

# NOW TO WAR: A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF EMBEDDED PRINT REPORTERS IN THE SECOND IRAQ WAR

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated how the embedding program used by the American military during the second Persian Gulf War affected the coverage of six print reporters who participated in it. This qualitative study analyzed eight stories written by each of the six reporters. These stories were written between March 19, the beginning of the war, and April 10, shortly after the fall of Baghdad.

Using textual analysis, the researcher discovered that the articles examined tended to present the American military forces in generally positive terms, whereas Iraqis were depicted as either grateful for the Americans' incursion into their country or dangerous and untrustworthy. Furthermore, the articles relied almost exclusively on American military personnel for sources and provided very little of the larger political context of the war they were describing.

This study suggests ways in which both the military and the media can better cooperate in order to improve the quality of coverage produced by any future embedding program. Additionally, it also contains suggestions about how media outlets can better prepare themselves for reporting future wars.