A STUDY OF *THE NEW YORK TIMES* COVERAGE

OF THE DARFUR, SUDAN CONFLICT, JULY 2003 - JULY 2006

by

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A THESIS

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This multi-method study examines how *The New York Times* reported on the Darfur conflict in Sudan, which has led to an estimated 300,000 deaths and over 2.3 million people displaced due to fighting between tribes of Arab and Black Sudanese. Drawing on postcolonial and normative theories and prior studies of Africa's representation, I analyze how the conflict was framed and what role sources played in reinforcing or resisting Western neocolonial values. I also explore how news-making processes impacted journalists' reporting on Darfur.

The content and textual analyses largely support results of prior studies on news framing of Africa. However, interviews with five *New York Times* journalists reveal that the individual biases and motives of the journalists and their sources significantly influenced the coverage. While the journalists participated in news-making processes

distinguishable by journalist goal, source availability, and source credibility, their sources

also provided information that reinforced certain media frames.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved mother Mariam Morbiwalla who taught me to believe in myself and always encouraged me to follow my dreams.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure   Page

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

War, disease, and famine symbolize Africa in news reports of African issues by the U.S. media. News coverage usually begins with a preliminary report on a looming crisis accompanied by graphic or violent images, which are then sensationalized for a few days, followed by some degree of resolution or a new crisis. As a result, audiences get only episodic information about Africa (Moeller, 1999).

The formulaic news coverage leads to misrepresentation of Africa for Americans, because they are either only exposed to news involving crisis or the coverage is too brief (Hawk, 1992). Atkinson (1999) points out that media "analyses of the causes of conflict and crisis in Africa rarely make more than a passing reference to the political roles of Western countries or to the importance of Africa's economic resources in the world economy" (p. 214). Consequently Americans are left thinking that Africa is a 'dark continent' where violent and irrational people live, or that the continent is a lost cause because of its constant struggle with violence, famine, and disease.

The media's negative coverage of international issues and especially of Africa has its ramifications. Beaudoin and Thorson (2002) argue that "because media play a powerful role in creating public perceptions and portraying conflict and conflict resolution," constant negative reporting can "affect voting decisions, political consensus, and potentially, conflict escalation"(p. 46). See also Zinnes (1968) and Eldridge (1979) for in-depth discussion about consequences of negative media coverage of international issues. Why this pattern and consequences recur has not been directly studied extensively though.

Criticisms of how the Western media dominate news flow and cover developing countries from a negative perspective have been discussed since the 1970s debates about the 'New World Information Order' (Masmoudi, 1981). Scholars such as Wall (1997), Mody et al (2005), Fair (1992), McNulty (1999), Robins (2003), and Hawk (1992) have all shown that African issues are still being framed with graphic details and images of tribal conflicts and Africans as helpless beings, dependent on the compassionate West for assistance.

Previous studies have used the East-West lens framework, which emerged during the Cold War, and the colonial perspective, to explain how the media frame African issues. The East-West lens focuses on Western values and downplays contributions of developing countries, while the colonial perspective sees African values as barbaric and backwards. For example, Nohrstedt (1986) writes that Western journalists are influenced by two kinds of ideological biases regarding Africa: the traditional colonial image of primitive societies, and current foreign policy interests in the home countries of the

publications. However, he does not say anything about organizational constraints influencing their reporting.

These observations are valid; however, if the intent of research is to educate or to understand the impact of news, then a better understanding of how these frames emerge is important. Content and textual analysis can help to identify frames in news and extent of coverage, or even the metaphors used to describe the issues; but to understand how the text was created – journalistic and editorial input would be necessary.

Although some scholars have discussed the implications of the cultural divide between Western journalists and international issues that they cover as well as the logistics of reporting from a foreign place and access to sources, none to my knowledge have interviewed journalists while conducting analysis of news. This study of Darfur coverage by the newspaper of record, *The New York Times,* examines what factors influence journalists as they attempt to create news content in the global news industry.

The purpose of this study is three-fold: first, to investigate the extent of Darfur coverage by *The New York Times* for the period of July 1, 2003 through July 1, 2006 and how the newspaper portrays the conflict, with special focus on which media frames emerge in the news articles; second, to assess the graphic information included in each news story and how these impact the framing of the story; and third, to explore the processes through which foreign issues are covered by journalists and how journalists and their news source preferences impact the creation of actual news content.

I employ a triangulation method: a quantitative content analysis, textual analysis, and in-depth interviews with journalists. The three methods together produce a better understanding of how the conflict in Darfur has been covered by *The New York Times*.

The quantitative content analysis approach was used to document variations in coverage of Darfur, and to identify patterns in each individual journalist's reporting style. Documenting this basic information not only helped to identify themes in each individual's reporting style based on their frequent use of certain sources and inclusion of graphic details but also assisted in developing interview questions addressing the actual coverage by each individual journalist. Furthermore, this information contributes to research about the role of journalists in international news coverage, especially when covering war and crisis in developing countries in Africa.

Foreign news stories, especially those related to African issues, tend to have two predictable elements: stories are usually about crisis or conflict; and stories are either filled with graphic or violent information or are accompanied by graphic images. To understand if there is a relationship between types of dominant media frames visible in a story and the degree of graphic information in the story, a graphicness index (adapted from work of Hockman-Wert, 1997) was used to gauge scale of violent details included in each news story and how they impact the content of the story and its consequent framing (described in Chapter III).

Next a qualitative textual analysis was conducted to identify dominant frames in the content. Lastly, journalists identified from the content analysis were contacted for interviews, using both general questions related to their experience when covering Sudan

and specific questions, which emerged from their reporting through my content and textual analysis.

Background Information on the Darfur Conflict

To understand the magnitude of the current situation in Darfur and its subsequent coverage by media it is important to be aware of the underlying causes of the on-going conflict in Darfur. Sudan has been engulfed in a civil war for the last twenty years. However, it was not until 2003 that the rest of the world began to notice the plight of Darfuris. According to Flint and Waal (2005), members of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) group attacked the Sudanese government air base on April 25, 2003. More than 75 government troops were killed while the rebels lost only nine men and escaped with ammunition, vehicles and weapons. The rebels – SLA and JEM members – had challenged the government and succeeded in their attack on the military base.

The Sudanese government responded by recruiting soldiers from ethnic Arabic speaking tribes – whose land and property were already destroyed due to the conflict to join the Janjaweed group to fight against rebels in the Darfur region, together with air raids in the rebel controlled areas. However, the situation in Darfur didn't garner the world's and the media's attention until Mukesh Kapila, the U.N. Human Rights Coordinator for Sudan, declared on the U.N.'s own IRIN network, that Darfur was "the world's greatest humanitarian crisis" and that "the only difference between Rwanda and

Darfur is now the numbers involved." Media outlets from around the world picked up this information and Darfur officially became news (Prunier, 2007, p.127).

Prunier (2007) explains that *The New York Times* started to write about "genocide," once they found the right frame: "Darfur was a genocide and the Arabs were killing the Blacks," which also became the local humanitarian activists' action words (p. 127-128). This frame was even more powerful when used to report how the Arabs were killing Black Sudanese.

Pruiner, writes that "images of children, rapes, horsemen" made a good story and that everyone was interested in covering the issue and demanded action, even if they didn't understand the actual mechanics of what was happening in Darfur; the Arab versus Black Sudanese was a good enough story (p. 127-128). Now it was not just any warring party fighting another, it was Arabs raping and impregnating Black women and killing and castrating Black Sudanese men.

This media frame worked to engage the attention of Americans, who already had a heightened awareness of themselves and the other "Arab," who terrorized America with the 9/11 attacks and the on-going war in Iraq. Thus, there was more empathy for the Black Darfuris.

The ethnic cleansing gained momentum in July 2003. Women and girls had been sexually assaulted and men had been castrated and murdered on a regular basis. Between January 2003 and May 2006, 2.3 million people were displaced and 285,000 were estimated to have died from starvation, diseases, and killings in Darfur (Amnesty International, 2007).

The endless violence and destruction was further aggravated by political and economic ambitions of people in power. Prunier (2007) explains that, the underlying and tragic problem in Sudan has been the conscious political manipulation taking place in the name of ethnicity by outside players, even though in reality, the political agenda has been to reserve the economic resources for a selected few ethnic groups and tempt the rest with false promises of economic gain.

This has resulted in double alienation for Darfuris, who are asked to fight each other in the name of ethnicity (see Illustration 1 for information about Sudanese tribes and their locations in Sudan). Even though all Sudanese have black skin, the tribes are being differentiated arbitrarily by media depending on their spoken language and physical features, such as shape of nose and thickness of lips (MacEachern, 2007). Many researchers now worry about the lasting consequences of tribal and ethnic alienation, which are not only reflected in news coverage of Darfur but also aid efforts.

Flint and De Waal (2005) further add to Prunier's analysis with their nuanced perspective of the situation in Darfur:

> The serial war criminals at the heart of Sudan's present government once sought absolute control in pursuit of an Islamic state. Now they seek power for its own sake ... they are destroying the very soul of Darfur, turning neighbors against each other and dismembering, limb by limb, a society that once thrived in diversity. The shock waves of this crime, if not reversed, will blight the lives of future generations, outlasting the bloodshed, hunger and grief today (p. 134).

Illustration 1: Map of Sudan
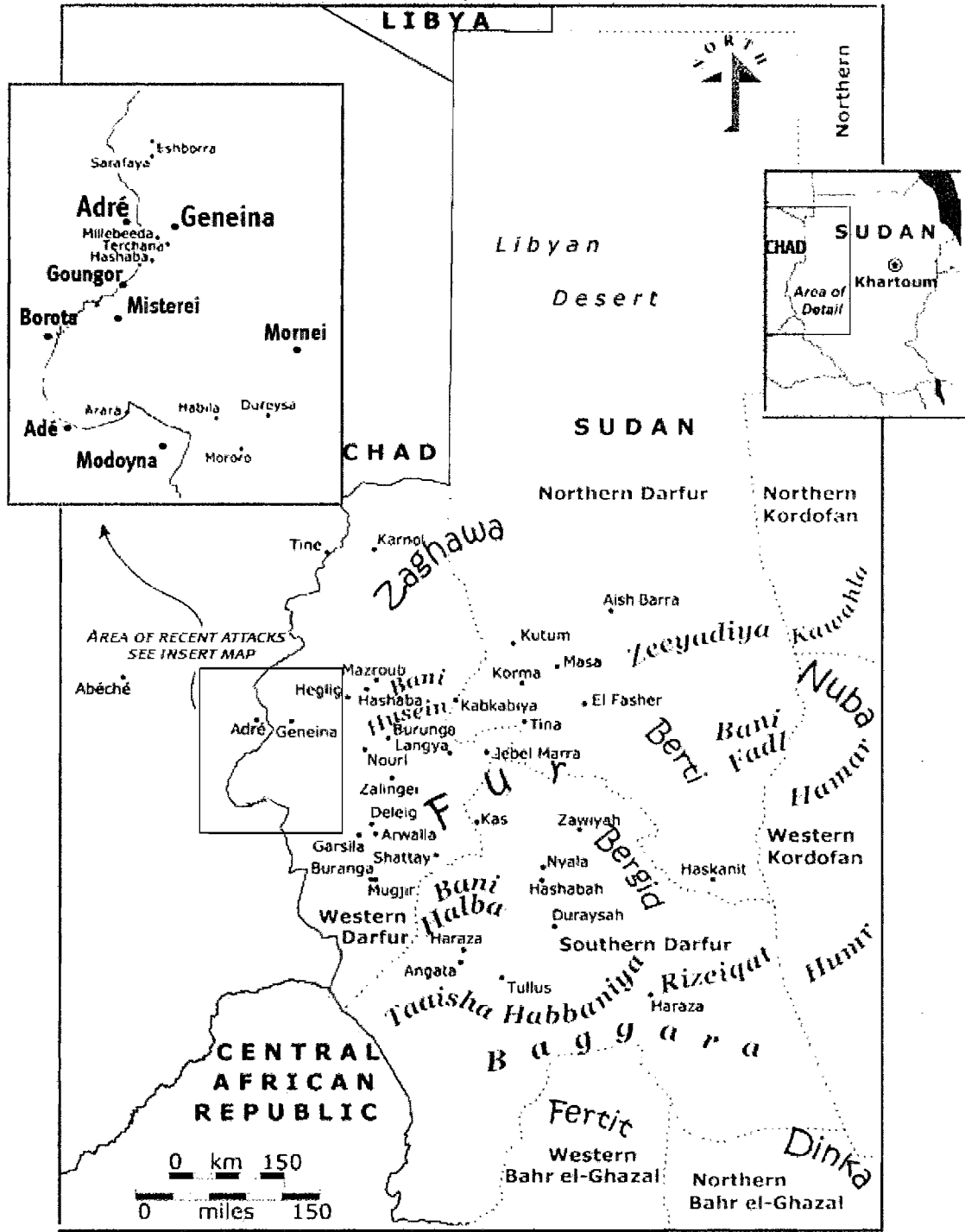
Courtesy of Human Rights Watch

To compound the atrocities being committed in Darfur, the Sudanese government has in the past used excessive force—physical harm towards journalists and imprisonment, to ensure that no information is allowed to become public.

Flint and De Waal explain that even *Al-Jazeera*—the most-watched television station in the Arab world—was shut down by the government after it became the first station in the world to report the atrocities in Darfur (p. 115), which could partly explain why the rest of the world took so long to react. Although the Darfur Peace Negotiations plan was started in December 2004, no consensus has been reached among the warring parties and instead the genocide in Darfur has spilled into Chad now, making it a bigger threat to other neighboring countries (Prunier, 2007).

Understanding why U.S. media and especially *The New York Times* have taken a leadership role in covering Darfur is beyond the scope of this study, but a few observations deserve to be noted to conceptualize this study. The conflict in Darfur is between Muslims, and the region is largely inaccessible due to violence (see Illustration 1 for information about the geographical location of the Darfur region). Therefore, how does lack of access influence journalists' approach to the story? Do the stories emphasize the Arab versus Black differences or did journalists attempt to gain access to both sides of the warring parties and reported using their perspectives?

The complexity of the conflict, lack of accessibility and political and individual motives of sources are all correlated and impact how *The New York Times* covers Darfur. A better understanding of how individual sources impact news coverage is important to

this study. Ultimately it is the news sources – either available to journalists or preferred by them, who provide information for news stories, as will be discussed in Chapter II.

<u>Importance of the Newspaper and Its Coverage of International News</u>

The New York Times has been selected for this study because it is a newspaper of record with 16 news bureaus in the New York region, 11 national news bureaus and 26 foreign news bureaus. The paper also has a daily average circulation of 1,103,600 (The New York Times website) and is read by the decision-makers throughout the United States. Furthermore, following a preliminary analysis of Darfur coverage, it was evident that *The New York Times* is one of the few mainstream media organizations in the United States that has been covering the genocide in Darfur consistently.

Likewise, the importance of the newspaper in relation to news coverage of Africa has been further stressed by Zein and Cooper (1992) who found from their analysis of *The New York Times'* coverage of Africa from 1976 to 1990, that the paper's "large news hole and its tradition of excellence in foreign coverage—represents the best day-by-day coverage of Africa readily available to U.S. readers" (p. 143).

Friel and Falk (2004) also point out the importance of the newspaper as an authoritative voice with respect to controversial policy issues facing the nation, and they argue that many citizens depend on it as a source of information about important events. There is a general belief that the newspaper publishes reliable information that helps to

inform its readers about complex foreign policy decisions. For a more in-depth

understanding of how the newspaper operates, see Diamond (1994).

<u>Organization of This Study</u>

In the next chapter I review past scholarship on media coverage of Africa, which

helps to ground the central questions of this study: how did *The New York Times* report on

the Darfur conflict and what are the dominant media frames evident in the coverage? What

processes impact journalists in the creation of the actual news content? Are there any

variations in the scale of graphic information included in the news articles? In Chapter III, I

discuss the triangulation method used in this study: a quantitative content analysis, a

qualitative textual analysis, and in-depth interviews with five journalists from *The New*

York Times who reported on Darfur conflict. The results of my analysis are presented in

Chapter IV. Chapter V presents a discussion of the findings, my recommendations for

future studies, and the conclusion.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first two sections discuss the theories this study draws on for analysis – postcolonial theories and normative theories of media. In the third section, I review historical and current trends in international news coverage. Past research on news coverage of Africa is presented in the fourth section. The chapter concluded with research questions.

Contesting Media Representations Through the Lens of the Postcolonial Theory

I draw upon postcolonial theory to analyze *The New York Times* coverage of the conflict in Darfur. Referring to postcolonial theories as "points of analytical entry for a more democratic rereading" of a text, Shome and Hedge (2002) identify postcolonial approaches as avenues to question, reframe and rethink our representations about the West and "others" (p. 264). The purpose of using postcolonial theory is not to emphasize

the West versus the East divide. Rather, the intent is to understand how identity is represented in politics of power. For Shome and Hoge (2002), contesting the representations of the East as inferior to the West using a postcolonial lens means not only helping to give back agency to the "East" but also that it is useful for illuminating how the politics of power are established and contested.

Said (1979) defines Orientalism as one of the discourses employed by the West to dominate the Orient (countries in the East), which are considered inferior. European cultures measured the value of their cultures by comparing them to the Orient, which is considered a sort of surrogate (p. 3). He further explains that ideas about the Orient are employed in politics, where assumptions about innocence or guilt, intervention or disengagement are made based on cultural assumptions (p. 96).

While Said's (1979) work has been important in defining the course of contesting the discourse of power dominated by the West, his critics caution against generalizing about oppression and domination over all the "others" (Mohanty, 1991). Generalization could reduce opportunities to understand how "the West and the 'other' are constitutive of one another in ways that are both complicitous and resistant" (Shome & Hedge 2002, p. 264). See Giroux (1992) for more in-depth discussion.

For example, Parameswaran (2002) explains how postcolonial theories can help to deconstruct Euro-American colonial ideologies about race, gender, and nation as reproduced in the *National Geographic's* August 1999 "millennium" issue on globalization:

> Applying the vocabularies of postcolonial critiques, which have
> previously dominated analyses of film and literary texts, to journalistic
> texts and images empowers media scholars to disrupt the hegemony of
> dominant discourses that shape conversations over key cultural and
> economic developments in the global public sphere (p. 312).

When analyzing media coverage, instead of just focusing the analysis on selection of sources, journalists' biases and story-telling practices, the agency of sources and their representations should be incorporated too.

Shome and Hoge (2002) point out that in the modernist study of issues, agency can be taken for granted, however by employing postcolonial theories, the focus can be maintained on understanding the complexity behind representations – who should be allowed to represent others? Is it right to assume the colonized or "others" as incapable of speech?

Likewise, this study aims to deconstruct the agency of news sources. How are imperialist/Western values reinforced by sources used in the news stories? Do those perceived as the "others" resist or subvert Western hegemonic order?

Normative Perspectives

This study is additionally grounded in normative theories of media, models that suggest that media operate in a certain way for societal values to remain intact (McQuail 2000, p. 8). The work of journalists can therefore help reveal how this happens by asking questions such as: How do journalists and their interactions with members of a society

shape reporting at a national or international level? How do journalists' values and preferences shape their reporting?

McQuail (2003) explains that although mass media do serve a social purpose by disseminating information and assisting in forming public opinion on issues, there are also consequences of how information is presented. In the case of news reporting, effects can be attributed to "those who own or direct the media and work in them as well as those for whom the media provides channels of communications, including governments, authorities and individual communicators" (p. 162).

Normative perspectives assume that sources used by journalists constitute an important part of the news production process. Stanton (2007) explains that news media reliance on their known networks – corporations and governments – as credible sources of information "forces all interpretation of issues and events into a narrow frame proscribed by the actions or policies of the corporations and governments as the defining pillars within the relationship" (p. 193-194). There are sources who get access to journalists as insiders, and there are those who journalists find or come across in the process of investigating a story. Seib (2002) further articulates the role of media insiders and how they impact what media pays attention:

> Story ideas do not materialize spontaneously. Even if they have germinated in the brain of a reporter, editor, or producer, the seed had to come from somewhere. It may have been sown as an offhand remark at a social occasion, or it may have been planted by overt lobbying … Sources cultivate journalists just as journalists cultivate sources (p. 41).

However, both types of sources have control over the kind of information they will share with the journalists. Though not false, the information might still influence a journalist's understanding of the subject and consequently what he or she conveys to readers. In the case of war coverage, information from sources is further mediated by how the war is defined – whether it is a religious or an ethnic conflict. Allen and Seaton (1999) explain:

> All definitions of war include the idea of organized violence against an enemy group. … Once violence starts, ethnic identities [or religious differences] become social facts, they are quickly ascribed to people whether or not they want to have them, and many protagonists will not hesitate in giving highly essentialist ethnic explanations for what they are doing (p. 3).

Strentz (1989) further explains that while outright lies or biased perceptions can be misleading, the reporter or even the news audience might not always be able to distinguish between them (p. 26). This can be particularly challenging when a reporter is trying to meet a deadline and doesn't have time to double check the information.

The news production process is further complicated by how the source will report the event depending upon the audience. Strentz (1989) outlines five factors that ultimately shape how "the facts" are reported and the news story is shaped depending upon: (a) how the news information is gathered; (b) what is used to define the news story; (c) rationalization of news; (d) prejudgment of news; and (e) stress levels of individual journalists, as they attempt to produce good stories (p. 23).

In order to understand how news stories are produced 'source-media' analyses can provide important insights. Tumber (2002) proposes: "by developing conceptual

frameworks and understanding the strategies and tactics employed by actors in pursuit of certain goals aimed at affecting public attitudes we can gain insight into the role of the media in the reporting of conflict" (p. 149).

Likewise, this study considers the role of news sources in framing of a story, by paying attention to the correlation between the visible dominant media frames in a news story and type of sources cited in the story.

While sources and news production processes play an important role in news reporting, ultimately it the news value of a story that shapes the coverage.

Gans (1980) in his discussion about enduring values in the news, argues that ethnocentrism and social order guide foreign news coverage (p. 42). "The clearest expression of ethnocentrism, in all countries, appears in war news" where American values are shown in a positive light, while foreign countries are represented as "the enemy" (Gans 1980, p. 42).

Likewise, American media prefer stories that relate to social order, because it is easier to apply American values and interpretations to them. Moreover, since there is a limited amount of print space devoted to foreign news, the media not only cover the most dramatic overseas events, but also prefer those aligned to American foreign policy (Gans, 1980:37). However, for foreign news to compete with domestic news, they have to provide information that is different from local news. One of the ways a story becomes newsworthy and garners follow-up stories is through its dramatic properties – either inherent or contrived. Bennett (1983) writes that "it is no secret that reporters and editors

search for events with dramatic properties and then emphasize those properties in their reporting" (p. 14).

In the case of Africa, past research has shown that newspapers tend to publish crisis news disproportionately more than news about peace or development (see Hatchen and Bell, 1985; and Zein and Cooper, 1992). Furthermore, the stories dramatize the events and focus on violence and individual actions. This trend requires further examination. Using a graphicness index (see Chapter III for coding guide) I examine if there is a variation in the scale of graphic or violent information included in the Darfur news stories.

This study also considers effects of organizational constraints and individual factors influencing journalists who are reporting on conflict in Darfur. For instance, do journalists explain that their editors' perception of the importance of the event (or other external constraints) impacts what gets covered and how the news article will be published in *The New York Times*?

News media usually provide people information about foreign news – whether a crisis or development. Thus, journalists have to travel overseas to cover these stories. Harriman (1987) explains that foreign correspondents are expected to file tight, comprehensible copy on deadline, and their editors expect them to report information that would make sense to their readers.

Conflicts however can arise between journalists and editors, when either the editors have different expectations about the reality of the story than what the journalist is observing on the ground, or when journalists "go native" and become involved in the

story and start providing a personal account, which is unacceptable to editors who want

"objective" reporting (Harriman 1987, p. 192).

The complexity of foreign news reporting is further articulated by Corera (2003) a

journalist for the *Today* program at *BBC Radio 4*, who explains that some of the biggest

challenges involved in reporting conflicts include: trying to provide a comprehensive

story using both sides' perspectives in a limited time period, when it is so much easier to

"go on air and play a little tape of the refugees with the translator saying 'there's been a

massacre' and you have got a great story."

Additionally sources tend to exaggerate and lie, because they understand the

power of the media and know that sensationalized stories will get them more attention;

this is difficult for journalists to sift through, when they don't have enough time to double

check information and research events (p. 256-257). In other words it is easier to provide

a sensationalized view of a news story, which would not only make the story

newsworthy, but the short-cut would also allow the journalist to meet the deadline.

The question of constraints facing individual journalists is further complicated by

timelessness of a story or constant pressure of deadlines. "In addition to promoting

formulaic reporting and distorting the importance of events, timeliness contributes to

news fragmentation," explains Bennett (1983, p. 126).

This is especially true for journalists reporting on international news stories –

where multiple stories are competing for attention. Journalists are forced to employ

subjective criteria to decide the relevance and news value of a story. One criterion

employed by journalists is that a news story "becomes more relevant when it is offered to

the press by 'credible' news sources" such as government officials (Bennett 1983, p. 127).

Likewise in their discussion about media coverage of Africa, Winship and Hemp (1992) explain, "there are basic elements of the African story making it a particularly difficult challenge for the American media and, in turn, particularly vulnerable to charges of bias and imbalance" (p. 237). The seven elements, which they argue impacts coverage of Africa are as follows (p. 237-8):

- Enormous continent-wide problems – the news is generally not good and hence media coverage tends to be negative;

- General public lack of interest – cultural differences, racial prejudice and negative reports don't create novelty and interest;

- Difficulties of access – Africa is a vast continent and war situations make access challenging and costly;

- Anti-American feelings – American journalists tend to be treated with suspicion due to U.S. foreign policy in Africa and therefore getting quotes and other information could be a difficult job;

- Differing perceptions of the media's role – in many African countries media is a tool of national development, while in the West, the media play the watch-dog's role;

- Declining resources – U.S. media have been closing foreign bureaus in the recent years, further making reporting from Africa more challenging;

- American insensitivity and ignorance – not having been exposed to African cultures or languages, it is sometimes difficult for American journalists to relate to the people or the problems they are writing about.

Armed with an understanding of challenges associated with covering Africa, the present study posits that an elite newspaper like *The New York Times* observes and reflects the values of libertarian theory of the press, which supports advancement of the interests and welfare of human beings by trusting in each individual's honesty, in this case, that of the individual journalist to get to the truth and inform the public (Seibert et al., 1956).

After all if the journalists' intent weren't to bring about a change in a situation like Darfur, why would they be willing to place themselves in dangerous situations?

Seib (2002), a former journalist agrees that journalists consider it their duty "to witness and to report, and through their coverage to prod policymakers and the public to pay more attention to what is going on around them" (p. 109). While fulfilling their professional duties journalists are often exposed to many of the fears and risks that the victims and refugees endure. Some of them even lose their lives while on an assignment (Seib, 2002: 121).

Furthermore, if the mass media are considered important in helping people formulate their worldview (e.g. Gitlin, 1980; Hall, 1982; Carey, 1986; and Beaudoin and Thorson, 2002), then *The New York Times* is fulfilling its role. Its consistent coverage of Darfur has helped the newspaper to maintain its reputation of being a credible source of

information and as a provider of accurate information about important issues, both at the national and international level through its investigative reporting regardless of political consequences (Friel and Falk, 2004).

International News Coverage: Historical and Current Trends in the Media

Useful to this study is an understanding of how newsrooms operate and how American media view foreign news. Schudson (2003) says that historically editorial voices defined newspapers and "reporting of news was incidental, unorganized and obviously subordinated to editorial partisanship." Even though by the 1920's newspapers became more structured as they sought economic success, editors still controlled content (p. 75-76).

With the growth of readership and demand for news, editors formed a nationwide association, the American Society of Newspaper Editors in 1922, and at their opening convention adopted a code of ethics called: "the Canons of Journalism" that included a principle of "Sincerity, Truthfulness, Accuracy" and another of "Impartiality," which included the declaration "News reports should be free from opinion or bias of any kind" (Schudson, p. 82).

By defining how news should be reported, once again, news editors were able to control how news was covered. Journalists were expected to report stories "objectively," free from opinion or bias. Or as Schudson correctly points out, the ideology of objectivity became a kind of industrial principle, practiced by everyone (p. 82). Consequently

newspapers could argue that they were just reporting "facts objectively" and their own perspectives were not shaping the story.

Journalism has evolved over time and now it is commonly acknowledged that it is not possible to be completely objective in reporting; but still every attempt should be made by reporters to be transparent about their stories, verify their sources and adhere to the truth (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001).

When it comes to foreign news, however, things have become more complicated. For one, news editors have to rely on journalists' value judgments when reporting and often can't control how the story will be covered once they have assigned it. Even then, editors can refuse to publish a foreign news story if they suspect that it doesn't meet their criteria of objectivity.

A study by Carroll (2006) found that even though readers ranked international/national news among the top sections they read, the number of foreign bureaus owned by the U.S. media has continued to decline over the years (p. 3-4). Furthermore, foreign news is suffering from lack of reporters available to cover international issues and larger news organizations are still wary of trusting freelancers because the reliability of their stories cannot be tested (p. 18).

As smaller papers stop covering foreign news, some of the larger newspapers such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* gain more credibility and respect because of their continuous foreign news coverage, which smaller newspapers have to subscribe to through the wire-news services in order publish some foreign news.

If news editors have historically controlled and continue to have a say in what will be covered and get published, what is the fate of foreign news, which is only covered by a select few news organizations and syndicated to the rest of newspapers in the country?

It is important to understand how news editors make decisions to select issues to assign to journalists and what they consider to be "newsworthy." because as Carroll says:

> Americans need to know what is being done in their name around the world and how their government's foreign policy might affect them. They need good information to make well informed voting choices and have an informed national debate of the issues (p. 21).

Nevertheless, it is not enough to report on some foreign issues. There should be a balance and diversity of subjects covered, and news shouldn't only reflect what an elite group of people think is important or newsworthy. Previous studies have focused on value representation in foreign news (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2001). Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger (1987) studied factors that best differentiate those international events that are covered in the U.S. news media from events that are not.

Likewise Chang's (1998) examination of what determinants affect the structure of international news coverage showed that while there are three communication zones used by the media to determine what stories to cover, they are generally ignored in the case of African countries.

However, since Shoemaker's and Reese's (1991) work on media organizations, journalists and editors' training and perceptions of news and how they influence foreign news, not many studies have examined the process of news coverage and selection, especially in the shrinking supply of quality foreign news.

News Coverage of Africa

Media coverage of African issues in the U.S. media have concerned scholars such as Hawk (1992), who argues that because "media presentation of needed contextual information about Africa is limited by commercial and financial considerations of editors, the personal opinions of editors and correspondents, and press restrictions of host governments," the coverage tends to be stereotypical and misleading (p. 4). This kind of reporting leaves Americans with a feeling that Africa is a "dark continent" far removed from the cultural norms of America.

The reality is different of course, and many scholars have been analyzing different forms of media coverage of African issues to illustrate the problems with the reporting and their consequences with the hope that reporting on Africa will get better at some point.

Scholars, such as Wall (1997) have conducted a comparative analysis of U.S. news magazine coverage of the crises in Bosnia and Rwanda, and found that violence in Bosnia was framed as an anomaly for Europeans whereas ethnic conflict in Rwanda was presented as typical of Africans.

> Coverage of Bosnia suggests participants made a logical, albeit evil, decision to commit violence in an attempt to seek revenge for past grievance… In contrast, Rwanda's violence is depicted as unavoidable and so alien from Western understanding as to defy explanation. The Rwandans, too, are depicted as inferior to the West, but coverage evokes little understanding for those it portrays as a primitive, savage people (1997, p. 411).

Although Wall's observations about U.S. newsmagazine coverage of the Rwandan crisis are noteworthy, her study does not explain what role the reporters played in how the stories were framed. Did they go in consciously thinking that since the United States was not involved in Rwanda, the coverage didn't have to be accurate; yet the violence in Bosnia, because of the U.S. involvement, had to be justified and factually reported?

Similarly, Wall's (1997a) analysis of news magazine's coverage of the 1994 Rwanda crisis showed that aid workers in Rwanda were quoted frequently, while Rwandans were depicted as passive beings (p. 124-125). She explains that news coverage of Africa tends to get distorted when reported by American news, and stories tend to interpret conflicts in Africa as barbaric and ethnically based (p. 131-132).

Even though her observations are valid and relevant to the newsmagazine she studied, they cannot be used to generalize to hard news coverage by newspapers like *The New York Times,* since newsmagazines work on different time-lines, budgets, and their audiences are very specific too.

McNulty's (1999) discussion of Western media's coverage of war and genocide in Rwanda found that the conflict was portrayed as ethnic or tribal. Additionally, the coverage either supported neo-humanitarian values (the West should intervene and save Africans) or advised non-intervention (the West can do nothing, as it is not their responsibility).

When Fair (1992) analyzed *The New York Times'* coverage of food aid sent to Africa in the mid-1980s by the United States, she found that Africans were represented as

dependent and helpless, while the U.S. was portrayed as aid giver and the West as compassionate. She also offers a brief explanation of how news stories are socially determined and alludes to roles of individual journalists and their organizations in creating the story; but because she does not include any analysis or research data, it is not possible to tell how individual journalists determine events.

Likewise when Robins (2003) analyzed top U.S. newspapers' coverage of the Sudanese 'Lost Boys', she found that the stories were presented out of context and many contained discrepancies in the details of the Sudan's civil war. While her findings are valuable in expanding the existing literature on media coverage of Africa, the study uses a human-interest story to analyze the larger question of how the US media covers Africa. The findings are relevant for the story under analysis, but can they be applied to war or political coverage too? Also feature stories are usually narratives, while hard news stories tend to focus on facts and developing stories and therefore it is possible that the margin of error could be smaller in the case of hard news stories.

Beaudoin and Thorson (2002) also draw attention to the disproportionate number of stories focusing on conflict coverage in Africa, published in the *Los Angeles Times*. Their study found that conflict coverage dominated by a 2-to-1 margin over conflict resolution in African countries' coverage, in comparison with other countries in the developed world. In the case of Africa, "conflict resolution appears to be largely overlooked—even though more than half of global peace agreements between 1989 and 1996 were achieved in this region" (Beaudoin & Thorson 2002, p. 57).

Their findings are important and support what other scholars have pointed out –
that the developing world, especially Africa, is considered inferior by Western
imperialistic standards and the media reflect these societal values through their negative
coverage (for e.g. see Said, 1979; Hawk, 1992; Wall, 1997; Fair, 1992).

Alternately, other studies suggest the U.S. media have imposed U.S. journalistic
values when covering African issues. For example, when the *Washington Post* and *The
New York Times* covered the 1994 elections in South Africa, Reta (2000) found that
elections and political figures were framed based on Western democratic values: media
discouraged violence and separatism and encouraged negotiation and reconciliation.
Nevertheless, even he admits that an important question still remains to be answered:
"what is the basis of these values and positions expressed by the media in reporting on
the South African elections? Are they rooted in the tradition of American political
culture, or are they linked to U.S. foreign policy?" (p. 535).

Another explanation for this unusual coverage of the South African election could
be the long apartheid history there. Journalists might still be associating South Africa as a
'white' country rather than 'black,' and therefore relevant to U.S. journalistic values.
Also Reta's analysis was limited to the study of a particular event, so the results may not
apply to the behavior of all newspapers covering Africa.

Similarly, Downing (1990) investigated the role played by *Time* and *Newsweek*
magazines in relation to political memory and public participation in US foreign policy
making during the apartheid era in South Africa. The findings showed that "African
barbarism" was a common frame used in the stories and Africans were generally absent

as official news sources. While the findings are notable, the study focuses on an African country that already has substantial attention from the international media, due to its rich economy and troublesome political history. Is it possible the African sources were not cited because they were not easily accessible, considering the segregation in South Africa? Would the findings differ if an analysis was conducted using coverage of a peaceful African country?

Taking a quantitative approach, Reta (2002) explores how *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* reflect U.S. foreign policy in their coverage of the Sudan conflict (1983-1996) and the Eritrean War (1962-91). Reta found that "as long as the U.S. has either close ties or clearly antagonistic relations with the governments, there is likely to be a certain amount of directional treatment of the parties in conflict even when coverage as a whole is predominantly neutral" (p. 255). He also found that both newspapers relied on government officials in Sudan and Eritrea for information, rather than the rebels, confirming how issues of sources could restrict or reduce source diversity.

Similarly, a recent quantitative analysis by Mody, Swenson, Skogberg, and Demont-Heinrich (2005) that investigated how international media, including *The New York Times*, are covering the Darfur crisis, also found that ethnicity and race of Sudanese was emphasized which lead the media to use ethic conflict as one of the primary frames in the reporting.

<u>Research Questions</u>

This study takes a more comprehensive approach in investigating *The New York Times'* coverage of the conflict in Darfur, both in terms of data collection and analysis. As noted earlier, communication scholars studying African news coverage by U.S. media have generally focused on the framing of issues and portrayal of main players and neglected to include the perspectives of journalists and their sources preferences, who are after all the creators of the texts under analysis. Since data analysis is subjective, it is important to at least understand the constraints under which the data were created, in this case: *The New York Times'* reporting on Darfur.

Although past studies of coverage of Africa have taken into consideration factors like news values, media ownership, editors, access to news sources, and how these variables impact the actual coverage, the present study hopes that by talking directly to journalists, a first-hand perspective of how journalists report from Africa additionally will be obtained. Therefore, this study uses a triangulation method—a quantitative content analysis, a textual analysis, and in-depth interviews with journalists—to investigate four research questions in relation to how the journalists at *The New York Times* have covered the conflict in Darfur.

The first two questions have emerged from previously cited literature on Western news coverage of Africa, as well as postcolonial and normative theories. Wall (1997), McNulty (1999), Fair (1992) and others have noted that the U.S. news coverage of African issues tends to frame issues as being either ethnic or tribal and portrays the

West's intervention as beneficial for Africans. Likewise, drawing from the postcolonial theory, it is assumed that depending on the identity and agency of the sources, the politics of power and representations will be present in the coverage of conflict in Darfur.

Q1: What are the dominant frames visible in the coverage of Darfur?

Q2: How and to what extent is the West's intervention offered as a solution to the conflict?

Seib (2003) points out that when journalists report on war, they use, " depictions of horror in words and pictures and sounds [to] highlight moral issues that transcend the political strictures that limit responsiveness" (p. 39). Likewise, Bennett (1983) highlights the media's preference for dramatizing stories to engage readers and increase news value. Furthermore, since journalists in Sudan are reporting about war, to maintain timeliness of a story and to minimize confusion about background information and follow-up stories, it is possible that when interviews with Darfuris are included in the news articles, graphic descriptions will be part of the victims' narratives and shall be included to engage readers' emotions and to maintain their interest in follow-up stories.

Q3: Is there variation in scale of graphic information included in news articles by individual journalists?

The fourth question is based on the underlying premise that an elite newspaper like *The New York Times* operates under a libertarian framework and aims to discover truth and inform its audience to the best of its ability. Therefore, assuming that the journalists reporting on Darfur have support from their editors and they all agree that it is their duty to advance the interest and welfare of human beings (Seibert et al, 1956), it is

possible the journalists in their interviews will allude to organizational constraints and factors to explain any perceived shortcomings in their reporting.

Q4: What do *The New York Times* journalists consider to be primary factors influencing their reporting on the Darfur conflict?

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is divided into five sections. First, I present the rationale for using a triangulation method and my criteria for data selection. The second section details how the quantitative content analysis was conducted. In the third section, the coding method used for the textual analysis is described. The fourth section reports how interview questions were derived and how the interview data were analyzed. Lastly, I discuss coding validity.

Working with the assumption that news reporting is a multi-layered process, involving various gatekeepers, organizational routines and constraints (e.g. Gans, 1980), I decided to employ a largely qualitative approach for my analysis. Given my questions about extent and type of coverage, a quantitative analysis would not allow as much freedom for in-depth analyses to trace causal processes both within each news story and across the whole period of coverage.

Nonetheless, a quantitative analysis can be very useful in understanding the parameters of the data to be qualitatively assessed, by highlighting the presence or absence of particular subjects and by quantifying the frequency of particular variables.

Story Sample

As previously discussed, *The New York Times* was selected for the present study not only for its reputation as a newspaper of record in the United States, but also because the paper has been covering Darfur consistently in the last four years. Before discussing my story selection criteria, it is important to understand how the newspaper is structured. There are six categories: (1) news pages that include news through foreign, national, and city bureaus; (2) the editorial page containing opinions and the paper's position about various news topics; (3) the "op-ed page" with the work of staff columnists; (4) additional op-ed pages containing commentary from guest contributors; (5) letters to the editors, which include readers' responses to stories published in the paper; and (6) a magazine and book review section (Friel & Falk, 2004, p. 3).

This study focuses on the news articles written by journalists affiliated with the *New York Times*, and is therefore limited to articles published in news and op-ed pages.

Using the Pro-Quest newspaper database to identify articles for analysis, I used a general search term 'Darfur' to call up all documents published between July 1, 2003 and July 1, 2006. This time frame was selected because it covers the most violent period of the conflict in Darfur (Amnesty International, 2007). During this period, the Janjaweed

with Sudanese government support attacked villages in Darfur; homes were burned, people were mutilated and their bodies were left in the open to warn anyone planning to come back to the village. By the beginning of 2005, about two million Darfuris had become refugees, living in overcrowded camps in Darfur, while another 200,000 people had fled to Chad (Flint & Waal, 2005).

The initial full-text search using the key word 'Darfur' yielded 734 articles. However, this large pool of documents contained duplicates, letters to the editor, and articles not pertaining to coverage of Darfur. All 734 articles were read in full to eliminate duplicate or unrelated articles and editorials. I also eliminated articles that did not provide the journalist's name in the by-line, as the second part of this study involved contacting all the journalists for in-depth interviews about their experiences.

The sample was 257 articles including: 211 news stories and 46 op-editorials on Darfur conflict. Although my research goals were primarily to understand what processes were impacting hard news production of Darfur, I choose to include opinion-editorials and feature stories in the data set as well. While the hard news stories data set can be considered enough for examining coverage of Darfur, inclusion of opinion-editorials and feature stories enabled me to identify and compare the variations in the coverage of Darfur, see Table 1 for the complete breakdown of coverage.

Quantitative Analysis

Using an initially quantitative approach, I operationalized my coding method including open and axial coding, which I then tested on a small sample of data. My

coding method was guided by (Berge, 2007) who recommends "specification of the content characteristics (basic content elements) being examined and application of explicit rules for identifying and recording these characteristics" before beginning coding (p. 314). After three test runs, I felt comfortable applying my coding method on my data set of news articles and opinion-editorials (n=257).

Table 1: Content Analysis Results

Article Type	Average Word Count	Number of Articles
Commentary	1,015 words	10
Feature Stories	944 words	8
National Briefings	118 words	3
Hard News	1,300 words	149
Op-Editorials	742 words	46
World Briefings - Africa	100 words	39
World Briefings - United Nations	107 words	2
Total		n = 257

First, I tabulated the following information in an Excel spreadsheet to determine my coding variables and coding categories: date line, word count, author of article, article type, number and type of primary sources used in a story, section and page number for story placement, and recurring keys words in the stories.

Second, after tabulating all the information from the articles, I further refined the sample. I sorted the data by each individual journalist and counted number and type of articles written by him or her. My data set of articles (n=257) included: 44 articles with word counts of less than 200 words and 28 articles with word counts between 200-499 words. These were then eliminated from my data sample, because the content did not provide enough data for in-depth analysis. I also eliminated 69 articles that were feature stories, commentaries and opinion editorials, because these articles focused on either activism by individuals in the U.S. or contained exclusively journalists' analysis of the conflict in Darfur. As my primary interest was to understand how the conflict in Darfur was reported, I choose to focus on hard news articles (n=116) with word counts of over 500 words, as they not only included stories written both from Africa and the U.S., but were also related specifically to the conflict.

Third, I modified a visual graphicness index designed by Hockman-Wert (1997) to assess degree of graphic information included in the hard news articles. Judgment of graphic description can be subjective; however, by systematically coding each instance based on a uniform specification, it is possible to gauge if there is variation in type and depth of graphic details included in a news story. Each news article was coded using the following index and a point was added for each instance of graphic details:

- If an article includes direct quotations from a victim describing violence committed against him or her physically;

- If author quotes a refugee from Darfur who described violence he or she witnessed while in Darfur;

- If the author describes violence that he or she witnessed while covering the conflict;

- If the author quotes a humanitarian aid organization or peacekeeping force describing violence that he or she has witnessed;

- For indirect reference to violence taking place in Darfur (for each reference);

- If a photograph is included in an article showing Sudanese people affected by the conflict: +1 (for each photograph). This information was tabulated using the captions provided in the articles for the photographs, as actual photographs are not available with archived articles.[1]

Textual Analysis

A textual analysis of hard news stories (n=116) was undertaken to identify themes and framing devices used to characterize the coverage. Media frames help to organize information for readers and to some extent journalists too. Gitlin (1980) has identified some of the framing strategies, which include overuse of officials as sources, trivializing actions of opposition groups, focusing on events instead of larger issues, and overemphasizing one side of the argument. Furthermore, past studies on media coverage of Africa have shown that news stories tend to be framed as "ethnic conflict," "U.S as aid

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[1]However, a single source describing violence at a great length would warrant a "3," while a broadly sourced story but limited in scope would receive a higher "graphicness" score.

giver," and "West as compassionate" (see Fair, 1992, Wall, 1997; 1997a; McNulty, 1999; and Mody et al, 2005).

Guided by prior research using the textual analysis method (see Steeves, 1997; Entman, 2003; and Shah and Nah, 2004), and past scholarship on media framing of African issues, a close reading of hard news stories (n=116) was undertaken to identify specific patterns in the coverage, which were tabulated for further analysis.

I used the following questions to deconstruct the contents of each article:

- Story focus—about a family, an individual, an ethnic tribe or a specific group.

- Salient words within texts, especially those describing Sudanese.

- Background information in the story, i.e. a minimum of 50 words describing how, why, and when the conflict started.

- Discussion of underlying problem in the story. If the story does not discuss any particular problem in Darfur, then what is the thesis of the story?

- Solution offered. If yes, what is the solution?

The within-case analysis involved topic coding of all news stories, followed by dividing all news articles into one of three types of news stories, based on topic coded: a summary of public event type, an investigative type, or a hybrid type (which included elements of both a summary of public event type and investigative type). Then I thematically coded each news article to examine the correlation between variants such as dateline, word count, type of primary sources used, and degree of graphic details.

The final step was to explore which media frame dominated in each type of news story and the relation between frame sources. Four major frames emerged from the analysis: "the West and U.S. in particular as saviors of Sudanese people;" "ethnic conflict;" "fatalist or no hope for peace in Sudan;" and "a combination of West is superior and ethnic conflict."

If a story highlighted efforts by the West and especially the U.S., it was categorized as having "the West and U.S. as saviors of Sudanese people" frame; but if the focus of the story was problems between the ethnic tribes or Arab and Black Sudanese, then it was placed under an "ethnic conflict" frame category. If a story highlighted the problem and failed peace processes in Sudan and sources seemed pessimistic about peace, then it was categorized as having a "fatalistic" frame; and if a story contained more than one dominant frame, then it was placed under a separate "combination" category. Table 2 summarizes my main results derived from a combination of quantitative content analysis and textual analysis and presents both the major analytical categories and distribution of hard news stories among them.

Table 2: Salient Frames in *The New York Times* Coverage of Darfur

Type of Frames	Number of articles in which the frames appear
The West and U.S. as saviors of Sudanese people	70
Ethnic conflict	33
Fatalist	8
Multiple frames	5

Interviews

Finally, all journalists identified from the content analysis as having contributed to coverage of Darfur were recruited for in-depth interviews. From the total of 27 journalists identified and following IRB approvals, contact information was found for 13 journalists, who were all contacted by email. Three of the 13 journalists refused to participate in an interview and six did not respond to my request. I was able to conduct four interviews with journalists affiliated with *The New York Times* at the time of reporting.

The journalists represent four different sub-sections of news sections at *The Times*: a freelancer for the city section, a national correspondent, a diplomatic correspondent, and a bureau chief based in Africa. One interview was conducted by telephone, while the other three journalists preferred answering my questions by email. See Appendix B for listing of journalists interviewed, title and interview mode and date.

I was additionally able to obtain many responses at two public presentations and Q&A sessions from Nicholas Kristof, the op-ed columnist at *The New York Times*, who refused to be part of my research, but agreed to answer some of the questions during his presentations at the Witnessing the Genocide Symposium at the University of Oregon in April 2007.

My research goals included gaining a better understanding of processes involved in news production. Johnson (2001) explains that to achieve research goals, the researcher has to have some background knowledge about the subject and interviewee. "Advance preparation can be helpful in avoiding a situation where "the interview will take on the nature of instruction, with more experienced [interviewee] teaching the novice interviewer" (p. 107).

In order to maintain clarity of my questions, before formulating them, I first analyzed all the news articles written by my interviewees and researched their background information in terms of their education and work experiences, using *The New York Times* website (www.nytimes.com).

Interviews began with general questions about the journalists' experiences when reporting on Darfur and how they found sources for their stories, and later focused on questions about their individual articles. On the subject of sources, I asked about how they identified and got access to their sources, and how they verified information provided by sources.

Regarding each individual journalist's reporting, I asked specific questions that emerged from the content and textual analysis of the articles they had written, such as

reliance on certain types of sources, subjects and frames of stories, and their writing style. See Appendix C for the questionnaire and the recruitment and consent letters.

Each journalist was assigned a pseudonym, and all identifying information was removed before analyzing the interview data. All interviews were then transcribed for further analysis. In order to explore how sources preferred by journalists impacted their actual stories, I examined:

(1) how each journalist explains his or her method of finding sources;

(2) what he or she considers to be the biggest problem when covering Darfur; and

(3) how the story he or she wrote was edited before getting published.

Specifically I was seeking to illuminate the relationships among: journalists' reporting styles, perceived constraints, and the story published in *The New York Times*.

First, I open coded each interview to identify themes related specifically to individual journalists; second, I connected these themes to the journalist's reporting to identify their association with other themes both within the stories and between other cases, such reporting of other journalists from the same location. I also compared individual journalist's responses with the other three interviews by examining if there were any similarities between their responses.

Validity and Reliability

This study employed largely a qualitative approach.

Like many qualitative projects (Steeves, 1997; Gitlin, 1980), I immersed myself in the material, taking notes each time. [2]

The quantitative content analysis relied on face validity for several of its basic categories – word count, dateline and story type information, which were all coded verbatim from the articles. As noted by Hockman-Wert (1997) "the validity of graphicness scale can be difficult to access," however by coding using a uniform specification can help to minimize errors (p. 44). Berg (2007) advises researchers "there is no single best way to code data … the more organized and systematic the coding scheme, the easier it is to allow the data to *talk to you* and inform you about research-related questions you might have" (p. 319). Likewise, Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998) explain that since reliability is about maintaining consistency when coding, *intra-coder reliability* can be achieved by coding data consistently over time to make sure that the coding schemes and definitions are clear and replicable (pp. 120-121).

Accordingly, I tested my media frames and graphicness scale coding schemes three times using a sample of my data before using them to code the complete set of news

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[2] Furthermore, while conducting this analysis, I was enrolled in an advanced qualitative methods class in the sociology department. I had many opportunities to discuss my coding categories with my peers, both from sociology and School of Journalism and Communication and receive feedback from Professor Jiannbin L. Shiao.

articles and opinion-editorials (n=257). In sum, by clarifying my coding schemes on a data sample, I was able to assure 100% test-retest reliability of my data.

To ensure validity of my interview questions, I followed each question either with a probe or a follow-up question (see Appendix C for the questionnaire guide). Johnson (2001) recommends using subsequent interviews and follow-up questions with same or other interviewees to check the interpretive validity of this strategy" (p.113).

Limitations of this Study

I recognize a number of limitations to this study. Like other content analysis; a researcher's bias can interfere with data coding. Although most of the coding categories were based on face validity, in the case of graphic details included in a story – individual perception of graphic information is open to interpretation.

My own background as someone from Africa could have affected my designing of the study and interviewing of journalists. Knowing the reality of life in Africa, I could have made some cultural assumptions about sources and their interactions with the journalists. However, I believe that my singular perspective was also helpful in strengthening the cultural validity of this research. Furthermore, since textual analysis is interpretive, it cannot be generalized to a larger news production process.

Finally, my interviews with the five journalists cannot be considered to be a representative sample. A better understanding of journalists' practices and challenges

when reporting on international stories could be achieved through surveys instead of individual interviews, which can be time consuming and hard to set-up.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

My analysis of *The New York Times* coverage of Darfur using triangulation method showed that the content largely supports prior literature on frames in African coverage; however, the news stories divide into types characterized not simply by their frames but also by the journalists. In fact, I found that the Darfur coverage is produced not by journalists with homogenous biases but by journalists participating in the news-making processes, distinguishable by journalist goal, source availability, and source credibility – all of which are embedded in specific locations or geographies.

The results are presented in three sections. The first section focuses on the general findings about the extent of coverage based on the content analysis. The second section, addresses my first three research questions: What are the dominant frames visible in the coverage of Darfur?; How and to what extent is the West's intervention offered as a solution to the conflict?; and Is there variation in degrees of graphic details included in news articles by individual journalists? I discuss salient patterns observed during the

textual analysis of the hard news stories, especially the visibility of certain media frames and their relationship to scale of graphic/violent details and location of the journalist, evident in the news stories.

The last section addresses the fourth research question: what do *The New York Times* journalists consider to be primary factors influencing their reporting on the Darfur conflict? In this section I summarize my observations on news-making process based on my four in-depth interviews conducted with *The New York Times* journalists and answers given by Kristof during his presentations at the Witnessing the Genocide Symposium (April 2007).

Coverage of Darfur Conflict

The initial quantitative analysis of all the articles published during the period from July 1, 2003 – July 1, 2006, (n=257) revealed that *The New York Times'* didn't start reporting on Darfur until January 17, 2004[3], although the Darfur conflict started on April 23, 2003. The coverage can be broken down into three time periods: for the year of 2004 (n=111) or 43%; for 2005 news stories (n=77) or 30%; and for the first six months of 2006 news stories (n=69) or 27% of the whole coverage. See Figure 1 for the scale of coverage.

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[3] "War in Western Sudan Overshadows Peace in the South" by Somini Sengupta & Marc Lacey filed from Tine, Sudan & Naivasha, Kenya.

Figure 1: Scale of Darfur Coverage
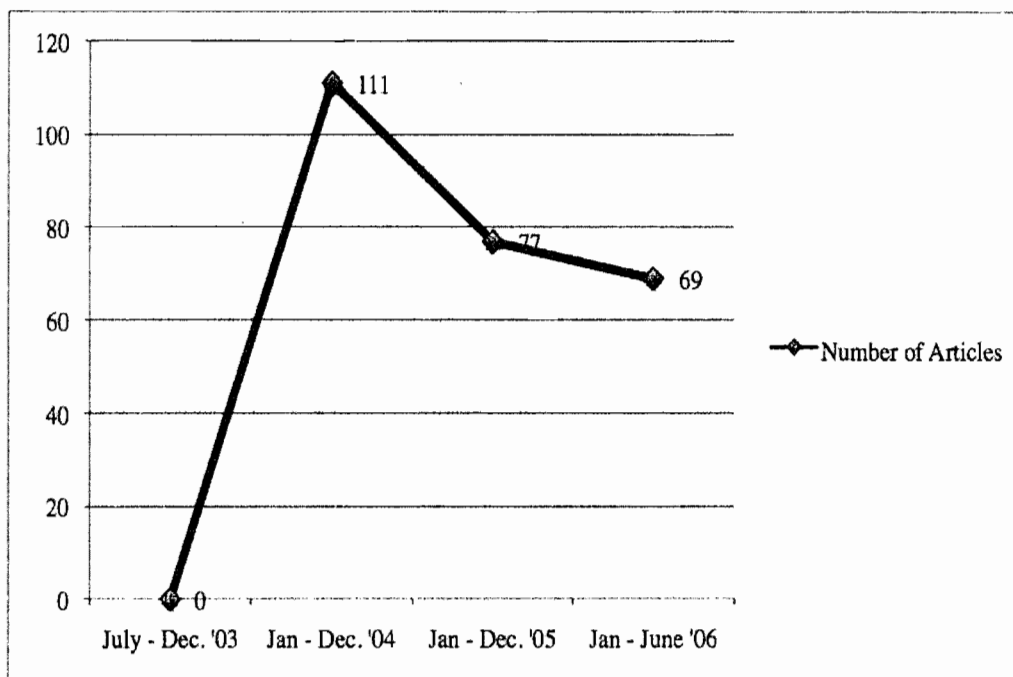
This breakdown is notable, because when the crisis was gaining momentum in 2003, there was no coverage (Prunier 2007). One of my interviewees, Lance Morrison (pseudonym), who is one of the African bureau chiefs, attributed the lack of coverage to inaccessibility in Darfur and the newspaper's focus on covering Iraq[4]. Morrison's explanation is further supported by Prunier's (2007) observations. He explained that Sudan didn't want media to report on Darfur. "The 'unimpeded access' promised by President Omar el-Beshir was largely a mockery" (p. 133). The Sudanese government's travel permits were designed to restrict access to the Darfur region, for both the media and humanitarian community.

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[4] L. Morrison (personal communication, October 19, 2007)

However, pressure from the U.N. and U.S. forced Sudan to allow humanitarian organizations and journalists in, beginning 2004, which is reflected in the increasing coverage of Darfur too (Pruiner 2007). Similarly in the first six months of the 2006, the coverage was comparatively higher than the previous two years alluding to easier access to the region and discussion on peacekeeping efforts, see Figure 1 for the breakdown of Darfur coverage.

The reporting included: hard news stories (n=149) of which 58% were filed from Africa and 34% from the United Nations; op-editorials (n=46) of which 98% were written by one journalist, Nicholas Kristof; World and National Briefings from Africa (n=39) and the U.N. (n=2) and the U.S. (n=3), i.e. short news briefs on breaking news; commentaries (n=10) – providing analysis of the conflict from journalists' perspectives; and feature stories (n=8), which feature more human interest stories about Darfur, both from the U.S. and Sudan. See Table 1 in the previous chapter for distribution of coverage by news story type and word count.

In addition to a greater number of hard news stories being filed from Africa, graphic information and images included in these stories are higher compared to the stories filed from the U.S. as shown in Table 3. Graphic images of burnt bodies and villages together with vivid descriptions of violence taking place in Sudan are present in news stories, which include Sudanese news sources. This trend was explained by Kristof

who defended this practice by arguing that violent images can work as attention-getting devices, when words fail to engage readers about conflicts in foreign countries.[5]

One of the most dramatic findings in the textual analysis was detection of subtle clues used by some of the journalists to indicate that information in news stories was not verified or the source was not necessarily credible. Some of the subtle clues were disclaimers about lack of options to verify stories or even correctness of the information and in some cases that information was acquired through a translator. This pattern was evident mostly in the case of information provided by Sudanese people, both the refugees and government officials and highlighted journalists' bias toward certain type of sources and pressure from the newspaper's editors to have all the information verified. Sources and journalists' credibility has become a sensitive subject at *The New York Times*, especially after Jayson Blair's fabrication of stories and sources during his tenure as a journalist at the newspaper. [6]

The New York Times' commitment to provide extensive coverage of international news is notable from the results of the content analysis. Not only were 56% of the hard news stories filed from Africa, but there were also resources available for a columnist like Nicholas Kristof to write 43% of his columns from Sudan (see Appendix A for a complete breakdown of news stories). This is an advantage that *The New York Times* has over its peers because it can still afford to maintain full-time bureaus in Africa, while many other news organizations have had to close down their foreign bureaus.

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[5] See Witnessing Genocide Panel discussion video available at
http://media.uoregon.edu/medsvs/witnessing_genocide/ for further information.

[6] See "Times Reporter Who Resigned Leaves Long Trail of Deception" in *The New York Times* of
05/11/03.

Furthermore, Kristof's interest in the subject and the paper's willingness to finance his trips is noteworthy. Not only did it bring prestige to the paper when he won the Pulitzer Prize in 2006 (The Pulitzer Prizes, 2007) for his commentary on Darfur, but the first-person reporting from Sudan by a columnist increased the credibility of the paper in eyes of readers. Likewise, all the other four journalists that I interviewed, either credited Kristof for keeping the newspaper's focus on the Darfur conflict by his persistent reporting from Sudan, or referred to his columns as a testimony of *The New York Times'* commitment to foreign news reporting and willingness to devote resources to cover a conflict that many other media have decided to ignore.

Multiple Framings of Darfur Conflict in *The New York Times*

Results of the textual analysis of the hard news stories further highlight the variations that exist in the coverage of Darfur, based on journalists' locations and their subsequent access to certain types of sources. The hard news stories were analyzed to understand the relationship between location of the journalists, type of primary sources used, and content of the story and its subsequent framing (see Table 2 in the previous chapter). The resulting themes and variations were woven together to separate the hard news stories (n=116) into three types of news stories, which represent the coverage of Darfur: (1) summaries of public event or action type; (2) investigative type; and (3) hybrid type (which contain elements of both types of news stories).

Summaries of Public Event or Action Type of News Stories (n=25)

Of the 25 public event/action type stories, 92% or 23 of them portrayed the U.S. as a savior and aid giver and the West as being compassionate towards the sufferings of Africans[7]. The salience of this frame is a result of sources like the U.S. government officials and Western human rights experts discussing their involvement in Sudan and Darfur in particular (see Table 3 for sources breakdown). There were numerous mentions of efforts by the U.S. State Department to broker peace-agreements in Sudan, and of legislators and government officials being pressured by U.S. citizens to intervene in Darfur.

Furthermore, when the human rights experts give advice on how to solve the situation in Darfur, the focus is always on more intervention by the West, especially the U.S., which again highlights the generosity and supremacy of the West and shows the inefficiency and inability of neighboring African countries and Africa in general to resolve their own problems.

However there were two exceptions to this type of news story. One story had a fatalist frame, as it was more a commentary about the situation in Sudan by the author,[8] who took a pessimistic view of the situation, instead of a straight news story. Also there

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[7] See "*State Department Sending Deputy to Sudan to Push for End to Violence in Darfur*" by Joel Brinkley, 4/8/05: A16.

[8] See "*U.N. Votes to Send Any Sudan War Crime Suspects to World Court*" by Warren Hoge, 4/1/05: A6.

was one story,[9] which seemed to have two frames – it's an ethnic conflict and the West and U.S. as saviors of Sudanese people. Not only does this story include information about what the U.S. in particular is trying to do to help Sudan, but it also includes sources that are describing the violence in Darfur as being based on ethnicity and how the U.S. can save them from the 'Arabs'.

Investigative Type of News Stories (n=26)

The dominant frame in 61% or 16 of the investigative news stories was based on ethnic differences. This frame was a result of interviews with refugees and aid workers who described violence and its effects on the ground in Darfur by explaining the incidents using tribal names or ethnicities.[10] Six stories were identified as having the West and U.S. as saviors of Sudanese People frame in the investigative type of news stories.[11] See Table 3 for more details.

These stories were mostly about either refugees trying to escape from Sudan and struggling to find asylum in the West, or about what else the West could do to help the people of Sudan, now that peace-talks haven't helped to end violence and death. Also two

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[9] See "*Kerry Wants Broader Effort From Bush On Sudan*" by David M. Halbfinger, Warren Hoge & Steven R. Weisman, 9/3/04: P10.

[10] See "*Darfur's Babies of Rape Are on Trial From Birth*" by Lydia Polgreen, 2/11/05: A1.

[11] See "*Evicted From Camp, Sudan Refugees Suffer in Limbo*" by Marc Lacey, 8/3/04: A3.

stories contained multiple frames -- ethnic conflict and superiority of western countries, which were again a result of having two opposing sides of sources discussing Sudan.[12]

The U.S. officials described their efforts to help and the Sudanese blamed the violence on tribal differences – the *Janjaweed* versus the rebel fighters. Just like the summaries of public event types of news stories, the investigative type had two stories that had fatalist frames too; instead of straight news stories, these stories provide analysis from the journalist's perspective of the situation in Sudan and peace-efforts and relied on personal opinion instead of sources.[13]

Hybrid Type of News Stories (n=65)

The 65 hybrid-type of news stories had two dominant frames. One was the West and U.S. as saviors of Sudanese People frame, especially the U.S., in 63% these stories. This frame is a result of stories having mostly official sources, U.S. and U.N. officials, both discussing peacekeeping efforts and aid contributions. The second frame under this type of news story was about Darfur being an ethnic conflict, in 17 of the 65 news articles. Stories under this type also included voices of the Sudanese people. When stories either followed distribution of aid to refugee camps and Darfuris were interviewed, they tended to invoke tribal or ethnic differences to explain their conditions.

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[12] See "*Despite Pact, New Violence Stymies Aid in Sudan*" by Somini Sengupta, 11/27/04: A1.

[13] See "*Beyond the Bullets and Blades*" by Marc Lacey, 3/20/2005: 41

Also, there were five news stories with a fatalist frame. These stories generally included more analysis by the author and less reliance on sources to explain a situation. Also reflection by journalists tended to be more pessimistic, since they continued to witness chaos and instability on the ground. Like the two other news story types, this category also included two stories, with multiple frames – the ethnic conflict and the West and U.S. as saviors of Sudanese people frames. See Table 3 for a complete distribution of dominant frames.

Correlation Between News Story Type and Graphicness Scale

One other dimension of the textual analysis was discerning variations in level of graphic details included in the hard news stories. I found that the index of graphic details was directly related to type of sources used in the story and location of journalists (see Table 3).

The investigative type had an average index score of 4.03 in news stories (n=26). This was largely a result of stories being written by journalists based in Africa, who not only had access to Sudanese people in Darfur, but they were also able to witness destruction and violence first hand. The summaries of public event or action type, on the other hand, had the lowest average index score of graphic details of 1.68 in news stories (n=25), which is not surprising since the majority of the sources were government officials, Western and Sudanese, who were more interested in giving information about

their contributions in the conflict or its resolution, instead of talking about violence taking place in Darfur or the rising death toll.

Furthermore, in the case of the hybrid type of news stories, the graphic details index was on a continuum, eight news stories had 0 graphic details, while twenty-two news stories merited 1+ score in the index. While the average index score was 1.92 in news stories (n=65), there was only one story with a score of 7+. The range in the hybrid type is predictable, since all stories in this type contain combinations of other two types; which means that there are multiple types of sources used in these stories too. For a complete breakdown of results, see Table 3.

Table 3: Textual Analysis Results

	Summaries of Public Events or Actions *N=25 or 21%*	Investigative *N=26 or 23%*	Hybrid (contains elements of both the summaries of public events and investigative types of news stories) *N=65 or 56%*
News Story Example	*"State department sending deputy to Sudan to push for end to violence in Darfur"* by Joel Brinkley.	*"Darfur's babies of rape are on trial from birth"* by Lydia Polgreen	*"Resisting Pressure, Rebels In Sudan Reject Cease-Fire"* by Joel Brinkley, Lydia Polgreen & Senan John Murray.
Primary Sources for each article	8 stories = Human Right Groups & Experts 17 stories = Western & African Officials	7 stories = Human Right Groups & Experts 7 stories = Western & African Officials 12 stories = Sudanese People	5 stories = Human Right Groups & Experts 19 stories = Sudanese People 41 stories = Western & African Officials
Word Count	Range 542 – 1,108 words *Average Length 745*	Range 1,012 – 2,745 words *Average Length 1,410*	Range 524 – 1,831 words *Average Length 968*
Dateline	2 stories = Other African Countries 3 stories = Sudan 7 stories = U.S. 13 stories = U.N.	1 story = U.N. 4 stories = Other African Countries 21 stories = Sudan	1 story = Israel 8 stories = U.N. 8 stories = U.S. 16 stories = Other African Countries 32 stories = Sudan
Index of Graphic Details	0 = 1 story 1+ = 13 stories 2+ = 6 stories 3+ = 3 stories 4+ = 2 stories *1+ = 52% of 25 stories* <u>Average Score =1.68</u>	0 = 2 stories 1+ = 5 stories 2+ = 3 stories 3+ = 1 stories 4+ = 5 stories 5+ = 2 stories 6+ = 2 stories 7+ = 2 stories 8+ = 1 story 9+ = 3 stories *1+ = 19% of 26 stories* *4+ = 19% of 26 stories* <u>Average Score = 4.03</u>	0 = 8 stories 1+ = 22 stories 2+ = 18 stories 3+ = 10 stories 4+ = 2 stories 5+ = 2 stories 6+ = 2 stories 7+ = 1 story *1+ = 33% of 65 stories* *2+ = 27% of 65 stories* <u>Average Score = 1.92</u>
News Frame	23 stories = The West & U.S. as saviors of Sudanese People Frame 1 story = Combination Frame 1 story = Fatalist Frame	16 stories = Ethnic Conflict Frame 2 stories = Combination Frame 6 stories = The West & U.S. as saviors of Sudanese People Frame 2 stories = Fatalist Frame	41 stories = The West & U.S. as saviors of Sudanese People Frame 17 stories = Ethnic Conflict Frame 2 stories = Combination Frame. 5 stories = Fatalist Frame

News-making Processes from Journalists' Perspective

My interviews with the four journalists brought up four factors, which they used to explain how they wrote their stories about Darfur and the subsequent editing process that a story underwent before publication. Each journalist explained the importance of (1) finding credible sources, (2) maintaining relationships with existing sources, (3) having autonomy to select the type of story to write, and (4) the editing process where information might get edited out, or moved around (see Table 4). All these factors affect how journalists might approach a story, whom they might to choose to talk and use in their stories, and eventually what the final story will end up being about.

The variations found in the news coverage of Darfur are presented below with journalists' explanations about their story writing goals and news-production processes. I focus on three of their individual goals: (1) to inform readers about the U.S. foreign policy; (2) to give readers the reality; and (3) to round-up of events and issues related to the conflict and U.S. foreign policy, because they help to explain the three types of hard news stories identified with the textual analysis.

Table 4: Interview Analysis Results

	Bureau Chief in Africa	**Diplomatic Correspondent**	**National Correspondent**	**City Desk – Freelancer**
Sources	Sudanese	Western officials	Familiar people	Diverse voices
Reasons for Preferred Sources	Values voices on the ground.	Respects and trusts them	Personal preference	Seeks to illuminate diverse voices
Reporting Style	Investigative: give readers the reality	Informative: update readers about US efforts in Sudan	Hybrid: Follow-ups on foreign policy efforts at a national level	Investigative: report about the impact of foreign policies on the lives of New Yorkers.
Editing Process	2-step: turns in the story to foreign desk editor, who might make some changes and then it is published.	2-step: turns in the story to foreign desk editor, who might make some changes and then it is published.	4-step: read by assigning editor, approved by reporter, read by national or foreign desk editors, then the copy editor completes the final edit.	4-step: checked by factual editor, then copy editor, reporter approves changes, and the chief editor reads it before publication.

My analysis showed that there is a correlation between a journalist's reporting

goals – to inform readers about U.S foreign policies and the stories identified as the

summaries of public event or action type. The journalists in this case were assigned to

this beat to summarize U.S. foreign policy decisions, and therefore either the journalist

was based at the U.N. or Washington, D.C. or they accompanied diplomats during their

visits to Sudan.

Brian Johnson, a diplomatic correspondent, explains what his primary

responsibilities were when covering Darfur, and how he gained access to sources that he

considered credible:

> My job when I was in Washington was primarily to cover U.S. policy
> toward Darfur. Our correspondents in Africa cover the events on the
> ground. The exception is on my trips to Darfur, when I can cover events
> on the ground. But I was always traveling with government officials -- the
> Secretary of State or others. As with any reporting, after I covered Darfur
> for a while I learned who was knowledgeable and reliable -- and who is
> involved in setting policy. These are the primary people one might call to
> write a story.[14]

The above excerpt highlights important information about how stories come to

have the frame of the West and U.S. as saviors of Sudanese people. In fact, this is his

assignment, especially given his sources. Journalists like Johnson are assigned to cover

meetings and peace-talks and to get up-to-date information, so he has to talk to those who

are involved in the policy setting process. Plus there is the issue of having access to

reliable and credible sources. He is more likely to first contact the sources who have

given him credible information in the past.

However, the ones whom the journalists' perceive to be credible could also have a

vested interest in sharing certain kind of information. The information might not be

inaccurate, but it doesn't provide a complete picture either. The source could be

interested solely in discussing their role in helping to bring aid to the Sudanese -- so the

focus would be on their efforts and accomplishment, which again can be contrasted with

the lack of efforts by Africans, either through omission of their voices or down-playing of

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[14] B. Johnson (personal communication, September 28, 2007)

their efforts. Hence, the story ends up having one dominant frame, depending on the sources.

Also, during my discussion with the journalists about their preferences for certain types of sources, some of them also mentioned that in the case of a issue like the conflict in Darfur, sometimes they tend to use silent sources or web sites to make sense of a complicated story. In other words, sources that are consulted for clarification or background information are not quoted or cited in the actual story, but still end up influencing the direction of the story.

Similarly, in the case of news stories identified as the investigative type, I found that there was a correlation between the content of the stories and journalists' reporting goals – to provide his or her readers information about the reality in Darfur. This particular relation is further impacted by challenges faced by journalists trying to get access to credible sources in Sudan. Journalists don't only need to get access to sources who are willing to be interviewed, but who also need to be trustworthy. In other words, journalists' perception of a credible source and getting access to one shapes the content and form of stories that are investigative in nature.

Lance Morrison is one of *The New York Times'* African bureau chiefs, whose stories often incorporate Sudanese peoples' voices instead of government officials. When I asked him why he employed these sources he raised the issues of credibility and access:

I viewed my primary responsibility to give readers a sense of what was going on on the ground in Darfur. It was difficult to get access to Sudanese government officials and it was difficult to believe much of what they said when one did get access to them. Reporting their view that the situation in Darfur was being blown out of proportion would not have served readers well. Showing them what was happening was my approach.[15]

The above excerpt highlights important information about the coverage of Darfur in several ways. First, there is a question of having freedom to select what kind of stories to report on. Morrison, as a bureau chief, had autonomy over what to stories to write about, which might not be possible for most reporters. Second, there is the challenge of overcoming the difficulty of having access to credible sources. Morrison resolved this challenge with a decision to report on how the conflict was affecting Sudanese civilians on the ground, instead of focusing on getting interviews with government officials.

In essence Morrison made a personal decision that "showing [my readers] what is happening on [on the ground]" was his primary responsibility as a journalist. Most importantly, however, his explanation helps to clarify why journalists reporting from Sudan on the same topic of Darfur could write stories that can be categorized very differently, especially if they both have access to resources and face challenges that are similar. In other words, news reporting is not only impacted by lack of access to what journalists would consider credible sources but also on what a journalist's personal writing goals and source choices may be.

Furthermore, journalists on the ground like Morrison have more opportunity to investigate the situation in Darfur from multiple angles such as: what do the Arab militia

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[15] L. Morrison (personal communication, October 19, 2007)

want or why is security in refugee camps a constant problem, in spite of African Union

peacekeeping force presence? Rather than focusing just on U.S. foreign policy, many of

the stories provided follow-up information with investigative reporting on outcome of the

policy and its implications.

In the case of stories identified as the hybrid type of news stories, which contain

elements of both summaries of public events and in-depth investigative types of news

stories, I found that there were multiple factors influencing the reporting process. This

process is a combination of a journalist's story reporting goals, which include providing

readers with summaries of events and issues related to the Darfur conflict and U.S.

foreign policies, alongside of issues of access, reliance on stringers for information, and

on sources whose credibility is questionable.

Johnson, in his interview with me, explained how clues are added in the stories to

warn the reader about credibility of sources, especially in stories that require different

types of sources. He explained that if the information was not verified or if a source is not

reliable then "it is presented as one person's opinion ... or assertion."

Similarly, Morrison explained how at *The New York Times* the challenges of

access are overcome:

> We had our West Africa correspondent cover Darfur from the Chad
> border, where there were many refugees crossing. Getting into Chad was
> far easier and getting to the border required a long, hot drive through the
> desert but there were no authorities denying reporters access, as there were
> in Sudan.[16]

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[16] L. Morrison (personal communication, October 19, 2007)

Solutions however, have their consequences. In this case, because of access issues, most of the stories quoted Black Sudanese refugees from Darfur, who focused on their plight at the hands of the Arab Sudanese. If access had not been an issue, Arab Sudanese who roamed the Darfur region would have been interviewed and given a chance to explain their actions, which might have helped to limit the salience of the ethnic conflict frame possibly or increased salience of this frame.

Apart from problems of access to credible sources and journalists' individual biases, there is also the editing process that further impacts the final story. From my interviews, I was able to identify two types of editing processes that are related to the location of journalists.

For the journalists who reported from Africa or those who were diplomatic correspondents, each story underwent a two-step process: they turned in the story to the foreign desk editor, who might make some changes, and then it is published. This type of process reduces journalists' opportunities to read the edits before they are published.

On the one hand, since the journalists are not based in New York City, in some instances their editors would have to rely on their own understanding to make changes of clarification, which might end up changing the direction of the story. On the other hand, the stories of journalists who were based in New York City or who worked as national correspondents underwent a four-step editing process. The story was read by assigning editor, approved by the reporter, then read by national or foreign desk editors, and finally the copy editor completed the final edit. For freelancers' stories: the four-step process

included: first checking by a factual editor, then by a copy editor, after which a reporter approves changes, and the chief editor reads it before publication.

Thus, when reading a news story or analyzing its content, it's important to note that together with the journalists and their sources, the editors also impact the final presentation of a story. In the case of stories filed from overseas, there is a higher possibility of editorial amendments and interpretations being made to a story, because the journalist is unable to see the multiple revisions before final publication.

Keith Sampson, a freelance contributor, commented "the city section had a specific type of a voice and that would sometimes result in lack of accuracy, but they are pretty good about correcting things if you catch it early."[17] He also observed the drawback of editing processes. Although Sampson was specifically referring to his experience with the city desk, it is also possible that similar situations would arise at the foreign or national desk too, – where journalists like Morrison and Johnson don't even have the luxury of reading over various edits before they are published.

Notwithstanding the impact of a journalist's location, his or her access to the sources and the subsequent editing process on the reporting of an issue such as the conflict in Darfur, it is the journalist's personal biases and preferred style of writing that primarily defines the shape of a story. Although my interviewees didn't explain their biases explicitly, questions about their reporting style and their subsequent explanations lead me to conclude that journalists were not approaching their assignment "objectively."

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[17] K. Sampson (personal communication, September 11, 2007)

Journalists' personal feelings about the subject of the story, or even sources that they

were forced to use were reflected in their reporting.

When I asked Johnson about his criticism of Sudanese officials in his writing, he

responded as follows:

> I cannot offer my opinions in *The Times*, but any rational person covering
> the story would have to conclude that the Sudanese government officials
> involved in this are bandits and liars. As for the Americans, the United
> States has been doing more to end this crisis than any other country. Not
> enough, in many people's view, but still more. There's not a lot to gain for
> the U.S. by settling an African dispute. This is not like Iraq, say, where
> lots of people believe the war is being fought over oil. I came to know the
> American players -- and in some cases respect them.[18]

The above excerpt reveals Morrison's bias against the Sudanese officials and his

respect for U.S. diplomats, which is reflected in his writing when he offers an analysis of

the situation in Sudan. This is true for other journalists too, who might respect diversity

in their sources, and they would try and include them in order to create a balanced story

in their opinion; however, there is a danger of overdoing either preference, which leads to

dominance of one kind of framing over another.

In sum, the above results have not only identified the dominant frames in the

coverage of Darfur, but by combining results of the textual analysis with interview data,

it is also possible to understand the processes and variants that create the framing of

stories. Factors like access to credible sources, motives of the sources, their credibility

and relationship with journalists, biases of journalists and the editing process all impact

reporting on a conflict like Darfur.

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[18] B. Johnson (personal communication, September 28, 2007)

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study examined the characteristics of *The New York Times* coverage of Darfur

conflict during the period of July 1, 2003 – July 1, 2006 to detect how media frames

emerge in the news articles and what processes impact journalists reporting assignments.

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to the theoretical framework and

literature review. The chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, I discuss the

relationship between news sources and the resultant dominant media frames. The variation

in the scale of graphic information included in the news articles is examined in the second

section. The third section reviews the impact of journalists reporting goals and news source

preferences on coverage of Darfur. General findings on different types of news stories are

discussed in the fourth section. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future studies.

Role of News Sources in Framing of News

The media may be emphasizing certain framings in news stories, but it is the sources and not the journalists who are key to the creation of these media frames; as they provide information that shapes the direction of the story.

Power and agenda of news sources has been discussed often in mass communication literature when addressing the news production process, however the focus has mostly been on corporations, experts and government officials – European and Americans (see Stanton, 2007). They are not only considered credible sources by Western media, but are also held responsible for media frames that emphasize Western imperialistic values (see Said, 1970; Wall 1997; McNulty, 1999; and Fair, 1992). Interestingly however, in the case of sources from developing countries, their agency and motives are either ignored or taken for granted; even though scholars such as Allen and Seaton (1999) have pointed out that people do not hesitate to play-up differences or dramatize events, especially in the times of war.

I found that the number of news stories with predominantly "ethnic conflict framing" also contained Sudanese people as primary sources: 16 news stories under the investigative type and 17 stories under the hybrid type of news stories. In contrast, 23 news stories with "the West and the U.S. as saviors of Sudanese people frame" included U.S. officials and human rights experts as primary sources.

Several factors can explain the variations in news framing. When Western official sources are interviewed for information, it's natural that he or she would discuss efforts

made by them—individually or on behalf of their organization or government to help

resolve the conflict in Darfur and provide assistance to Sudanese.

Similarly when Sudanese are interviewed they are more likely to blame "the other

enemy" by emphasizing ethnic differences to explain their own behavior and highlight their

own suffering. People understand the power of media and know that if their story gets

media's attention; their conditions might improve, although information manipulation has

consequences too.

The agency of Sudanese news sources reflects what postcolonial theories have

stated in the past. Shome and Hedge (2002) explain that resisting representations of self by

others can be challenging and carries negative consequences because

> This interstitial space between agency and the lack therefore, between being
> constructed within structures of domination and finding spaces of exerting agency
> ... [is complicated as] agency is deeply bound to the politics of identity couched
> within the structures of gender, nation, class, race and diaspora (pp. 266-267). [19]

Consequently, even though Sudanese news sources attempted to exert agency over

how they were represented in the news stories, journalists reporting goals and biases

sometimes led to the sources agency being used to reinforce stereotypes of victims

(refugees), hence the salience of ethnic conflict framing.

In other words, in the case of Darfur coverage, agency exerted by Sudanese got

manipulated in the process of maintaining normative practices of news making. Journalists

are required to have credible news sources, stories have to include a certain amount of news

value (else it is added in editing process through manipulation of information) and

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[19] See O'Hanlon and Washbrook, 1992 for more in-depth discussion.

eventually the editing process depending on the location of journalists, further enforces structures of domination and neocolonial values.

Graphic Information in Stories – Sensationalism Tool

Scholars such as Bennett (1983) and Seib (2003) have pointed out that media have a tendency to use depictions of horror in testimonies and images to engage readers and to increase the news value of the story.

Likewise, in the case of Darfur coverage, graphic information and images were used. Surprisingly, however, not all stories carried an equal amount of graphic information. Instead I found that graphic information was more widely present in the investigative type of news stories. This finding deserves a deeper look into how stories are sensationalized and what is the source of graphic information.

For example, the present study illustrated that news stories with an index of 4+ and higher was found in the investigative and hybrid type of news stories, as compared to the summaries of the public event or action type which averaged 1+ on the graphic information index. Thus, it appears that there is a correlation between not only the type of news sources used in a story and emergent dominant framing of the story, but also how much graphic information is included in the news stories (which is provided in most cases by Sudanese sources).

Nicholas Kristof, journalist at *The New York Times*, addressed the debate about how much graphic information should be included in a story during his panel

presentation at the Witnessing Genocide Symposium. He explained that while some

people find inclusion of graphic images and information problematic and ethically wrong,

he chooses to include these details for shock-value, with the hope of getting audiences'

attention with the depictions of horrors suffered by their fellow human beings.[20]

While journalists like Kristof have good intentions for including graphic

information, these depictions of the Sudanese as victims of constant tribal conflicts can

be harmful too. Beaudoin and Thorson (2002) write that constant negative representations

could skew Americans perspectives about Sudan and Africa in general. Also, are these

graphic images and information really helping to gain audience attention or are they

contributing to aggravation of existing "compassion fatigue" (Moeller, 1999)?

Alternately, do we need to reconsider the value of graphic information and

images? After all there is no war without violence, pillage or deaths. Thus, if journalists

are reporting what they are witnessing on the ground – is it wrong?

Journalists – Humans First, then Reporters

Journalists' biases and lack of understanding about foreign cultures have been

subject of many research studies, but as far as I know no study has interviewed them

while analyzing coverage of a foreign story. While general findings of this study

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[20] See Witnessing Genocide Panel discussion video available at
http://media.uoregon.edu/medsvs/witnessing_genocide/ for further information.

confirmed previous findings reviewed in Chapter II, which includes access to sources, source credibility and journalist own biases impact news reporting.

The unexpected part of my interviews with journalists was their commitment to journalism and belief that they were making a difference with their reporting. I had assumed that being affiliated with a paper like *The New York Times*, their focus would be on how the elite newspaper serves its readers; but to my surprise, I found that the four journalists I interviewed were willing to recognize shortcomings in their reporting.

All four of them while alluding to resources provided by the newspaper to cover Darfur, acknowledged that there was room for improvement in their reporting; but pressure of being in a war zone, deadline constraints, language barriers, and access to "credible" sources impacted their reporting.

Their individuality was further accentuated when they described their reporting goals. Journalists as employees of *The New York Times* might be assigned specific regions or beats to cover by their editors; but all of them employed reporting goals that were aligned to their personal beliefs to shape the direction of the news stories—beginning from what type of sources to contact and whom to avoid, and ending with what type of information to include in the news story, including news analysis.

The correlation between journalists' goals and their actual reporting is demonstrated in Chapter IV. Admittedly, my interview sample of five journalists (in-depth interviews with four journalists and information from the Q&A with Nicholas Kristof) is not representative of all *The New York Times* journalists reporting on Darfur; each journalist's location and assignment provided valuable insight into how each news

section (foreign, national and city bureaus) operates and what factors might be impacting the news reporting process.

Although these findings illuminate what processes are impacting reporting on a conflict like Darfur, they are not meant to be used to excuse flaws found in the reporting. Rather, the intent here is to show that journalists, like communication scholars, are human beings, who make value judgments and decisions depending on the issue at hand.

The striking difference between scholars and journalists is that journalists are usually the ones who are willing to step out of their comfort zone and even risk physical hardship or death to cover a story, because they believe they are making a difference. On the contrary, media scholars usually analyze texts based on their understanding of the subject acquired from texts – sometimes forgetting to acknowledge journalists' hard work and contributions.

Homogenous News Stories – not for Darfur Coverage

Previous research on media coverage of Africa has focused on the dominant news frames visible in the news, with special attention paid to negative representations of Africans. In addition, past studies have argued that the coverage tends to be episodic and favors Western imperialist values.

While my results showed that *The New York Times* coverage of Darfur contained dominant media frames identified by previous studies; the coverage is not homogeneous. Because I analyzed the news stories by each individual journalist, I found that there were

three types of news stories, all impacted by journalists' geographic location and his or her access to certain types of news sources. This finding is important considering that we have been led to believe that news coverage of Africa is usually episodic and homogenous in its content in terms of how the news is reported.

In the case of Darfur coverage only 25 of the news articles were identified as the summaries of public event or action type of news stories. Additionally, these stories were mostly filed from the U.N. (13 stories) and the U.S. (7 stories). Considering that foreign news reporting relies on and prefers Western officials as news sources, coverage of Darfur shows that *The New York Times* had actually invested considerable resources by sending journalists to Africa, which lead to more source diversity.

Additionally, the average word count devoted to the summaries of public event or action type of news stories was much lower than the other two types (745 word versus 1,400 words) even though Western officials and human rights experts were the predominant sources in these stories. By having journalists report from Africa and allocating larger word counts, more Sudanese voices are incorporated in news articles, i.e. 24 of investigative type and 48 articles of the hybrid type of news stories respectively, which were filed from Africa.

This trend can be considered a positive change in the coverage of Africa; Africans are given more opportunities to present their perspectives through news media. Rather then having consequences of U.S foreign policy narrated through the U.S. official perspectives, Africans are provided a chance to voice their opinions about effectiveness or ineffectiveness of foreign intervention in Darfur.

Nevertheless it is also possible that the different types of news stories identified in *The New York Times* coverage of Darfur constitute an exception, rather than a change reflecting general improvement in coverage of Africa. The journalists covering Sudan on the ground sometimes relied on African journalists/stringers for information due to language and access barriers, an option probably not available or feasible in all African countries.

Likewise, since media studies tend to privilege media organizations such as *The New York Times* and other Western voices for research, we currently don't have data to compare and see if African media organizations and journalists would have approached coverage of Darfur conflict differently. Lack of research on African media practices further highlights the agency of those who have resources and how they choose to use them. Currently it is the media scholars in the West who have the capabilities and resources to conduct research on international communication, and Western media are the ones who can still afford to cover international issues. As a result, Western voices dominate in media content and scholarship.

Suggestions for Future Studies

There is a critical need to design research projects that involves both the producers and consumers of media – journalists and audiences/scholars. This would provide an opportunity to understand each side's perspective about the value of international news stories. How do journalists perceive their reporting on international

issues? Do they think their work matters? What do audiences prefer in international news stories – explicit details about the subject or succinct analysis summarizing the story?

Likewise, there is an urgent need to include African media and their journalists when conducting international communication research. While it is important to analyze how the West is covering Africa, by analyzing African media's coverage of its own issues, we would get a more nuanced understanding of differences and similarities evident in media practices. This could be achieved by conducting a comparable analysis of an issue as reported by a media organization in the West and in Africa.

A quantitative study using surveys could be useful in providing a better understanding about the importance of international news for both the journalists and their audience in the U.S. and Africa.

When it comes to predictable frames in the media coverage of Africa, a comparative analysis could be conducted of the coverage of Darfur in an African country to see if there are similar patterns evident in the coverage in terms of primary sources preferred by journalists and subsequent dominant framing of the stories.

A quantitative study using survey results of all journalists and editors at *The New York Times* would be useful in understanding newsroom practices at the various bureaus. Are there any differences in how the newspaper approaches its international news reporting in comparison to the domestic reporting?

Additionally, how do the experiences and perceptions of editors differ from those of journalists in terms of news value and framing of stories? Both a survey and

participant observations could provide important insight into the process of news production.

Conclusion

My analysis of Darfur coverage illustrates how sources and journalists' location and biases determine the content of a story in both predictable and unexpected ways. I found that a journalist's understanding of a subject and preference for certain types of sources impacted his or her reporting. As previous studies have shown, use or reliance on a certain type of source leads to a predictable framing of a story.

Furthermore, from my interviews with the journalists, I discovered that in order to make sense of a complicated issue like Darfur, journalists tend to interview sources who are not cited in the story. In my opinion, this is important information that needs to be taken into consideration when conducting framing analyses of media texts. How much do silent sources impact and drive the content or direction of a story?

I also found that graphic details were present at a higher frequency in stories that had a predominantly ethnic conflict frame and contained information from Sudanese sources. This pattern suggests that there is a correlation between the characteristics of a particular frame and type of information included in the story, like graphic details of violence – information that is provided by sources (in this case – Sudanese refugees).

Each type of source impacts the story in a unique way. When official or authoritative sources are used by national reporters, who either locate the sources using

existing contacts or through the Web, there is a risk of ignoring a large number of sources who can provide a more nuanced perspective on the story but are hard to locate, either because they are not very good at publicizing themselves on the Web or do not associate with the people the journalist seeks for reference.

This method is efficient for journalists working on a tight deadline. The use of familiar sources who have been reliable in the past or finding sources who are already famous (have public credibility) makes verification of information easier.

Similarly, when diplomatic correspondents rely on government officials and stringers as sources because of access constraints, there are consequences. By working closely with a set number of government officials, the journalists get exposed constantly to the same kind of opinion and information which might impact their individual perception of the story and even bias towards other players in a conflict like Darfur.

In the case of stories published in the city section, the journalists are allowed to use a grass-roots approach and can rely on people on the street or taxi drivers for inspiration for stories or lead to sources, which results in a diverse array of voices getting published. However, having numerous sources and freedom to choose from them can be challenging for a journalist working with a limited word count, as it can lead to selection of a source who is most unusual and stands out from the group, but doesn't necessarily explain or represent the story accurately.

In brief, my data suggest that media frames are the result of certain conditions: (1) type of primary sources used in a story, (2) location of journalists, and (3) subject of the story. In other words, the media frames that emerge from the selective presentation of

information are made possible by the information that sources provide journalists, as sources are not neutral beings – they have their bias and agenda for sharing information.

Therefore, before substantial reform can occur in how Western media, especially in the U.S., report African issues, a better understanding of factors impacting news production is needed together with respect for journalists' hard work – even if their work is not prefect. This will help in the long run to start a dialogue between media scholars and media producers.

APPENDIX A

NEWS ARTICLES IN SAMPLE

The following list of hard news stories (n=116) were analyzed for this study.

Articles are presented chronologically by date.

Date	Headline	Author(s)	Word Count	Dateline	Sect ion	Page No.
1/17/04	War in Western Sudan Overshadows Peace in the South	Somini Sengupta & Marc Lacey	1,366	Tine, Sudan & Naivasha, Kenya	A	3
4/24/04	Rights Group Says Sudan's Government Aided Militias' Raids	Somini Sengupta	792	Dakar, Senegal	A	2
5/4/04	In Sudan, Militiamen on Horses Uproot a Million	Marc Lacey	1,298	Nyala, Sudan	A	1
5/8/04	Uprooted Sudanese Balk at Invitation to Return Home	Marc Lacey	1,325	Geneina, Sudan	A	3
5/15/04	A Tree That Supported Sudan Becomes a War's Latest Victim	Marc Lacey	1,287	Khartoum, Sudan	A	1
6/12/04	White House Reconsiders Its Policy on Crisis in Sudan	Marc Lacey	1,457	Nairobi, Kenya,	A	3
6/26/04	U.N. Chief to Join Powell in Sudan to Try to Halt Massacres	Warren Hoge	774	United Nations	A	2
6/30/04	Powell to Press Sudan to Ease the Way for Aid in Darfur	Christopher Marquis	907	Khartoum, Sudan	A	3
7/1/04	Powell and Annan See Hints of Disaster in Sudan	Christopher Marquis, Marc Lacey & Warren Hoge	1,442	Khartoum, El-Fasher Sudan & United Nations	A	1
7/2/04	Sudan Camp Is Moved Before U.N. Visit	Marc Lacey	1,063	El Fasher, Sudan	A	5

Date	Headline	Author(s)	Word Count	Dateline	Section	Page No.
7/18/04	Despite Appeals, Chaos Still Stalks the Sudanese	Marc Lacey	1,546	Nyala, Sudan	1	1
7/20/04	Rights Group Says Sudan Aids Abuses	Warren Hoge	526	United Nations	A	9
7/23/04	In Darfur, Appalling Atrocity, but Is That Genocide?	Marc Lacey	1,102	Khartoum, Sudan	A	3
7/23/04	At U.N., U.S. Threatens Penalties on Sudan	Warren Hoge	582	United Nations	A	3
7/29/04	U.N. and U.S. in Urgent Appeals to Help Refugees in Sudan	Warren Hoge	732	United Nations	A	3
7/30/04	U.S. Alters Sudan Resolution to Attract U.N. Votes	Warren Hoge	556	United Nations	A	7
7/31/04	U.N. Council Threatens to Punish Sudan Over Militia Killings	Warren Hoge	810	United Nations	A	2
8/3/04	Evicted From Camp, Sudan Refugees Suffer in Limbo	Marc Lacey	1,013	El Fasher, Sudan	A	3
8/5/04	Protesters in Sudan Oppose U.N.'s Demands	Warren Hoge	752	United Nations	A	6
8/6/04	Sudanese Suffer as Militias Hide in Plain Sight	Marc Lacey	1,890	Nyala, Sudan	A	1
8/8/04	Crisis in Sudan Resists Simple Solutions	Steven R. Weisman	1,030	Washington	1	6
8/11/04	Sudan Accused of Arresting Those Who Disclose Dire Conditions	Marc Lacey	543	Nairobi, Kenya	A	5
8/15/04	Want, Violence and Death Steal Childhood in Sudan	Marc Lacey	1,319	Nyala, Sudan	1	18
8/16/04	Crisis in Sudan: Thorny Issues Underlying Carnage in Darfur Complicate World's Response	Somini Sengupta	1,266	Ndjamena, Chad	A	8
8/20/04	Death and Sorrow Stalk Sudanese Across Border	Somini Sengupta	1,346	Bahai, Chad	A	1
8/22/04	In Sudan, Hunter and Hunted Alike Invoke the Prophet	Marc Lacey	1,171	Furburanga, Sudan	1	3
8/25/04	U.S. Report on Violence in Sudan Finds a 'Pattern of Atrocities'	Marc Lacey	554	Nairobi, Kenya	A	7
9/2/04	In Western Sudan, Fear and Despair Are the Ever-Growing Enemy	Somini Sengupta	1,614	Shigekaro, Sudan	A	1
9/2/04	Annan Says Sudan Hasn't Curbed Militias; Urges More Monitors	Warren Hoge	577	United Nations	A	5
9/3/04	Kerry Wants Broader Effort From Bush On Sudan	David M. Halbfinger, Warren Hoge & Steven R. Weisman	716	Nantucket, Mass, Washington & United Nations	P	10

Date	Headline	Author(s)	Word Count	Dateline	Sect ion	Page No.
9/9/04	U.S. Urges Security Council to Take Tougher Stance on Sudan	Warren Hoge	549	United Nations	A	5
9/10/04	Powell Says Rapes and Killings in Sudan Are Genocide	Steven R. Weisman & Warren Hoge	1,231	Washington & United Nations	A	3
9/11/04	Sudan Government's Attacks Stoke Rebels' Fury	Somini Sengupta	2,745	Farawiya, Sudan	A	1
9/19/04	Authority Is Approved For Sanctions Against Sudan	Warren Hoge	528	United Nations	1	12
9/25/04	Envoy Suggests Sharing Power To Aid Darfur	Somini Sengupta	577	Abeche, Chad	A	3
9/27/04	U.N. Envoy Urges More African Peacekeepers in Sudan	Somini Sengupta	1,154	Geneina, Sudan,	A	3
9/29/04	Sudan Official Calls Darfur a 'Smoke Screen' for Plotters	Somini Sengupta	916	Khartoum, Sudan	A	3
9/29/04	Sudan Conflict Reaches U.S. Immigration Courts	Rachel L. Swarns	1,195	Elizabeth, N.J	A	12
10/2/04	Sudan Agrees to Allow 3,500 African Union Troops Into Darfur	Somini Sengupta	574	Khartoum, Sudan	A	2
10/8/04	Sudan Agrees to Resume Peace Talks With Rebels in Its South	Marc Lacey	577	Nairobi, Kenya	A	6
10/21/04	From Rare Glimpse Inside Militia Camp, Clear Ties to Sudan	Somini Sengupta	1,483	Mistariha, Sudan	A	1
10/25/04	New Guerrilla Factions Arise in Sudan Ahead of Peace Talks	Somini Sengupta	807	Abuja, Nigeria	A	4
10/26/04	Unrelenting Attacks on Women in West Sudan Provoke an International Outcry	Somini Sengupta	1,305	Kebkabiya, Sudan	A	10
11/3/04	New Violence Hinders Relief Efforts in Western Sudan	Somini Sengupta and Warren Hoge	552	Dakar, Senegal & United Nations	A	9
11/4/04	Annan Urges Security Council to Act on Growing Violence in Sudan	Warren Hoge	524	United Nations	A	5
11/21/04	Darfur Strife Behind Them, Two Detainees Win Freedom	Sewell Chan & Rachel L. Swarns	1,073	Washington & New York	1	39
11/25/04	Sudan Rebels Say Government Bombed Village Camp, Killing 25	Somini Sengupta	565	Khartoum, Sudan,	A	20
11/27/04	Despite Pact, New Violence Stymies Aid in Sudan	Somini Sengupta	1,373	El Fasher, Sudan	A	1
11/29/04	African Union Strives to End Deadly Cycle in Darfur	Somini Sengupta	1,359	Tawila, Sudan,	A	3
12/5/04	Leader of Darfur Rebels Resorts to Damage Control	Somini Sengupta	1,229	Thabit, Sudan	1	33

Date	Headline	Author(s)	Word Count	Dateline	Sect ion	Page No.
1/1/05	Sudan and Southern Rebels Sign Pact to End Civil War	Marc Lacey & Reuben Kyama	949	Nairobi & Naivasha, Kenya	A	3
1/10/05	Sudan and Southern Rebels Sign Deal Ending Civil War	Marc Lacey & Scott Shane	1,185	Nairobi, Kenya	A	3
1/17/05	Sudan Peace Deal Allows Displaced to Go Home at Last	Lydia Polgreen	933	Jabarona, Sudan	A	3
1/24/05	Civilians Bear Brunt of the Continuing Violence in Darfur	Lydia Polgreen	1,336	Labado, Sudan	A	3
1/29/05	U.S. Lobbies U.N. on Darfur And International Court	Warren Hoge	795	United Nations	A	8
2/1/05	U.N. Finds Crimes, Not Genocide in Darfur	Warren Hoge	866	United Nations	A	3
2/2/05	Both Sides of Conflict in Darfur Dispute Findings in U.N. Report	Lydia Polgreen	695	Dakar, Senegal	A	6
2/9/05	Sudan Rebuffs U.N. on Trying Darfur War-Crimes Suspects Abroad	Warren Hoge	576	United Nations	A	5
2/11/05	Darfur's Babies of Rape Are on Trial From Birth	Lydia Polgreen	1,690	Geneina, Sudan	A	1
2/15/05	10,000 Peacekeepers Sought By U.S. for Southern Sudan	Warren Hoge	610	United Nations	A	8
2/17/05	Human Rights Commissioner Urges U.N. to Act Quickly on Darfur	Warren Hoge	584	United Nations	A	9
3/7/05	Unpaid Aid Pledges Endanger Sudan Peace Pact, U.N. Says	Warren Hoge	858	United Nations	A	4
3/20/05	Beyond the Bullets and Blades	Marc Lacey	2,139	Bunia, Congo	4	1
3/24/05	France Asking U.N. to Refer Darfur to International Court	Warren Hoge	626	United Nations	A	3
3/30/05	U.N. Council Approves Penalties In Darfur	Warren Hoge	617	United Nations	A	6
4/1/05	U.N. Votes to Send Any Sudan War Crime Suspects to World Court	Warren Hoge	734	United Nations	A	6
4/8/05	State Department Sending Deputy to Sudan to Push for End to Violence in Darfur	Joel Brinkley	673	Washington	A	16
4/16/05	A Sudanese City of Refugees With No Plans to Go Home	Joel Brinkley	908	Abushouk, Sudan	A	7
4/29/05	Sudan Poses First Big Trial For World Criminal Court	Marlise Simons & Marc Lacey	1,220	Khartoum, Sudan & The Hague	A	12
5/1/05	Peace Is in Sight, but Is Darfur Too Broken to Fix	Marc Lacey	1,012	Geneina, Sudan	4	3
5/6/05	The New African Dream Is to Escape the Nightmare of Darfur	Marc Lacey	914	Khartoum, Sudan	A	16

Date	Headline	Author(s)	Word Count	Dateline	Section	Page No.
6/18/05	C.I.A. Role in Visit of Sudan Intelligence Chief Causes Dispute Within Administration	Scott Shane	811	Washington	A	7
7/10/05	Onetime Enemies Join Forces to Lead Sudan on a Road to Peace Filled With Obstacles	Marc Lacey	957	Nairobi, Kenya	1	11
7/21/05	Sudan Still Paying Militias Harassing Darfur, U.S. Says	Joel Brinkley	1,108	Khartoum, Sudan	A	3
7/22/05	Sudanese Guards Rough Up U.S. Aides and Reporter as Rice Visits	Joel Brinkley	974	Abu Shouk, Sudan	A	3
7/30/05	U.N. Charges Sudan Ignores Rapes in Darfur by Military and Police	Warren Hoge	542	United Nations	A	8
8/1/05	New No. 2 in Sudan, an Ex-Rebel Leader, Dies in Copter Crash	Marc Lacey	518	Nairobi, Kenya	A	5
8/2/05	Death of Sudan Rebel Leader Imperils Fragile Hope for Peace	Marc Lacey, Reuben Kyama & Steven R. Weisman	1,195	New Site, Sudan, Nairobi & Washington	A	1
8/3/05	Amid Sudan Riots, a Fighter Takes the Role of Peacemaker	Marc Lacey	809	New Site, Sudan	A	4
8/4/05	Riot Toll Mounts in Sudan After Rebel Leader's Death	Marc Lacey	767	New Site, Sudan	A	3
10/18/05	Chaos Grows in Darfur Conflict As Militias Turn on Government	Marc Lacey	1,377	Zam Zam, Sudan,	A	1
11/7/05	Surge in Violence in Sudan Erodes Hope	Joel Brinkley	1,070	Washington	A	5
11/9/05	U.S. Convenes Peace Talks on Darfur, but Rebels Are Mostly Absent	Joel Brinkley	585	Nairobi, Kenya	A	7
11/11/05	Violence and Refugee Numbers Grow in Sudan, U.S. Official Finds	Joel Brinkley	699	Shearia, Sudan	A	8
11/13/05	Darfur Crisis Defies Even Redoubled U.S. Peace Efforts	Joel Brinkley	712	Juba, Sudan	A	14
1/18/06	Egypt Says It Won't Deport Any of the Jailed Sudanese	Michael Slackman & Mona el Naggar	1,047	Cairo	A	3
1/24/06	African Union Rebuffs Attempt by a Sudanese to Lead It	Marc Lacey	889	Khartoum, Sudan	A	3
1/25/06	Africans Pick Congo Republic Leader, Not Sudanese, for Union Post	Marc Lacey	542	Khartoum, Sudan	A	5
2/4/06	Security Council Agrees To Send Troops to Darfur	Joel Brinkley	587	Washington	A	6

Date	Headline	Author(s)	Word Count	Dateline	Section	Page No.
2/5/06	In Darfur, Tiny Steps Toward Policing a Lawless Land	Marc Lacey	1,494	Menawashei, Sudan	1	16
2/18/06	Bush Sees Need to Expand Role of NATO in Sudan	David Sanger, Joel Brinkley & David S. Cloud	1,053	Orlando, Fla & Washington	A	1
2/19/06	How States Are Aiming to Keep Dollars Out of Sudan	Carla Fried	1,315		3	5
2/28/06	Refugee Crisis Grows as Darfur War Crosses a Border	Lydia Polgreen & Michael Kamber	1,831	Adre, Chad & Geneina, Sudan	A	1
3/1/06	Peacekeepers and Diplomats, Seeking to End Darfur's Violence, Hit Roadblock	Warren Hoge	610	United Nations	A	10
4/14/06	Chadian Forces Repel Rebel Attack on Capital in Intense Combat	Marc Lacey	822	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	A	10
4/15/06	After Battle in Capital, Chad Threatens to Expel Sudanese	Marc Lacey	1,157	Ndjamena, Chad	A	3
4/21/06	Family Feud Complicates Revolt Over Chad's Leader	Marc Lacey	1,550	Ndjamena, Chad	A	10
4/26/06	Student-Driven Sudan Divestment Campaign Grows	Philip Rucker	772	New Haven	B	9
4/27/06	U.S. Options on Darfur Are Running Out	Joel Brinkley	976	Washington	A	8
4/29/06	U.N. Agency Cuts Food Rations for Sudan Victims in Half	Lydia Polgreen & Joel Brinkley	1,098	Khartoum, Sudan & Washington	A	3
4/30/06	Muslims' Plight in Sudan Resonates With Jews in U.S.	Neela Banerjee	1,081	Portland, Me.	1	21
5/1/06	Thousands Rally in Washington for More U.S. Aid to Darfur	Holli Chmela	690	Washington	A	17
5/1/06	Deadline Passes Without Accord in Darfur Talks	Lydia Polgreen & Joel Brinkley	1,304	Khartoum, Sudan & Washington	A	1
5/2/06	U.S. Diplomat Heads to Nigeria to Try to Unsnarl Darfur Talks	Joel Brinkley, Lydia Polgreen & Senan John Murray	717	Khartoum, Sudan, Washington & Abuja, Nigeria	A	3
5/3/06	Bush Urges Sudan's President to Continue With Peace Talks	Lydia Polgreen & Joel Brinkley	772	Khartoum, Sudan & Washington	A	8
5/4/06	U.S. Presses Sudan and Rebels To Reach Darfur Peace Pact	Joel Brinkley & Lydia Polgreen	592	Khartoum, Sudan & Washington	A	8
5/5/06	Resisting Pressure, Rebels In Sudan Reject Cease-Fire	Joel Brinkley, Lydia Polgreen & Senan John Murray	1,218	Washington, Khartoum, Sudan & Abuja, Nigeria	A	14
5/6/06	Largest Faction of Darfur Rebels Signs Peace Pact	Lydia Polgreen & Joel Brinkley	1,682	Khartoum, Sudan	A	1

Date	Headline	Author(s)	Word Count	Dateline	Sect ion	Page No.
5/8/06	Peace Pact Has Yet to Touch Lives of Darfur's Refugees	Lydia Polgreen	1,019	Gereida, Sudan	A	3
5/9/06	Angry Darfur Refugees Riot In Demand for U.N. Troops	Lydia Polgreen	1,169	Kalma Camp, Sudan	A	10
5/14/06	Truce Is Talk, Agony Is Real In Darfur War	Lydia Polgreen	1,208	Menawashie, Sudan	1	1
5/17/06	Obstacles Test African Force In Grim Darfur	Lydia Polgreen, Joel Brinkley & Warren Hoge	1,669	Menawashei, Sudan, Washington & United Nations	A	1
5/19/06	Violent Rebel Rift Adds Layer to Darfur's Misery	Lydia Polgreen	1,352	Tina, Sudan	A	1
5/31/06	Darfur War Rages On, With Disease and Hunger the Biggest Killers	Lydia Polgreen	1,543	Zam Zam, Sudan	A	1
6/9/06	Jailed Sudanese Refugees Pose a Moral Puzzle for Israel	Dina Kraft	1,042	Tel Aviv	A	3
6/12/06	Over Tea, Sheik Denies Stirring Darfur's Torment	Lydia Polgreen	1,708	Mistariha, Sudan	A	1

APPENDIX B

LIST OF JOURNALISTS INTERVIEWED

The following journalists from *The New York Times* were interviewed for the

present study. They are listed by their pseudonyms and their job titles reflect their job

descriptions during the period the journalists reported on Darfur: July 1, 2003 – July 1,

2006.

Johnson, Brian. *Diplomatic Correspondent* – interview conducted by email of September
     28, 2007.

Morrison, Lance. *African Bureau Chief* – interview conducted by email on October 19,
     2007 and December 3, 2007.

Sampson, Keith. *Freelance Contributor to the City Section* – interview conducted by
     telephone on September 11, 2007.

Schudson, Simon. *National Correspondent* – interview conducted by email on September
     13, 2007.

APPENDIX C

RECRUITMENT LETTERS AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Recruitment Letter or Email

Dear [insert name],

My name is Ammina Kothari from the University of Oregon, Journalism and Communication School and I am writing to invite you to participate in my graduate research study. This is a study about the *New York Times'* coverage of the genocide in Darfur, Sudan. You're eligible to be in this study because you are one of the journalist's at the newspaper who has been reporting on this issue. I obtained your contact information from The *NY Times'* newsroom.

In the past, communication scholars have looked at gate-keeping roles of journalists and numerous content analysis of news coverage of African issues have been done to illustrate bad or lack of coverage. However, I have yet to find a study involving interviews with international journalists to understand how they overcome challenges to deliver news stories. The project I propose is important because it looks at international news coverage from a journalist's perceptive and shall help to educate future aspiring international journalists and hopefully contribute to academic research as well.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will have to answer my research questions about your experience as a journalist reporting on genocide in Darfur. With your permission I would like to audio record your answers, then I'll use the information to explain my findings from the content analysis of the news coverage of Darfur, which is my master's thesis.

Remember, this is completely voluntary and pseudonyms will be assigned to all participants. You can choose to be in the study or not. If you'd like to participate or have any questions about the study, I can be reached at the contact information listed below.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Ammina Kothari.
Masters Student.

Ammina Kothari
MA Student in Communication and Society Program
University of Oregon – Journalism and Communication School.
1290 University of Oregon,
Eugene, OR 97403-1290

(541) 346-1543 (office)
(773) 541-1170 (cell)
<akothari@uoregon.edu>

<u>Verbal Consent Script:</u>

This is Ammina Kothari, from the University of Oregon, Journalism and Communication School working on my master's thesis project. Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research project. The research will help me understand the challenges faced by journalists when covering foreign conflicts like genocide in Darfur, Sudan.

Today you will be participating in an individual phone interview, which should take approximately one hour. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, you may stop at any time. Furthermore, you are free to decline to answer any question for any reason. Responses will be completely anonymous and I will assign you a pseudonym. Taking part in this audio taped interview is your agreement to participate.

If you would like a copy of this consent form for your records, please let me know and I will email it to you. If you have any questions regarding the research, contact my advisor Dr. H. Leslie Steeves, School of Journalism and Communication, 208 Allen Hall, 1275 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-1275, Phone: (541) 346-3751. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the Office for Protection of Human Subjects at the University of Oregon, (541) 346-2510. This Office oversees the review of the research to protect your rights and is not involved with this study.

Thank you again for your help.

Ammina Kothari.

Email Consent Script

This is Ammina Kothari, from the University of Oregon, Journalism and Communication School working on my master's thesis project. Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research project. The research will help me understand the challenges faced by journalists when covering foreign conflicts like genocide in Darfur, Sudan.

Today you will be participating in an individual email interview, which should take approximately one hour. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, you may stop at any time. Furthermore, you are free to decline to answer any question for any reason. Responses will be completely anonymous and I will assign you a pseudonym. Although every precaution will be taken to keep your responses confidential, there is always potential for loss of confidentiality in email correspondence. Taking part in this email interview is your agreement to participate.

If you have any questions regarding the research, contact my advisor Dr. H. Leslie Steeves, School of Journalism and Communication, 208 Allen Hall, 1275 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-1275, Phone: (541) 346-3751. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the Office for Protection of Human Subjects at the University of Oregon, (541) 346-2510. This Office oversees the review of the research to protect your rights and is not involved with this study.

Thank you again for your help.

Ammina Kothari.

Interview Questionnaire

A. Interviewee Background
- How long have you been working as a journalist?
- How long have you been working for *The New York Times*?
- What is your expertise in foreign news reporting?

Probes:
- How did you get involved in covering Darfur, Sudan.

B. Background information on the newspaper:
- What resources are available to foreign correspondents like you to cover a conflict like Darfur?
- Do you choose the story to cover or does an editor assign one?
- Briefly describe the process that is completed before a story you write gets published.

Probes:
- Is the strategy employed by *The New York Times* working – why or why not?
- What would you like to see improved in terms of foreign news coverage?

C. Covering Darfur:
- How many trips have you made to Sudan to cover Darfur?
- Briefly describe the process that is completed before a story you write gets published.
- What would you say are some of the challenges of being a foreign correspondent?
- Why do you have a preference for a certain type of sources?

Probes:
- What would you say is the driving interest behind *The New York Times'* covering of Darfur, when many other mainstream media are ignoring this conflict?

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLES OF EACH TYPE OF NEW STORY

Summaries of Public Event or Action Type of News Story

ProQuest

The New York Times

State Department Sending Deputy to Sudan to Push for End to Violence in Darfur

Joel Brinkley. **New York Times.** (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: Apr 8, 2005. pg. A.16

Subjects:	Foreign aid, Human rights, Minority & ethnic violence, Militia groups, Diplomatic & consular services
Locations:	Darfur Sudan, United States, US
People:	Zoellick, Robert B, Rice, Condoleezza
Companies:	Department of State (NAICS: 928120)
Author(s):	Joel Brinkley
Document types:	News
Dateline:	*WASHINGTON, April 7*
Section:	*A*
Publication title:	New York Times. (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: Apr 8, 2005. pg. A.16
Source type:	Newspaper
ISSN:	03624331
ProQuest document ID:	818900911
Text Word Count	673
Document URL:	http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=818900911&sid=2&Fmt=3&clientId=5252&RQT=309&VName=PQD

Abstract (Document Summary)

Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick will head for Sudan next week, and one of his missions will be to put pressure on its leaders to end the violence in Darfur, the region of western Sudan where Arab militias, aided by the government, have killed as many as 300,000 people in the last two years.

Richard A. Boucher, the State Department spokesman, said on Thursday: "We're not in the position of holding up on Darfur because the North-South is not being implemented or holding up on North-South implementation because of Darfur. We want to see both things happen because they contribute and support each other, and so that's what our money goes to."

A senior State Department official said Mr. Zoellick would meet with Sudanese government leaders in Oslo and in Khartoum, and he would visit Darfur. But the official acknowledged that Sudanese leaders have seemed impervious to persuasion, even when visited by Mr. [Colin L. Powell], British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Secretary General Kofi Annan of the United Nations. He agreed to speak only on condition that he not be named; the State Department postponed an on-the-record press briefing on the trip.

Full Text (673 words)

Summaries of Public Event or Action Type of News Story (continued)

Copyright New York Times Company Apr 8. 2005

Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoelllck will head for Sudan next week, and one of his missions will be to put pressure on its leaders to end the violence in Darfur. the region of western Sudan where Arab militias. aided by the government, have killed as many as 300,000 people in the last two years.

On the way, he will represent the United States at a donors' conference for Sudan, in Oslo, committing the United States to provide $1.4 billion in aid for reconstruction in southern Sudan, where a long-term conflict recently ended.

That may seem incongruous, but officials and others who follow the tortured recent history of Sudan say they understand.

Mr. Zoellick's trip will be the first by a senior American official since June, when Colin L. Powell, secretary of state at the time, visited. It comes a week after the United Nations gave the names of 51 suspects in the ethnic killings in Darfur to the International Criminal Court for possible prosecution. The government in Khartoum has vowed not to cooperate with that.

The State Department says Mr. Zoellick is going so he can show that the administration takes the problems in Darfur seriously. The department says Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice counts the problems among her top concerns.

Since Mr. Powell's visit last year, the Sudanese government, with heavy involvement by the United States, has reached a peace agreement with rebels in the south. They fought for more than 20 years in a conflict that was wholly separate from the violence in Darfur.

Under the terms of that peace agreement, the southern rebels are to play a role in the central government for six years, and then they may receive some level of autonomy. During the coming months and years, said Susan E. Rice, who was assistant secretary of state for African affairs during the Clinton administration, "it matters hugely that the new government in Southern Sudan is able to deliver."

The American aid will be given to private aid groups, United Nations agencies and others in the south -- not the central government in Khartoum. Susan Rice said she thought the Sudanese government would be just as happy if the aid were not delivered, leading to the failure of the former rebel army to turn itself into a viable government.

"We want to prevent the government in Khartoum from winning the fight off the battlefield that they could not win on the battlefield," she said.

Richard A. Boucher, the State Department spokesman, said on Thursday: "We're not in the position of holding up on Darfur because the North-South is not being implemented or holding up on North-South implementation because of Darfur. We want to see both things happen because they contribute and support each other, and so that's what our money goes to."

Still, Ms. Rice, echoing many others, said she thought the Bush administration should sharply step up the pressure on the Sudanese government over the killing in Darfur, which began in 2003 and continues even today.

A senior State Department official said Mr. Zoellick would meet with Sudanese government leaders in Oslo and in Khartoum. and he would visit Darfur. But the official acknowledged that Sudanese leaders have seemed impervious to persuasion, even when visited by Mr. Powell, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Secretary General Kofi Annan of the United Nations. He agreed to speak only on condition that he not be named; the State Department postponed an on-the-record press briefing on the trip.

The senior official added that the violence in Darfur appears to have diminished but remains serious. In addition to the deaths, an estimated 2.4 million black Africans have been displaced from their homes. Many live in refugee camps that marauding militias occasionally attack. Mr. Zoellick will visit one of those camps next week.

Ms. Rice did not hold out much hope that the administration's strategy would accomplish a great deal. The Sudanese leaders, she said, "have learned that much of what we consider terribly wrong, they can get away with."

Investigative Type of News Story

ProQuest

The New York Times

Darfur's Babies of Rape Are on Trial From Birth

Lydia Polgreen. **New York Times.** (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: Feb 11, 2005. pg. A.1

Subjects:	Rape, Civil war, Refugees, War crimes, Minority & ethnic violence, Babies, Social conditions & trends
Locations:	Darfur Sudan
Author(s):	Lydia Polgreen
Document types:	News
Dateline:	*GENEINA, Sudan*
Section:	A
Publication title:	New York Times. (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: Feb 11, 2005. pg. A.1
Source type:	Newspaper
ISSN:	03624331
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Text Word Count	1690
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Abstract (Document Summary)

Interviews with traditional midwives and aid organizations here indicated that there are probably two dozen such babies just in Al Riyadh, the displaced people's camp where [Fatouma] lives. It is one of scores of places where ethnic Africans have fled in Darfur and eastern Chad from attacks by government forces and their allied Arab militias.

"She is a janjaweed," Fatouma, 16, said of her daughter, who she said was born after Fatouma was raped by an Arab militiaman. "When people see her light skin and her soft hair, they will know she is a janjaweed." (Photo by Michael Kamber for The New York Times)(pg. A10); [Ashta], 30, with her 2-month-old son, [Faisal], at Al Riyadh camp in Darfur. She said Faisal was born nine months after she was raped by militants. (Photo by Michael Kamber for The New York Times)(pg. A1)

Full Text (1690 words)

Copyright New York Times Company Feb 11, 2005

Fatouma spends her days under the plastic tarp covering her tent, seated on a straw mat, staring at the squirming creature in her arms.

She examines over and over again the perfectly formed fingers and toes, 10 of each, and the tiny limbs, still curled in the form they took before leaving her belly five days before, and now encircled with amulets to ward off evil.

Everything about this baby, the 16-year-old mother declared, is perfect. Almost everything.

"She is a janjaweed," Fatouma said softly, referring to the fearsome Arab militiamen who have terrorized this region.

Investigative Type of News Story (continued)

"When people see her light skin and her soft hair, they will know she is a janjaweed."

Fatouma's child is among the scores of babies produced by one of the most horrific aspects of the conflict in Darfur, the vast, arid region of western Sudan: the use of rape against women and girls in a brutal battle over land and ethnicity that has killed tens of thousands and driven 2 million people from their homes.

Interviews with traditional midwives and aid organizations here indicated that there are probably two dozen such babies just in Al Riyadh, the displaced people's camp where Fatouma lives. It is one of scores of places where ethnic Africans have fled in Darfur and eastern Chad from attacks by government forces and their allied Arab militias.

A recent United Nations investigation into war crimes in Darfur laid out, in page after graphic page, evidence of widespread and systematic rape in the two-year conflict. In one incident, a woman in Wadi Tina was raped 14 times by different men in January 2003. In March 2004, 150 soldiers and janjaweed abducted and raped 16 girls in Kutum, the report said. In Kailek, it said girls as young as 10 were raped by militants.

The fruit of these attacks is now being born in Darfur, and will inevitably become a long-term legacy of the conflict. In a society where deep taboos surrounding rape persist and identity is passed, according to Muslim tradition, from father to child, the fate of these children and their mothers is uncertain.

"She will stay with us for now," Adoum Muhammad Abdulla, the sheik of Fatouma's village, said of the days-old infant. "We will treat her like our own. But we will watch carefully when she grows up, to see if she becomes like a janjaweed. If she behaves like janjaweed, she cannot stay among us."

The fact that he and the new mothers call the children janjaweed, a local insult that means "devil on horseback," underscores just how bitter the division between those who identify themselves as Africans and those who see themselves as Arabs has become, and points to the potential difficulty of acceptance and integration in the years ahead.

In a conflict that began over land but has been fueled by ethnic strife, these children will carry a heavy burden. Long after the fighting ends, they will endure as living reminders of war.

"To them, every Arab is a janjaweed," said one foreign health worker in Geneina who has worked with rape victims. The worker insisted on anonymity because the government has penalized aid organizations that speak out on the topic. "The hatred and animosity will be very difficult to overcome."

Some women have reported that their attackers have used racial epithets and declared that they wanted to make more Arab babies, leading some to conclude that the use of rape is part of a campaign of ethnic cleansing. But the United Nations investigation found that while rape was clearly being used to demoralize and humiliate the population, it did not conclude that it was genocidal in nature.

In Fatouma's case, the child she has borne marks her forever as a victim, and may spoil her chances at marriage, at having more children, at having a normal life if her family ever returns to its village, which was burned to the ground by Arab militants more than a year ago.

For her daughter, who remained nameless until the seventh day after her birth, as tradition here dictates, the future is even more uncertain.

"One day I hope I will be married," Fatouma said, casting her eyes down. "I hope I find a husband who will love me and my daughter."

Like so many women and girls here, Fatouma's ordeal began with a trip out of the relative safety of the displaced people's camp where she lives to search for firewood. Many women earn money by gathering firewood to sell in the market, which makes them vulnerable to attack by militants who roam freely around the camps. "The janjaweed chased us, but I couldn't run fast enough," Fatouma said. "They caught me, and they beat me."

Five men held her captive overnight, she said, raping her repeatedly under a tree. In the morning she ran away, stumbling into a nearby displaced people's camp, where she spent the night, then found her way back to Al Riyadh.

"When my mother saw me, she cried and she said, 'Look how they beat you,'"

Fatouma said pointing to a dark scar below her right eye. She told her mother, Tama, what had happened, though she herself was confused.

"They did bad things to me," she said, her eyes cast down. "Very bad things."

A few months later she began to feel a strange pain. At first she tried to ignore it, but as the swelling continued she

Investigative Type of News Story (continued)

started punching at the movement in her belly with her fists. Tama, suspecting that her daughter was pregnant, ordered her to stop, and took her to a health clinic. A test confirmed the truth.

"I cried for a long time," Fatouma said.

From the next tent, Tama whispered to a visitor: "She is so small. Look at what they did to my daughter. She is just a child."

When the labor pangs began Fatouma was wholly unprepared for the pain.

"I was so afraid, I thought I would die," Fatouma said.

After a night agony, a midwife placed a squirming baby girl in her arms.

Sudden motherhood has overwhelmed Fatouma. Her gray T-shirt was stained with ragged concentric circles of breast milk, and she had trouble figuring out how to feed and clean the infant."I am very happy to be a mother," she said, after a long afternoon of sitting in her tent, staring at her daughter. "I will love her with all my heart."

But if her neighbors are any guide, Fatouma's prospects are dim. Ashta, a 30-year-old woman who lives on the other side of Al Riyadh camp, also spends her days alone in a bare tent with her 2-month-old son, Faisal. She absentmindedly rocks him, trying to quell his constant crying. He was born nine months after Ashta was attacked by a group of militants.

"Faisal changed my life," Ashta said. "Because of him I am sick. Because of him my life is ruined."

Ashta's husband, who has been in Libya for eight years, working as a cow herder, has cast her off, abandoning her and their two children. She lives in a tent next to her brother, who has taken her in.

She said she was raped as she fled her village, Bemiche. Two of her brothers were killed in the attack, and as she wandered in the desert looking for water, a group of bandits set upon her, she said.

One man "beat me with sticks, and said if I tell anyone they would kill me," Ashta said.

She does not know what to make of the child she has borne. She has no expectation of remarrying and stoically faces a long life of loneliness and hardship.

"Without a man you cannot have anything in life," Ashta said. "Your children suffer. Now we don't even have a bed to sleep on. We have no future."

Ashta's brother, Mohammad, said he refuses to blame his sister for what happened to her, despite taboos about rape.

"It is not her fault," he said. "She is a victim of war. We will take care of the child. It is very difficult to love a janjaweed, but we will try to accept him as our own."

While a Sudanese government report on atrocities in Darfur acknowledges that violence against women has taken place, Jamal Ibrahim, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, said in an interview that accounts of rape in Darfur have been wildly exaggerated.

"Human rights organizations and aid groups have to justify their work somehow, so they make these fictions," Mr. Ibrahim said. "If it has happened it is in isolated cases. This kind of thing is not part of our culture."

But in displaced people's camps, accounts of rape are common, and families struggle to deal with the legacy of sexual violence.

Kaltouma Adam Mohammed, a traditional midwife who said she had has delivered eight babies to women who were raped, said that while rape is traditionally seen as a great shame on a family, in the context of this war families are more likely to forgive and accept the mother and child.

"I tell them: 'Sometimes we feel like we have the janjaweed here with us, but it is just a child. He doesn't know anything about this war. We cannot hate this child,'" she said. "We don't know what will happen when these children grow up. If they are like their fathers, they must leave us. But we will try to love them, to accept them. It is God's will that it be so."

[Photograph]

Investigative Type of News Story (continued)

"She is a janjaweed," Fatouma, 16, said of her daughter, who she said was born after Fatouma was raped by an Arab militiaman. "When people see her light skin and her soft hair, they will know she is a janjaweed." (Photo by Michael Kamber for The New York Times)(pg. A10); Ashta, 30, with her 2-month-old son, Faisal, at Al Riyadh camp in Darfur. She said Faisal was born nine months after she was raped by militants. (Photo by Michael Kamber for The New York Times)(pg. A1)
Map of Sudan highlighting Al Riyadh camp: Al Riyadh camp houses two dozen babies conceived in rapes. (pg. A10)

ProQuest

Hybrid Type of News Story (contains elements of other two types of news stories)

Document View

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ProQuest

The New York Times

Resisting Pressure, Rebels In Sudan Reject Cease-Fire

JOEL BRINKLEY and LYDIA POLGREEN, Joel Brinkley reported from Washington for this article, and Lydia Polgreen from Khartoum, Sudan. Senen John Murray contributed reporting from Abuja, Nigeria.. New York Times. (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: May 5, 2006. pg. A.14

Subjects:	Truces & cease fires, Genocide, Peace negotiations, Guerrilla forces
Locations:	Darfur Sudan, Sudan
Author(s):	JOEL BRINKLEY and LYDIA POLGREEN, Joel Brinkley reported from Washington for this article, and Lydia Polgreen from Khartoum, Sudan. Senan John Murray contributed reporting from Abuja, Nigeria.
Document types:	News
Dateline:	WASHINGTON, Friday, May 5
Section:	A
Publication title:	New York Times. (Late Edition (East Coast)). New York, N.Y.: May 5, 2006. pg. A.14
Source type:	Newspaper
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ProQuest document ID:	1032257501
Text Word Count	1218
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Abstract (Document Summary)

"Our people sent us here to bring back their rights," Abdul Wahad al-Nur, the chief negotiator for one of the factions of the Sudanese Liberation Movement, who later rejected the agreement, said at the villa. "We cannot accept anything less than their minimum rights." Last Sunday, Sudan accepted a peace agreement drafted by the African Union, but the rebel factions balked, and mediators put off the Sunday deadline for 48 hours. On Monday, Robert B. Zoellick, the American deputy secretary of state, arrived in Abuja and began directing the negotiations. Then on Tuesday, the mediators gave the negotiators another 48 hours, to end at midnight on Thursday.

If rebel leaders "fail to grasp their best chance for peace, then Darfur faces a cataclysm," wrote Alex de Waal, an expert on Sudan who is a member of the African Union mediation team, in an open letter made public on Thursday. "All those who believe in peace for Darfur will ask ourselves whether we did enough to bring it about, and the needless deaths that occur will scar our consciences. Today is the day."

Even if an agreement is reached, United Nations officials acknowledge, the janjaweed militia and the rebels have broken many cease-fires in the past. "We know full well that a deal between government and rebels cannot solve all Darfur's complex problems," Mr. de Waal wrote. "And so we propose a 'Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Reconciliation' to be held within 60 days, at which representatives of every group in the region can meet to begin the process of stitching the social fabric back together again."

Full Text (1218 words)

Hybrid Type of News Story (continued)

Frantic negotiations through the night failed to produce an agreement on Friday to end the carnage in Darfur despite intense pressure from top Western and African diplomats on three rebel groups fighting an insurgency to sign an accord endorsed by the government of Sudan.

The two smaller rebel factions rejected the agreement outright, saying the deal was not acceptable to them. Negotiators for the largest group, a faction of the Sudan Liberation Army, said they would consult with their commanders about the latest proposal. Discussions with that faction were set to resume after a three-hour break.

On that slim reed of hope that an agreement might still be reached, the talks adjourned at 6 a.m., with negotiators and diplomats expressing deep frustration that the rebel groups had refused to budge on their demands.

"The return of peace depends on their actions in the next three hours," said Salim Ahmed Salim, the chief African Union negotiator, seeming tired and frustrated as he announced the developments in Abuja.

Late on Thursday, the Nigerian president, Olusegun Obasanjo, had invited all the negotiators to his presidential villa to provide a formal setting for the signing, should it come. In New York, Kofi Annan, the secretary general of the United Nations, called an emergency meeting on Sudan and asked representatives from 18 nations, plus the European Commission, the Arab League and the African Union, to press both sides to reach an agreement.

The efforts appeared to be the culmination of a week of intensive negotiation over a draft peace agreement intended to end more than three years of carnage in the Darfur Province of Sudan that has left more than 200,000 people dead.

As the midnight deadline approached in Nigeria, where the peace talks were held, the diplomats and heads of state gathered in a plush conference room on the grounds of the presidential villa. With 40 minutes to go, negotiators for the rebel movements arrived, dressed in suits and ties, not military fatigues, as they wore the day before. But no one said a deal had been reached.

"Our people sent us here to bring back their rights," Abdul Wahad al-Nur, the chief negotiator for one of the factions of the Sudanese Liberation Movement, who later rejected the agreement, said at the villa. "We cannot accept anything less than their minimum rights." Last Sunday, Sudan accepted a peace agreement drafted by the African Union, but the rebel factions balked, and mediators put off the Sunday deadline for 48 hours. On Monday, Robert B. Zoellick, the American deputy secretary of state, arrived in Abuja and began directing the negotiations. Then on Tuesday, the mediators gave the negotiators another 48 hours, to end at midnight on Thursday.

On Wednesday, Mr. Zoellick and his staff reopened the draft agreement and started making modest changes, trying to win the rebels' support. And on Thursday, both government and rebel officers reacted to the changes positively, but by late Thursday neither had signed. At the presidential villa, the diplomats and heads of state were prepared to lean on the rebels to agree. As the midnight deadline slipped past, the negotiations appeared to continue, but with a tense and frantic air as diplomats made last-minute efforts to meet the brinkmanship of the rebels, who stood outside the conference room, apparently still undecided about whether to accept the deal. Mr. Zoellick stepped outside to speak to Mr. Nur, spending more than 20 minutes intensely engaged in a conversation with him, then returned to the conference room, while Mr. Nur remained behind.

If rebel leaders "fail to grasp their best chance for peace, then Darfur faces a cataclysm," wrote Alex de Waal, an expert on Sudan who is a member of the African Union mediation team, in an open letter made public on Thursday. "All those who believe in peace for Darfur will ask ourselves whether we did enough to bring it about, and the needless deaths that occur will scar our consciences. Today is the day."

In an address at the 100th anniversary dinner for the American Jewish Committee in Washington on Thursday, President Bush renewed his call for the United Nations and NATO to help shore up African peacekeeping efforts in Darfur, saying, "We must understand that the rape and the murder and the suffering must be stopped." Flanked by Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and Mr. Annan, he added, "We will not tolerate the genocide taking place in that country."

The proposed revisions of the agreement would allow a few thousand rebels to join the Sudanese Army instead of a few hundred, and would force the government-backed janjaweed militias to disarm and withdraw at an earlier stage than previously stipulated.

Abdulrahaman Zuman, spokesman for the Sudanese government negotiating team, said Thursday that while the overall agreement was not open to negotiation, a very narrow band of details was being discussed. "We are not ready to open any subject in the agreement for further discussion," Mr. Zuman said. "The only issue now under discussion is the American suggestion about what they call the reintegration of the rebels in the Sudanese Army and police and other security agencies of the Sudanese government."

Hybrid Type of News Story (continued)

The agreement, if reached, would open several possible avenues for alleviating the human crisis afflicting Darfur, where two million people are homeless and a million more depend on relief agencies for food. Sudan has indicated that it will grant permission for United Nations peacekeeping forces to take up stations in Darfur if an agreement is reached, as similar United Nations forces did in southern Sudan after a north-south peace treaty to end decades of civil war was signed last year.

What is more, many refugees could presumably return home and begin planting crops before the rainy season begins this summer. As it is, shrinking donations, harassment of aid workers and escalating violence have forced charities to reduce food aid to the victims of the conflict to only half the caloric intake needed to stave off malnutrition.

Even with an agreement, myriad potential pitfalls lie ahead, all tied to the deep animus and suspicion with which each side regards the other after more than three years of war.

The proposed agreement calls on the government forces and allied militia to disarm and withdraw behind cease-fire lines. "We have carefully plotted every military position and militia camp, and mapped cease-fire lines and demilitarized zones," Mr. de Waal wrote.

"Disarming the janjaweed is a top priority," he added. "We insist that the government first confines all militia to camps, takes away their heavy weapons, and has a staged process for disarming them well before the rebels have to move" to containment sites.

Even if an agreement is reached, United Nations officials acknowledge, the janjaweed militia and the rebels have broken many cease-fires in the past. "We know full well that a deal between government and rebels cannot solve all Darfur's complex problems," Mr. de Waal wrote. "And so we propose a 'Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Reconciliation' to be held within 60 days, at which representatives of every group in the region can meet to begin the process of stitching the social fabric back together again."

[Photograph]
Denis Sassou-Nguesso, the chairman of the African Union, in Abuja, Nigeria, yesterday, where he is expected to help in talks on Sudan. (Photo by George Osodi/Associated Press)

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