Framing Human Trafficking:
A Content Analysis of Newspaper Articles from 2012 and 2013

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The phrase "human trafficking" can invoke a variety of mental images. There is the impoverished young girl, sold into a life of prostitution to feed her family, such as portrayed in *Sold*, a bestselling novel and National Book Award Finalist in 2007. There is also the image of the innocent teenager kidnapped by foreign traffickers and forced into sexual slavery, as shown in the 2008 blockbuster movie *Taken.* Yet these portrayals of trafficking tell only a small part of a larger, more complicated story that has captured the interest of the public, policymakers, and academics for over a decade.

Despite the growing interest in trafficking, there is still not complete agreement over its definition, a problem that has hindered discussions of trafficking among both academics and policymakers (Weitzer, 2014; Lee, 2011). This confusion is in large part due to the conflation of trafficking in scholarly literature, official figures, and even in legal codes with related issues such as illegal migration, prostitution, and slavery (Kelly, 2005; Kara, 2009; Weitzer, 2014). A source that appears to offer one of the more widely accepted definitions of trafficking and is used for this study is the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), passed by the U.S. Congress in 2000. According to this Act, "severe forms of trafficking in persons" is:

> (A) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or
>
> (B) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose

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of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.
(Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000)

In addition to the lack of consensus regarding a definition of trafficking, the extent of the problem is also debatable. In the Department of State's 2014 Trafficking in Persons Report, Secretary of State John F. Kerry refers to "more than 20 million victims of trafficking" who have not yet been identified and describes trafficking as "all-too-common" (p. 2). The International Labour Organization (ILO) provides a similar figure, estimating that there are currently 20.9 million victims of forced labor (including sexual exploitation), while some academics have placed the number at 27 million (ILO, 2012a; Bales, Trodd & Williamson, 2009).

Other scholars think these types of numbers are inaccurate and misleading (Steinfatt, 2011; Weitzer, 2014). In an article addressing several of the most popular and persistent claims about trafficking, for instance, Weitzer (2014) convincingly argues against the claim that trafficking is a prolific, worldwide problem. Some trafficking estimates, he suggests, are arrived at through faulty methodology, such as extrapolations based on a small number of documented victims, or by including voluntarily smuggled laborers in counts of trafficking victims. Other estimates of trafficking are given without the claimants providing any supporting evidence and are simply repeated by others, including the media (Weitzer, 2014). The differences between the number of estimated victims and those actually identified, Weitzer (2014) points out, are enormous, raising further questions regarding their validity.

Despite these ambiguities, concerns about trafficking continue to grow, particularly among policymakers. Since the passage of the TVPA in 2000, the United States has seen a marked increase in policies aimed at preventing trafficking, prosecuting traffickers, and assisting victims. At the federal level, each reauthorization of the TVPA has added to the original, either by expanding measures to combat trafficking, improving the services available to victims, or by adding prevention strategies, "such as providing information about workers' rights to all people applying for work and education-based visas" (Polaris, 2013). Between 2003 and 2014, all 50 states and the District of Columbia also passed anti-trafficking laws, specifically criminalizing both sex and labor trafficking. While many of these laws are aimed at prosecuting traffickers, a growing number also focus on providing assistance to victims. In particular, Safe Harbor laws have been gaining attention, and are currently in place in 22 states. These laws are aimed at ensuring sexually exploited minors are protected, granted immunity from prosecution, and directed to child welfare services (Polaris, 2014).

There is also evidence that concerns about trafficking are growing among the media. Analyses of news coverage have shown that the number of articles published about trafficking in the United States has increased steadily since the mid-2000s (Gulati 2011; Marchionni 2012; Farrell and Fahy 2009; Ta, 2014),[1] and trafficking has also been given greater prominence in newspapers, referenced increasingly in news headlines (Burnette, 2010). In fact, coverage of trafficking has increased so much in recent years that in 2010 the United Nations (UN) held a panel discussion titled "Hidden in Plain Sight: The News Media's Role in Exposing Human Trafficking," with the goal of

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[1] These same studies agree that news coverage began increasing around 2000, after the passage of the TVPA, but dipped over the next several years, possibly due to the coverage of events related to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

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discussing how the media were currently explaining trafficking to the public, and how they could improve ("Hidden," 2011).

The topic of this panel discussion touches upon several questions of more interest to academics than the general growth of concern about trafficking. What *do* we know about how the media report on trafficking, and what are the potential implications of this coverage? Does media reporting reflect the dominant political views on trafficking, or seek to question it and offer information from alternative voices that are potentially critical of official policies? These questions are particularly important in light of research suggesting the media is not only the primary source of information for most people on public policy and social issues, but that the information news organizations provide is also more trusted than that from other institutions, including the government (Strömberg & Snyder, 2008; Pew Research, 2011).

Because of the media's potential to influence the public and political discourse on trafficking (Shanahan, McBeth & Hathaway, 2011; Basilio de Simoes, 2010; Botelho & Kurtz, 2008; Wahl, 2003), numerous studies have been conducted to answer questions like those in the preceding paragraph. These studies have assessed descriptions of trafficking (such as the type of trafficking, or the portrayal of trafficking victims), as well as examining the theoretical implications of coverage by exploring the way trafficking is "framed" by the media. The issue has been addressed domestically and internationally, across time periods and mediums, and through the theoretical lenses of many disciplines, including sociology, economics, and public health (Pajnik, 2010; Gulati, 2012; Marchionni, 2012; Keo, Bouhours, Broadhurst & Bouhours, 2014; Haase, 2014).

The present study seeks to add to the scholarly understanding of media coverage of trafficking by analyzing the content of articles on human trafficking published by the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* in 2012 and 2013. As the literature review will illustrate, similar studies have been conducted in the past, but only for an earlier time period. This study helps bridge this gap by simultaneously focusing on descriptive and theoretical research questions to add to the growing literature on both fronts. The present study also partially replicates work conducted by another researcher for articles published between 1980 and 2006 in order to make more reliable comparisons between the two data sets, and identify changes in the media coverage of trafficking over time. The specific research questions driving the present analysis are as follows:

1) Does media coverage mirror the dominant or official view of trafficking?

2) How do the media portray trafficking victims?

3) How do the media define trafficking, and how do they portray the size of the problem?

4) Have there been any major changes in media coverage of human trafficking between the earlier time period (i.e. since the mid-2000s) and more recent years? If so, what do these changes consist of?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The concept of framing is frequently discussed in the literature about media portrayals of human trafficking. In the simplest terms, frames can be understood as "cognitive structures that help define how one sees the world" (Farrell & Fahy, 2009, p. 618). More specifically, in the context of media, framing has been defined as "a process of how politicians, policymakers relay their messages to attract media attention and put the best face on the events, how journalists construct messages under organizational guidelines and professional values and how audience members interpret, think, and reassess those media messages" (Zhang, 2000, p. 5).

The latter definition is important because in addition to emphasizing how journalists frame their stories for their audience, it also identifies a second point of theoretical importance: those providing information to the media (often politicians and policymakers) also have a hand in framing articles, to a certain degree. Both journalists and their sources make choices about what information they relay to their audience, what they hold back, and which interpretations of the information they include. As a result, it is investigative journalism, which usually seeks to examine issues more comprehensively and make use of more varied sources and viewpoints, that has the potential to provide a more detailed and balanced view of an issue than traditional news reporting (Berry, 2009; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007).

Because of the selective processes involved, the media play an important role in defining what problems are worthy of public and government attention. According to Entman (2007), this means the media have the potential to help "distribute political

power to particular groups, causes or individuals" if news reports and editorials are slanted so that "framing favors one side over the other in a current or potential dispute" (p. 165-66). Multiple studies have explored this proposition, concluding that the groups and causes supported by the media are often the dominant ones, and that most articles mirror the information provided by policymakers rather than offering alternative ideas and actively encouraging debate (Larson 2006; Jones and Baumgartner 2005; Bennett, 2009). This may be due in part to the organizational structure of reporting — journalists frequently cover the same area or topic ("beat reporting"), and are often limited to gathering information from official and/or easily accessible sources in order to meet deadlines (Gans, 2005; Poler, 2004). In addition, journalists may prefer official sources because they are "immediately credible" and have "a legitimizing effect on news stories" (Fogarty, 2012, p. 276).

Studies analyzing the content of news articles about human trafficking have found articles to be similarly dominated by official views (Gulati, 2011; Marchionni, 2012; Johnston, Friedman & Shafer, 2014; Ta, 2014). One such study was a content analysis of articles from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* published between 1980 and 2006. This study found that a majority of articles (60%) were written in response to some official government action or event, while fewer than 20% were the result of newsroom initiatives (Gulati, 2011). In addition, when editorials, commentary, and letters to the editor were excluded, 78% of articles utilized official sources (government or law enforcement). Combined, these findings suggest a large number of news reports are written in ways that reinforce the dominate trafficking frames of the time, either because

they rely heavily on official sources or are triggered by events where government or law enforcement officials are already the major voices.

Two other studies also support the conclusion that media coverage frequently reflects the dominant political stance on trafficking. In 2012, Marchionni examined articles from the (London) *Guardian*, the (London) *Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* between 2002 and 2006 and found "strong indirect evidence of the government's role" in setting the agenda for the international press (p. 155). The empirical evidence to which Marchionni refers was derived from the content of the articles themselves, which focused strongly on the issue of sex trafficking, as opposed to other types of trafficking, like labor exploitation. According to Marchionni, sex trafficking was the dominant focus of both the U.S. government and the UN during the five year timeframe studied, and in keeping with the policy agendas of those two groups, the press "all but ignored" labor trafficking, despite research suggesting it is likely the larger problem (p. 155).

A third study, Johnston et al. (2014), provides further support for the idea that the media frequently reflect and reinforce the prevailing political views of the time. Focused exclusively on articles about sex trafficking published in major U.S. newspapers in 2009, the authors' content analysis found that news coverage was dominated by official sources, and like Gulati (2011), that a majority of reporting was "event-driven," featuring coverage of a "meeting, event, or occurrence having to do with sex trafficking, such as an arrest, a meeting to pass some legislation, or an event to promote awareness of the issue" (Johnston et al., 2014, p. 426). In addition, only a small subset of articles (14.5%) provided any sort of counter-theme that might diminish concerns about trafficking and

challenge dominant political views, such as by suggesting that some women choose to be prostitutes and are not trafficked sex slaves (Johnston et al., 2014). The media's failure to question the prevailing assumption that all trafficked women are victims who *want* to be rescued serves to reinforce attitudes that deny the agency of women who chose to migrate (Lee, 2011).

In addition to studies that focus on framing to gauge whether or not the media support the dominant view of an issue or offer alternative voices, research has also been conducted to identify how the media essentially define and/or categorize trafficking for the public. For instance, Johnston et al. (2014) examined whether an article framed sex trafficking as a crime, human rights, policy/legislative, public health, or activism issue and found that it was predominantly covered as a crime issue. Another study examined changes in coverage from 1990 to 2006, finding that trafficking was originally recognized as a human rights issue, transformed to a crime and criminal justice problem in the early 2000s when the TVPA was enacted, and was portrayed as a crime problem with national security implications in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks (Farrell & Fahy, 2009). These findings show how trafficking has been socially constructed by identifying the different dimensions and dangers associated with it.

Given the media's potential to influence the attitudes and opinions of the public (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2008), studies have also examined how the media portray trafficking victims. For instance, Farrell and Fahy (2009) noted that by the mid 1990s, media coverage "increasingly included stories of young White women from the former Soviet Union," which heightened public fears because they appeared as "innocent victims who looked like and could be confused with young White women in the U.S." (p. 620).

Though little to no additional research has attempted to quantify the race or ethnicity of victims as presented in the media coverage, more recent data do support the idea that victims are frequently presented as young and female. Johnston et al. (2014) found that victims were identified as minors in 43% of the sex trafficking articles in their sample, as adults in 14%, and as both in 38%. Curtis (2012) reported similar results for age from a content analysis of articles published between 2008 and 2011, adding that victims were identified as female in approximately 61% of articles, while males were only mentioned in 1% of articles in the sample (the remaining articles made no reference to gender).

These results suggest the media portrayals of victims align closely with assumptions made by officials in a "prosecution-oriented victim support regime," such as that currently in effect in the United States and the United Kingdom (Lee, 2011, p. 64). According to Lee (2011), victims in these societies are subject to a "hierarchy of victimhood" in which some trafficked individuals are considered "less deserving" of being labeled as victims than others based on the circumstances of their exploitation, their character and past actions, and their willingness to be smuggled (p. 66-69). The "ideal" or "legitimate" victim in this society is weak, vulnerable and was trafficked by an unknown, dangerous offender. Such constructions of victimhood simultaneously ignore the agency of women who choose to migrate and deny legitimate victim status to those individuals whose experiences of exploitation "do not fall neatly into a very specific constellation of deception, abuses, debt bondage and false imprisonment" (p. 64). In addition, when these constructs are combined with the persistence of hegemonic masculinities and the idea that men are the principal victimizers, the result is a society and a political agenda that essentially ignore the male victim of trafficking (Lee, 2011).

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Lee is not alone in her criticism of the official views of victimhood, though other scholars focus their criticism on the media for emphasizing such attitudes through their coverage of trafficking. According to Pajnik (2010), media framings of trafficking that highlight the use of force and the trafficking of unwilling victims "fail to reflect the complexity of the experiences of people who have undertaken to leave their homes to pursue a better life," and "obscure the potential opportunities of migration" by suggesting people are better off staying home than risking abuse if they leave (p. 59). In addition, media representations of victims can potentially hinder law enforcement efforts to identify trafficked individuals since many victims are originally smuggled into the U.S. voluntarily and then "find themselves in situations where they are forced or coerced into prostitution to pay off exorbitant smuggling debts" (Farrell & Fahy, 2009, p. 623).

In contrast to the extensive literature available regarding the framing of trafficking and trafficking victims, much less information is currently available regarding how the media define trafficking and explain the extent of the problem to their audience. In fact, only one study codes for whether a definition of trafficking is provided in media reports and whether the extent of the trafficking problem was discussed within an article. The study found that out of 837 articles, only two questioned the definition of trafficking and neither did so in a way critical of government policy (Gulati, 2012). Regarding the extent of the problem, when numbers were questioned, it was to suggest that the numbers were actually underestimated (Gulati, 2012). These prominent patterns of media representations of human trafficking persist despite the ongoing questioning by analysts of the definitions and figures provided by government officials and used by other researchers.

While this review of the current literature suggests that much scholarly work has already been conducted regarding media coverage of human trafficking, there is clearly room for additional research. The current study builds on the work of Gulati's (2011) examination of media coverage between 1980 and 2006 by comparing his findings to more recent years, allowing for the identification of both continuities and changes between the time periods. Additionally, by focusing on a research question that is almost entirely unaddressed, this study contributes new insight to a growing field of research.

Chapter 3: Methods

In order to answer questions regarding media coverage and framing of human trafficking, I conducted a content analysis of newspaper articles from the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* published between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2013. Initial research revealed that multiple studies on this topic had already been conducted, thus I chose to expand on the work of Gulati (2011) in order to broaden the current knowledge base and compare my results to those from previous years. In addition, I included new variables in my analysis to address research questions that have not yet received as much attention in the literature, including questions about media portrayals of victims, definitions of trafficking, and the scale of human trafficking.

Gulati's 2011 article, "News Frames and Story Triggers in the Media's Coverage of Human Trafficking," was chosen as the model for my study based mainly on the similarity of our research questions. Using articles published by the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* between 1980 and 2006 (N=605), Gulati analyzed whether or not media coverage of human trafficking helped to legitimize the views of policymakers by coding articles for story trigger, issue focus (i.e. type of trafficking), source type, country focus, and the representation of specific ideas and details about causes and solutions.[2] He also categorized articles as either "beat reporting" or "media-initiated" in order to examine differences in these types of coverage.

My study replicates this approach, with the exception that country focus and representations of causes and solutions were excluded from my analysis. Instead, I added

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[2]Because of space limitations, the findings for issue and country focus were not presented in the original published version of Gulati's 2011 article, but can be found in a longer version of the manuscript at http://ssrn.com/abstract=1633572.

variables that coded for age and gender (which offer insight into how the media portray trafficking victims), and for whether or not definitions of trafficking or numerical representations of the scale of trafficking were present in an article. I also conducted a limited qualitative analysis of articles in order to help contextualize the quantitative findings. Relevant headlines or quotes are discussed within various sections and offer a more nuanced exploration of the news coverage of trafficking.

In order to ensure comparable results, I replicated Gulati's use of the LexisNexis database for obtaining articles and his exact search terms.[3] Once duplicate and irrelevant articles (such as those regarding roadway traffic) were removed, 196 articles remained from the *Washington Post*, and 268 from the *New York Times* (N=464). These articles were then coded using either a short or long form protocol based on whether or not human trafficking was the focus of the article or was only mentioned in a secondary or peripheral sense. The short form protocol was used when human trafficking was not the focus of the article, and consisted only of a basic analysis regarding the length, type, and location of the articles within the newspaper. The long form was used when an article focused entirely on trafficking, mentioned trafficking in the headline or lead paragraph, or substantially discussed trafficking (i.e. devoted at least four sentences to the topic), and included all of the variables discussed in the preceding paragraphs (N=128).[4]

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[3] The following search terms were used in LexisNexis: (traffic!) w/3 (human or persons or women or girls or children or sex! or labor!). The "!" ensures that variations of the words "traffic," "sex," and "labor" (such as "trafficking") are also included in the search. The "w/3" tells LexisNexis to include articles where the second term is within three characters of the first term.
[4] While Gulati maintained a sample size of 605 throughout his study, he suggested I take this approach since maintaining the full sample size resulted in an abundance of missing data from articles that did not actually discuss human trafficking. My initial step of removing these articles from the detailed content analysis through the use of short and long form protocols means that the problem of missing data is greatly reduced.

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In addition to analyzing all variables independently, I also examined the statistical significance of the bivariate relationships between "source type", "issue focus," "reporting type," "gender," and "newspaper" using Pearson's Chi-Square test. This significance test was determined to be appropriate for several reasons: 1) the study utilizes nominal (categorical) variables; 2) these variables are mutually exclusive; and 3) this test can be used to determine if a relationship between variables exists and whether or not this relationship could be due to chance, which is important to my analysis ("Chi-Square," 2015). In order to examine the relationship between the number of articles falling within the "beat" and "enterprise" categories for a specific "issue focus," the T-Test was utilized instead of Chi-Square, due to its applicability to continuous variables and its ability to gauge whether the differences between groups are significant ("Statistical," 2015). By utilizing these two tests, I was able to make more informed conclusions regarding the data.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

General Overview of Trafficking Coverage

     In 2012, the *Washington Post* (WP) and the *New York Times* (NYT) published a total of 189 articles referencing human trafficking. In 2013, that number increased by almost 50%, to 275. These numbers are substantially higher than those found by Gulati for the years 1980-2006, when the number of articles published per year peaked at 135 in 2006. Figure 1 (see Appendix) combines the results of both studies to display a summary of articles published per year between 1980 and 2013, with a gap in coverage for the intervening years. Since 2002, there has been an overall growth in the number of articles published, though additional research would be necessary to determine if this growth continued steadily between the timeframes of these two studies. The average length of all articles, measured by word count, increased slightly since 2006, from 880 to 995, while the length of news articles (defined as news stories and news summaries) declined by 91 words.

     Most of the 464 articles referencing human trafficking in the current study appeared as news stories (63%), followed by editorials and commentary (18%), mentions of trafficking in a list or transcript (9%), news summaries (6%), and letters to the editor (5%). These results are similar to those found by Gulati in that news stories and editorials/commentary have remained the two largest categories, though there has been an increase in the latter at the expense of the former (see Figure 2 for a complete comparison of categories). When only the 128 articles *substantially* discussing trafficking (i.e. articles

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that devoted at least four sentences to the topic) are considered, the percentage of editorials, commentary, and letters to the editor also increases significantly, from 23% to 33%. This increase is likely due to the NYT, which published 81% of the editorials and commentary and 71% of the letters to the editor that discussed human trafficking.[5]

Nicholas Kristof, a popular op-ed columnist for the NYT, in particular helped fuel the increase in commentary with his stories of young girls like "Taz," who unwittingly "ended up in the hands of a violent 20-year-old pimp" and was forced into prostitution (Kristof, 2012a). Kristof recounts the details of these girls' victimization in horror-invoking detail, using their stories as a platform for encouraging anti-trafficking legislation. One girl, for instance, was controlled by a pimp who "carved his name on her back with a safety pin," while another "was regularly punished by being locked inside coffins with scorpions and biting ants" (Kristof, 2012a; Kristof, 2012b). In the timeframe studied, Kristof wrote 9 of the 21 editorials/commentaries that discussed human trafficking in the NYT.

In terms of location within the paper, the greatest number of articles was located inside the main section of both newspapers (34%), and inside other sections (30%), followed by articles on the op-ed pages (23%), the front page of the main section (5%), and the front page of other sections (5%).[6] Compared with the placement of articles from 1980 to 2006, fewer articles appeared on the front page of the main section and inside the main section, while the number of articles inside other sections and on the Op-Ed pages increased significantly (see Table 1). This is consistent with the increase in editorials, commentary, and letters to the editor noted previously. It also suggests an increase in

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[5] The difference in article type between the two newspapers was statistically significant at the .01 level.
[6] The remaining 3% of articles did not have a location listed by LexisNexis and were coded as missing.

references to trafficking appearing outside of major news stories, such as in lists of bestselling novels and theatrical releases, book and film reviews, and calendars of events.[7]

The changes in the placement of articles over time offer insight into the media's view of human trafficking as it relates to newsworthiness. According to the Pew Research Center's Journalism Project (1998), articles are placed on the front page of a newspaper (or newspaper section) because they are believed to be of most interest to readers. However, the articles thought to be of most interest to readers are often those pertaining to competitiveness in some form (conflict, winning and losing, and wrongdoing) (Pew, 1998). Since there is often a lack of conflict among policymakers regarding human trafficking and the media tends to reflect the dominant agenda (Larson, 2006; Jones & Baumgartner, 2005; Weitzer, 2007) it is possible that the decrease in articles appearing on the front page of the WP and the NYT, rather than being the result of decreasing interest in trafficking, is at least partially the result of a general consensus regarding trafficking and the methods used to combat it.

The increase in articles appearing in the Op-Ed section, which is read by 42% of readers according to the Newspaper Association of America (2008), suggests that despite the decrease in articles appearing on the front page, trafficking stories are still being placed in positions where they will be noticed by the public in general and by their most politically aware readers. Furthermore, articles in all sections of these papers attempt to capture the attention of their audience through the use of catchy or sensationalized headlines. One article, for instance, discusses the release of the Department of State's

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[7] Examples of events appearing on such calendars include a "human trafficking symposium" offered in Prince William County and an exhibit in Washington, DC, titled "Can You Walk Away? Modern Slavery: Human Trafficking in the United States."

annual Trafficking in Persons Report, and is titled "U.S. accuses Russia, China of human trafficking" — which sounds like an incident of epic proportions (Gearan, 2013). Other sensationalized headlines include: "Selling sex, servants, organs and children" (a review of a book about human trafficking) and "Escaping Modern Day Slavery" (a news report about a victim of labor trafficking in Washington, DC, who escaped after six years of servitude) (Tirman, 2013; Dvorak, 2013).

Does media coverage mirror the dominant view of trafficking?

Story Triggers

In his 2011 study, Gulati defined a "story trigger" as the reason for printing an article. Story triggers help determine whether or not a story was written following traditional journalistic methods ("beat reporting"), or was more investigative, sparked by the newspapers' or an individual journalist's interest in a topic ("enterprise" or "media-initiated" reporting). When story triggers are combined with other variables, such as issue focus and sources, the distinction between reporting types can be important to an analysis of framing for multiple reasons. First, as discussed in the literature review, traditional journalism approaches are frequently limited because they rely heavily on official sources, particularly when a story is triggered by an event where government or law enforcement officials are already the major voices, while media-initiated reporting is not. Second, examining the issues focused on within each reporting type offers insight into whether or not journalists attempt to present a balanced, informative view of trafficking and discuss issues outside of or in opposition to the dominant trafficking agenda of the

time. As a result, several of the following sections will utilize the information collected on story triggers and reporting type to determine whether news articles mirror the dominant or official view of trafficking, or provide alternative perspectives.

Information on story triggers was collected in the present study for the 128 articles in which trafficking was substantially discussed. Overall, 63% of articles were triggered by some official government action or event, with only 16% initiated by the media (investigative reports or other newsroom enterprises). Of the articles triggered by some government action or event, the largest number of articles provided coverage of law enforcement or judicial action (32%), followed by coverage of a debate, passage or implementation of anti-trafficking policy (18%), coverage of a trafficking tragedy or other event (8.6%), and the release of an official government report or report by an NGO or other anti-trafficking group (4%). The remaining articles allowed a response to a previous article (13%) or were written to offer analysis and interpretation (9%).

Comparison to Gulati's results shows a substantial decrease in the number of articles reporting on a debate, passage or implementation of anti-trafficking policy (26% vs. 18%) and the release of an official government report or report by an NGO or other anti-trafficking group (14% vs. 4%), while coverage of law enforcement or judicial action increased (15% vs. 35%). However, the overall percentage of articles triggered by government action versus those initiated by the media stayed approximately the same (See Figure 3 for a comparison to Gulati's results.) The greater number of Gulati's articles triggered by the debate, passage or implementation of anti-trafficking policy and the release of an official report may be due in part to the passage of the Trafficking Victim's Protection Act (TVPA) in 2000, which received significant media attention

around the time of its enactment and was also featured again when facing reauthorization in 2003 and 2005 (Farrell & Fahy, 2009).

During the timeframe of the current study, the TVPA was only reauthorized once — as an amendment to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) — and was mentioned in only nine articles in the entire sample (N=464). Of these nine mentions, six occurred in editorials or commentaries published in the NYT and made reference to the Act in the context of urging Congress to renew the VAWA or TVPA. Such references left no doubt concerning the paper's opinion regarding the importance of such anti-trafficking legislation: in the words of one editorial, "Passing a law to fight human trafficking and slavery is one of those bipartisan no-brainers that Congress used to be able to accomplish" ("The Fight," 2012).

The increase in articles triggered by coverage of law enforcement or judicial action, however, can potentially be explained by the passage of new anti-trafficking laws in New York and the District of Columbia, including laws for dealing with minor victims of sex trafficking (Safe Harbor laws). In addition, in 2013 New York created a new, statewide system of courts aimed at identifying victims of sex trafficking among those charged with prostitution and related crimes in order to provide them with services for recovery. Multiple articles in the NYT made reference to these legal changes, including beat articles reporting the arrest of traffickers and/or prostitutes. It is possible this type of coverage increased, at least in part, due to interest in the new laws and an eagerness to gauge their success.

Issue Focus

The "issue focus" of an article refers to the type of human trafficking referenced and/or the context in which trafficking was discussed. Information on issue focus was collected for the 128 articles in which trafficking was substantially discussed. The greatest percentage of articles referred to sex trafficking (64%), followed by articles discussing both sex and labor (13%), and labor only (11%). The remaining articles referenced trafficking in the context of immigration/human smuggling, illegal adoptions, and historical slavery (9%), or did not reference a specific trafficking issue (3%).

The prominence of sex trafficking in these articles is consistent with other studies, such as those by Marchionni (2012) and Gulati (2011). Both of these researchers interpreted these findings as confirmation that media coverage helped legitimize the dominant view of trafficking, which at that point was characterized mostly as sex trafficking and prostitution by both the U.S. government and the UN (Marchionni 2012; Gulati 2011). That sex trafficking continues to dominate in media coverage is particularly interesting given that the ILO estimates that there are nine times as many victims of labor trafficking than sex trafficking, and that current statistics from the UN show that more than 50% of trafficking victims in North America are exploited in forced labor (ILO, 2012b; United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2014).

Comparison with Gulati's findings reveals that the media's focus on sex trafficking is even stronger now than in prior years, despite the inclusion of an additional category for both sex and labor in the current study.[8] The portion of articles from 2012

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[8] Gulati did not code for articles where trafficking was presented as both a sex and labor issue, either because there were no articles during the timeframe of his study that fit this description, or because there was enough information present in each article to determine that the primary focus was either sex or labor trafficking and the articles could then be placed into one of those categories. My study, however, included a

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and 2013 focused on sex trafficking increased by nine percentage points since the 1980-2006 timeframe. In contrast, the portion of articles focused solely on labor dropped by nine percentage points. The preeminence of sex trafficking remained even when issue focus was examined by newspaper, with the majority of articles from both papers focused on this issue. The percentage of articles appearing in the NYT, however, was substantially larger than in the WP: 71% versus 59% focused on sex trafficking. Additionally, the WP published more articles dealing with *both* sex and labor (24% vs. 5% for NYT). The differences between these two papers in regards to issue focus are statistically significant at the .05 level.

When the issue focus of articles was examined in the context of reporting type (see Figure 5 and Figure 6), sex trafficking remained the dominant focus among beat reporting articles (70%), but received the same attention as labor-trafficking (32% each) among media-initiated articles. The prominence of the sex trafficking issue within beat articles is a complete reversal from the timeframe of Gulati's study, when sex trafficking received more attention in media-initiated articles. The relationship between issue focus and reporting type is statistically significant at the .01 level for sex trafficking and labor trafficking, and at the .1 level for immigration.

One potential reason for the continued emphasis on sex trafficking within the media may be simple: sex trafficking is the issue most seen in popular culture, and therefore it is likely that this is also what journalists believe readers will find most interesting. Numerous books, movies, and plays (reviews of which were included among the articles examined for this content analysis) have featured this aspect of trafficking,

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substantial number of articles in which sex and labor trafficking were equally referenced, making it impossible to collapse these articles into either of the other categories.

often featuring young, vulnerable victims that correlate with fears that trafficking is a growing problem domestically (Farrell & Fahy, 2009).

Another, more likely, scenario is that sex trafficking remains and even continues to grow as the media's primary focus due to the fact that it is still the primary focus of policymakers in the United States and internationally (Weitzer, 2014; UNODC, 2014). This focus is illustrated in part by the passage of Safe Harbor laws in eight states between 2007 and 2011, including New York and the District of Columbia. The main purpose of these laws was to decriminalize prostitution for minors, who are all defined under the TVPA as victims of sex trafficking. Furthermore, the Human Trafficking Intervention Initiative, mentioned earlier in the section on story triggers, was launched in 2013 specifically to help victims of sex trafficking, which authorities in New York view as the state's most prominent human trafficking problem (Lippman, 2013). Overall, the continued emphasis on sex trafficking by the media in light of current policies suggests that articles continue to reflect, and therefore legitimize, the dominant trafficking agenda within the United States.

It is also worth noting, however, that one reason the media may be so eager to bolster the official trafficking agenda is that, as a whole, the two newspapers in this study support it. Editorials and opinion columns, for instance, frequently discuss the need to combat human trafficking, and appear particularly concerned with sex trafficking. One editorial in the NYT applauds the Obama administration's "meaningful new initiatives against human trafficking," and laments the failure of Congress to reauthorize the TVPA, stressing that "continued delay on this bill would hurt victims and send a terrible message to the world" ("To Combat," 2012). The WP is less blatant in its support for anti-

trafficking policies, but an editorial discussing the 2013 "downgrade" of Russia in the

Department of State's Trafficking in Person's Report, which ranks countries based on

their efforts to combat human trafficking, is revealing: "Russia earned its ranking with its

woeful response to human trafficking," the article contends, adding that "pretending

otherwise would have devalued the rankings and ill-served the Russian people"

("Downgrade," 2013). Additionally, the article criticizes Russia's lack of effort against

trafficking, stating "Russia's demotion is another sign that its government is floating

away from the world order in a manner harmful to its people" ("Downgrade," 2013).

Such assertions, though more common in the NYT, indicate that both papers agree

human trafficking is a large-scale problem and support current anti-trafficking efforts.

Sourcing

As discussed in the literature review, prior research has found that media

coverage of trafficking is dominated by the use of official sources, mostly government

officials and law enforcement, including related reports, press releases, and other

documents (Gulati 2011, Johnston et al., 2014). This was also the case in the current

study. Government officials were the most frequently cited source, appearing at least

once in 43% of all articles that substantially discussed human trafficking (N=128). Law

enforcement and court personnel (including prosecutors, defense attorneys, border agents,

police, judges) were the second most common source, appearing in 41.4% of articles. In

contrast, Gulati's results from articles published from 1980 to 2006 place NGOs and

activists as the second most-common source, appearing in 21.5% of all articles, while law

enforcement took a smaller role, cited in only 18% of all articles. Table 2a and Table 2b

(see Appendix) illustrate the complete results of the two studies.

When sources were examined in relation to reporting type, statistically significant differences are found for six types of sources. Unlike articles published from 1980 to 2006, which cited government officials almost equally in beat and media-initiated reporting, government officials were cited much more frequently in media-initiated articles in 2012 and 2013, while law enforcement and court personnel became the dominant voice in beat reporting articles. The latter change is likely due to the substantial jump in articles triggered by coverage of law enforcement and judicial action that occurred between the 1980-2006 and 2012-2013 study periods (these articles increased from 15% of all articles to 32%).

NGOs and activists continued to be cited most frequently in media-initiated reports, with the percentage of articles citing this source increasing from 43% in the 1980-2006 timeframe to 80% in 2012 and 2013. This change could suggest either that journalists have begun making a more concerted effort to seek out these sources or that NGOs and activists have become better at making their voices heard. Citations of UN agencies or representatives also increased in 2012 and 2013 by 22 percentage points, but only for media-initiated articles. Meanwhile, the percentage of articles citing victims increased for both reporting types, while the percentage of articles citing traffickers/employers or customers and witnesses or family members decreased for both reporting types. The increase in the number of victim sources could be interpreted in multiple ways. The increase could be related to the creation of Safe Harbor laws and a slowly growing victim-oriented shift in law enforcement or journalists may be making more of an effort to seek out victims as sources. Additional research on this topic would

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be needed before any definitive conclusions could be made.

Sources were also examined in relation to story trigger in order to determine if certain sources were utilized more frequently depending on the reason an article was being published. The following results were all statistically significant at the .05 level. Government officials, as might be expected, were cited most frequently in articles triggered by the release of an official government report or report by an NGO or other anti-trafficking group (80%), and in articles reporting on a debate, passage, or implementation of anti-trafficking policy (73.9%). Law enforcement or court personnel were cited most frequently in articles written in order to cover law enforcement or judicial action (85.4%), and were never cited in articles that were triggered by the release of an official government report or report by an NGO or other anti-trafficking group. NGOs and activists, victims, academics and researchers, and UN agencies and representatives were all cited most often in investigative reports (81%, 61.9%, 23.8% and 23.8%, respectively), supporting the idea that investigative journalism encourages journalists to dig up more varied information that traditional beat reporting. Interestingly, while this type of reporting could have offered journalists the opportunity to emphasize more alternative, non-dominant views on trafficking, the continued focus on sex trafficking and the preference for official sources (even when other sources were also utilized) suggests that journalists nevertheless continued to present and legitimize the dominant trafficking agenda in their work.

How do the media portray trafficking victims?

Victim Descriptions

Though not discussed by Gulati, the portrayal of trafficking victims by the media is another type of framing that can be used to gauge the extent to which the media reflect the dominant views of policymakers on trafficking, as well as having additional implications. For instance, if victims are largely considered to be females, will law enforcement more frequently fail to identify and assist male victims? Or if victims are more frequently considered to be minors, will policies fail to offer the support needed by older victims, whose experience of trafficking is likely very different?

In order to determine whom the media is presenting as a victim, this study examined the age and gender of those represented as victims in trafficking articles. Out of the 128 articles in which human trafficking was substantially discussed, 39% specifically referenced children as victims of trafficking, 26% mentioned children and adults, 19% focused only on adults, and 16% made no specific reference to victims of either age (see Figure 6). In relation to issue focus, 42% of the articles focused on sex trafficking referenced only children, while articles focused on labor trafficking referenced children and adults equally (36% each). Half of the articles that focused on both sex and labor trafficking referenced both children and adults.

Regarding gender, the majority of articles (55%) referenced females, 20% mentioned both genders, and only 2% referenced males. A substantial percentage (23%) made no reference to either gender (see Figure 6). When gender was examined in relation to issue focus, the results were statistically significant at the .01 level. Seventy-one

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percent of sex trafficking articles referenced females, and 7% referred to both genders. Only 1% of sex trafficking articles only referenced males. While males *were* mentioned more frequently in labor trafficking articles than sex trafficking articles, mentions of female victims continued to dominate in articles about labor trafficking (43% v. 7%). Over half (56%) of the articles that discussed both sex and labor trafficking mentioned victims of both genders, while 25% made no reference to gender.

These results present an interesting variation from the latest figures provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in the Global Report 2014, which several journalists cited when explaining the scale of trafficking worldwide. While children were most frequently referenced as victims in articles, UNODC reports that the majority of all identified victims are adults (67%). In addition, while the dominant narrative of female victims provided by the media is more in line with UNODC reporting (70% of all UNODC-identified victims were female), there is still a substantial discrepancy between the number of male victims portrayed in the news articles and the actual number of male victims identified. According to reporting, 30% of all UNODC-identified victims are male, yet news stories only reference males in, at most, 8% of articles. Part of the reason for the focus on children and female victims of trafficking may have to do with the nature of current anti-trafficking laws or treaties. Safe Harbor laws, for instance, are now in place in 22 U.S. states and offer assistance specifically to victims under age eighteen, encouraging the mindset that victims of trafficking are most frequently minors. Furthermore, the title of UN's international agreement dealing with human trafficking implies that victims are mostly minors and females: it is called "The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, *especially Women and*

Children" (emphasis added) (UNODC, 2015).

Of further interest is the prominence of female victims in articles about labor trafficking when research by international agencies has shown that males are more frequently the victims of labor trafficking. Data from UNODC and ILO, for instance, indicate that between 60% and 66% of labor trafficking victims worldwide are male (UNODC, 2014; ILO, 2012b). The emphasis on female victims may have to do with the type of labor exploitation the articles in this study deal with: all six of the articles referencing females concerned domestic labor. While the UN's report does not provide the number or gender of victims involved specifically in domestic labor, given the prevalence of women in such roles, (maids, housekeepers, etc.), even in the United States (Department of Labor, 2013), it is likely that many victims of this type of trafficking would be female. However, the lack of articles discussing other forms of labor trafficking involving male victims is still curious, suggesting that the media may very well be presenting stories of victims that they feel will attract the most attention or that cater to the perceptions the public has already formed based on references to trafficking in popular culture.

The media portrayal of trafficking victims may also reflect official constructions of victimhood such as discussed by Lee (2011). Many articles highlighted the vulnerability or helplessness of victims, for instance, in addition to focusing on their age (minors) and gender (female). In one article, high school girls were described as being recruited by gang members who told them they "looked pretty and could make easy money" dancing, then "steered" them into prostitution and "used coercion, threats, and in some cases, force" to maintain control (Wilber, 2012). Another article covered the story

of a fifteen year-old girl from Brooklyn who was kidnapped, transported to a vacant house in Queens, and drugged, raped and forced into prostitution over six days" (Rosenberg, 2012). According to Lee (2011), such portrayals of victims fit neatly with the idea that in order to be recognized as a "legitimate" victim of trafficking, the trafficking event must contain certain elements, such as the innocence of the victim and their subjection to a physically dominant offender (Lee, 2011). Thus, rather than offering a balanced portrayal of trafficking victims, the media may in fact be perpetuating and legitimizing a stereotype, with potentially harmful repercussions in the form of inadequate public policies and enforcement practices.

One final facet of the portrayal of victims by the media is worth noting: the articles in this study strongly emphasized the fact that human trafficking, particularly sex trafficking, is increasingly a domestic problem. "Human trafficking for sex and labor isn't reserved for third-world countries rife with corruption," one article notes, "It's prevalent in the District, Northern Virginia and even Prince William County" (Borden, 2012). "Everybody thinks that trafficking is all the other countries bringing their children in here to be trafficked, but that's not true," another article quotes a source as saying; "Our own children are being trafficked" (Fitzpatrick, 2013). The message is clear: No longer do trafficking victims only *look* like they could be from the United States, as noted by Farrell and Fahy (2009) — now, the public is being shown, they *are* from the United States.

How do the media define trafficking, and how do they portray the size of the problem?

Definitions and Numbers

Because the literature on trafficking suggests that there is still some disagreement as to the definition of trafficking and the extent of the problem (most frequently referenced in terms of the number of victims worldwide), this study examines how the media portray these issues. Are definitions debated or at least provided? Do articles discuss the number of victims of trafficking, at least on some scale, whether local, national, or international? The answer to both questions, according to the articles included in this study, is no.

In terms of definition, articles were coded "yes" or "no" for the presence of a definition of trafficking, however brief. Out of the 128 articles in which trafficking was substantially discussed, only ten articles (8%) provided a definition for trafficking. Surprisingly, only one of these articles was an investigative piece, which by definition could be expected to provide more detailed background information and context for stories. Given the supposed lack of consensus regarding the definition of trafficking, this failure to clarify the topic within more articles seems odd and potentially suggests that journalists believe clarification is not necessary, and that their readers are already fully aware of what trafficking is. The danger in this assumption is that, by not clearly distinguishing what they mean by "trafficking," journalists are inviting further conflation with other issues, such as prostitution and human smuggling.

Of the eight articles written by journalists[9] that *did* provide definitions, six did so within the context of explaining legislation or legal charges and referenced either the TVPA or state trafficking laws. The exclusion of definitions in other types of articles leaves the impression that definitions were thought to be most useful when the legal implications of an event were being considered. In the case of several NYT articles, providing a definition of trafficking may have been thought particularly important since the journalist noted that the case being covered was seen as "an interesting test of the limits of the state's sex trafficking law that took effect in 2007" (Buettner, 2013).

Compared to definitions, a larger percentage of articles (26%) provided numbers of some kind in an attempt to measure the extent of the human trafficking problem. However, these numbers varied greatly in both size and scale. Most articles, for instance, attempted to estimate the problem based on the number of victims, but these estimates were given on local, national, and international levels. Other articles used completely different measures, such as the number of trafficking cases prosecuted, the number of calls to a trafficking hotline, or the amount of revenue trafficking generates. When the number of trafficking victims was estimated worldwide, estimates ranged from 5.5 million to 27 million, depending on the source cited. The variability of these estimates is consistent with the findings of scholars such as Weitzer (2014), who have noted the unreliability of these figures. The most frequently cited sources were government officials or reports (particularly the U.S. Department of State), which were used in 67% of the articles written by journalists that contained an estimate of the trafficking problem. 26% of articles referenced NGOs (all anti-trafficking organizations) or UN agencies,

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[9] This clarification is necessary to distinguish between articles that could be said to express the views of the paper (such as news stories and editorials), and those that usually do not, such as letters to the editor. This phrasing is used throughout the rest of this section.

while 15% referenced academics. Another 15% did not reference a source.[10]

An additional variable examined is the way measurements of trafficking were presented. Specifically, this study examined if journalists appeared to think the numbers they were providing were overestimated or underestimated. Of the 27 articles written by journalists that provided a numerical estimate of trafficking, eight articles used phrasing or language that suggested the numbers provided were potentially underestimated and that the trafficking problem might actually be greater. For instance, one article states that the ILO makes a "'conservative estimate' that 5.5 million children around the world are trapped in forced labor," but that "in India alone the government uses estimates of 5 million to 12 million children forced to work" (Denyer, 2012). Another article says that, while the ILO "has found that India has 12.6 million laborers between the ages of 5 and 14" while "other groups place the figure at 45 million or higher" (Yardley, 2012). Interestingly, several articles concede that "there is little reliable data on the subject" but go on to cite official estimates nonetheless (Denyer, 2012; Orlinsky, 2012).

These results are important for several reasons. First, the fact that more articles provided numerical estimates of trafficking than definitions of trafficking may suggest the media consider readers to be less informed regarding the magnitude of trafficking. However, as the wide range of numbers used within the articles shows, there is little agreement about the size of the problem even among government agencies and anti-trafficking organizations, which may be why a majority of articles made no reference to the extent of the problem at all. It is likely many journalists believed it better to remain silent than risk misinforming their audience or leaving themselves open to criticism due

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[10] Note: Percentages do not total to 100 since some articles cited more than one source.

to the unreliability of trafficking data.

Second, because of the wide variation in trafficking figures and the academic literature highlighting its unreliability, it is surprising that *not a single article questioned whether these numbers were overestimated.* If investigative journalism, in particular, is aimed at "reporting on an issue of significant public concern that reveals information not previously known and perhaps even hidden," then exposing the potential problems with trafficking data, at least for the purpose of encouraging their improvement, seems like an obvious area for a journalist to cover (Aucoin, 2005, p. 3). However, investigative journalism is not just about exposing problems; it also has a rich history of "crusading for reform" (Aucoin, 2005, p. 84).

In the context of human trafficking, it is possible that the desire to question was overruled by a desire to provide unambiguous coverage of an issue the journalist and/or the paper wanted the public, and policymakers, to respond to. As discussed in an earlier section, the media seen through the lens of this study desired to maintain, even potentially expand, current anti-trafficking policies, and questioning the number of trafficking victims could potentially undermine these goals. In this case, by accepting the trafficking estimates of government agencies, the UN, and anti-trafficking NGOs without question, the media may have been helping legitimize the official anti-trafficking stance because they agreed with it.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Examining human trafficking through the lens of coverage and framing makes an already complex issue even more so. Media, and newspapers in particular, have the potential not only reach large numbers of the public, but also policymakers through the stories they tell, and in recent years, human trafficking has been featured regularly. As a result, understanding exactly what the media is saying about trafficking and how that discourse changes over time can offer insight into the role of media in our society, particularly its ability to legitimize or oppose the official view of an issue. An analysis of trafficking articles also offers a chance to reexamine our perceptions — if one of the major roles of the media in society is to educate or inform the public about social issues such as trafficking (Muhammad, 2013; Aucoin, 2005), then what perceptions are we being left with, and how accurate are they? The goal of this study was to answer these types of questions by conducting a content analysis of newspaper articles from 2012 and 2013, and comparing many of these results to a similar study conducted for articles from 1980 to 2006.

Overall, this study found evidence that the media frequently serve to mirror and legitimize the official view of trafficking, rather than acting as a conduit for the expression of alternative views. This finding is based largely on the media's overreliance on official sources and the dominance of sex trafficking in media coverage, which mimics the focus currently placed on that particular trafficking issue by policymakers (Weitzer 2014; UNODC 2014). In addition, this study found that, consistent with past research, the media most frequently portray victims as minors and females (Curtis, 2012; Johnston et al., 2014), apparently reflecting dominant perceptions of these victims as

more "legitimate" and worthy of assistance than others (Lee, 2011). Finally, results indicate that the media do not believe it is necessary to define human trafficking for their readers, and rarely offer data regarding the extent of the problem. While the lack of effort to define trafficking may be due to the belief that the public is already fairly well informed in that regard, the low percentage of articles attempting to quantitatively capture the extent of the problem, combined with the media's clear support of anti-trafficking policies, suggests the media are more interested in advancing the anti-trafficking campaign than questioning statistics.

These findings have several significant implications for public policy and sociological research. First, due to the misleading portrayal of trafficking found by this study, the public and in particular policymakers should be critical of the media, who often frame coverage around what will appeal to the reader, the political goals of the paper, and what information is easily accessible. Second, because perceptions of trafficking victims could be skewed by media coverage, it is important that policymakers reexamine these perceptions and create strategies to better identify and assist all victims, not just those who fit a particular profile, or are perceived to be more "deserving" (Lee, 2011, p. 69). Finally, this study has shown that the media can exert their own voice on social issues, largely through the use of editorials and opinion columns, and may choose to reflect the official trafficking agenda because they agree with it. This last finding raises an interesting question – does policy drive the media, or vice versa? Addtional content analysis of editorials and opinion columns undertaken with the goal of answering this question would be a valuable contribution to human trafficking research.

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Appendix: Tables and Figures

Figure 1: Volume of Media Coverage of Human Trafficking in *The New York Times and Washington Post,* 1980-2006* and 2012-2013.
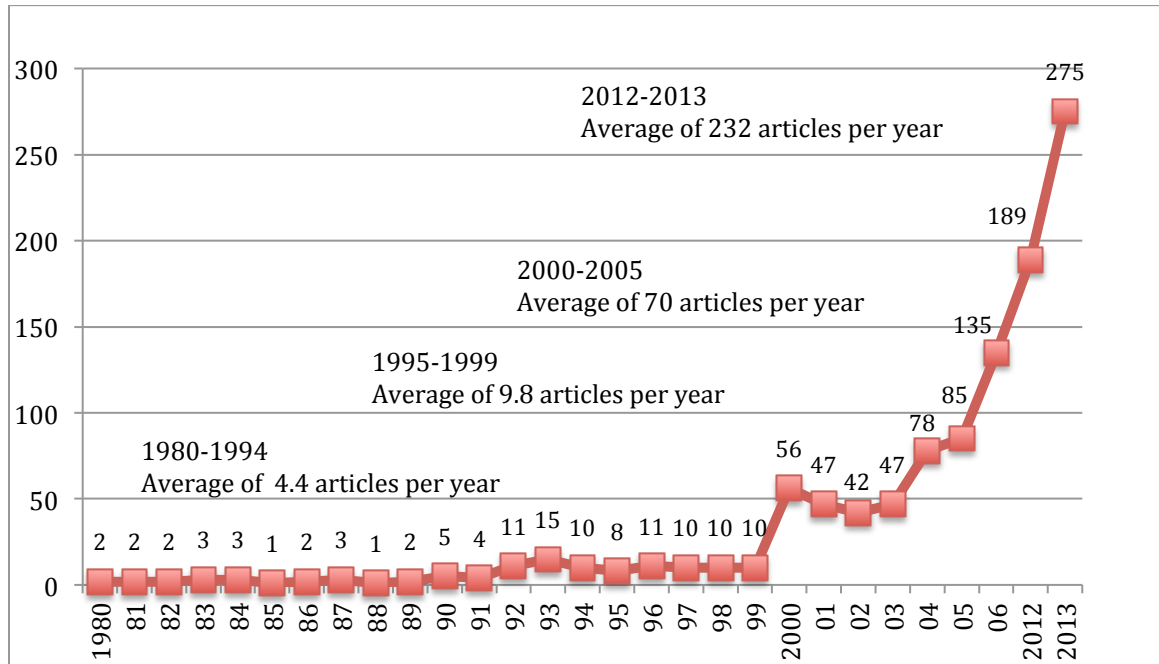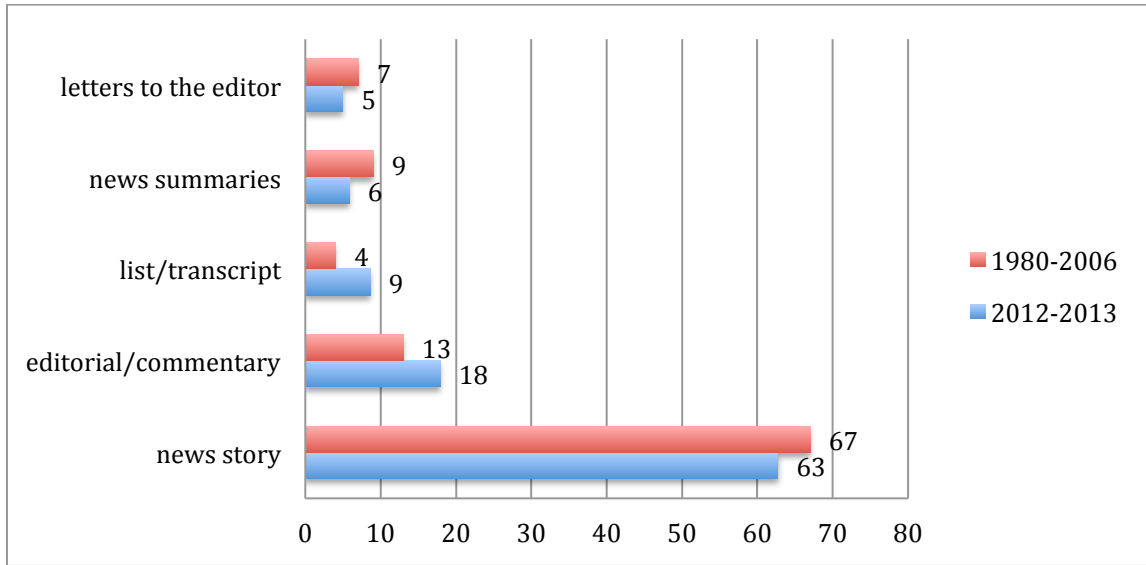

Source: Gulati, 2011.

Table 1: Percentage of Articles by Section for 1980-2006 and 2012-2013.

|	Percentage of Articles	
Section	**1980-2006***	**2012-2013**
main section, front page	8	5
op-ed pages	19	23
other major section, first page	5	5
main section, inside	50	34
other sections, inside	18	30
unknown	0	3

Source: Gulati, 2011.

Figure 2. Comparison of Article Type from 1980-2006* and 2012-2013 (in Percentages).
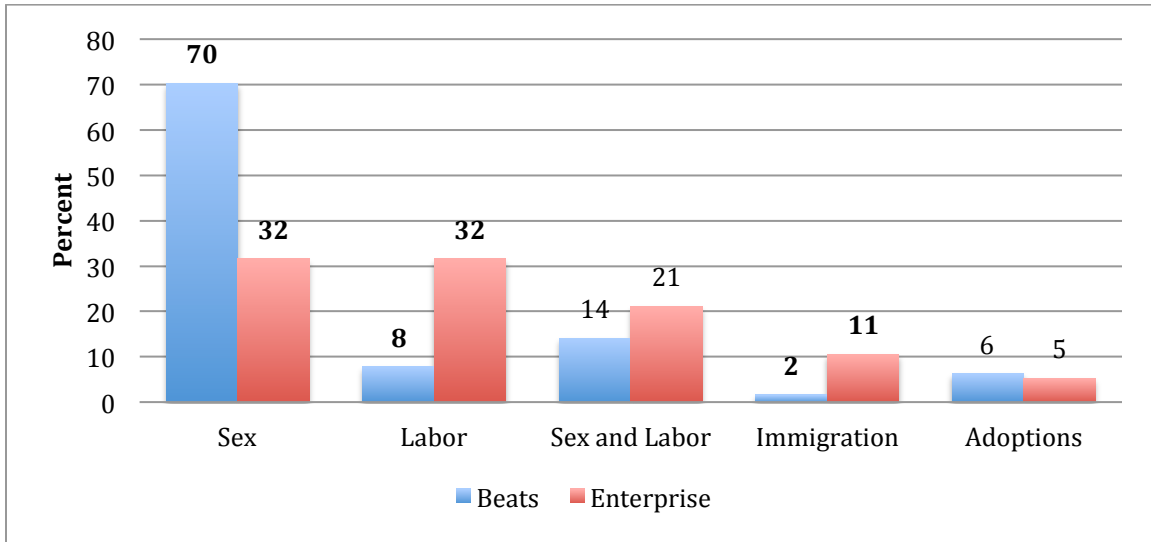

*Source: Gulati, 2011.

Figure 3. Comparison of Story Triggers from 1980-2006* and 2012-2013.
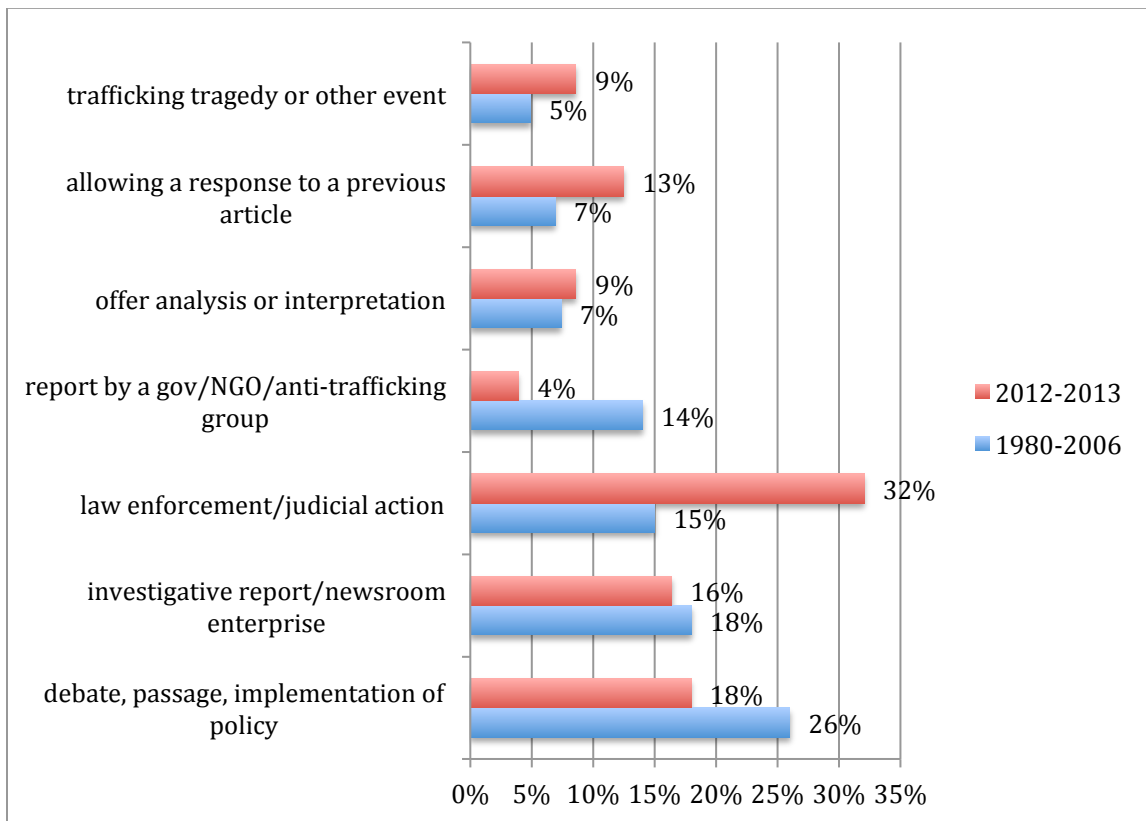
*Source: Gulati, 2011.

Figure 4: Issue Focus of Human Trafficking Articles by Type of Reporting (2012-2013).

Notes: I found no news articles where trafficking was discussed primarily as a historical slavery issue or as a national security issue. The difference between beat and enterprise reporting was statistically significant at the .01 level for sex trafficking and labor trafficking, and at the .1 level for immigration (shown in bold).

Figure 5: Issue Focus of Human Trafficking Articles by Type of Reporting (1980-2006).
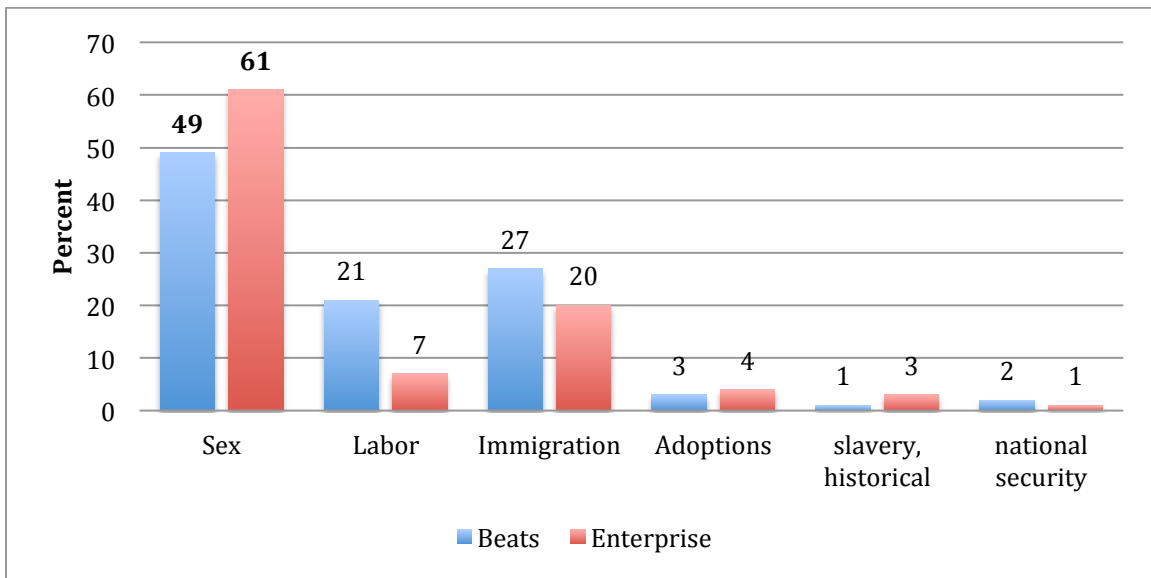
Source: Gulati, 2011.
Notes: The difference between beat and enterprise reporting was statistically significant only for sex trafficking (shown in bold).

Table 2a: Type of Source Cited in News Articles by Story Trigger (2012-2013).

			Story Trigger	
Source	% of All Articles (N = 128)	% of All News Articles (N = 85)	% of Media-Initiated News Articles (N = 20)	% of Beat Reporting News Articles (N = 65)
Government Officials	43.0	51.8	**75.0**	**44.6**
NGOs and Activists	35.2	40.0	**80.0**	**27.7**
Law Enforcement/Courts	41.4	54.1	**35.0**	**60.0**
Victims	25.0	37.6	**55.0**	**16.9**
Traffickers/Employers/Customers	5.5	8.2	5.0	9.2
Academics/Researchers	10.2	11.8	**25.0**	**7.7**
Witnesses/Family Members	5.5	8.2	10.0	7.7
UN Agencies	7.8	8.2	**30.0**	**1.5**
Other Journalists	8.6	5.9	10.1	4.6
Religious Leaders/Activists	0.8	1.2	0.0	1.5

Notes: Bold entries indicate that the difference between columns as revealed by the Chi Square test is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Table 2b: Type of Source Cited in News Articles by Story Trigger (1980-2006).

			Story Trigger	
Source	% of All Articles (N = 605)	% of All News Articles (N = 370)	% of Media-Initiated News Articles (N = 100)	% of Beat Reporting News Articles (N = 270)
Government Officials	44.1	52.7	52.0	53.0
NGOs and Activists	21.5	29.7	**43.0**	**24.8**
Law Enforcement/Courts	17.9	24.9	28.0	23.7
Victims	15.0	20.0	**42.0**	**11.9**
Traffickers/Employers/Customers	10.5	14.9	**22.0**	**12.2**
Academics/Researchers	8.6	12.2	**18.0**	**10.0**
Witnesses/Family Members	7.9	11.4	**20.0**	**8.1**
UN Agencies	7.8	10.0	8.0	10.7
Other Journalists	5.6	6.2	7.0	5.9
Religious Leaders/Activists	**4.0**	**4.9**	**7.0**	**4.1**

Notes: Bold entries indicate that the difference between columns as revealed by the Chi Square test is statistically significant at the .05 level.
Source: Gulati, 2010.

Figure 6. References to Age and Gender in 2012 and 2013.