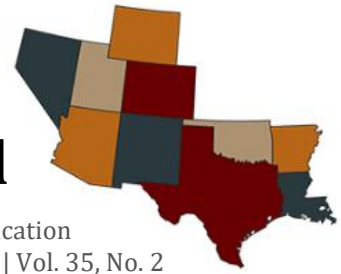


Southwestern Mass Communication Journal

A journal of the Southwest Education Council for Journalism & Mass Communication
ISSN 0891-9186 (Print); ISSN 2641-6743 (Online) | Vol. 35, No. 2



Band of Brothers (And Sisters): Gender Framing in U.S. Army Commercial Advertising

Holly Speck
Kansas State University

The U.S. Army spends over 7 billion dollars in recruitment advertising, with its largest percentages going toward television marketing. However, little research has been dedicated to military advertising besides strategic recommendations. This project offers a critical investigation on the depiction of gender in military advertising. A content analysis on a sample of U.S. Army commercials produced between 2008 and 2018 offers an exploratory discussion on how gender is visually and verbally framed within the Army's advertising.

Keywords: Military advertising, gender, commercials, Army Strong, Warriors Wanted, Framing Theory

Just a few years ago, the draft for men was in full effect, women were decades away from achieving full military status, and the social perceptions of the U.S. Armed Forces was at a record low. In present day the atmosphere and goals of the military have changed significantly, but overall public perception remains negative (Kieran, 2017). The War in Afghanistan has surpassed the Vietnam War as the longest in U.S. history and changed the Army's overall mission. Women are not only allowed in the military, but as of January 24, 2013, women are also allowed to serve in combat roles (Yeung et al., 2017).

Although the U.S. Army's possibilities for recruitment audiences has expanded, their enlistment numbers have readily decreased. For one, modern youth of enlistment age seem more interested in technological advancements and college plans than a patriotic sense of duty (Wang, Elder, & Spence, 2012). However, this low enlistment is caused by a multitude of other external factors, including failed advertising campaigns.

The controversial “Army of One” campaign originating in January 2001 in response to the September 11th attacks, had a promising start, exceeding recruitment goals by 604 soldiers in 2002 and setting into motion a ‘new’ kind of Army focused on individuality and diversity (Moore, 2009; Eighmey, 2006). However, this sense of individualism did not translate into long-term conscription. After the Army missed its recruiting target in 2005, by the widest margin to date, 6,627 soldiers, the campaign was exchanged for “Army Strong” in 2006 (Moore, 2009).

Though “Army Strong” (AS) still appears in current advertisements, “Warriors Wanted” (WW) was added as a new campaign to run simultaneously in 2018. This fragmentation of branding strongly mirrors the Army’s struggles in recruitment into an all-volunteer force, which started its decline in the 1980s and has carried through to current recruitment lows, missing 2018 recruitment goals by 6,500 (Myers, 2018). Additionally, the Army is yet again on the lookout for a new slogan (Cox, 2018).

Furthermore, although the U.S. military spends around 7 billion dollars on advertising annually to attract new recruits, including an incredible amount of taxpayer money, little research has been devoted to military marketing apart from strategic recommendations (Apostle, 2011). In fact, most research dedicated to military advertising has focused on overall effectiveness and general propensity to enlist (Dertouzos & Garber, 2006; Segal, M., Segal, D., Bachman, Freedman-Doan, & O’Malley, 1998). However, less is known about message strategy and composition (Park, Shoieb, & Taylor, 2017; Sackett & Mavor, 2004).

In addition, deeper analysis of military advertising is warranted because it shapes how non-recruits and the civilian public understand the military, while also influencing the expectations and behaviors of recruits once they join the military. Auxiliary, since recruitment efforts have traditionally focused on a heterosexual male audience, it is important to analyze how military organizations are modifying their recruitment efforts to target other groups, especially women (Hanlon, 2013). While reviewing previous literature, it became apparent that female was a forgotten factor when it came to military media analysis. In sum, this research will explore the framing of gender in U.S. Army commercial advertising within the “Army Strong,” and “Warriors Wanted” campaigns from 2008 to 2018. This study indicated significant findings in relation to the visual and verbal framing of gender in Army commercials, particularly in the depiction of military roles and voice of speakers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The goal of this literature review is to analyze significant theoretical perspectives to study how the U.S. Army has constructed and framed gender in its commercial advertising. This section analyzes prior literature, focusing on three main topical areas, which relate to Army advertising: metaphor and slogan as persuasive strategies of military recruitment, a brief history and identification of underlying military advertising, and the depiction of gender and race in military advertising. Erving Goffman’s Framing Theory and Fairhurst and Sarr’s (1996) framing techniques will be studied within the overarching theoretical framework for this research.

Framing Theory

Originating from sociologist Erving Goffman (1974), “the frame analysis” is used to provide a logical account of how we use expectations to conceptualize everyday life situations and the people in them. This micro-level theory can also be expanded into the realm of communications research. Increasingly, framing theory has been used to discuss how media has influence within the social world.

William Gamson (1989) argues that frames originating in the media have shaped the successes and failures of social movements to the extent that the medium promotes or does not promote frames consistent with ideological interests, such as in the realm of global warming, or in this scenario, military perception.

Framing theory has similarly been defined as “attention paid to one perspective over competing perspectives” (Glazier and Boydston, 2012, p. 430). Entman (2004) adds that frames define particular conditions as problems, identify their causes, convey moral judgements, and endorse particular solutions. Others supporting Entman (2004) argue that frames can unify information and can be based on culture (Tewskbury & Scheufele, 2009). Therefore, Army commercials play a key role in framing gender stereotypes by amplifying the frames of individuals or groups within their media depiction of the ‘ideal’ Army. This shapes the way that the public perceives the military, its expectations, and its culture (Entman, 1993; Scheufele, 1999; Tuchman, 1978).

Furthermore, Goffman’s framing theory suggests that how something is presented to an audience influences the choices people make about how to process that information. In the contexts of this study, the U.S. Army focuses attention on certain events and places them into a field of meaning. For example, commercials that focus on financial incentives and bonuses rather than potential dangers of military enlistment propagate the idea that the military is lucrative and ‘safe.’

Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) extend framing theory by labeling certain framing techniques such as metaphor, stories, tradition, slogan, artifact, contrast, and spin. These persuasive apparatuses are used to form the connection between leadership and communication, two qualities that are intensely relevant to military advertising. Fairhurst and Sarr adopt Pondy’s (1978) view that “leadership is a language game,” wherein leaders, or in this study leading institutions, craft their communication with deliberate linguistic and symbolic tools. These tools influence perceptions of the world, beliefs about causes and consequences, and theories about possible futures. In their viewpoint, framing selects and highlights certain aspects of a situation, and excludes others, so that one meaning or set of meanings is chosen and accepted.

The U.S. Army is the land warfare service branch of the United States Armed forces and is under the direct supervision of the U.S. government and the Commander-in-Chief, the real and symbolic leader of America. Referring to Fairhurst and Sarr’s (1996) correlation between leadership and language, the Army under direct jurisdiction of the government selects certain aspects of the military and excludes others to form a positive public perception and to increase recruitment. The military uses similar tools in framing their advertisements, in particular combining the use of slogan, tradition, and metaphor in the “Army Strong,” and “Warriors Wanted” campaigns.

Military and Metaphor: Calling, Occupation or Tradition

Metaphors shape social judgements and “help people understand and communicate abstract and elusive ideas by reference to more concrete objects and processes, transferring attributes from one domain to another” (Kalmoe, Gubler, & Wood, 2018, p. 334). Metaphors are also used to create interpretative frames, and therefore have a strong influence on people’s actions (Van Stee, 2018). In armed forces advertising, metaphor is a persuasive tool used to facilitate positive public attitudes toward the military and persuade their target audiences to enlist.

After the September 11th attacks, “Army of One” replaced “Be All You Can Be,” the first long-lasting and recognizable Army slogan, introduced in 1981. It also initiated the metaphor of the

“warrior,” which has reemerged within the current Warriors Wanted campaign. However, “Army of One’s” subsequent campaign “Army Strong” borrows metaphoric modes from two main sources: action films and reality television (Hakola, 2018). From a cultural studies approach, giving special attention to the logic of popular culture and its effects on commercials such as familiar modes of narration, music, and image from popular films, television, and video games, “Army Strong” is an effort to present the Army as an exciting and appealing opportunity for the few who ‘have what it takes’ (Hakola, 2018). This supports the view that the all-volunteer Army is still depicted as a metaphoric ‘calling,’ rather than strictly an occupation (Moskos, 1997).

The strength of Army Strong lies in its presentation of patriotic variables and action, while also actively avoiding a true depiction of war during war time (Moore, 2009). This campaign highlights adventure and patriotism, but avoids the possible futures associated with enlistment, such as war, death, long periods away from home, etc. However, an underlying “paternalistic remuneration system” of compensation through non-cash benefits such as skill development, housing, education, and uniforms grounds and juxtaposes the action and adventure in commercials by highlighting only the ‘good’ realities of military life, building the credibility of the action-filled advertisement (Moskos, 1997). On the other hand, these paternalistic appeals could potentially isolate females or the college-bound as target audiences, who may be seeking different, or more occupational-based goals such as advancement, leadership, sense of purpose, etc. (Segal, David R. Segal, Jerald G. Bachman, Peter Freedman-Doan and Patrick O'Malley, 1998; Bachman, Peter Freedman-Doan, Patrick M. O'Malley, 2001).

The “Warriors Wanted” campaign also contains inherent framing problems in relation to gendered propensity to enlist. Reichert, Kim, and Fosu (2007) utilized the theory of reasoned action to assess efficacy of an experimental group who viewed five recruitment commercials and had rated more positive enlistment beliefs than a control group. This experiment found that intention and social norms acted as antecedents to behavior (Reichert, Kim, & Fosu, 2007). In other words, behavior was a direct effect of attitude, positioned by framing.

WW frames the military in its normative values such as duty, honor, and country, which anchors the campaign in tradition (Moskos, 1977; Wang, Elder, Spence, 2012). The tradition frame posits WW with innate gender exclusion, focusing on the customary masculinity of the warrior/soldier metaphor and reinforcing traditional social norms of an all-male military (Hanlon, 2013; Reichert, Kim, & Fosu, 2007).

Military Advertising: A Brief History

From 1971 to 2005, Army television advertising consistently promised to provide occupational, educational, and monetary advantages to the recruit while softening the Army’s demands of sacrifice and conformity (Moore, 2009). The advertising highlighted what market research had demonstrated the American youth wanted to hear (Fu, 2013; Park, Lee, Park, 2017; Park, Shoeib, Taylor, 2017). In fact, the largest obstacle market research found, first cited in the historic PROVIDE study¹, was that the Army was not particularly well regarded by American youth. This market research also indicated the

¹ Project Volunteer in Defense of the Nation (PROVIDE) published in January 1969, was produced after the original “Career Force Study,” ordered by General Westmoreland in his attempts to bolster the future All-Volunteer Force (AVF). Both studies contained many important assertions that would guide the Army’s advertising efforts over the course of the AVF era. It also revealed that the general public ranked the Army last among the services of preferred enlistment.

lack in foresight of the possible future allowing female enlistment and set the tone for a gap in research on women's propensity to enlist (Maley, 2013):

Young American men feared that if they joined the Army, they would lose their personal freedom, [and they] would be submerged in an institution that showed no respect for individuality. (Bailey, 2007, pg. 61)

In the early 2000s, Army advertising tried a new approach, one aimed at humanizing soldiers and assuring young Americans their individuality would not be threatened. However, a stint of record college attendance, a strong economy, and post-9/11 outrage cooling, sapped its power. The "Army of One" campaign initially tried to bridge this gap between individualism and enlistment by depicting an Army welcome to a range of talent and a focus on the 'one,' but ultimately failed in its recruitment goals.

Subsequently, the "Army Strong" campaign seemed to initially strike the balance between promoting material benefits and highlighting values that shaped the service, however, eventually the campaign reverted to the traditional "Be All You Can Be"-esque style, promoting job skills and educational opportunities (Moore, 2009).

Gender in Military Advertising and Enlistment

Military advertising has long targeted both males and females; however, the goals of this advertising has significantly changed pertaining to females, mirroring the changes in societal expectations of women. In the 1960s, popular women's magazines advertised for the Women's Army Corps and Nurse Corps and featured militarized femininity at its finest, depicting an environment in which young women could explore job opportunities, travel, and build self-esteem, while meeting male suitors (Ghilani, 2017). Print advertisements in this era rested on gender normativity and heteronormativity, but also balanced the rhetoric of second-wave feminism.

For example, one popular advertisement during this period depicted an attractive woman with perfectly coiffed hair in a dress uniform holding a two-way radio device (N. W. Ayer Advertising Records, 1968). She looks serious as she works, as a handsome young man in a non-dress military uniform is shown working behind her. The caption says, "Even the General has to clear through Patricia." The advertisement on its surface frames Patricia as powerful in her role, since the General must receive permission to depart or land from an air traffic controller, but the text also ensures that a hierarchy of gendered roles prevails. This is depicted through an almost sarcastic-language choice and an insistence on what most girls do or do not know. The fine print of the advertisement states that Patricia serves as an air traffic controller in a job that "most girls don't even know exists." Furthermore, in the ad's description it lists 'female-friendly fields' such as communication, photography, medicine, personnel administration, and public relations (N. W. Ayer Advertising Records, 1968).

While this ad contains obvious sexism, it well illustrates this study's means and goals. This study will analyze how gender is framed both visually and verbally, and how the two interact to strengthen gender expectations and roles. Sexism may not be as apparently glaring in current advertisements, but a tendency to frame males and females in specific and separate military roles could thrive and ferment underneath the surface.

Furthermore, age structure, racial composition, and military-institutional presence were found to be key factors for Army enlistment (2005, Maley). However, advertisements in the 1960s were described as 'white-washed' for both male and females (Ghilani, 2017). Ironically, the demographics for

the current enlisted Army are the antithesis. Studies have shown that non-whites are more likely than whites to volunteer for military service (Lutz, 2008; Moskos and Butler, 1996; Orvis, Sastry, & McDonald, 1996).

It is interesting to note that most of these studies focused on male-centered demographics, rather than female demographics. In fact, research studying gender and propensity to enlist found that less is known of background variables' effects on women's propensity to enlist, opposed to men's (Segal, Segal, Backman, Freedman-Doan, & O'Malley, 1998; Maley, 2005; Backman, Freedman-Doan, & O'Malley, 2001). For example, it is unknown if the southern tradition of higher enlistment holds true for women, too.

In sum, this project seeks to fill the gap in literature exploring a critical analysis of gendered military advertising. This research would advance knowledge surrounding a specific service's message strategy utilizing Erving Goffman's Framing Theory (1974). More particularly, this content analysis seeks to examine how gender is visually and verbally framed within the U.S. Army's commercial advertising between 2008 and 2018.

RQ1: How is gender visually framed during the "Army Strong," and "Warriors Wanted" campaigns?

RQ2: How is gender verbally framed during the "Army Strong," and "Warriors Wanted" campaigns?

METHODS

Content analysis is "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Berelson, 1952, p. 18). The definition was further expanded by Kolbe and Burnett (1991), who wrote that content analysis is "an observational research method that is used to systematically evaluate the symbolic content of all forms of recorded communication. These communications can also be analyzed at many levels (image, word, frames, etc.), thereby creating a realm of research opportunities" (p. 243). In this exploratory study, U.S. Army commercials were examined for gender frames.

Furthermore, content analysis has many advantages including systematic, replicable, and unobtrusive observation and study. In this particular longitudinal type of study, content analysis is possible due to videos being stored in a military archive. These archived videos can be cataloged using quantitative assessments. Quantitative content analysis is defined as:

The systematic and replicable examinations of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical method. . .in order to infer from the communication to its context. (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 1998, p. 25)

Further, a macro-analysis of communication is interested in viewing content as a social event that goes beyond individual behavior and "explores the possible consequences of personal and institutional dynamic, reflected in cultural products" (Gerbner, 1958, p. 87). This study's research is a macro-analysis of mass media content and is concerned with "broad regularities in a large system of mass-produced cultural commodities" (Gerbner, 1958). There is an assumption made that the military branch under study, the U.S. Army, is a creator of a large system of archival records, and therefore contributes to these cultural commodities.

Population

This content analysis will focus on the U.S. Army's framing of gender in the "Army Strong" and "Warriors Wanted" advertising campaigns, from 2008-2018. Research has shown differences in effectiveness between joint and specific service advertising, finding the latter to be most efficient (Brockett, Cooper, Kumbhakar, Kwinn, & McCarthy, 2004). The researcher conducted a content analysis of U.S. Army advertising as the specific service because the Army accounts for more than half of the military's annual advertising budgets (DOD, 2014). Furthermore, most of the Army's advertising budget is allocated to television advertising, making commercial advertising an appropriate form to evaluate.

The author sent several emails to officers in the U.S. Army, requesting access to an online archive of Army commercials; however, an archive received from these officers did not include the entire population of commercials. The U.S. Army's Public Affairs team granted the researcher legal permission to conduct this study and utilize the U.S. Army's official advertising.

To locate commercials within the 2008-2018 population, the author searched corporate archives (e.g. iSpot.tv) and other websites (e.g. YouTube). Finally, a total of 54 commercials was obtained.

For inclusion, the video must have been an aired commercial, rather than a Public Service Announcement (PSA). Time considerations also impeded the finding of the entire search size, so a convenience sample was selected to produce results that can be generalized with reasonable confidence.

Sample

Sampling content units for this study are commercial clips, which offer the opportunity to study both progression of gender framing within a commercial and the framing of gender in comparison with other commercials. A commercial clip can be defined as a single complete picture in a series, which forms the overall commercial. For example, the opening clip of a commercial could include a series of soldiers jumping out of a helicopter on a mission. The second clip immediately following this first, could depict a soldier hugging a child in a foreign country. A cut to a different scene marks the beginning and end of a clip.

The choice behind this unit of analysis was determined by the researcher's concern for fair representation of the commercial's content and time constraints. In order to study both the visual and verbal elements in relation to other variables such as gender, ethnicity, and narration, the researcher chose to study six clips per commercial. Clips 1, 2, 3, and 4, were the first four clips of the commercial, while clip 5 and clip 6 were the last two clips of the commercials that displayed people. In other words, the last clip depicting solely the army logo and/or campaign phrase was not coded, since this would be the same for every commercial. The first four clips allowed the researcher to study who and what appeared in the commercial, in the opening and the middle of a commercial. The last two clips allowed the researcher to study who and what was shown as the 'closing argument' of the commercial. Research has found that message order can influence advertising processing, with the first and last clips of a commercial advertisement being most impactful (Brunel & Nelson, 2003). In total, the researcher examined a population of 324 clips.

In addition, each clip's number of females and males was counted for their totals per clip (12 was used if it was unknown how many people were in a large group). However, if there was more than 3 people in the clip, the coder was instructed to code only the first three individuals clearly pictured in the clip from left to right. If the gender could not be determined the individual was not coded. If there was

less than three people left to right, one or two people were coded in the clip. This was done due to time restraints and for clarity of instruction.

Individual clips were coded to turn operational concepts and definitions into numbers to then be analyzed. In the process of this coding, there is always some degree of error.

Finally, intercoder reliability is “near the heart of content analysis; if the coding is not reliable, the analysis cannot be trusted” (Singletary, 1993, p. 294). In order to reduce error in content analysis coding, two coders independently coded the same set of videos. The coders coded the same six commercials, which represented ten percent of the total sample. The researcher determined the Cohen’s kappa coefficient for each variable to measure the inter-rater agreement. The (κ) mean was .97. Since this is generally a more robust measurement than simple percent agreement calculation and also takes into account the possibility of the agreement occurring by chance, this was a very high reliability.

RESULTS

Although the U.S. military spends around 7 billion dollars on advertising annually to attract new recruits, little research has been devoted to military marketing apart from strategic recommendations. This exploratory study sought to explore the message composition of U.S. Army commercials and its visual and verbal framing of gender. This study found the framing of gender in Army advertising offers various implications for recruitment and public perception.

Visual Framing

RQ1 asks how gender is visually framed during the “Army Strong,” and “Warriors Wanted” campaigns. The researcher used crosstabulations to determine the Chi Square significance of independent variables surrounding the visual framing of gender including frequency of gender, depiction of role, ethnicity, clothing, physical location, presence of children and overall visual focus of the clip.

Gender Frequency

First, this study will discuss gender frequency. There were 420 males and 95 females coded within the sample of clips (515 characters total). Therefore, this sample included 18.4% females and 81.6% males. According to the official 2017 Army Profile women make up 17% of the total Army (active, guard, and reserve) (Reynolds, & Shendruk, 2018). Army commercials seem to reflect this numerical frequency in their commercials. However, lower advertorial representation of females could in turn reflect lower numbers of female recruitment. In addition, this research was more interested in the framing of gender, rather than quantity. It is also important to note that within the Warriors Wanted campaign only 1 female was featured.

Gender and Depiction of Role

RQ1 was interested in the visual depiction of gender. A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between visual depiction and gender. The relation between these variables was significant, $X^2(7, N = 515) = 94.3, p < .01$. Males were more likely to be depicted in combat roles (97.8%), than females (2.2%).

In addition, females were more likely to be depicted in medical roles (68.8%) than males (31.3%). Females were more likely to be depicted as civilian spouses (88.9%) than males (11.1%). (Table 1).

Table 1.*Gender and Depiction of Role (Visual) Crosstabulation*

		Medical	Combat	Training	Civilian Spouse	Parent	Driver	Artillery Aid	Other	T
M	Count	5	136	184	1	8	5	4	77	420
	% Depicted	31.3%	97.8%	80.7%	11.1%	50%	100%	100%	78.1%	81.5%
F	Count	11	3	44	8	8	0	0	21	95
	% w/in Depicted	68.8%	2.2%	19.3%	88.9%	50%	0%	0%	21.9%	18.5%
Total	Count	16	139	228	9	16	5	4	98	515
	% Depicted	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Gender and Clothing

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between clothing worn and gender. The relation between these variables was significant, $X^2(8, N = 515) = 37.44, p < .001$. Males were more likely to wear fatigues (67.1%) than females (36.8%). Males were also more likely to wear military dress blues (3.6%) than females (2.1%).

Females were more likely to wear civilian clothes (32.6%) than males (14%). Females were also more likely to wear job clothes (28.4%) than males (14.3%).

Gender and Location

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between location of the clip and gender. The relation between these variables was significant, $X^2(8, N = 515) = 42.46, p < .001$. Males were the only gender pictured on the battlefield (100%). Males were more likely to be shown in training facilities (85.1%) than females (14.9%). Males were more likely to be shown at a civilian job (81.8%) than females (18.2%). Males were also more likely to be shown in a vehicle (90%) than females (10%). Males were more likely to be shown in a foreign country (81%) than females (19%). Lastly, females were more likely to be in hospitals (87.5%) than males (12.5%).

Gender and Presence of Children

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between the presence of children and gender. The relation between these variables was not significant, $X^2(1, N = 515) = 6.33, p = .15$. However, females were more likely to be found in a clip with a child present (66.7%) than males (33.3%). It is important to note that there were only 15 commercial clips featuring children.

Gender and Visual Focus

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between the visual focus and gender. The sample size is smaller here (280) since not every clip featured a visual focus alongside a coded person. The relation between these variables was significant, $X^2(7, N = 280) = 17.88, p < .05$. When females were present, the visual focus of the clip was more likely to be job skill (51%), family (17.6%), and humanitarian (11.8%).

When males were present the visual focus of the clip was more likely to be combat (26.2%) and duty (29.3%).

Table 2.
Gender and Focus of Clip (Visual) Crosstabulation

Focus of Clip (Visual)		Males	Females	Total
Incentives	Count	4	1	7
	% Gender	1.7%	2.0%	1.8%
Job Skill	Count	61	26	87
	% Gender	26.6%	51%	31.1%
Combat	Count	60	1	61
	% Gender	26.2%	2.0%	21.8%
Duty	Count	67	6	73
	% Gender	29.3%	2.0%	21.8%
Family	Count	7	9	16
	% Gender	3.1%	17.6%	5.7%
Humanitarian	Count	10	6	16
	% Gender	4.4%	11.8%	5.7%
Other	Count	19	1	20
	% Gender	8.3%	2%	7.1%
Indiscernible	Count	0	1	1
	% Gender	0%	2.0%	.4%
Total	Count	229	51	280
	% Gender	100%	100%	100%

Gender and Message Order

In addition, the methodology section of this paper discussed the importance of message order and its influence on advertising processing. The opening and closing clips of a commercial advertisement were determined to be most impactful on audience perception of importance (Clips 1, 5, 6).

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between clip order and gender. The relation between these variables was not significant, $X^2 (5, N = 515) = 5.59, p = .35$. Although not significant, this study found that males were more likely to be found in the opening and the closing of the commercial (Clips 1, 5, and 6). Females were more likely to be found within the middle of the commercial (Clips 2, 3, 4).

Gender and Ethnicity

It is important to note that while there was no significance between gender and ethnicity, a chi-square test of independence was also performed to examine the relation between ethnicity and role depiction. The relation between these variables was significant, $X^2 (18, N = 515) = 22.53, p < .01$.

A person depicted within a medical role was more likely to be Caucasian (56.3%). A person depicted in a combat role was more likely to be Caucasian (72.7%) rather than African American (17.3%). Additionally, a person depicted as a parent or a civilian spouse was always Caucasian (100%).

In addition, according to the Army's 2017 demographics there was an equal black to white ratio of females. Among enlisted recruits, 56% of female recruits are Hispanic or a racial minority (Reynolds, & Shendruk, 2018). Female recruits are consistently more diverse than the civilian population and more diverse than male recruits (Reynolds, & Shendruk, 2018). Within these commercial clips, females were more likely to be ethnically depicted as Caucasian (63%). Females were depicted as African American (17%) and Hispanic (10%).

Verbal Framing

RQ2 asks how gender is verbally framed during the "Army Strong," and "Warriors Wanted" campaigns. The researcher used crosstabulations to determine the chi-square significance of independent variables surrounding the verbal framing of gender such as gender text (if text was on the screen and a person was present), narration, and frequencies of verbal focuses within the clip.

Gender Text and Gender

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relation between gender text (text on the screen's focus) and gender. The relation between these variables was not significant, $X^2(6, N = 515) = 7.42, p = .28$.

Gender and Verbal Focus

A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between verbal focus and gender. The relation between these variables was not significant, $X^2(8, N = 515) = 13.96, p = .08$.

However, the researcher also examined verbal focuses frequency, or the most regularly deployed verbal focuses in commercials, by gender. The verbal focus when males were present were more likely to be about combat (10.9%) and duty/patriotism (26.2%). The verbal focus when females were present were most likely to be about job skill (35%), incentives (9.8%), and humanitarian efforts (7.8%). By gender, males were featured alongside the verbal focuses incentives (3.5%), and humanitarian discussion (2.6%) about half the frequency as females.

Gender and Narration

Finally, narration was described as no omniscient narrator present, a narrator with a male voice, a narrator with a female voice, a personal narrative with a female voice or a personal narrative with a male voice. A personal narrative could be described as a character on the screen talking or a non-omniscient voice. *Figure 1* demonstrates that an omniscient narrator was always male (100%), while personal narrative was quadruple more likely to be male (15.7%) than female (3.6%).

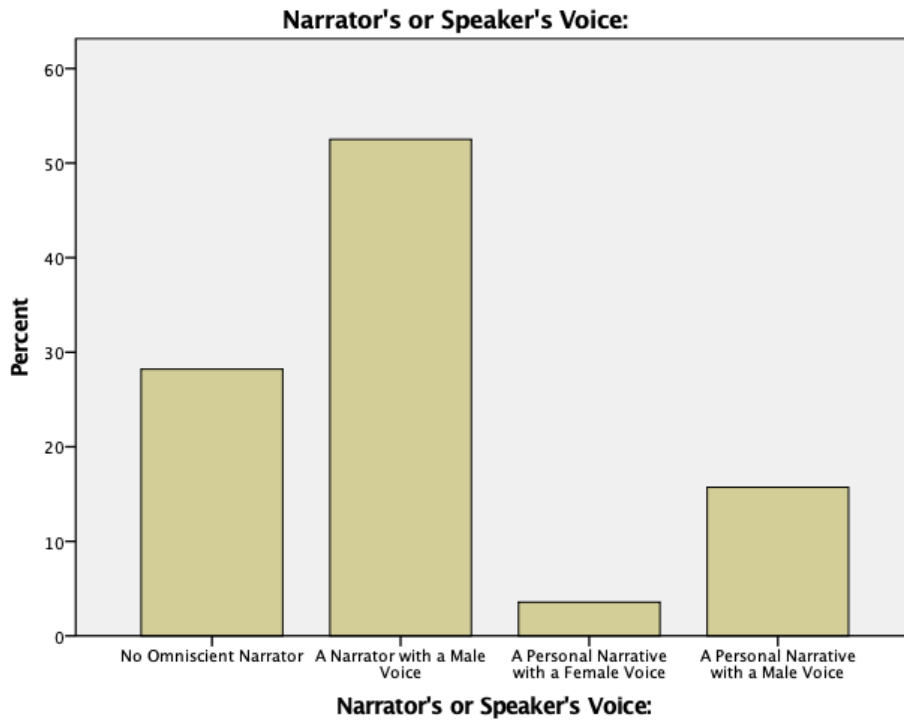


Figure 1. Narrator or Speaker in Commercial by Gender. This figure describes the gender of an omniscient narrator or a personal narrator in U.S. Army commercials.

Visual vs. Verbal Focus

The researcher also briefly looked at whether or not the verbal and visual framing of gender offered conflicting or competing narratives. It is interesting to note here the juxtaposition of combat within the verbal and visual focuses. Although only featured 10% of the time verbally, combat was visually depicted over 25% within these clips.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study offer an exploratory examination of the framing of gender in military advertising. Results indicated that the visual framing of gender surrounded by independent variables such as frequency, depiction, clothing, location, and overall visual focus were significant. Results indicated that the verbal framing of gender through variables such as narration and frequency of verbal focus within a clip were significant.

This study found that males were more likely to be depicted in combat roles (97.8%), than females (2.2%). According to the Army Times there were 783 women serving across five divisions and one independent brigade in 2017, just a few years after the Army opened infantry, armor, fire support, and special operator jobs to women for the first time (Myers, 2018). Although formally ‘allowed’ in combat roles, the commercials studied within this project still feature females more prominently in traditional gender roles such as civilian spouses (88.9%) and as medical aid (68.8%). In order to raise these recruitment numbers, rather than mirror the statistical reality of females in combat roles, Army advertising could portray females within a more robust diversity of roles. Perhaps, females without interest in being in the medical field are not ‘seeing’ an Army career path for them.

In addition, as mentioned previously, there is high importance in relation to message order and its influence on the public's processing of advertising. Although not statistically significant, this study found that males were more likely to be featured in the opening and closing of the commercials and females were most likely to be found within the middle of the commercial. This indicates that an audience would view males as more salient in the commercial, and thus more important or primary in the 'real' Army. This may discourage potential female recruits.

Verbally, an omniscient narrator was always male (100%), while personal narrative was quadruple more likely to be male (15.7%) than female (3.6%). This indicates that while we may be visually seeing females in commercials, regardless of their depicted role, we are not hearing them. In order to broaden gendered recruitment efforts, more opportunities for female voice is necessary.

As an exploratory study looking at how gender is framed in Army commercial advertising, this research found many tools for furthering future research.

First, this study sampled from YouTube and iSpot.tv for its commercials, examining 6 clips within each commercial due to time restraints. Future research may rely upon a wider population or examine a larger number of clips per commercial.

Second, this study examined the visual and verbal framing of gender over a span of 10 years. Future research may look at a wider set of time or pick a set 'before' and 'after' research period, such as before and after females were allowed in combat roles.

Third, future studies may choose to study print advertisement, rather than commercials. A content analysis could be performed on a military news source such as the Military Times. Another study could combine the technological with the print, by studying military advertisement on social media.

Lastly, it is imperative that future experimental studies expand on this study's quantitative discussion. Researchers should add a qualitative aspect, interviewing female and male recruiters for their experiences and possible gendered scripts. In addition, studies should explore the direct effects of Army commercial viewing on the propensity to enlist for males and females.

The findings related to gender in this study carry broad implications. Although females are officially 'allowed' in expanded military roles, they are not being depicted in a wide diversity of roles within U.S. Army commercials. The findings of this study imply that the majority of the commercial sample visually featured males more frequently, and most often in combat roles. This study found that verbally, the male voice was also more prominent than the female. In order to reach and target a broader recruitment audience, the U.S. Army will have to examine how they frame minority groups within their advertisements. In turn, this shift may incur a more positive public perception of females and their 'place' in the military.

In conclusion, this study found significant correlations between gender and a range of variables in U.S. Army advertising. It also opened a new realm for possible exploration, looking at gender across Armed Forces advertising. Within the context of this study, it appears females are featured less prominently than males in U.S. Army Commercials. However, future research is needed to study the implications of this study's findings. For now, the total impact of the framing of gender in military advertising demands further investigation.

REFERENCES

- Apostel, S. P. (2011). *"Army of One" to "Army Strong": Visual media and US Army recruitment during Bush's 'War on Terror'*. (Doctoral dissertation, Michigan Technological University).
- Bacevich, Andrew J. *The New American Militarism: How Americans are Seduced by War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Bailey, B. 2007. "The Army in the Marketplace: Recruiting an All-Volunteer Force." *The Journal of American History*, 4(1)
- Bachman, J. G., Freedman-Doan, P., & O'Malley, P. M. (2001). Should US military recruiters write off the college-bound?. *Armed Forces & Society*, 27(3), 461-476.
- Berelson, B. (1952) *Content analysis in communication research*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.
- Brockett, P. L., Cooper, W. W., Kumbhakar, S. C., Kwinn Jr, M. J., & McCarthy, D. (2004). Alternative statistical regression studies of the effects of joint and service specific advertising on military recruitment. *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, 55(10), 1039-1048.
- Brown, M. T. (2012). "A Woman in the Army Is Still a Woman": Representations of Women in US Military Recruiting Advertisements for the All-Volunteer Force. *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*, 33(2), 151-175.
- Brunel, F., and Nelson, M. R. 2003. "Message Order Effects and Gender Differences in Advertising Persuasion." *Journal of Advertising Research*, 43(3), p 330-341.
- Butler, J. S., & Moskos, C. C. (1996). All that we can be: Black leadership and racial integration the Army way. *New York, NY: Perseus Book Group*.
- Cadigan, J. (2006). The impact of family-friendly compensation: An investigation of military personnel policy. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 26(1), 3-20.
- Cox, Matthew. (2018, November 2 November) Here's when the army might unveil slogan to replace army strong. *Military.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.military.com/dodbuzz/2018/11/02/heres-when-army-might-unveil-slogan-replace-army-strong.html>
- Dertouzos, J. N., & Garber, S. (2006) Effectiveness of advertising in different media: The case of U.S. Army recruiting. *Journal of Advertising*, 35, 111-122.
- Eighmey, J. (2006). Why do youth enlist? Identification of underlying themes. *Armed Forces & Society*, 32(2), 307-328.
- Ellison, Jesse. "Judge Dismisses 'Epidemic' of Rape in Military Case." December 13, 2011. *The Daily Beast*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/judge-dismisses-epidemic-of-rape-in-military-case>
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of communication*, 43(4), 51-58.
- Entman, R. M. (2004). *Projections of power: Framing news, public opinion, and US foreign policy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Fairhurst, G. & Sarr, R. (1996) *The art of framing*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- Ferdinando, Lisa. "DoD Releases Annual Report on Sexual Assault in Military." May 1, 2018. U.S. Department of Defense. Retrieved from: <https://dod.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1508127/dod-releases-annual-report-on-sexual-assault-in-military/>
- Fu, W. C. (2013). *Persuasive strategies of the United States military television recruitment advertising during the all-volunteer force era* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign).
- Gamson, W. A. (1989). News as framing: Comments on Graber. *American behavioral scientist*, 33(2), 157-161.
- Gerbner, G. (1956). Toward a general model of communication. *Audio-Visual Communication Review*.
- Ghilani, J. (2017). Glamour-izing Military Service: Army Recruitment for Women in Vietnam-Era Advertisements. *American Journalism*, 34(2), 201-228.
- Glazier, R. A., & Boysdstun, A. E. (2012). The president, the press, and the war: A tale of two framing agendas. *Political Communication*, 29(4), 428-446.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Harvard University Press.
- Hakola, O. J. (2018). How Pop Can Army Strong Be? Uses of Popular Culture in US Army Recruitment Campaign. *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 51(6), 1540-1561.
- Hanlon, C. L. (2013). *Recruiting GI Jane: An analysis of the United States military's advertising messages on recruitment websites*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Florida).
- Human Rights Watch (2015). *Embattled: Retaliation against Sexual Assault Survivors in the US Military*. Retrieved by: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/05/18/embattled/retaliation-against-sexual-assault-survivors-us-military>

- Kalmoe, N. P., Gubler, J. R., & Wood, D. A. (2018). Toward conflict or compromise? How violent metaphors polarize partisan issue attitudes. *Political Communication*, 35(3), 333-352. Doi:10.1080/10584609.2017.1341965
- Kieran, D. (2017). "Never Too Late to Do the Right Thing": Barack Obama, the Vietnam War's Legacy, and the Cultural Politics of Military Awards during the Afghanistan War. *Journal of American Studies*, 51(2), 513-533.
- Kolbe, R. H., & Burnett, M. S. (1991). Content-analysis research: An examination of applications with directives for improving research reliability and objectivity. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18, 243-250
- Lutz, A. (2008). Who joins the military?: A look at race, class, and immigration status.
- Maley, A. J. (2013). *The Southern Military Tradition: Investigating Region and Demographics for Army Enlistments in 2005*. University of Nebraska at Omaha.
- Moore, T. I. (2009). *Army television advertising: recruiting and image-building in the era of the AVF* (Doctoral dissertation, Kansas State University).
- Moskos, C. C. (1977). The all-volunteer military: calling, profession, or occupation?. *Parameters*, 7(1), 2.
- Myers, M. (2018, September 23). The Army is supposed to be growing, but this year, it didn't at all. Retrieved from <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/09/21/the-army-is-supposed-to-be-growing-but-this-year-it-didnt-at-all/>
- Myers, M. (2018, October 8). Almost 800 women are serving in previously closed Army combat jobs. This is how they're faring. Retrieved from <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/10/09/almost-800-women-are-serving-in-previously-closed-army-combat-jobs-this-is-how-theyre-faring/>
- N. W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Great Myths of the WAC," 1969, print ad, NMAH.
- Orvis, B. R., Sastry, N., & McDonald, L. L. (1996). *Military recruiting outlook: Recent trends in enlistment propensity and conversion of potential enlisted supply* (No. RAND/MR-677-A/OSD). RAND CORP SANTA MONICA CA.
- Park, S., & Avery, E. J. (2016). Effects of patriotism and celebrity endorsement in military Advertising. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 22(5), 605-619.
- Park, S., Lee, J., & Park, J. S. (2017). Evaluating the Message Strategy of US Army Advertising: With Focus on Information Needs and Motivational Cues. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 23(2), 303-319.
- Park, S., Shoieb, Z., & Taylor, R. E. (2017). Message strategies in military recruitment advertising: a research note. *Armed Forces & Society*, 43(3), 566-573.
- Pondy, L. R. (1978). Leadership is a language game. In M.W. McCall, Jr. and M.M. Lombardo (Eds.), *Leadership; Where else can we go?* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Reichert, T., Kim, J., & Fosu, I. (2007). Assessing the efficacy of Armed-Forces recruitment advertising: A reasoned-action approach. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 13(3-4), 399-412.
- Reynolds, G. M., and Shendruk, A. (2018). Demographics of the U.S. Military. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.cfr.org/article/demographics-us-military>
- Riffe, D., Lacy, S., & Fico, F. (1998) *Analyzing Media Messages Using Quantitative Content Analysis In Research*. London: Mahwah Publishers.
- Riffe, D., & Freitag, A. (1997). A content analysis of content analyses: Twenty-five years of *Journalism Quarterly*. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 74, 873-882.
- Sackett, P., & Mavor, A. (2003). *Attitude, Aptitudes, and Aspirations of American Youth: Implications for Military Recruitment: Committee on the Youth Population and Military Recruitment—Phase I*. Washington, DC: *National Research Council*.
- Sackett, P. R., & Mavor, A. S. (2004). *Evaluating military advertising and recruiting: Theory and methodology*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- Scheufele, D. A. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of Communication*, 49, 103-122.
- Segal, M. W., Segal, D. R., Bachman, J. G., Freedman-Doan, P., & O'Malley, P. M. (1998). Gender and the propensity to enlist in the US military. *Gender Issues*, 16(3), 65-87.
- Sellman, W. S. (2004). Predicting Readiness for Military Service. *How Enlistment Standards Are Established*. National Governing Board.
- Singletary, M. W. (1993). *Mass communication research: Cotemporary methods and applications*. Boston: Addison-Wesley.
- Tewksbury, D., & Scheufele, D. (2009). News framing theory and research. In Bryant, J., and Oliver, M. B., (Eds), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research*. (pp. 17-33). New York and London: Routledge
- Tuchman, G. (1978). Objectivity as strategic ritual: An examination of newsmen's notions of objectivity. *American Journal*

of Sociology, 77(4), 660-679.

Van Stee, S. K. (2018). Meta-analysis of the persuasive effects of metaphorical vs. literal messages. *Communication Studies*, 69(5), 545-566. Doi: 10.1080/10510974.2018.1457553

Wang, L., Elder Jr, G. H., & Spence, N. J. (2012). Status configurations, military service and higher education. *Social Forces*, 91(2), 397-422.

Yeung, D., Steiner, C. E., Hardison, C. M., Hanser, L. M., & Kamarck, K. N. (2017). *Recruiting Policies and Practices for Women in the Military: Views from the Field* (No. RR-1538-OSD). RAND NATIONAL DEFENSE RESEARCH INST SANTA MONICA CA SANTA MONICA.

Funding and Acknowledgements

The author declares no funding sources or conflicts of interest.

About the Author(s)

Holly Speck (B.S., University of Richmond) joined the Kansas State University A.Q. Miller School of Mass Communications and Journalism in 2018 pursuing her Master's in Mass Communications. She has professional experience in social media marketing and journalism from New York City and Washington, D.C. Speck combines her professional background with her scholarship in social media, gender studies, and journalism to create a hands-on classroom experience. Speck's research examines the framing of gender in military advertisements and popular culture, and news trust and credibility of anonymous sources.

Online Connections

To follow these authors in social media:

Holly Speck: @aspeckofholly