

Fitting the Frame: Broadcast News Portrayals of Females in the Student Anti-Vietnam
War Movement

Caitlan McCafferty
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The 1960s was a decade of change, and activists pursued these changes for the civil rights movement, peace movement, and the women's liberation movement. The three different causes together composed the "Movement" dominated by students on college campuses across the country:

"In the last few years, thousands of American students demonstrated that they at least felt the urgency of the times. They moved actively and directly against racial injustices, the threat of war, violations of individual rights of conscience and, less frequently, against economic manipulation. They succeeded in restoring a small measure of controversy to the campuses after the stillness of the McCarthy period."¹

The quote is from the Students for a Democratic Society's mission statement. SDS's Port Huron Statement explained that students, male and female, were fighting on campuses in order to achieve social change. In 1965, SDS became more active with the anti-war movement and gained the attention of the national broadcast media. The media started putting the anti-war movement on the national agenda. They had decided that it was now an important movement starting in the United States². In the years following, and most notably in 1968, the media coverage of the anti-war movement increased, as the movement's activities increased.

The broadcast media of the 1960s was completely free of restrictions. The cameras of ABC, CBS, and NBC captured every conflict without fear of censorship. The media went to Vietnam and flooded people's living rooms with the atrocities happening in

¹ SDS, Port Huron Statement, in *The Sixties Papers*, ed. Judy Clavir Albert and Stewart Edward Albert (New York: Praeger Press, 1984), 182

² Gitlin, Todd. *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making & Unmaking of the New Left*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 32-33.

an war, unwanted by many, and the media treated “wars” going on at home in the same manner. It captured children being blown down by fire hoses at the March in Birmingham and cops beating students at the Democratic National Convention³. The media delivered the truth with the images of the protests. However, it also created media frames, which contorted the story to make it easier for the American public to consume the information. The student anti-war movement was one story that the media defined with a news frame.

Broadcast media is attracted to the newest, loudest story, so many of the stories within the student anti-war movement got forgotten. One of the stories was the female experience within the movement. The student anti-war movement was predominantly male-led, and broadcast portrayals of the movement reflected the strong male involvement in the movement. However, female students were also passionate about and involved in the student anti-war movement. Yet, male students marginalized the female student activists, and the broadcast news media covered the male leaders, ignoring female activists and creating the perception that females were only concerned with “women’s issues”. The confusion about the gender composition of each movement is due to the broadcast media’s use of media framing, and it shows the broadcast media’s inability to fully explain complex social and cultural movements.

³ Rodger Streitmatter, *Mightier than the Sword: How the News Media Shaped History*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 2012), 155-187.

Literature Review

The historiography of this topic is three –fold. A history exists for women’s participation in the student anti-war movement, the effects of the media on society and the treatment of women by the media. The topics are important to study broadcast media’s portrayal of the student anti-war movement and its participants. Two articles that discuss the participation of women in the anti-war movement, “Political Development of Sixties Activists: Identifying the Importance of Class, Gender, and Socialization on Protest Participation” and “The Impact of Student Activism on Attitudes toward the Female Sex Role”. Both reach different conclusions about the role of the female in the anti-war movement but have value in their analysis. The first example, Darren E. Sherkat and T. Jean Blocker’s “Political Development of Sixties Activists: Identifying the Importance of Class, Gender, and Socialization on Protest Participation” relies heavily on the *Youth-Parent Socialization* study. The study focuses on the High School graduating class of 1965 and traces their protest involvement in college, which adds a different sect of the population to the scholarly conversation about student protest. They also add another facet to the conversation because they analyze the gender difference in protest participation. From the study they find evidence to support the argument that the social movement participation was caused by socialization and social psychological differences, which accounted for a difference in participation according to gender. They outline the economic and social reasons for students becoming involved in protests. But, their main goal was to solidify the differences between those who participated and those who did not participate. They also find that women participated less than men and attributes the lower participa-

tion to stronger religious beliefs and lower college attendance, as well as, social constructs of gender learned as children determining their roles in their adulthood⁴.

The other aforementioned article takes a different approach to describing the female participation in the anti-war movement. Relying on a different study, James D. Orcutt's "The Impact of Student Activism on Attitudes toward the Female Sex Role", concludes that many women were active in the anti war protests. Orcutt argues that the attitudes about gender evolved in the 1960s, which made women more able to participate in activism. He links participation in the feminist movement with participation in the anti war movement⁵. Orcutt's analysis is about women's participation is very different compared to Sherkat and Blocker's analysis.⁶ And both use statistics and studies as sources, but find completely different conclusions about women's involvement. Orcutt conducted his own study of women on college campuses in 1973 and compares it to the Kammeyer study of 1961 to prove his argument of "change of attitude". Orcutt's conclusion is important because it shows that women were involved with the protests, but unappreciated as activists for the peace movements. Orcutt's article and Sherkat and Blocker's article add to the context for the movement created in Phillip's and Lispet's works.

⁴ T. Jean Blocker and Darren E. Sherkat, "The Political Development of Sixties Activists: Identifying and Influence of Class, Gender, and Socialization on Protest Participation." *Social Forces*, no. 3 (March 1994): 836-838, <http://proxyau.wrlc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ahl&AN=9406224422&site=ehost-live> (accessed September 29, 2012).

⁵ James D. Orcutt, "The Impact of Student Activism on Attitudes toward the Female Sex Role." *Social Forces*, no. 2 (Winter 1988): 383, <http://proxyau.wrlc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ahl&AN=11686618&site=ehost-live> (accessed September 29, 2012).

⁶ Blocker, "The Political Development of Sixties Activists", 826.

Now that the context is established, it is easier to analyze the scholarship on the media and its effects on the public during the period. The work of Todd Gitlin is crucial in the understanding of how the media interacted with the student anti-war movement. Todd Gitlin's book, *The Whole World is Watching, The Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*, starts the conversation about the student anti-war movement and its relationship with the media. Gitlin argues that the media chose to put the student anti-war demonstrations on the national agenda. He takes a communication studies approach to history because he is talking about communication terms like framing, agenda setting, and media influence. He aptly observes that people don't just think something is important; the media has to tell them it is:" [...] people are pressed to rely on mass media for bearings in a obscure and shifting world "⁷. He also observes that the organizers of the movement agitated the media in order to gain more attention. They realized they needed the media's attention in order to have any effectiveness in society⁸. The "unmaking" of the New Left happened when the media started showing the protesters as moderate force. The media wanted to show a balance between moderate protesters and militant protesters so they "played one against the other"⁹. The media manipulated how the public viewed different sects of the protest. Overall, Gitlin makes the argument that the media controlled how the public viewed the protesters, but the protest organizers knew how to take advantage of the media and get themselves the coverage they needed to have success. Gitlin's

⁷ Gitlin,*The Whole World Is Watching*, 1.

⁸ Ibid,29

⁹ Ibid, 217

arguments about the media are important for this project because , coupled with the primary sources, it provides reasoning for why the media effectively ignored the female activists.

Another source that is in direct conversation with Gitlin is Edward P. Morgan in his work, “ From Virtual Community to Virtual History: Mass Media and the American Antiwar Movement of the 1960s”. Morgan refers to television as the primary source of culture, and the virtual community it creates. He is in agreement with Gitlin about media frames and how they create stories surrounding personalities and partisan interest¹⁰. Basically, the scholarship suggests that the media did not think female participation was as important as male participation. Three other scholars provide context for the visual representation of women in media.

In her book, *Mass Media and the Shaping of American Feminism*, Patricia Bradley argues women’s liberation activists were inspired by antiwar demonstrations they were involved in but also excluded from by men. Bradley is commenting, like Orcutt, on women’s involvement in the protests. They seem to both have come to a similar conclusion that women were involved in the protests, but men were the organizers and leaders of the protest. But, Bradley takes that argument a step further to show that the antiwar movement led to women to create their own movement. Bradley goes on to argue that the media portrayed feminists as angry toward the New Left’s male dominated anti-war

¹⁰ Edward P. Morgan. "From Virtual Community to Virtual History: Mass Media and the American Antiwar Movement of the 1960s." *Radical History Review* no. 78 (Fall 2000): 87-89, <http://proxyau.wrlc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=9986915&site=ehost-live> (accessed October 2, 2012).

movement. Also, Bradley provides a lengthy discussion of the stereotypes that the media used to portray women, such as the burning bra image used to describe feminists¹¹.

Another source that speaks more to the portrayal of women is Anessa Babic's dissertation, "Undoing Glory: Constructions of Gender and Patriotism in Post War US Society, 1945-1972". Babic conducts a comprehensive image analysis of images that were important to the portrayal of women between 1945-1972. She argues that during the 1960s and 1970s images challenged the standard notions of women. She uses the images of *Wonder Woman* and a statue, *Barfly* to argue that the women were caught up in a time of social upheaval and confusion¹². She focuses on the women's liberation movement, but also speaks about how women protested to bring their sons and husbands back home. Discussing women and their motivations to participate is important to understanding some of the media biases in their portrayal of the protest.

In addition to Babic and Bradley, Marian Meyers provides more insight to the visual representation of women specifically about the visual representation of women in the news. In the book, *Women in Popular Culture*, Meyers has provided an explanation of the problems female activists encountered in the news. She refers to it as the "scope of the misogynist media". Her source for her analysis is the Global Media Monitoring Project. She writes about the "woman as the victim" image found in broadcast news.

¹¹ Bradley, *Mass Media and the Shaping of American Feminism 1963-1975*, (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press:2003), 50-55.

¹² Anessa Ann Babic, *Undoing glory: Constructions of gender and patriotism in post war US society, 1918—1972*, State University of New York at Stony Brook, 2008, In PROQUEST ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT), <http://search.proquest.com/docview/304357693?accountid=8285>, 179-180.

Women are more than twice as likely as men to be the victim in a news story.¹³ Meyer is using fairly recent studies from the 1990s and early 2000s, however, the concepts she mentions in the above passage are clearly noticeable in the primary documents. Because of this, it is appropriate to link the conclusions made in *Women in Popular Culture* to the questions of this project. Meyer, Babic, and Bradley all add the necessary analysis of the visual representation of women to the scholarly conversation about the history of the anti-war movement and the history of media effects on American society.

This particular project will add to the conversation started by the scholars mentioned in the previous section. Its goal is to complete a first-time analysis of broadcast portrayals of female student activists because it has never been done before. The evidence used for this project is primarily made of broadcast segments from the three major television networks, ABC, CBS, and NBC. The broadcasts are segments referring to some of the major events of the anti-war movement such as: the 1969 Democratic National Convention demonstrations, protests at Columbia and Berkeley, Moratorium protests, and the protest and shooting at Kent State. However, other evidence, such as alternative press articles and essays written by activists, are added for further insight into the movement.

¹³ Marian Meyers, *Women in Popular Culture*, (Cresskill: Hampton Press, 2008), 259.

The Student Anti-Vietnam War Movement

As aforementioned, students were a force for social change during the 1960s. In 1965, the United States increased the amount of troops in Vietnam and the military began its operation of bombing Northern Vietnam. At this time, mass demonstrations began to occur across the country on college campuses. The most well-known student organization was probably the Students for a Democratic Society or SDS. In 1964, SDS had 2,000 members on 75 college campuses, and by 1966 the organization had grown to 200,000 members on 200 campuses. However, the majority of the general student population were not advocating for withdrawal from Vietnam. Students generally supported the anti-war movement, but were not actually involved. However, in 1968 the anti-war movement gained more support. The anti-war opinion was solidified with the failures of the Tet Offensive, a military skirmish that the United States won but the public saw as a sign that the United States was not successful against the North Vietnamese. Students grew more active in their opposition. In 1968, SDS membership totaled 30,000 members on 300 campuses¹⁴. Campus unrest was happening across the country. A major protest occurred at Columbia University during this period. During the spring semester of 1968, the SDS chapter at Columbia effectively stopped the school from functioning normally. The student activists held a strike in which they took control of five academic buildings as well as, the president's office.¹⁵ Columbia became a hotbed of campus unrest. The university

¹⁴ Phillips, *Student Protest*, 56-59.

¹⁵ Ibid, 75

pressed charges against 1,100 people and 79 students were suspended¹⁶. The protests at Columbia show the intensity of campus unrest and student's willingness to do anything in order to achieve change. As the year went on, the protests students were involved only grew more violent.

After the spring of 1968, came the summer of 1968 and the nominating conventions for that year's upcoming presidential nomination. Probably the strongest example of student protest happened at the Democratic National Convention of 1968. The protest was born from "movement organizers proclaiming their intent to force the Democratic convention to confront the war in Vietnam"¹⁷. The demonstration quickly turned violent with the police beating the protesters. The scenes at the DNC shocked the American public and brought national attention to the protest movement.

University of California at Berkeley, like Columbia, was an epicenter for the movement. One anti-war activist, Lee Felsenstein, encouraged students at Berkeley to think about young people's involvement in the Vietnam conflict when he wrote an article, "No Door to Tomorrow", that appeared in the *The Berkeley Barb*. The article focuses on a student from Berkeley that died in Vietnam named Bud Anello. The most important part of this article is that it acts as a sort of call to action for students to protest the war, not just because it was an unjust war, but also because students were the American population fighting the war. Felsenstein's words are powerful and reminded the students at Berkeley

¹⁶ The Columbia Strike Coordinating Committee, "Columbia Liberated", in *The Sixties Papers*, ed. Judy Clavir Albert and Stewart Edward Albert (New York: Praeger Press, 1984), 246.

¹⁷ Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 187.

what they were fighting for and were inciting protest. His article serves as a reminder that every student in America probably knew someone fighting in Vietnam, and it reminded the students what they were demonstrating against. Also, he makes a reference to “gas chambers” alluding to the Holocaust. With that reference, he is saying that most people will do what the government is forcing them to do, but that doesn’t mean that they should do it. Students fought for the ideals that are featured in Felsenstein’s article during demonstrations at Berkeley and college campuses across the country.

Campus protests usually faced strong resistance from authorities, and some student groups thrived from that confrontation. But, 1969, student activists formed a largely peaceful, moderate protest called the Moratorium. One *Quicksilver Times* article called it “impressive” because it gathered 50,000 people united in the anti-war cause in Washington, DC¹⁸. However, more radical parts of the movement disregarded the Moratorium being protest, “designed from the beginning to gain a pat on the back in the pages of The New York Sunday Magazine and benefit only the button sellers”¹⁹. The Moratorium was an opportunity for a mass protest, and student organizers took advantage of that opportunity. But, the movement did not take many cues from the Moratorium, and the campus continued to be the location of most unrest.

Protest continued into the 1970s. One of the most devastating events of the movement happened in May of 1970 at Kent State. Students at Kent State held a protest against the recent bombing of Cambodia initiated by the Nixon administration. The

¹⁸ Sal Torrey and Terry Becker, “Moratorium Day”, *Quicksilver Times*, October 18-28, 1969

¹⁹ Abbie Hoffman, “Free Abbie”, *Quicksilver Times*, , December 8-18, 1969.

protest became violent, and the Ohio National Guard was sent in to break up the demonstration. The students met the National Guard aggressively and within the confusion of that confrontation the National Guard began to fire shots. Ultimately, nine students were injured and four students were killed. Two men and two women made up the four students killed. The names of the students were Allison Krause, Sandra Lee Scheuer, Jeffrey Glen, and William K. Schroeder²⁰. An eyewitness account of the shooting was published in the *Quicksilver Times*. The student described the terrifying feeling of having the National Guard's guns suddenly turn and point towards the students. The student described the paralyzing fear of realizing that bullets are coming to hit him, and how he escaped that barrage of bullets by running to the practice field. But, he also described that trauma of seeing fellow students on the ground and bleeding²¹. The events at Kent State shocked a nation already in pain, and Nixon had his Campus Unrest Commission investigate the incidence. The conclusion was that the National Guard was at fault, and no student had fired a first shot to provoke the National Guard to start shooting²². Kent State marked a notable change in student protest. And as the 1970s continued, the war began its end and students all over the country started just going to college for classes, not demonstrations.

²⁰ABC news broadcast, "Kent State / Students Shot / Reactions / Probe," Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired May 5, 1970)

²¹ "Eyewitness Report: Kent State", *Quicksilver Times*, May 8 -18, 1970.

²² NBC news broadcast, "Campus Unrest Commission/Kent State," Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired August 21, 1970).

Women's Participation in the Student Anti-war Movement

The major events and groups aforementioned are important in understanding the movement, however, it is also important to discuss the demographics of the movement. Both women and men were involved in the student anti- Vietnam War movement: "The student base of the anti- war movement grew, utilizing young men and women whose middle-class homes had held *Life* magazines on coffee tables and whose television sets had been tuned to civil rights coverage".²³ Blocker and Sherkat have suggested that women were less engaged in the anti-war movement: "Women may not have been as interested in the anti-war movement because they were not at risk for the draft. [...]. It should also be noted that women's lower rates of college attendance gave them less exposure to activist networks and contexts."²⁴ However, an all-female group organized early in the anti-war movement challenges this idea. The Jeannette Rankin Brigade was made up of women involved in another anti -war organization, Women Strike for Peace. The Jeannette Rankin Brigade held a protest on January 15, 1968, the opening day of Congress. Women all over the country, dressed in black as a symbol for mourning those killed in Vietnam, marched to the Capitol²⁵. This group shows that the anti-war movement was a cause that some women had an interest in, and it shows that women cared and fought for the anti-war cause.

²³ Bradley, *Mass Media and the Shaping of American Feminism*, 53

²⁴Blocker, "The Political Development of Sixties' Activists", 826.

²⁵ Amy Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 135-138.

Women's involvement in the student anti- Vietnam War movement was a unique experience that was different from the male experience in the movement. Female activists did not lack passion, but lacked opportunities to be leaders in the movement. Two women in SDS, Naomi Jaffe and Bernadine Dohrn wrote an essay about their experience in SDS in 1968. From their experience in SDS they constructed their own idea about their involvement: "We realize that women are organized into the Movement by men and continue to relate in through men²⁶."

In the remaining parts of their essay, Jaffe and Dohrn go on to explain that the exploitation of women is an economic social relationship. And in regards to the anti- war movement, they want "not equal aggressive leadership in the Movement, but the initiation of a new style of non-dominating leadership"²⁷. "The Look is You" shows that women did not lack dedication to the anti- war movement and were willing to change it from the inside. Later accounts mirrored the thoughts of Jaffe and Dohrn. Women's frustrations with student anti-war movement and the positions they were given within the movement grew as the movement continued.

Women felt undervalued and discriminated against by the male activists within the anti-war movement. They were considered to be only valuable in the office doing monotonous secretarial work. In issues of the *Quicksilver Times*, the paper featured articles about the female experience in the anti- war movement. One article explored the condition of women on college campuses. Sue Tod, a student at American University,

²⁶ Naomi Jaffe and Bernadine Dohrn, "The Look is You", in *The Sixties Papers*, ed. Judy Clavir Albert and Stewart Edward Albert (New York: Praeger Press, 1984), 228.

²⁷ Ibid, 232.

wrote about her experience: “What a perfect set up; get a girl secretary to do all the crap work and use her for sex on the side. Men have got it made I must say.”²⁸ With her sarcastic and playful tone, Tod explains what women involved in the movement were feeling. Even in “radical” groups, women were not expected to have drive or ambition for anything besides meeting a husband and starting a family. Her tone indicates the frustration that women involved in the anti-war movement were feeling. Other articles in the *Quicksilver Times* reflect similar feelings among other women. Reggie Sigel wrote, “women are excluded from any important political or policy decisions. Decisions are filtered down to them, and they are supposed to carry them out”²⁹. Linda Carrione wrote about the relationships between the men and women: “Married or unmarried they were also ‘owned’ by men—a Bill’s girlfriend or a ‘Jim’s wife’. Women fought against everyone’s oppression –except their own”³⁰. Young women were starting to realize they needed to create a better situation for themselves, and student involvement in the women’s liberation movement began as an outcome of their experience in the anti-war movement.

Women saw in their experience as a part of the anti-war movement, an oppression that the white male activists weren’t completely aware of themselves. In an essay, a woman who only identified herself as a “Berkeley sister” wrote about the oppression of female activists in the form of a letter to a white male radical:

Why am I writing this? Because you don’t understand yet what it means to oppress a woman. [...]. You represent to me on a person-

²⁸ Sue Tod, “Conditions of Women: On Campus”, *Quicksilver Times*, Oct 18-28, 1969.

²⁹ Reggie Sigel, “Movement Work”, *Quicksilver Times*, Oct 18-28, 1969.

³⁰ Linda Carrione, “True Story”, *Quicksilver Times*, Oct 18-28, 1969.

al level what women in Women's Liberation have been discussing so long. You are the embodiment of male chauvinism and what is so sick about it is that you self-importantly deny it. Like all white male liberals who abound over this shitty earth you are forever denying your elitism and prejudice while you oppress others³¹.

From this essay, it can be noticed that women were clearly angry about the way they had been treated within the movement. Therefore, it makes logical sense that young women would have an interest in women's empowerment and flock to the women's liberation movement. The new dedication to women's empowerment did not mean they were no longer passionate about the anti-war movement. However, female students' commitment to the anti-war cause was largely ignored by the news media because of the frames that were already in place for explaining the student anti-war movement.

Media and the Anti-war Movement

Broadcast media played an influential role during the 1960s. It was one of the first times in history that people could have a protest stream into their living room in color. Because of this almost constant access to broadcast news, the media had a new power in shaping the public's agenda and opinion. One activist, Jerry Rubin discussed the influence of the media on the anti-war movement in an excerpt from his book, *Do It!*:

Walter Cronkite is SDS's best organizer. Uncle Walter brings out the map of the U.S. with circles around the campuses that blew up today. The battle reports. Every kid out there is thinking, 'Wow! I wanna see *my* campus on that map!' [...]. The media does not *report* 'news', it creates it. An event *happens* when it goes on TV and becomes myth³².

³¹ "A Berkley Sister to a Male Radical", in *The Sixties Papers*, ed. Judy Clavir Albert and Stewart Edward Albert (New York: Praeger Press, 1984), 518.

³² Jerry Rubin, *Do It!*, ", in *The Sixties Papers*, ed. Judy Clavir Albert and Stewart Edward Albert (New York: Praeger Press, 1984), 442.

In this passage, Jerry Rubin is discussing the ability of the broadcast networks to make an event important to the American people. Rubin also goes on to write about the power of images: “I’ve never seen ‘bad’ coverage of a demonstration. It makes no difference what they *say* about us. The pictures are the story”³³. The media shaped the movement because they showed the American public what the activists were doing, and the images were shocking to the public. This exposure made the movement important in the eyes of Americans, and the movement had to stay relevant in order to keep this exposure. The media created a frame for the protests to fit into, and this container was complete with ideology, organization leaders, and events.

News frames are crucial in understanding how the media shaped the anti-war movement and put it on the national agenda. Frames are “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual”.³⁴ The media created frames in which they could explain the movement, although these frames shifted over time; the media only paid attention to parts of the movement that fit in to its definition of the anti-war movement. The media created a sort of theater when it came to the student anti-war movement with its own captivating drama.

News has to be captivating to the public; therefore, the media would pick exciting stories to feature on the news. As Todd Gitlin states in his book:

From the media point of view, news consists of events; which can be recognized and interpreted as drama; and for the most part the news is what is

³³ Ibid, 443.

³⁴ Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 7.

made by individuals who are certifiably newsworthy, he or she has been empowered, within limits, to make news³⁵.

The media needed interesting characters to complete the drama; therefore they began to make the leaders of the movements into the celebrities of the anti-war movement. These people put a face to the movement and were instantly recognizable by the American public. Mark Rudd, an SDS leader at Columbia University, is an example of a celebrity leader. The media elevated their status as leaders, but the leaders also knew what rhetoric would be the most attractive in a news story³⁶.

The media paid attention to the most inflammatory rhetoric. The loudest, most violent protests were seen as the most newsworthy, and so the protests followed suit³⁷. However, once the protests started getting too violent, the media changed its frame. Todd Gitlin explains that the media began to favor more moderate protests, which is why the media was in favor of the Moratorium movement: “As the war lost legitimacy and popularity, antiwar activity became respectable. Within the general shift in political momentum, the media now helped frame the respectable opposition as an explicit alternative to the radical, confrontational Left”³⁸. The evidence shown in the trajectory of the media and movement’s relationship shows that the media was more concerned about their own message than relaying the absolute truth to the public. However, an important part of the

³⁵ Ibid, 146

³⁶ Ibid, 146-153.

³⁷ Ibid, 179-183.

³⁸ Ibid, 209.

relationship is the movement's own manipulation of the media. The leaders knew they could become a face for the movement or create a situation that the media would definitely cover. The media and activists in the movement used each other for their own agendas. But, a group both, the media and movement, ignored were women.

Female activists did not fit into the broadcast media's frame for the student anti-war movement. The Jeanette Rankin Brigade was the first all women antiwar protest and the broadcast media did not cover it. Something that was the first of its kind seems newsworthy, but because it did not fit into the already defined image of an anti-war action the press effectively ignored it³⁹. However, the news frame established for the movement is not the only reason for media's ignorance. Stereotyping is a product of the dominant ideology, and it is used as a way to explain information within a media frame⁴⁰. This stereotyping within the mass media accounts for their ignorance of female students when covering the majority of the student anti-war movement. When analyzing the actual clips from broadcast news segments, one will notice the stereotyping and astounding, clear, preferential treatment towards men.

Portrayals of the Student Anti- war Movement

In order to understand the media's effect on the student anti- war movement, one must analyze the portrayals of the students and the perception of the movement that the media created. The major events that marked the movement were the demonstrations at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, the Moratorium protests, and the protest

³⁹ Ibid, 182.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 265-267.

at Kent State. However, there was near constant coverage of general campus unrest throughout the country. Media coverage of the events gave the public a unique perception of the student anti- Vietnam War movement. During the period, there is a clear change in the how the protests were covered. The change over time mirrored the two frames the media established: the frame for violent, dramatic protest, and the other frame encouraging moderate protests. The DNC, campus unrest, and Kent State fit into the drama news frame. The moderate news frame defined Moratorium, along with, the actions of the 1970s.

One of the major moments of the student anti war movement that provided an opportunity for the news media to exploit drama was the demonstration at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Protest groups such as the Yippies and Students for a Democratic Society were at the Convention staging mass demonstrations against the Vietnam War. The mass demonstrations were met with extreme violence and police brutality. One of the most memorable images from the demonstrations was activists shouting “The whole world is watching! The whole world is watching!”⁴¹ The famous phrase explains the media’s involvement in the demonstrations. It showed every moment of the horrific violence.

During this protest, the coverage was sympathetic to the protesters, but it also was shaped by the reporters’ own experiences during the protest. Because it was already a major political event, the media was in Chicago covering the Convention and the protests. The images of the protest were alarming to the public. In many broadcasts, NBC showed

⁴¹Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 187.

the horrific experience of the protesters. On August 27th, NBC aired a broadcast that depicted a protest in Lincoln Park. During the protest, the protesters attempted to plant the Vietcong flag in the park. The police began beating the protesters, as well as, the newsmen, trying to cover the event. The broadcast showed the footage of police beating the protesters, and it included accounts from eyewitnesses. One of them was a visibly injured reporter, John Evans. He was shown in the interview badly injured with a large, bloody wound on his head. He recounted the event for the audience, and described his experience with the police threatening him and eventually beating him. An interview with Newsweek reporter, James Jones, revealed to the audience that the police were shouting “kill,kill,kill” when confronting the protesters. Another interview was with a priest. Rev. Penn described the brutality and the disturbing gleeful attitude of the police while beating people⁴². From the interviews, the audience got the message that the police acted wrongly during the demonstrations. This broadcast segment is interesting because it is detailing complex issues. Broadcast media fought for what they believed was the right message. However, as the movement changed and became more active, the media’s message changed.

As the Vietnam War became increasingly unpopular, the student protest groups became more active. Broadcast networks did many reports of campus unrest during their evening news programs. Two universities that the networks focused on were University of California at Berkeley and Columbia University. NBC did a broadcast at the beginning

⁴² NBC news broadcast. “Convention/Demonstrations/Violence”, Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired August, 27 1968).

of Berkeley's 1968 fall term at their annual "Fun Fair". The broadcast reported about the students at the university, and called the university "model for young rebellious people everywhere"⁴³ But, reporter, John Chancellor, tried to stress that every student at Berkeley is not an activist: "They turn up at the rally, listen to the arguments, even though their minds may be on tomorrow's chemistry test".⁴⁴ Using language like "passionate" or "activist" created an image of Berkeley that was less violent than other campuses⁴⁵. After he quelled the public's fears that every student was a radical activist, Chancellor interviewed some of the students involved in the movement. He interviewed two male students: one from the Independent Socialist Club, and one from SDS. Both expressed the need for academic freedom on the University's campus⁴⁶. NBC also featured a report about Columbia University during the beginning of the 1968 Fall Term. The impression created by each report is very different. The Columbia University students seemed far more radical.

In the Columbia University report, the students are protesting the suspension of activists. The students had held a protest the previous May that seized several buildings forcing the administration to close buildings during the end of the 1968 spring term. The report featured Mark Rudd, an SDS leader, making a speech to students, and police attempting to break up the protest at the registration building⁴⁷. The report included lan-

⁴³ NBC news broadcast. "Campus Unrest/Berkley" Vanderbilt Television News Archive. (originally aired September 23, 1968)

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ NBC news broadcast. "Campus Unrest/Columbia", Vanderbilt Television News Archive. (originally aired September 18, 1968)

guage like “militant”, “inflammatory”, and “seized”. Because the report described the students this way and showed them in conflict with police, the impression left for the viewer is far more frightening than the one described at Berkeley. The reports explained the differences of the campuses very well, but they also created a degree of confusion for the viewer. The report on Berkley seemed to be describing the students more fairly because Chancellor stressed that not every student was active in the movement. But, with the report on Columbia, the students seemed to be the enemy. SDS was shown as radical and violent. The conflicting messages created confusion about the student anti – Vietnam War movement. Another factor that created confusion was the overlapping of many other social movements. One scholar, Arnold H. Miller, explores the confusion created by different sects of movement.

In his article, “Perceptions & Recommendations of Activists in the Vietnam Protest Movement”, Miller explores the reality of what the protesters wanted in spite of the general misconceptions about their motives. He conducted a study of activists in Pittsburgh. He than created two categories in which he placed each of his subjects. The first group was made up of people that disagreed with the “basic objectives the United States appeared to be pursuing in Vietnam”. He called this group the AABOs⁴⁸. The other group objected to “the strategy the United States was using to achieve these objectives”, and this group was called the AASs.⁴⁹He interviewed ninety-four people. Thirty -eight

⁴⁸ Arnold H. Miller, 1971, “Perceptions and & Recommendations of Activists in the Vietnam Protest Movement” , *Palgrave Macmillan Journals*, no. 2: (September 2000), 367, <http://www.jstor.org.proxyau.wrlc.org/stable/3234116> (accessed October 1, 2012).

⁴⁹ *Ibid*,368.

were in the first group, and fifty –six were in the second group⁵⁰. From his study, he concluded that both groups create a perception of the movement independent from each of their interests:

The combination of differing sets of perceptions and differing policy recommendations result in important differences between AABO's and AAS's. Although there is some similarity in the responses of the two groups, the overall picture that emerges indicates the existence of two distinct groups, each having its own "reality world" and each making distinct types of policy recommendations.⁵¹

The discoveries that Miller made in his study support that the anti- war movement was made up of many different people with many different interests. Because of this complexity, the broadcast media did not have a message for a cohesive movement. The differences within the movement created an impression of confusion within the movement, and it was difficult for the news media to fully explain the movement in segments only three to seven minutes long. As the protests raged on through 1968, the news media covered them and the continuing changes happening due to campus unrest.

Another point of confusion coming from the news was about female participation in the student-anti war movement. Female students involved in the anti-war movement were effectively ignored in the news because of the media frames used to explain the movement. As aforementioned, women were passionate about the movement. The Jeanette Rankin Brigade is only one example of how the media ignored women within the anti-war movement. The only times anti – war female activists appeared in the media

⁵⁰ Ibid, 368.

⁵¹ Ibid,387.

was in the background or as the organization's spokesperson. In 1969, NBC aired a broadcast about a demonstration at Radcliffe, the female counterpart of Harvard, and the segment utilized an existing stereotype called "women as victim image"⁵². Eighteen female students were put on probation because of a sit-in that occurred in a campus building. The male student from Harvard and fellow Radcliffe students held a demonstration and questioned the President of the school, Mary Bunting. The broadcast was about the female students, but the viewer does not hear one female student voice. The entire segment focuses on the male students coming to the female students rescue. The media made intelligent women seem like the damsels in distress that the boys from Harvard had to come save. The broadcast is intended to tell the story of women at Radcliffe, but NBC does not tell the story of the women, but the men of Harvard⁵³. The broadcast about the female students at Radcliffe fit into the model of the student anti-war movement because it focused on the radical men of SDS, and not the students at Radcliffe College.

Like other campus unrest the shooting at Kent State fit into the drama of the anti-war movement. The shooting at Kent State was probably the most jarring event in the history of student anti- Vietnam War movement. A May 4, 1970 protest on the campus of Kent State ended in the death of four students. The National Guard was sent in to control the protest and misunderstandings led to the shooting. Broadcast news covered the event and commented on the change it signaled in the student anti- war movement. . At the protest, Allison Krause, one of the girls that died, placed a flower in the rifle of a National

⁵² Meyers, *Women in Popular Culture*, 259.

⁵³ NBC news broadcast, "Harvard/Radcliffe/Campus Unrest", Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired April 28, 1969).

Guard soldier saying “flowers are better than bullets”⁵⁴. She also seems to be the student that was focused on during the coverage of the tragedy at Kent State. However, no female students voices were heard in interviews. For example, an ABC broadcast used Allison Krause’s story as a lead-in for their coverage of Kent State. But, they interviewed a male student about his experience. The media made a conscious choice to not find a female student and use the opinions of a male student. It is also clear that they had that opportunity because it is known that women were at the protest that resulted in the Kent State shooting. The media used the human- interest story of Allison Krause to hook the audience in to the story at Kent State, but failed to allow female students to express their experiences at the shooting.

A CBS broadcast made similar choices in a broadcast on May 5, 1970. The broadcast provides an overview of the shooting with violent images. But it also features an interview with a male student who was wounded. The report also takes advantage of Allison Krause’s story. CBS reporters interview Krause’s father. He explains his daughter’s activism and his utter heartbreak at the lost of his daughter. The male voices in both the ABC broadcast and the CBS broadcast are valuable to the story of the Kent State shooting⁵⁵. However, the coverage of Allison Krause and the images from the shooting prove that women were involved in the protest. But, the media does not choose to highlight

⁵⁴ ABC news broadcast, “Kent State / Students Shot / Reactions / Probe”, Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired May 5, 1970).

⁵⁵ CBS news broadcast, “Campus Protest/Kent State,” Vanderbilt Television News Archive.

those stories, they continue creating stories from the pre-defined news frames highlighting only male centric stories.

Later news coverage of Kent State did not utilize Allison Krause's story. NBC covered the end of the Kent State hearings in a broadcast on August 21, 1970. The National Guard claimed that they did not fire the first shot, however that claim was dismissed. During the segment, the broadcast included footage of hearing and testimony from students, as well as, police. The testimony from one student revealed that the guardsmen were ordered to shoot. Another testimony was from a student who was a victim of the shooting. He joked around about his experience, but it was obvious that he had been through a traumatic event. The police chief of Kent's testimony was also featured. He commented on the subversive activities of students and called the groups "splinters off the communist party"⁵⁶. The Campus Unrest Commission led the hearing, and it created a report for Nixon. On October 16th, NBC broadcasted a segment about the Commission's report. The National Guard was absolved of any legal responsibility and the Campus Unrest Commission considered the actions at Kent State acts of self -defense⁵⁷. NBC also aired a broadcast about changes on campuses that happened due to the tragedy at Kent State. NBC opened the broadcast with news that another student at Kent State was indicted and facing criminal charges. But, the report focused on a forum held at Ohio University that attempted to better relations between police and students. The police

⁵⁶ NBC news broadcast, "Campus Unrest Commission/Kent State", Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired August 21, 1970).

⁵⁷ NBC news broadcast, "Kent State/Ohio Grand Jury/Report/ Reactions," Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired October 16, 1970).

chief, James Ahearn, addressed the students about the Kent State tragedy. The students accepted him well, and they seemed happy to listen to him in interviews.⁵⁸ The coverage of Kent State is interesting because it creates sympathy for the students, but also calls for a change on campuses. It spotlights Ohio University for beginning to change the relationship between the authorities and students. However, it still mainly focuses of the male participants of the movement, and only uses a female character toto hook viewers on the story. From the coverage of Kent State, it is clear that the media wants to support the beginning of change and the end of violence on college campuses.

As the war raged on at Vietnam and on the streets in American cities, the media changed its frame for the student anti-war movement. Broadcast media continued to cover the negative effects of the movement, but also the media started to shift the narrative when it began to encourage moderate forms of protest. An example of moderate protests they encouraged was Moratorium. Moratorium was a peaceful protest that the media clung to in order to encourage moderate alternatives. The Moratorium organizers were David Hawk and Sam Brown. They were a part of the moderate anti- war movement, and they began building a base of campus support for their idea of de-centralized protests that would be held in Washington, DC during the fall of 1969⁵⁹.

The organizers were interviewed for an ABC broadcast, and one organizer, in addition to Hawk and Brown, was focused on during the segment. ABC set out to explain to their viewers who were behind the large movement growing in popularity. In the seg-

⁵⁸ NBC news broadcast, "Ohio/Kent State/Ohio University/Campus Unrest," Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired October 22, 1970).

⁵⁹ Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 217.

ment, the reporter, Gregory Jackson, features David Hawk, David Mixner, and Sam Brown the organization's leaders. However, the segment also features Marge Sklencar. She was another integral part in the organization of the Moratorium movement. She was responsible for "the money, breaking up arguments, and she knew everyone"⁶⁰. She also worked in the office at least "18 hours a day"⁶¹. Jackson called her "extraordinary" and seemed amazed when she was able to rattle off the names of people all of the country involved in the Moratorium planning. The viewer gets the impression that Marge is not an ordinary female student, and that she is an over achiever. This portrait of Marge perpetuates the stereotype of weak women. However, the majority of the Moratorium coverage stayed true to the predefined male portrait of the movement.

During 1969, the broadcast networks continued featuring moderate responses to the war. In a broadcast on Oct 6, 1969, NBC reported that Congress was not in support of Nixon's handling of the war. They also reported that many members of Congress would support the Moratorium protest. Nixon's response to the protest was that he would not change any policy due to criticism, and he wanted a "moratorium on war criticism".⁶² On October 13th, NBC aired a Georgetown student reading a letter he received from Nixon. In the letter, Nixon again refused to be swayed by any protest. But, Randy Dicks, the student, believed that the Moratorium protest would go on despite Nixon's attitude. Also, at

⁶⁰ ABC news broadcast, "Vietnam Moratorium Organizers", Vanderbilt Television Archive, (originally aired October 10, 1969).

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² NBC news broadcast, "Vietnam Criticism/Cong", Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired October 6, 1969).

the end of the segment, reporter, John Chancellor, predicted that Moratorium would be a “big and important” event⁶³. Both of these broadcasts show the general support of the media for the Moratorium protest. It is important to analyze the Moratorium event because of the media involvement. They had been reporting violence and campus unrest, and they wanted to support a more peaceful protest. Todd Gitlin explains possible motivations for the media’s interest in the Moratorium movement.

In a chapter of the *The Whole World is Watching* named “Elevating Moderate Alternatives”, Gitlin explores the media’s coverage of the Moratorium protest:

Before the first big Moratorium day, October 15, 1969, newspapers began to publicize the upcoming demonstrations, giving the dates and schedules of the varied events. [...] They did not do so for the SDS antiwar march of April 1965). The media were amplifying the moderate alternative to militancy, willy-nilly. In the process, of course, they were far from inventing the distinction between moderates and militants (radicals). Both segments of the antiwar movement had their own reasons for polarizing. [...] The Moratorium “came across constructive and gentle”⁶⁴.

From Gitlin’s analysis, two reasons for the media’s portrayal of the Moratorium protest emerge. The Moratorium organizers decided to capitalize on their moderate views and garner media support. The media wanted to support moderate activists because it was a better perception of the students for the public. Dividing the protesters into two groups, moderates and radicals, was an easy template for a news broadcast. The news media cov-

⁶³ NBC news broadcast, “Vietnam / Moratorium / Nixon and Dicks”, Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired October 13, 1969).

⁶⁴ Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 219. He is quoting an interview with David Hawk from November 12, 1972.

ered campus unrest, but were more concerned with major events that the public could easily understand.

Another later broadcast also supported moderate choice made by student protesters. In May of 1970, CBS aired a segment on a new organization on Yale's campus called "Movement for New Congress". CBS featured them because they believed that the demonstrations of other anti-war groups weren't working. Movement for New Congress thought that they needed to work within the political system. The segment opened with a male student getting his haircut, and the reporter calling it an "unusual sacrifice"⁶⁵. The segment went on to feature the organization's actions in support of congress candidates. They were campaigning for Congress candidates that supported anti-war ideals. And the segment ended with reporter, David Culhane saying, "These young people are not being destructive and violent, they are working peacefully; within the system for the changes they want"⁶⁶. The coverage of events like the Moratorium or an organization like Movement for New Congress is an attempt by the broadcast media to support moderate alternatives to violent forms of protest.

The media continued to support the moderate form of protest as the movement continued in to the last years of the Vietnam War. The media even decided when the conflict between the students and authority was over. In 1973, the broadcast media saw campuses returning to normal. CBS aired a segment in which reporter Eric Sevareid analyzed

⁶⁵ CBS news broadcast, "Systemized Students", Vanderbilt Television News Archive (originally aired May 23, 1970)

⁶⁶ Ibid.

the student movement. He believed the students were “nostalgic for quieter times”⁶⁷. The report is condescending to students and just speculating on their reasons for inactivity. But, Severeid words encouraged the students to be moderate and inactive. The analysis from CBS shows the media’s generalization of the student movement, which created misconceptions about the movement.

Like CBS’s analysis, ABC reported about the changing mood on college campuses in 1973. The report focuses on Berkeley because it was a center of campus unrest during the anti-war movement. Mary Harrington, a woman involved in SDS, is interviewed about the changes going on within the New Left and on college campuses. She says one sentence in a three minute and twenty second segment: “I think the Left is sort of deciding what to react to beside the war since its supposedly over”⁶⁸. The segment goes on to include two more interviews from two males. It is important to note that the reporter for this segment was a female. The female reporter may account for Mary Harrington being included at all in the segment. The media frames created outlines for reporters so the student anti-war movement had a narrative that the American public could follow the story simply. Coupled with the discrimination within the movement, female student activists did not fit into that media frame, therefore they were not featured in coverage of the student anti-war movement. However, female student activists fit into a different frame—the one defined for the Women’s Liberation movement.

⁶⁷ CBS news broadcast, “Analysis(Student Movement), Vanderbilt News Television Archive, (originally aired February 20, 1973).

⁶⁸ ABC news broadcast, “Student Movement,” Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired May 4, 1973).

Portrayals of the student anti- Vietnam War movement are important when analyzing the movement. The media had a strong effect on the movement because it created a perception of the movement for the public. Because of the constant showing of violence and interviews of student leaders, the perception of the students involved in the movement was believed to be the more radical. The perception of radicals can be noticed when analyzing interviews with people that are not students. The older generation of Americans perceived the students as radical communists⁶⁹. However, an analysis of the Youth-Parent Socialization Panel confirms that students learned their politics from the older generation, more specifically their parents⁷⁰. Their analysis also confirmed that many factors went into a student's activism. All of these factors could not be described within a short news segment. Therefore, the two categories of militant or moderate, were created within the media's frame for describing the anti war movement. When analyzing the general campus unrest coverage with the coverage of major events like the Democratic National Convention demonstrations, Moratorium protests, and tragedy at Kent State, it is noticeable that coverage changed over the years. It started with a more sympathetic picture of the protester during the Democratic National Convention. But, as the years of protest continued, the student demonstrator was understood to be a male, militant radical, and the media only encouraged moderate protests.

The news media created a male-dominated portrait of the student anti-war movement, which left no room for female activists to have their voices heard. Throughout the

⁶⁹ NBC news broadcast, "Campus Unrest Commission/Kent State", Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired April 21, 1970).

⁷⁰ Blocker, "The Political Development of Sixties Activists", 823.

time of the Vietnam War, women were active in the antiwar movement but the media only covered female activists if it fit into the media's existing stereotypes. The media confused the American public about the true motivations of the protesters, who the activists were, and about the entire anti- Vietnam War movement.

Perceptions of Female Activists

Women did not fit into the news frame constructed for the student anti-war movement, but they did fit into the one created for Women's Liberation Movement. The media used stereotypes and a news frame that included similar factors to the one used for the anti-war movement. The frame was built from stereotyped images, leaders like Gloria Steinem, and the drama of demonstrations. Patricia Bradley, quoting Florynce Kennedy, explains that from this frame, female activists grew to distrust the media:

“For as we all know from reading the papers and watching TV, feminists are nothing more than child-hating, white middle-class lesbian, who are mainly interested in burning their bras and being called ‘Ms.’. And beside, they’re too homely to get a man. We also know from reading ladies’ page profiles and interviews that all women who have ‘made’ it, did it by themselves and are ‘no women’s libbers.’ They say so themselves when the reporters ask them. And the reporters always do”⁷¹.

The networks set up a similar frame for the women's movement that they set up for all social movements. The frame was littered with stereotypes and misconceptions, but it helped the American people digest the information easier. An example of the frame came in an ABC broadcast about the demonstrations supporting women's equality and the Equal Rights Amendment. The lead for the segment is a quote from Spiro Agnew,

⁷¹Bradley, *Mass Media and Shaping American Feminism*, 50-51. Bradley is quoting Florynce Kennedy (1997:27).

Nixon's vice president: "Three things have been difficult to tame: "fools, the ocean, and women. We may soon be able to tame the ocean, but fools and women will take a little longer"⁷². The segment goes on to report on the demonstrations and the speeches about the Equal Rights Amendment and the ideal woman. It also reports on the demonstration on Wall Street. The media's bias is noticed because the reporter covering the mass demonstrations is female and the one covering Wall St. is male⁷³. The female reporter seems generally supportive of the demonstration. Her part of the segment is mostly made up of the women's speeches and a voiceover. However, the male reporter seems less enthralled with the movement saying, "Amusement prevailed among the overwhelmingly male crowd"⁷⁴. The segment is filled with stereotyping that makes it seem as if women's liberation activists are not going to be successful in changing anything. The broadcast is bookended with misogynistic quotes that undercut any positivity for the women's movement in the segment: with the lead in being the Agnew quote and the end being a quote from Senator Jennings Randolph: "a small band of braless bubble heads"⁷⁵. The quotes are used to increase the drama in the piece, but they also perpetuate stereotypes. The news media covering of the women's liberation movement created misconception about activist women; one being that female students were only concerned with women's empowerment.

⁷² ABC news broadcast, "Women/Demonstrations", Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired August 26, 1970).

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

Because women were nearly never shown in anti-war coverage, the media created the misconception that young women only cared about women's issues. A CBS segment did a feature on the women's liberation movement in 1970. In the segment, they attempt to explain the Women's Liberation Movement and the different sects of the movement. One of the groups featured is young women. It is safe to assume that some of these young women were students. In the segment, the young women are featured in a senate hearing, in which, they are questioning senators. The impression left on the audience is that these women are definitely passionate about women's empowerment, but also that they are extremely angry and hostile. The reporter, David Culhane, refers to the young women as "militant"⁷⁶. One woman is featured screaming, "We are not going to sit quietly any longer. You are murdering us for your profit and convenience"⁷⁷! The women were protesting at the senate hearings because the Senate was discussing birth control. Images like these created the perception that young women were angry feminists that hated men. Another broadcast spoke about female students specifically and continued to perpetuate the stereotype.

NBC also did a feature on the entirety of Women's Liberation movement like the other broadcast networks did. The report marks the anniversary of women's suffrage. The broadcast attempts to give an overview of the movement, but it doesn't achieve that in an effective way. They allude to the student anti-war movement when explaining that many women from the anti-war movement joined the Women's Liberation movement. Aline

⁷⁶ CBS news broadcast, "Feminist Movement/Now/Protest," Vanderbilt Television News Archive, (originally aired March 9, 1970).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Saarin, the reporter says, “There were women who belonged to the freedom movement like these SDS girls, till they found they were expected to make coffee, not policy. They’re splinter groups want to change the whole society. They have adapted the strategies and even the outfits of confrontation”⁷⁸. This statement about former SDS “girls” creates the impression that they no longer belong to the anti-war movement, and therefore no longer work towards the end of the war. The reporter is telling the public the truth about their experience in the anti-war movement, but because she mentions that negative experience it creates the perception that female students no longer want to help the anti-war cause. Coverage of the Women’s Liberation fit into a different frame that the one used for coverage of the student anti-war movement. Therefore, the news media made it seem like there was no overlap between the two movements. However, women who were involved in the Women’s Liberation movement were also supportive of the anti-war movement.

It is clear that female student activists were involved in the women’s liberation movement, because the women’s liberation movement was born from the discrimination female activists felt within the student anti-war movement⁷⁹. Female students could join feminist organizations or join feminist caucuses within other organization like SDS. But some radicals within the women’s movement dismissed these groups and women who

⁷⁸ NBC news broadcast, “Commentary (Women’s Organizations), (originally aired 4/3/1970).

⁷⁹ Judy Clavir Albert and Stewart Edward Albert, *Sixties Papers*, (New York:Prager Press, 1984), 48

belonged to them as “male –identified”⁸⁰. Two examples of radical anti-war activists were Bernadine Dohrn and Judy Clavir Albert. Both women were involved in the student anti-war movement ⁸¹, but they were also women’s liberation activists. Bernadine Dohrn was a leader of the militant, anti- war Weathermen, and she co-wrote the aforementioned “The Look is You” with Naomi Jaffe. Judy Clavir Albert was a founder of the Berkeley women’s movement, as well as, an organizer for the demonstrations at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago⁸². Female students started working for both objectives—the end to the war in Vietnam and equality for women.

Two incidents that are good examples of arms of the women’s liberation movement working for the anti- war cause are the WITCH protest at the US Department of Justice in 1969 and the all female march on the Pentagon in 1971. WITCH or Women’s International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell was an action arm of the Women’s Liberation Movement⁸³. At this protest, they were challenging the justice department in support of the Chicago 8 who were on trial for the violence that happened at the Democratic National Convention of 1968. Relating to their name, WITCH protested with chants that sounded like spells. At the Department of Justice their chant spoke about the injustice of the government:

“We are witches and we have come to hex, the evil doers inside of the opposite sex. We as witches come to proclaim, justice does not

⁸⁰ Ibid,50.

⁸¹ Ibid ,42.

⁸² Ibid, xix.

⁸³ Bradley, *Mass Media and Shaping American Feminism*, 63

always reign. You men inside who are pointing the fingers are really the guys who are pulling the triggers. You say the bad ones are that group of eight, but we think you just want more people to hate. Justice is dead, justice is fraud, you just keep prosecuting in the name of god. You honorable men justify ways, in Vietnam on women and on the poor. Witches are we, a hex to make, a trial to protest, a law to shake. Conspire to change, conspire to free, we too, will conspire—witches are we!!⁸⁴

The WITCH protest shows that even the most radical arm of the Women's Liberation Movement was interested in the anti-war movement. Women were capable of still supporting the anti-war cause while fighting for their own rights.

Another incidence of women protesting for the anti-war cause happened in 1971. On April 11th, 1971, the women of the Liberation movement called for a national women's anti-war march:

Women have not yet come together nationally as women to show our collective force and to demonstrate against the Pentagon's wars at home and abroad to defend the right of all people to live. We will speak to women in high schools and campuses, in offices on lunch hours, we will meet women in unions before their union meetings start. We will talk to women on the streets, to our mothers after they see the evening news, to women in supermarkets.⁸⁵

The call to action for the national women's anti-war march shows that there was interest from female students in the anti-war movement. With the mention of "high schools" and "colleges", it shows that the organizers of the march knew that female students would want to be involved in the march. The media failed to fully explain both the student anti-

⁸⁴ Malcolm Kovacs, "Witch at the Justice Dept : Action Arm of Women's Liberation Protest Chicago Conspiracy Trial", *Quicksilver Times*, October 1-11 1969.

⁸⁵ "Call for national women's anti- war march", *Quicksilver Times*, March 17-30 1971.

war movement and the women's liberation movement. The media's coverage was driven by stereotypes that fit into the frames already set as definitions for those movements.

Shortcomings of the Media

Many factors caused the media's inability to explain complex social movements. The media industry had to serve many interests and while serving those interests details get lost in a confusion created with agenda setting, frames, and stereotypes. The interests the media had to serve were network, the corporation, and the public. The media is a product of majority opinion. In order to keep viewers watching the broadcast media had to play to the majority, and the necessity for that shapes the coverage. Gitlin writes, "Through the everyday workings of journalism, large scale social conflict is imported into the news institution and reproduced there, however, in terms of derived from the dominant ideology"⁸⁶. The student anti-war movement is a case study of this effect. The media used the drama of the movement to get people to watch, and the activists made demonstrations more dramatic to get coverage. However, the media did not explain every motive or every sect of the anti-war movement, it only spotlighted leaders and charismatic voices. Also, the media completely ignored women unless they were anomalies like Marge Skenlcar, an organizer of the Moratorium protest, or Allison Krause, one of the students who died at Kent State. The coverage of women activists was stereotyped, which was linked to the coverage of the women's liberation movement. The broadcast media attempts to tell the truth, but with wide spread movements, the media cannot fully explain what happened without the ease of stereotype. The public can understand stereotypes

⁸⁶ Gitlin. *The Whole World is Watching*, 270.

within a two- minute segment; they cannot understand the reasons for divisions or discrimination in the movement within that same segment. The media's own agenda restricts it from covering social movements coherently without stereotypes or misconceptions.

Conclusion

The broadcast news media has incredible influence over the public, and during the Vietnam War era the media was even more influential. Their main objective was to reveal the unfiltered truth about the goings on at home and in Vietnam, but the broadcast model is limiting. Agenda setting and news frames value the dramatic and exciting. It features participants less, and focuses on the charismatic leaders. The coverage of social movements suffered because of this model. Every story that is a part of the movement does not get told. One story that was ignored was that of female student anti-war activists. The media focused on the male leaders, and not the female participants. Because the public never saw females linked to anti-war coverage, the media created the perception that female students only cared about women's issues.

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