perspective, and for global consumption. Reporters and sources are Western, and women are "othered" through the "neo-traditional" story stance.

While mere attention to women's issues in the news media might be seen as a step forward, the debate about a potentially global, homogenizing feminism shows that certain well-intended representations might be problematic. One of the main concerns is that women in "other" cultures are represented as victims without an understanding of their varied local contexts. For example, Narayan (1997) writes about her frustration when encountering phrases such as "women are being burned to death everyday in India" (p. 83). According to Narayan, this phrase does not explain the historical context of this practice, it is lacking in details, and it frames all Indian women as victims of patriarchy regardless of their age, class, race, education, or sexual orientation. An example of this kind of writing comes from O, the Oprah Magazine, where all girls are represented as victims that need to be saved. The article is about a young woman from Lesotho who participated in a UNICEF program and the headline reads: "Rescuing the world's girls." Then, in the sidebar: "A charismatic 17-year-old named Puseletso Takane is one of the stars of a UNICEF program aimed at saving at least some of the children in an African country so AIDS-ridden that skinned knees at school are handled with kid gloves. But who will save her?" (Charlayne Hunter-Gault 2006, p. 101).

The debate about "global feminism" in the news media can also be seen in Mohanty's (2003a) criticism of Hosken's journalistic work. Hosken started her own publication, WIN News, in 1975 "to develop a global network to deal with an enormous problem: worldwide communication by, for, and about women" (Hosken 1996, p. 212). While Hosken's work on human rights and female genital mutilation in Africa and the Middle East was groundbreaking, Mohanty (2003a) argues that Hosken consistently defined women "as the victim of male control---'as the sexually oppressed'" (p. 24).

Instead of defining women as powerless and men as powerful in all societies, Mohanty says male violence has to be examined within specific societies to better organize against it. Radhika Parameswaran (1996) writes about a similar problem in a story in the Dallas Observer that described the death of a Christian Indian woman. Yet, the paper referred to her death as a case of a "burning bride" or sati. Parameswaran points out that this article draws on stereotypes that exoticize the Indian woman:

> Universalizing Aleyamma's experiences, the Observer casts all Indian women as a homogenous social group characterized by what Chandra Mohanty calls "common dependencies" and "powerlessness." Such a universalization denies "historical specificity" to the experiences of particular Indian women who have different experiences based on the structures of case, class, geographic location, and religion within which they are located. (1996, p. 79)

Not only is this woman shown as a passive victim of her culture, but Parameswaran argues that the article homogenizes diverse and specific experiences instead of taking this woman's particular circumstances into account. As a result, the article creates a binary opposition between Western culture and other cultures, as such reinforcing the superiority of the West.

When human rights language is used, Visweswaran (2004) points out that in sensationalized media reports of gender asylum cases in the United States, there is "both a stereotyping of non-western cultures as oppressive to women, and a presumption that patriarchal norms, discriminatory laws, and gender-related violence are not also features of western societies" (p. 505). Despite the IPS gender mainstreaming policy, the application of the policy is sometimes lacking and problematic stories continue to appear.

In one example, about the new Afghanistan constitution, the ability of the country to have free and fair elections is questioned while the inclusion of women's rights is praised (Jim Lobe 2004). The only two people quoted in the story are two male representatives of Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. Nobody from Afghanistan was quoted and no women were included in the story. Indeed, the success of the assembly is attributed to "arm-twisting by the US, the United Nations and the international community." These examples illustrate some of the pitfalls journalists should be aware of when writing about women in cultures other than their own.

Scenario 3: Multi-directional Orientation

Cultural Globalization: Hybridization

The third scenario of cultural globalization discussed by Pieterse (2004) is the hybridization of cultures. Hybridization refers to a mixture of cultures and is also known under related terms such as syncretism, creolization, mestizaje, and crossover. In hybridization, two or more cultures are brought together and in the process something new, a so-called "third culture," is created. Hybridization addresses the interplay between the global and the local, when new forms or ideas emerge through processes of regionalization, localization, indigenization, glocalization, and transculturation (Jean Chalaby 2002; Joseph Chan & Eric Ma 1996, 2002; Marwan Kraidy 1999, 2002, 2005; John Sinclair, Elizabeth Jacka & Stuart Cunningham 1996; Ian Weber 2003). In particular, the idea of glocalization, a combination of the local and the global, is emerging as an important approach in the field of international communication (Kraidy 2003). In fact, Roland Robertson (1995) argues that glocalization is a more appropriate notion than globalization because of the interplay between the global and the local: "The

global is not in and of itself counterposed to the local. Rather, what is often referred to as the local is essentially included within the global" (p. 35).

Glocalized Journalism and Contraflow

Journalism that is a combination of the local/vertical orientation and the global/horizontal orientation constitutes glocalized journalism. Reese (2005) describes this journalism as "globalized": a process that involves systematic changes and new relationships brought about by globalization. He writes:

> As with other cultural forms and social practices, the profession of journalism is changing as it adapts reflexively to various forms around the world. These changes are not just transplanted from one country to another; they interact with local contexts, merge with other ideas, and re-emerge to form new global hybrids. (Reese 2005, p. 4)

Glocalized journalism is new and developing in that it incorporates an interplay between the local and the global, both in terms of form and content. While Boyd-Barrett (2000) sees the global news agencies as agents of homogenization, he also comments on the interplay between the global and the local:

> They bring the global to the local and incorporate the local within the global in their day-to-day news-gathering and news-dissemination practices, selling international news to national and local media, and using local and national media as sources of news for global distribution. (p. 300)

The idea of contraflow or "sub-altern flows" (Thussu 2007, p. 5), typically used to describe the growing flow of media products from the South to the North, is related to

glocalized journalism in that it also works to bring about hybridity. As Thussu (2006) argues:

> There does exist a blurring of boundaries, mixing of genres, languages and a contraflow of cultural products from the peripheries to the centres … In the first decade of the twenty-first century, though the West continues to set the international cultural agenda, non-Western cultures are more visible than ever before. (p. 205)

In the case of journalism, contraflow means a growing flow of news, ideas, and voices from the developing world to the developed world.

Transnational Feminisms

When extended to women's issues, similar theoretical approaches can be found in third world, postcolonial, and transnational feminisms (Basu 2003; Dekoven 2001; Grewal & Kaplan 1994; Mohanty 2003a). In contrast to a white, hegemonic US-based feminism, discussed as "global feminism" above, transnational feminisms acknowledge difference. As Wilkins argues: "Gender needs to be understood not as a monolithic condition with universal characteristics, but as aligned with other markers of difference, such as class, race, and religious identity, within broader power dynamics" (2005, p. 269). Similarly, Mohanty (2003a) argues for a recognition of the histories and struggles of third world women against simultaneous oppressions of racism, sexism, colonialism, imperialism, and monopoly capital. Grewal and Kaplan (1994) envision a transnational feminism of solidarity consisting of "affiliations between women from different communities who are interested in examining and working against the links that support and connect very diverse patriarchal practices" (p. 26). Basu (1995) describes hybrid

forms when arguing that while women reject the term “feminism” as Western and bourgeois, they identify indigenous alternatives to Western-style feminism within their own cultural and political contexts. As such, feminism is here embracing the interplay between the global and the local, as advocated by scholars such as Bunch (2001). As Basu (2003) argues:

> There is an alternative to the choice between a religious politics which undermines women’s rights and universalist, liberal feminism, which undermines women’s religious and nationalist loyalties … the local is not merely local, but infused with global influences. (p. 76)

Indeed, Steeves (2007) argues that postcolonial feminism focuses on local events instead of grand narratives, and on the subaltern instead of on elites when addressing questions about the relationship between the local and the global.

Story Stances: “Inner Sanctum,” “We’re Watching You, Too!” and “Service Stories for the Smaller Group”

Seymour (2003) discusses three stances that can produce stories with unexpected and fresh points of view. These story stances are the “inner sanctum,” “we’re watching you, too!” and “service stories for the smaller group.” Seymour describes inner sanctum stories as those stories that journalists can only get access to through trusted acquaintances who allow them into their groups: “These are stories about issues and events and people that are talked about and known about only within an undercovered community” (p. 2). Her example: “Debbie Wilbourne is deaf and a psychotherapist, but some of her deaf acquaintances consider her a sell-out because she prefers to lip-read rather than sign. (Young deaf professionals: straddling two worlds).” (Seymour 2003, p.

2). In this story, Seymour addresses an issue that only those in the deaf community are aware of: the fact that insiders consider one of their own a sell-out because she prefers to lip-read instead of using sign language. As such, she acknowledges differences within the non-dominant group. When applied to women in the news, we see stories that give an insider's perspective into the lives of women while acknowledging difference.

Seymour's second story stance, "we're watching you, too!" gives the perspective of the non-dominant group on the dominant group. Her example:

> John Malish hands you the card explaining his muteness, and can virtually predict what happens next. You'll start talking louder, and depending on the day he'll be exasperated or bemused. (Disability etiquette: What helps and what doesn't help; what is polite and what isn't polite, in conversations and teamwork with deaf, visually impaired, mute, wheelchair-using people). (2003, p. 2)

What Seymour shows here is how a disabled person responds to his "othering" by able-bodied people. When applied to women in the news, this stance presents a story on dominant male society from the perspectives of women. This story stance has parallels with what I call a "Rest versus the West" perspective.

Seymour's final story stance, "service stories for the smaller group," deliberately addresses the needs of non-dominant communities. Again, smaller does not necessarily refer to the number of people in the group but to its lack of power in society. Seymour's example:

> When John Essed arrived at Macomb Mall, he easily found a handicapped parking spot big enough for his van. Then he found out why: The automatic door for wheelchairs---the only one in the entire shopping complex---was on the

> backside of the mall, near a different parking lot. (An investigative accessibility survey: Which department stores, or which malls, have the highest percentage of wheelchair-accessible aisles? How about trained and instructed sales staff (say, for when a customer walks in the door with a white cane or dog?). (2003, p. 3)

This story stance provides information to help disabled people with problems they experience within a society dominated by able-bodied people. When applied to women in news, we see stories that offer solutions and information to help women within a male dominant society, written from a gender sensitive perspective.

Application to Women in the News

In the best case scenario here, the news organization does not have a strong national affiliation but rather depends on local bureaus and reporters; includes sources impacted by issues and events, particularly women; and employs progressive story stances. Here, in contrast to nationalist news and global news, the production and consumption of news happens on a global basis but with the inclusion of local voices, providing some degree of contraflow in ideas from the local to the global.

When taking into account the scarcity of representations of women in the news media, it becomes quite a challenge to envision representations that are neither patriarchal nor homogenizing. In contrast to ignoring and stereotyping women, or approaching women's issues from a Westernized, global feminist perspective, a new approach is needed to integrate the global and the local. At the juncture of transnational feminisms and glocalized journalism, we need representations that acknowledge the particular histories, multiple simultaneous oppressions, varied locations, and complexities of women around the world.

As a result of the IPS's gender-mainstreaming policy, this news agency presents some good examples of gender-aware journalism. Today, the IPS describes itself as "civil society's leading news agency" and "an independent voice from the South and for development" (IPS 2007). As a global news agency with headquarters in Rome, IPS does not have a national base or affiliation, and the agency employs permanent correspondents in twenty-three countries and permanent stringers in seventy-six countries (IPS 2003). As such, IPS is a truly glocalized news organization. As part of the gender-mainstreaming project, IPS revamped its employment and editorial policies and produced a variety of training manuals to mainstream gender in news coverage. Made defines gender mainstreaming as "integrating the concepts of gender, equality, and women's rights into all our editorial coverage, and ensuring that these influence our news agenda" (2000, p. 31). In IPS materials, much emphasis is placed on the intersection of multiple oppressions that women face, as well as difference among women. For example, the Gender and Development Glossary (Beryl Leach 2000) states that "gender is changeable by individuals, within and among societies, and is affected by other factors such as age, race, class, ethnicity and sexual preference" (p. 13).

A story called "Foreign brides reflect changing demographic" provides an example of both an "inner sanctum" and "we're watching you, too!" story from IPS Asia-Pacific reporter Antoaneta Bezlova (2004). This is an "inner sanctum" story because it highlights the difficulties that foreign brides face as women, immigrants, and people with a low economic status, in their own words. All five sources are women who immigrated to Taiwan as foreign brides. The story can also be seen as a "we're watching you, too!" story in that it gives women's perspectives on men. For example, the women interviewed

said men lacked confidence and remained too close to their mothers. As such, the story gives voice to women, acknowledges their local positions, and provides context.

It appears as if other good examples of glocalized journalism that take difference into account are achieved by feminist news organizations that recruit local journalists to contribute materials. Robin Morgan, former editor in chief of Ms. magazine and current global editor, explains the publication's policy as follows:

> It is Ms. policy that (whenever and wherever possible) coverage on women in other countries will be done by feminist reporters from/of those countries, so as to avoid---however well intentioned---insensitivities and errors on the part of "outsider" journalists. Over the years, we've found that this makes an enormous difference in coverage. There is simply no way (especially regarding stories from the Global South) that a visiting, outside journalist, no matter how sympathetic, can approximate the depth, cultural knowledge, context, nuance, even language, of a national. Furthermore, this gives local and "indigenous" women journalists a chance to publish in Ms.---which gladdens their hearts (and our readers). (Personal communication, May 19, 2005)

Ms. magazine, while produced in the United States in English, can be seen as a limited example of glocalized news because its content is produced for global consumption by local writers. While US-based, Ms. has subscribers in seventeen countries.

A story titled "Hong Kong Hustle" in Ms. illustrates an "inner sanctum" story stance (Fiona Ng 2007). The story is about impoverished Chinese women who migrate to Hong Kong for sex work. It is written by Ng, who lives in Hong Kong, and includes two local female sources: one from a university and one from a sex-worker rights group. The

story can be seen as an "inner sanctum" story because it gives readers an insider's perspective to the lives of these women.

Another example is of Women's eNews, a daily online news service that describes itself as an "unbiased source of underreported news about women throughout the world" ("Why Women's eNews has an Arabic version"). According to Byerly and Ross (2006), journalist Rita Henley Jensen launched the Internet-based service in June 2000 and soon expanded its focus from national to international reporting. Women's eNews covers international women's issues on a regular basis through freelance correspondents from over the world. A search of the eNews archive showed 53 international stories published from September 2006 to September 2007.

According to a statement on the Women's eNews Web site, the service realized in 2002 that it had quite a high number of visitors from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and other Arabic-speaking countries: "In fact, the visitors from the Middle East ranked fourth---after North America, Western Europe and unknown---in frequency of visits." At the same time, Women's eNews became aware of several reports that argued for the increased participation and non-stereotypical representations of Arab women in the media. As a result, the service developed an Arabic-language version "that would translate Women's eNews articles into Arabic as well as produce original content for Arabic Women's eNews in Arabic." Women's eNews currently features an Arabic version and has plans to expand to other languages, including Japanese, Spanish, and French.

According to Jensen, the news service avoids problematic representations of women in other countries by obtaining stories from local correspondents: "We use local correspondents and they are reporting on women's issues in that nation---so they are by

definition attuned to what the issues are for women in that nation or community and therefore are able to avoid unintentional insults" (personal communication, May 25, 2005). As such, Women's eNews also represents a limited example of glocalized journalism as a U.S. news organization with content produced for global consumption by local participants.

"Kenyan women push back against campaign violence" (Henry Neondo, 2007) provides an example of a Women's eNews story that uses the "inner sanctum" stance. The story deals with how violence is used to intimidate women who participate in electoral politics. The stance is "inner sanctum" because it gives the insider's perspective of what these women, a non-dominant group in society, experience. It includes quotes from six women who talk about the problem and what they are doing about it. This story, written by Neondo, a male journalist based Nairobi, illustrates that men can also write gender-sensitive stories.

Yet, mainstream Western news organizations that report on women and use progressive story stances can also produce admirable stories. "Lifting the Veil/Afghanistan Unveiled," a co-production of CNN and Channel 4 in the United Kingdom (2006), investigates the lives of women and girls in Afghanistan. The hour-long documentary, independently produced by Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, provides an insider's perspective seldom seen in the media. Obaid-Chinoy, who is originally from Pakistan, interviews a variety of Afghani women: old and young, urban and rural, and educated and uneducated. The documentary also reflects on the strong patriarchal culture of Afghani men through a "we're watching you, too!" stance.

A final example is a story from The New York Times. “Saudi women have message for U.S. envoy” (Steven Weisman 2005) illustrates two of the progressive story stances. The story is about a speech that Karen Hughes, under-secretary of state for public diplomacy, made at an audience of women at a Saudi university. Weisman states that Hughes is charged with “spreading the American message in the Muslim world,” with the implication that she will be furthering an American or “global feminist” message. Yet, when Hughes said she hoped that Saudi women would be able to drive and “fully participate in society” as women do in the United States, the women in the audience challenged her: “Many in this region say they resent the American assumption that, given the chance, everyone would live like Americans.” Here the article takes the stance of an inner sanctum story, giving voice to women from the non-dominant group, namely Saudi women. Weisman goes further in pointing out that this group of women at the meeting with Hughes does not represent all Saudi women, instead, they are members of the privileged elite in one of the more liberal areas of the country. This story also reflects the “we’re watching you, too!” stance when a woman in the audience is quoted as saying that the United States under President Bush had become “a right wing country” and that criticism by the press is “not allowed.” The New York Times, while a distinctly American institution, offers a limited example of glocalized news because convergence with the Internet allows audience members across the world to read its online edition. However, the inclusion of women and the story stances employed justify this example.

The examples of Ms. magazine, Women’s eNews, Channel 4/CNN, and The New York Times, however, are limited because they are Western-based. In the case of Ms. magazine and The New York Times, English is the only language used. Women’s eNews

raises some questions because of the limited number of international stories on the Web site. As for The New York Times, I believe the example illustrates that story content and stance can work toward hybridization and transnational feminisms despite the obvious limitation that it comes from a mainstream, US-based news organization. As discussed above, both Ms. magazine and Women's eNews put a high premium on the judgment of an individual, local reporter to contribute culturally sensitive stories. This reporter, then, becomes what Narayan has described as "the authentic insider" who has "to name and describe problematic features of their cultural contexts" (1997, p. 142). As Pamela Shoemaker and Reese (1996) point out, the individual reporter constitutes only one of five layers that influence news content. As such, news organizations would do well to ensure that the other layers, such as news routines and organizational policies, are conducive to gender-sensitive reporting.

Conclusion

The question addressed in this paper is how news organizations can best represent women and our diverse lives within the context of globalization. This was done by showing the connections between macro-level theories of globalization and micro-level theories of identity politics. It was shown how Pieterse's (2004) three scenarios of cultural globalization show close similarities with forms of journalism, theories of feminism, and the representation of women in the news. News coverage of women in a global world requires that reporters understand the culture they work in, give voice to those who are affected by issues and events, and use progressive story stances.

What this means is that when news organizations ignore and stereotype women, they contribute to continuing misunderstanding and conflict in the world. When news

organizations include women but fail to pay attention to cultural differences and specific contexts, they contribute to a continued cultural imperialism by, perhaps inadvertently, subscribing to “global feminist” ideas. However, when news organizations pay attention to women and issues important to us with an understanding of difference and culture, they may work in the direction of a hybridized culture through contraflow. The news media, then, may act as agents of continuing inequality and tension or work toward improved understanding and harmony.

The dichotomies of macro and micro, global and local, male and female, can to some extent be overcome. Macro-level theories of globalization correspond closely to micro-level theories of feminism. The global can be infused with the local, which remains the ultimate place of resistance and meaning creation. As we see the increasing interconnectedness that is globalization, the news media will face a larger challenge to incorporate local views into the news. Both male and female reporters can employ progressive story stances that encourage gender-sensitive reporting despite a male-dominated newsroom culture. However, to produce these kinds of stories requires an editorial commitment and financial resources, which might be unlikely in an era of profit-driven news. Only those news organizations that honor their responsibility and public service function without being gagged by commercial constraints would be able to go the extra mile.

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Table 1: Extension of Pieterse's scenarios of cultural globalization

	Macro level: national politics		**Micro level: identity politics**	
	Cultural Globalization	**Journalism**	**Feminism**	**Story Stances**
Vertical orientation: Local	Clash of civilizations	Nationalist journalism	Patriarchal	"1950s traditional" "Service stories for dominant group"
Horizontal orientation: Global	Homogenization	"Global journalism" Cultural imperialism	"Global feminism"	"Neo-traditional"
Multi-directional orientation: Glocal	Hybridization	Glocalized journalism Contraflow	Transnational feminisms	"Inner sanctum" "Service stories for non-dominant group" "We're watching you too!"