

FEDERAL RESERVE CHAIRS IN THE NEWS: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH  
FINANCIAL REPORTERS ON THEIR COVERAGE OF JANET YELLEN AND BEN  
BERNANKE

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This project examines how Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen and Chairman Ben Bernanke were covered in the news. This was analyzed and is relevant because of the historical significance of Chair Yellen's nomination and subsequent confirmation to lead one of the most powerful financial institutions in the world. Interviews were conducted with eight prominent financial journalists based in Washington, D.C. and New York City who work in print, television, radio and digital spaces. Most of the interviews were done in person, two over the phone and one on email. Results show that gender plays little to no role in coverage of Yellen. Economic conditions, the evolution in communication and transparency of the Fed, politics and technology were strong driving factors of news coverage. Journalists drive the narrative of stories by highlighting or excluding certain information. The fact that a bias was not prominent in how reporters cover the chairs of the Fed is a striking outcome in itself. The results could indicate that in some cases, women are gaining ground on the equality front.