

Public Abstract

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Title: Now to War: A Textual Analysis of Embedded Print Reporters in the Second Iraq War

This research paper attempted to determine if the embedding program used by the American military in the second Iraq war caused newspaper journalists to write stories that cast the military in a positive light. Journalists tend to value objectivity and impartiality in their work, but the nature of the embedding program might have caused them to unknowingly compromise these values.

The researcher studied 48 newspaper stories about the war: eight stories apiece by six different journalists. The researcher conducted a textual analysis of these stories, looking for signs of possible pro-military bias in the tones, themes and sources of the stories. This analysis revealed that many of the stories used sources favorable to the military, described the military in favorable terms, ignored Iraqi sources or portrayed them negatively, and made little reference to the constraints placed upon their reporting by the military itself.

These results suggest that the embedding program itself may be affecting print journalists' coverage and creating an incorrect public perception of the American military and its mission in Iraq.