

**WHO
MAKES THE
NEWS?**



North America

Global Media Monitoring Project 2010 Regional Report



Acknowledgements



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GMMP 2010 is co-ordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), an international NGO which promotes communication for social change, in collaboration with data analyst, Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), South Africa.

The data for GMMP 2010 was collected through the collective voluntary effort of hundreds of organizations including gender and media activists, grassroots communication groups, academics and students of communication, media professionals, journalists associations, alternative media networks and church groups.



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Preface

Global Context

- 10 November 2009 was an ordinary day at work for newsroom staff around the world. It was however a special day for groups in over 100 countries who gathered to monitor their news media. After months of planning, preparations and training, they brought the Fourth Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) to life.
- The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) is the world's longest-running and most extensive research on gender in the news media. It began in 1995 when volunteers in 71 countries around the world monitored women's presence in their regional radio, television and print news. The research revealed that only 17% of news subjects – the people who are interviewed or whom the news is about – were women. It found that gender parity was 'a distant prospect in any region of the world. News [was] more often being presented by women but it [was] still rarely about women.'¹
- Seventy countries participated in the Second GMMP in 2000. This and all subsequent GMMPs were coordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC). The research found a relatively static picture: only 18% of news subject were women, a statistically insignificant change over the 5-year period.²
- The Third GMMP in 2005 attracted the participation of 76 countries. Some progress in women's presence in the news was evident. 21% of news subjects were female. This 3% increase in the preceding five years was statistically significant. However, the overwhelming finding was women's continued near invisibility in the news. Very little news – just under 10% of all stories – focussed specifically on women. Women were rarely central in stories that comprised the bulk of the news agenda. Women were outnumbered by men as newsmakers in every major news topic. Expert opinion was overwhelmingly male with women comprising only 17% of experts who appeared in news stories. As newsmakers, women were under-represented in professional categories. The third GMMP found that the sex of the journalist made a difference in whether or not women made the news: there were more female news subjects in stories reported by female journalists (25%) than in stories reported by male journalists (20%).
- The First GMMP, and as will be seen, the Fourth GMMP reveal that the world reported in the news is mostly male. Overall, news stories were twice as likely to reinforce gender stereotypes rather than challenging them. News stories on gender (in)equality were almost non-existent.

Regional context

- The North American Regional Report of the GMMP consists of the results of research in the United States and Canada. This region, therefore, represents one of the wealthiest regions in the globe, in addition to holding significant economic, political and military power.
- The North American media-scape has a high level of concentration of ownership, especially when it comes to dominant mainstream news sources –those sources used by most people to learn about the world. In the US, for example, the control and ownership of media organizations, including news media organizations, has been substantially reduced due to concentration of ownership, cross-media ownership, and lack of regulatory instruments to ensure a diversity of ownership – never mind opinion and content – in the media environment. Thorough research into the reduction of media voices has shown, for example, that the number of corporations with majority control of US media has shrunk from 50 in 1983 to only 5 in 2004.³
- A similar situation holds in Canada, with four media corporations owning and controlling much of the commercial mainstream news media. As a geographically large country with a small population the

¹ *Global Media Monitoring Project, Women's participation in the news*. Regional Watch on Images of Women in the Media (MediaWatch) Inc. 1995

² Spears, George and Kasia Seydegart, Erin Research. with additional analysis by Margaret Gallagher. *Who makes the news? Global Media Monitoring Project*. 2000

³ Bagdikian, Ben H. , 2004. *The New Media Monopoly*. Boston: Deacon Press.

number of news organizations is slightly smaller than that of the United States. Ownership of the commercial news outlets in Canada - print, radio and television - is highly concentrated. At the time of the monitoring, three large corporations – CanWest Global Communications, CTVglobemedia & Quebecor – owned the largest collection of news media outlets in the country.

- News media remain the major and most influential source of information, ideas and opinion for most people around the world. It is a key element of the public and private space in which people, nations and societies live. A nation or society that does not have a diverse and representative news media cannot fully know itself, and thus cannot respond to its citizens' aspirations. Who and what appears in the news and how people and events are portrayed *matters*. Who is left out and what is not covered are equally important. Since media play a vital role in shaping thoughts and narratives, media entail both a privilege and responsibility to society. Thus, it is vitally important to monitor media in order to measure and understand the messages and 'reality' that is being presented, and to ensure that the stories represent multiple perspectives.
- In particular, it is important to view critically whether images of women are fairly and accurately portrayed, and their perspectives included in an age of increasing globalization of knowledge. Image, role, and representation of women are a key to the assessment of gender parity in news making and delivering. Indeed, as we have found in this and other research, the cultural underpinnings of gender inequality and discrimination against women are continuing to be reinforced through the media.
- As one of the wealthiest regions on the globe, North American popular mythology suggests that we have also been successful at solving gender disparity. Indeed, the examples of other, 'less enlightened' societies are sometimes displayed in opposition to our 'completed' equality project. There is little recognition of the pervasive structural, cultural and ideological constraints that systematically render women subordinate and, as the GMMP continues to demonstrate, relatively invisible.
- While the popular discourse may support the myth that 'we've come a long way', credible empirical evidence – using both quantitative and qualitative research methods, provides a far more precise measurement of where changes have occurred and where they have not. As past reports of the GMMP have stated, it is crucial for news media organizations and those who work in them to understand that fair gender portrayal is a professional criterion for good journalism – like diversity, clarity and balance. Recognizing examples of both the change and continuity of gender disparity gives us the ability to applaud improvements while at the same time acknowledging the persistent historical constraints on, and nascent challenges to, gender equality.
- The North American regional report for 2010 was coordinated in the US by a non-government organization and in Canada by a scholar affiliated with a university. The US monitoring group was The United Methodist Women, an organization which has worked for the welfare of women and children within the United States and around the world for the last more than 140 years. Since 1976, the United Methodist Women volunteers have been monitoring the image, role, and representation of women on the media, and published an educational resource, *Sex Role Stereotyping in Prime Time Television*, that year using the data collected from monitoring prime time television viewing. Volunteers from the United Methodist Women's organization participated in the Global Media Monitoring Projects in 1995, 2000, 2005, and now in 2010. As stated by the U.S. national coordinator, Glory Dharmaraj, "United Methodist Women volunteers are committed to amplify the silenced and muted voices. When women's voices are heard and their perspectives included in the stories, the members know for sure that business interests and media conglomerates alone will not be controlling the public and media agenda."
- Canada also has a long history of involvement in the GMMP, having been instrumental in the work of the first report in 1995. As in the past, Canadian involvement in the GMMP was facilitated by a combination of non-government organizations, private researchers and scholars from a number of post-secondary institutions. The national coordinator, Kathleen Cross, involved other university scholars and students to work on the report. Together, this report gives us a credible snapshot of the state of the news media in North America.

Executive Summary

The news in North America does not provide a mirror on our world. Instead, it shows a world where crime is rampant, politics and governing is mostly of concern to only men, and women are almost unseen. After monitoring 37 major news outlets in the United States and Canada, here are some of the key findings of this report:

- **Women are dramatically under-represented in the news.** Only 28% of the news subjects – the people who are interviewed, or whom the news is about – are female. While this number represents a mere 2% increase in the proportion of female newsmakers in five years, from 26% in the 2005 results. Further, this result remains consistent with the overall finding in all GMMP reports to date, that women are marginalized as subjects in the news. Generally, men were 2.5 times more likely to be news subjects, and three times more likely to be found in stories about ‘politics and government’ and ‘celebrity, arts and sports’. Considering women make up just over half of the population of Canada, this is a strikingly inaccurate portrayal of the world.
- **Women are rarely heard from in dominant news topics.** Women were outnumbered by men as newsmakers in every major news topic. The highest number of stories in the news were represented by the categories of ‘crime and violence’ and ‘politics and government’, together containing over 50% of all stories. The major topic ‘crime and violence’ groups together stories on violent crime, gender based violence, crime, war, riots and disaster, among others. Women are equally if not disproportionately affected by several of these issues yet only 20% of subjects in stories under this topic were female. Under the major topic ‘politics and government’, only 31% of the news subjects were women.
- **Women in the news mostly function as providers of personal accounts, and rarely as knowledgeable experts.** Even when women do make the news in North America, they are most likely to show up in a news story as offering an eye witness account or giving a personal or popular opinion (33-37% of the time), while expert opinion was overwhelmingly male. Women were quoted as experts, spokespersons for organizations, or the main subject of the story only 25-27% of the time while men were three times more likely to function in these roles. Interestingly, the percentage of women as persons who the news stories are about dramatically decreased in North America from 32% in 2005 to only 25% in 2010.
- **As newsmakers, women were under-represented in professional categories.** ‘Business persons’ and ‘health/social service professionals’ were predominantly male – women accounted for 30% and 36% respectively, even though women’s actual occurrence in these professions is significantly higher. The only categories where women were more likely than men to be identified, not surprisingly, were the ‘homemaker or parent’ (58%), child or young person (56%) and non-managerial office worker (59%).
- **Less than 10% of all news stories (9.5%) have women as a central focus** - stories that focused directly on a woman or a group of women, or stories that reported on issues that affected women in a particular way, such as women’s unemployment. Where women *were* central focus they were twice as likely to be in highlighted in stories about violent crime than as women in political or other decision making roles.
- **Women in the news were twice as likely as men to be identified in relation to their family status** (eg: as mothers, wives, etc.), and male reporters were three times more likely to report a woman subject’s family status than a man’s.
- **Overall, news stories were dramatically more likely to reinforce gender stereotypes rather than to challenge them.** Only 10% of the news stories challenged gender stereotypes. News stories on gender (in)equality were almost non-existent. Further, sexual stereotypes were reinforced in 87% of the stories about *celebrity and sports*, and 78% of the stories about *crime and violence*. It did not seem to matter whether the reporter was male or female – in all cases, the overwhelming number of stories were seen to reinforce gender stereotypes.
- **Women reporters were least likely to be found reporting on the topics that dominated the news agenda.** Women journalists in North America were least likely to be found in stories about *politics and government* and *social and legal* issues (both 28%), and most likely to be reporting on stories about *crime and violence* (40%). The overall percentage of stories reported by women journalists remained static over the five years (35% in 2005 and 34% in 2010), and were least likely to be found in radio than in print or television.
- **Gender inequality in the news persists.** North American news continues to reinforce stereotypes that subjects, experts and spokespersons – *important people* in North America - are men.

A DAY IN THE NEWS – NORTH AMERICA

The GMMP monitoring day **November 10, 2009**, was characterised by the following major stories:

- The monitoring day fell on the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall, which resulted in significant coverage of this and related international news stories.
- The outbreak of the H1N1 pandemic, commonly referred to as ‘swine flu’, resulted in news attention to the World Health Organization comments as well as national health experts, and characterized by much concern (if not mild panic) about the availability of the vaccine.
- There were a number of stories about the uneven recovery of the economic situation in the US, especially in the US news media.
- At the same time in the US, the controversial public health care bill, supported by President Obama, reached the US senate but its passage was secured only through last minute deals for restricting abortion coverage.
- In North America, November 10 also fell on the day before a significant public holiday in both countries, - the national day of mourning for veterans of the military – Veterans’ Day in the US and Remembrance Day in Canada’s.
- And finally, November 2009 marked three months before Canada hosted the Winter Olympics, and while there were no particularly dramatic stories in Olympic news that day, this general topic had been increasing in frequency throughout the fall of 2009.

These were the key public sphere events in the news on the day of monitoring. However, in none of these major stories was there significant or even equitable representation of women. On reading the first page of *Augusta Chronicle*, one of the student monitors at Augusta State University, Georgia, USA, said, “only female names mentioned on the front page belong to hurricanes Ida, Fay, and Katrina.” Similarly, another U.S. monitor commented on the first page of *The Star Tribune-Minneapolis* by noting that “the photo portrays a strong woman that the article supports until the final paragraph talks about her bonding with another woman senator over shopping.” Another monitor referred to *Albuquerque Journal*, and said, “I was disappointed in the news stories on November 10. Even if we weren’t to code specifically, women’s news---I looked for something related to women.”

THE CONTEXT

- The United States media system is dominated by private commercial companies, or as media reform scholar Robert McChesney describes it “a profit-driven, advertising-supported corporate media system”.⁴ Many of these corporate news organizations were suffering from economic uncertainty and loss of revenues in 2009. The Pew Research Centre estimated the losses for newspapers as \$1.6 billion in annual reporting and editing capacity since 2000, or roughly 30%.⁵ More cuts were predicted in the 2010. Similar results were reported for radio and television news, the ‘traditional’ news media sources. Broadcasting in the United States is subject to regulation by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) although the deregulatory environment of the last 20 years has limited the FCC’s role in media content.
- Canada, on the other hand, has what could be termed a ‘mixed ownership’ media system. Broadcasting in Canada is regulated by the CRTC (Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission) which includes limited but enforceable requirements for standards of news content. Canada has a major public broadcaster, the Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC), similar to the BBC in the UK in that it has a long history of public service and non-commercial funding from the government. However, Canada also has a large corporate commercial media that has been a significant part of the media landscape in Canada for decades.

⁴ McChesney, Robert. *The U.S. Media Reform Movement*. Monthly Review. September 2008.

⁵ Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, *The State of the News Media 2010* (www.stateofthemediamedia.org/2010/)

- In 2009 the Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders ranked the US 20th (up from 41 in 2008) and Canada 19th (down from 13) in press freedom.

Media monitored

- The U.S. monitors focused on print media, drawing on 17 newspapers from various parts of the country in order to get a broad picture of how news is covered. They also looked at two television channels and one internet news source. In Canada, the monitors reviewed seven major daily newspapers across the country, six television news reports from different regions, five radio news reports, and six Canadian internet news sources. See below for a complete list of the media monitored.

Media Monitored

United States	Canada	
Newspapers:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Albuquerque Journal</i> ○ <i>The Augusta Chronicle</i> ○ <i>Charleston Daily Mail</i> ○ <i>The Denver Post</i> ○ <i>Fort Worth Star-Telegram</i> ○ <i>Kansas City Star</i> ○ <i>The Lincoln Journal</i> ○ <i>The Times Picayune</i> ○ <i>The Boston Globe</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Newsday</i> ○ <i>New York Times</i> ○ <i>New York Post</i> ○ <i>Omaha World Herald</i> ○ <i>The Star Tribune</i> ○ <i>Statesman Journal</i> ○ <i>USA Today</i> ○ <i>New York Daily News</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Globe and Mail</i> ○ <i>National Post</i> ○ <i>Vancouver Sun</i> ○ <i>Toronto Star</i> ○ <i>Hamilton Spectator</i> ○ <i>Montreal Gazette</i> ○ <i>Le Devoir (French language)</i>
Television		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>KHTV-11</i> ○ <i>NBC</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>CTV</i> ○ <i>CBC</i> ○ <i>CHCH-TV</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Global National</i> ○ <i>Global BC</i> ○ <i>Global TO</i>
Radio		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>CBC Radio</i> ○ <i>CKNW</i> ○ <i>News 1130 – Vancouver</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>CHML AM 900 – Hamilton</i> ○ <i>CFRB (CFRT680) – Toronto</i>
Internet		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The Huffington Post</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>canoe.ca</i> ○ <i>ctv.com</i> ○ <i>msn.com</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>thestar.com</i> ○ <i>globeandmail.ca</i> ○ <i>cbc.ca</i>

- **The monitors:** A total of 103 volunteers in the United States and Canada monitored a total of 664 news stories. Monitors included scholars, university students working with their professors, and volunteers from the US United Methodist Women, the YWCA, and media activist groups, among others.



GMMP monitors in the U.S. on November 10, 2009



GMMP monitors in Canada on November 10, 2009

TOPICS IN THE NEWS

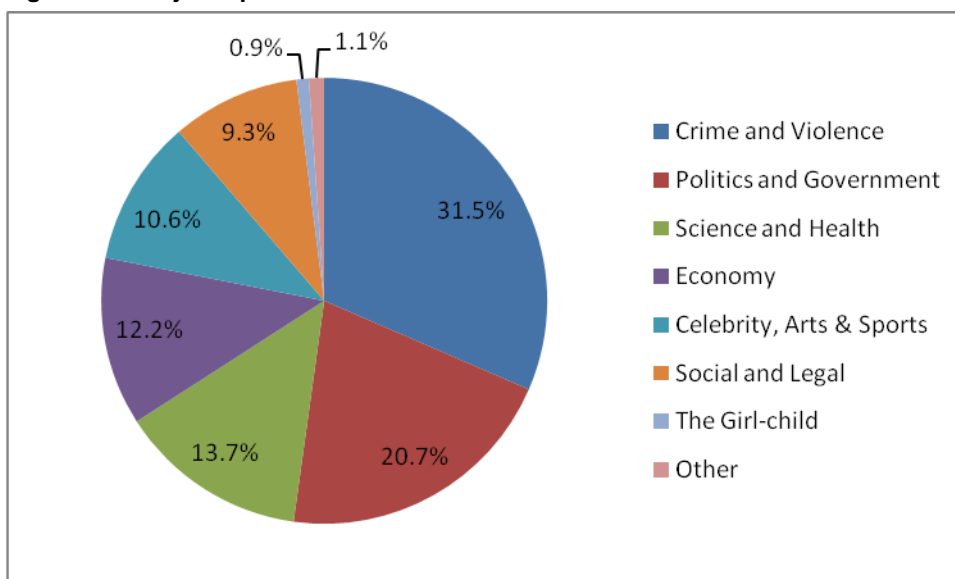
- Topics in the news:** The GMMP categorizes news stories into seven major topic areas – see table 3.1 below. Of these, crime news held the top spot on topics in the news on November 10, 2009 in North America, garnering almost a third of all of the news topics at 31.5%. The next most frequent major topic was “politics and government” (20.7%). These two topics make up over half of all the stories in the news. The next four news topics were found in relatively equal amounts: ‘science and health’ news (13.7%), the economy (12.2%), celebrity, arts, sports (10.6%) and social and legal issues (9.3%). The ‘girl-child’ topic (0.9%) was not a significant news topic in North America, showing at less than the ‘other’ category (1.1%).⁶
- However, there were clear differences between the news media platforms. While crime news remained the most frequent general topic in all news across print, radio and television, the second most common news story changed. Politics and government news was the second most popular news topic only in print news (28%). In radio this position was held by the economy (24%) and in television it was ‘celebrity, arts and sports’ news (24%). This result is consistent with the research that shows how crime and celebrity news relies more on visuals than economic news, thus making it more likely to dominate on television. See Table 3.3 and Figure 3.4 below.

Table 3.1: Major Topics in the News

Crime and Violence	31.5%
Politics and Government	20.7%
Science and Health	13.7%
Economy	12.2%
Celebrity, Arts & Sports	10.6%
Social and Legal	9.3%
The Girl-child	0.9%
Other	1.1%
Total	100%

⁶ Please note that percentage values in some of the charts and figures in this report may not directly correspond to ‘N’ values. This is because percentage values have been ‘weighted’, meaning they have been converted based on each country’s media density. The advantage of using weighted percentages is to allow the data to be comparable category by category with data from countries around the works. All ‘N’ values are the actual numbers.

Figure 3.2: Major Topics in the News



- Further, print news is more than twice as likely to cover ‘politics and government’ stories than radio news, and almost three times more likely than television, the latter of which had this topic only 10% of the time.
- Over half of all television news stories were ‘crime and violence’ (33%) or ‘celebrity, arts and sports’ (24%), indicating a deficit in television news about all other aspects of our lives. In television, the economy rated merely 7% of news topics, even at a time of lingering economic turmoil in the United States.
- Thus, all three media carried high numbers of stories about crime, likely due to the ease and inexpensive cost of collecting such news. After that, television preferred celebrity news, radio favoured stories about the economy, and print media selected stories about politics and government most often.

Table 3.3: Topics in News by Media

Topic	Print	Radio	Television	Total %
Crime and Violence	30%	31%	33%	31.5%
Politics and Government	28%	12%	10%	20.7%
Science and Health	16%	9%	12%	13.7%
Economy	11%	24%	7%	12.2%
Celebrity, Arts & Sports	4%	13%	24%	10.6%
Social and Legal	9%	10%	6%	9.3%
The Girl-child	2%	0%	2%	0.9%
Other	0%	1%	5%	1.1%
				100%

- Who delivers the news offers an important insight. While crime news was the most frequent news story, stories about ‘celebrity, arts and sports’ were most likely to be covered by women reporters. Women journalists in North America were least likely to be reporting on stories about ‘politics and government’ than their male counterparts. Women reporters were responsible for these stories only 27%, while male journalists were almost three times as likely to report on these stories. Women were most likely (at 49%) to be found reporting on stories about celebrity, arts and sports. All other topic areas were covered by women journalists about a third of the time. See Table 3.5 and Figure 3.6 below.

Figure 3.4: Topics in the News by Media

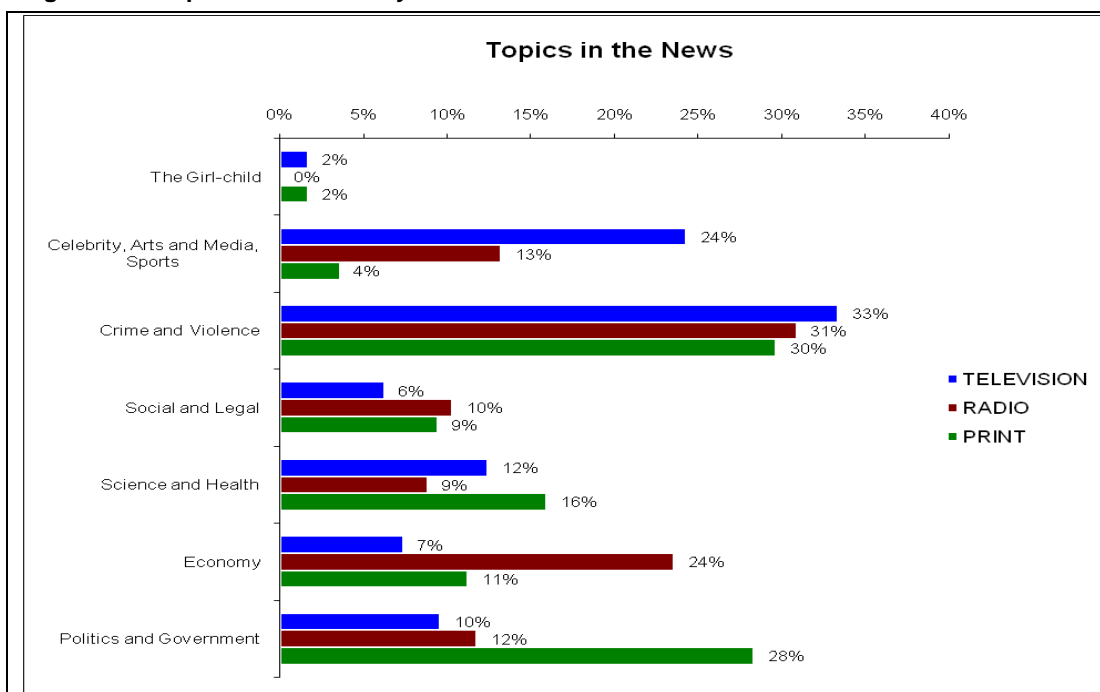
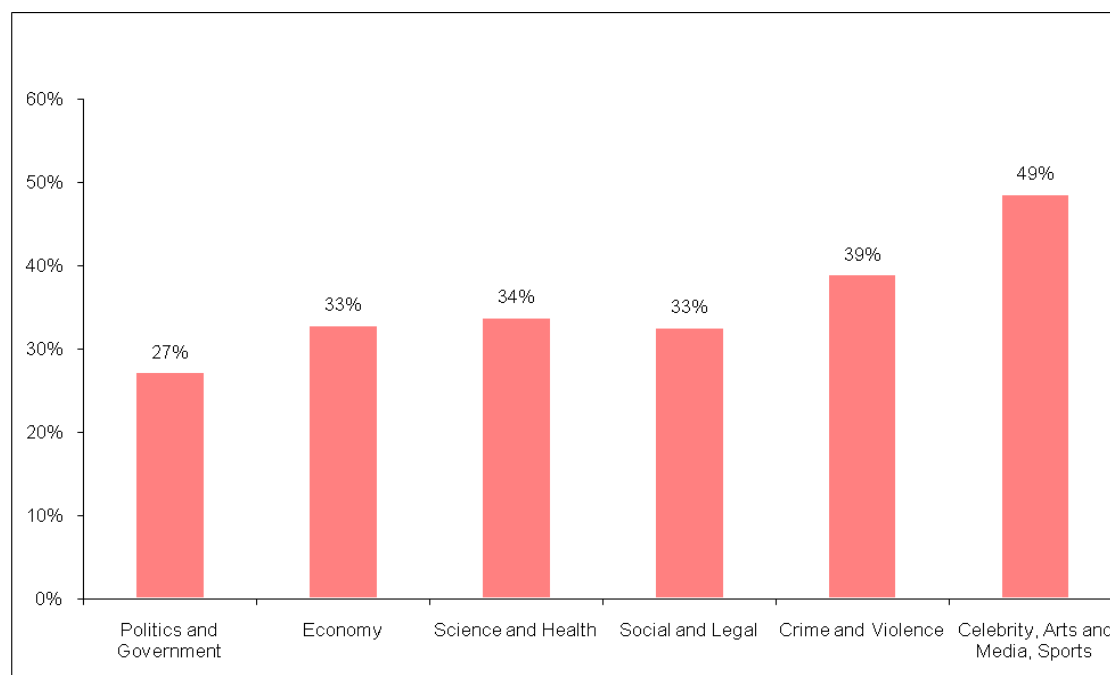


Table 3.5: Topics in the news by sex of reporter

TOPIC	% Female
Crime and Violence	39%
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	49%
Science and Health	34%
Economy	33%
Politics and Government	27%
Social and Legal	33%

Figure 3.6: % Female Reporters in Topics



THE NEWS

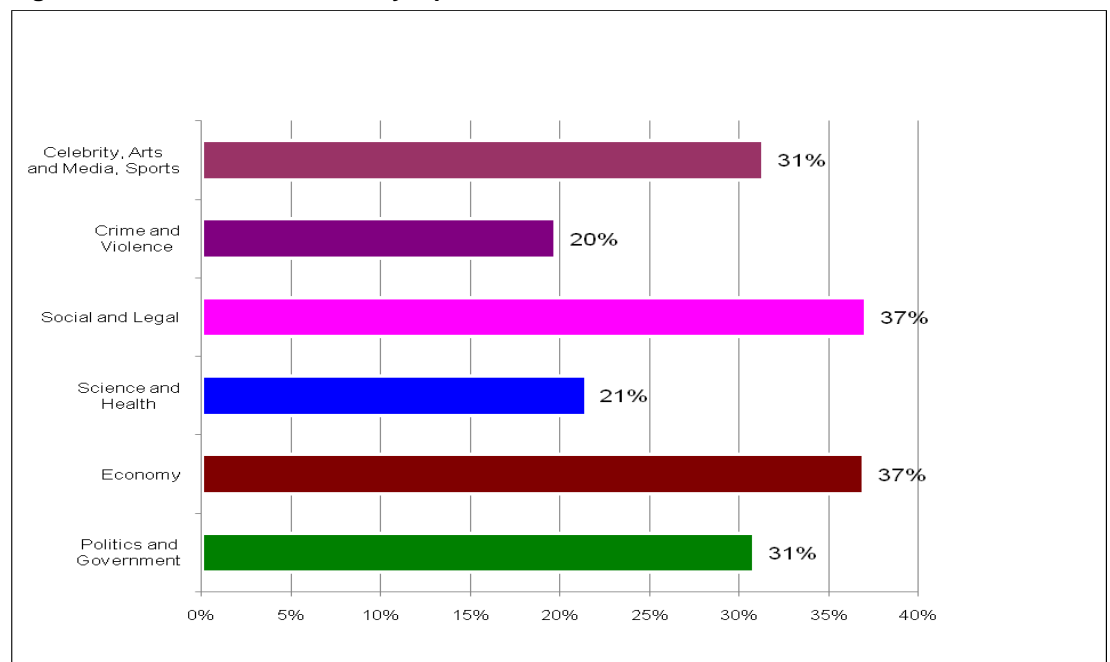
The overall presence of women and men in the news in North America as news subjects:

- A few explanations about the following findings are in order here. In this GMMP research, the term ‘news subjects’ can refer to two occurrences: 1) a subject could be a person whom the news story is about, that is, the ‘subject’ of the news story, or 2) a subject could be someone who appears in the story as a source of information, e.g.: is quoted.
- A total of 1080 news subjects were counted. Women were subjects in the news less than one third of the time compared to men (28% compared to 72% of all news subjects, see Figure 4.1). This number represents only a slight increase in the proportion of female newsmakers from the 2005 results for North America – only 2% increase in five years. More importantly, these results remain consistent with the overall findings that women are marginalized as subjects in the news. Men were almost three times more likely to be news subjects overall, as well as four times more likely to be included in stories about ‘science and health’ and ‘crime and violence’. Considering women make up over half of the population North America, this continues to be a dramatic under-representation of women in the news media.

Table 4.1: Overall presence of women in the news

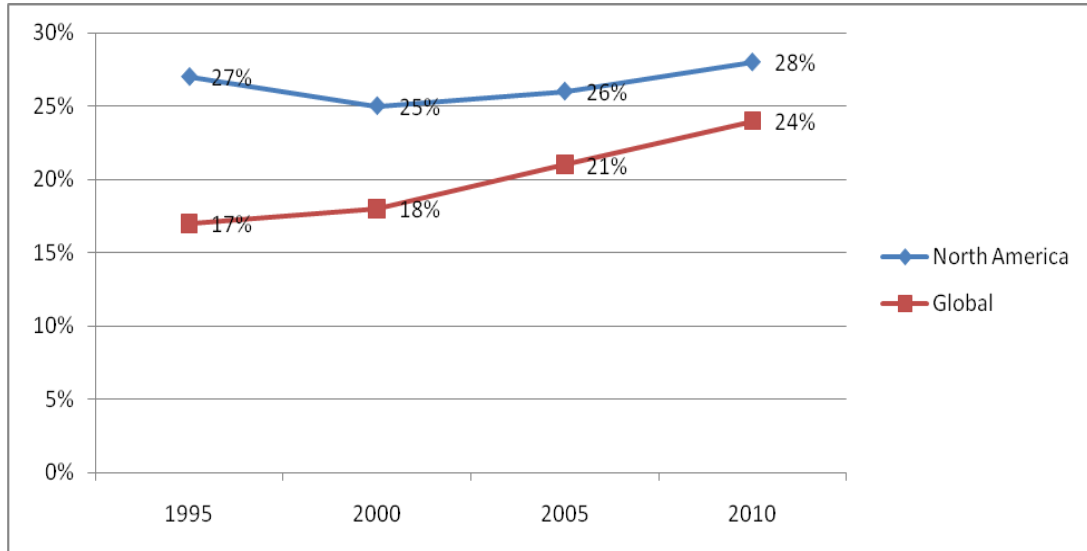
Topic	% Female	% Male
Politics and Government	31%	69%
Economy	37%	63%
Science and Health	21%	79%
Social and Legal	37%	63%
Crime and Violence	20%	80%
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	31%	69%
Other	15%	85%
Total	28%	72%

Figure 4.2: Presence of women by topics



- While the overall presence of women in the news in North America is only 28% compared to 72% of men, the visibility of women in the news is slightly better in North America than in the rest of the world, as shown by Figure 4.3. However, the gap between North American and global results has been narrowing over the last 15 years of the GMMP.

Figure 4.3: Female subjects in news - North America & Globally



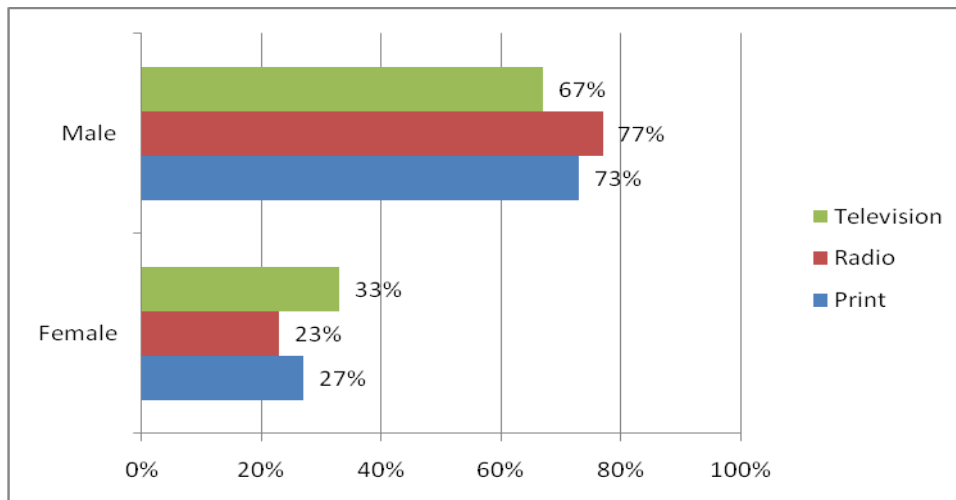
Presence of female and male news subjects North America by medium – radio, TV and newspapers:

- Radio in North America was the least likely to include women as news makers, with an abysmal 23% of all news subject compared to 77% for men. Print news was slightly better with 27% of news subjects being women. The most appearances of women as subjects in the news were found in television, with 33% of all news subjects being women and 67% being men. See Table 4.4 and Figure 4.5 below.

Table 4.4: Sex of news subjects in print, radio and TV news

Sex	PRINT	RADIO	TELEVISION
Female	27%	23%	33%
Male	73%	77%	67%

Figure 4.5: Sex of news subjects by media.



- **News Sources:** Female news subjects were slightly less likely to be quoted as sources of information in stories of national importance (24%) and slightly more likely to be quoted in stories about international issues (33%). See Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Sex of news subjects by scope of story

Scope	%F
Local	29%
National	24%
National and other	28%
International	33%
Total	28%

- As noted above, the most frequent story topic on November 10, 2009 was ‘crime and violence’, an area where women were subjects almost one third of the time (31.5%) compared to men. Within this larger topic, female subjects were more likely to be present in stories about ‘riots, demonstrations, and public disorder’ (48%) and ‘child abuse, sexual violence against children, trafficking, and neglect’ (39%) and much less likely to be subjects in stories about ‘war, civil war, terrorism, state-based violence’ (14%), ‘non-violent crime, bribery, theft, drug-dealing, corruption’ (15%), and ‘violent crime, murder, abduction, kidnapping, assault, drug-related violence’ (20%).
- In the large topic area of ‘politics and government’, women were fairly evenly under-represented a third of the time compared to men (32%), including the areas of ‘peace, negotiations, treaties’ and ‘foreign/international politics, relations with other countries, negotiations, treaties’. These areas were no doubt affected by the presence of a female Secretary of State in the United States, Hilary Clinton. However, women subjects were substantially under-represented in the sub-topic areas of ‘national defence, military spending, military training, military parades, internal security’ where female presences was only 16%, and ‘other domestic politics/government including elections, speeches, and the political process’ (25%).
- In the third most common news topic, *science and health*, women accounted for only 21% of the news subjects compared to 79% for men but only 7% of the sub-topic of ‘science, technology, research, funding, discoveries, developments’ and only 11% in the stories about the environment, nature, pollution, global warming, ecology, and/or tourism. Astonishingly, in women-centred stories relating to pregnancy, birth control, fertility, women accounted for only 30% of the news subjects.
- Women were 80% of the subjects in stories about the economic crises, state bailouts and company takeovers, but only 22% of the subjects in stories about economic indicators, statistics, or trade & stock markets. Women were also 60% of the subjects in stories about poverty, housing, and social welfare, but only 28% of the subjects in stories about labour issues and trade unions.

Who are the newsmakers?

- Of the overall 28% of women who were subjects in the news, women were represented in different proportions depending on the occupations or positions they held. The most frequent occupations in the news that day were those described as ‘government official, politician, president, government minister, political leader, political party staff, spokesperson, etc’. In this category 26% of the subjects were female while 74% were male. In the second most common occupation for subjects, that of a ‘health or social service professional, doctor, nurse, laboratory technician, social worker & psychologist’, an area that has a high occurrence of women working, 37% of the subjects were women. And women accounted for only 28% of the ‘business persons, executive, managers, entrepreneurs, economists, and financial experts’, the third most common occupation in the news.
- Importantly, these numbers do not appear to reflect the relative percentage of women in these occupations. Women account for 47% of the total US workforce and according to 2007 statistics from

the US department of labour, women account for 46% of managerial positions and 54% of all professional and technical occupations.⁷ Similar numbers are found in Canadian statistics, where women make up over half (52%) of all those employed as business professionals. Even more telling, women account for a large majority of those working in the health and social service areas, making up 87% of nurses and health-related therapists, and 55% of all doctors and dentists.⁸

Function of female and male news subjects:

- While women may show up in the news as subjects 28% of the time overall in North America, this does not mean that their function in the news story is the same as men. Women were most likely to function in a news story as someone providing an opinion or a comment based on personal experience (37%) or providing an eye witness account (33%), and least likely to be quoted as experts, spokespersons for an organizations, or the main subject of the story (25-27%). Indeed, males were three times more likely to be the main subject of a story in the news, and three times more likely to be quoted as an expert or commentator. See Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: News subject's Function in news story, by sex

Function in News Story	% F	% M
Personal experience: the person provides opinion or comment, based on individual personal experience; the opinion is not necessarily meant to reflect the views of a wider group	37%	63%
Eye witness: the person gives testimony or comment, based on direct observation (e.g. being present at an event)	33%	67%
Popular opinion: the person's opinion is assumed to reflect that of the 'ordinary citizen' (e.g., in a street interview, vox populi etc); it is implied that the person's point of view is shared by a wider group of people.	29%	71%
Spokesperson: the person represents, or speaks on behalf of another person, a group or an organisation	27%	73%
Expert or commentator: the person provides additional information, opinion or comment, based on specialist knowledge or expertise	26%	74%
Subject: the story is about this person, or about something the person has done, said etc.	25%	75%
Other. Use only as a last resort (describe the function in 'Comments' section of coding sheet).	32%	68%
TOTAL	28%	72%

Constructing 'victims' in the news: 17% of female news subjects are likely to be identified as victims in contrast to 10% of male news subjects. Females are most likely to be victims of domestic violence (29% of all female victims) while males are more likely to be victims of accidents/disaster. See table 4.7 below

- **Identity and family status in the news:** Women were twice as likely to be identified by their family status (as mothers, wives, etc) in the news compared to men (17% vs. 9% for men). This identification, however, was different based on whether the reporter was a man or a woman. While most of the time family status is not mentioned at all, female reporters are more likely to mention family status, and the family status of women slightly more than the family status of men (21% of the time compared to 15% of the time for male subjects). Male reporters, however, are *three times* more likely to mention the family status of a female subject compared to male subjects. See Figure 4.8 below. Interestingly, this difference only holds true for the United States and is not found in the Canadian numbers.

⁷ Gabriel, Paul and Susanne Schmitz. (2007) "Gender differences in occupational distribution among workers" from the *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, United States Department of Labor.

⁸ Statistics Canada (2006). *Women in Canada: A gender-based statistical report*. & Almey, Marcia. (2007) *Women in Canada: Work Chapter updates*. Statistics Canada.

Table 4.7: News Subjects who are portrayed as victims, by sex

Victim Type	% Female	% Male
Victim of an accident, natural disaster, poverty, disease, illness ...	27	25
Victim of domestic violence (by husband/wife/partner/other family member), psychological violence, physical assault, marital rape, murder ...	29	24
Victim of non-domestic sexual violence or abuse, sexual harassment, rape, trafficking ...	2	0
Victim of other crime, robbery, assault, murder ...	7	6
Victim of violation based on religion, tradition, cultural belief, genital mutilation, bride-burning ...	0	1
Victim of war, terrorism, vigilantism, state-based violence ...	2	18
Victim of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, ability ...	10	13
Other victim	22	13
TOTAL	100%	100%

- **Images in the news:** Females also appeared in photographs in the news more than males – 16% of women news subjects were accompanied by a photograph compared to 11% of male subjects.

Figure 4.8: News subjects who are identified by family status, by sex by sex of reporter

Sex of reporter/announcer	Female		Male	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
No	79%	85%	86%	95%
Yes	21%	15%	14%	5%

WHO DELIVERS THE NEWS?

Since 1995, the GMMP has coded the number of presenters and announcers (in television and radio) and reporters (in all media) for each story. However, importantly these numbers do not represent the number of women and men in newsrooms or present in each newscast. There is a subtle difference. In a television newscast, for example, we coded each story in the newscast to note the sex of each reporter and announcer/presenter in that story. In an ordinary newscast there will be one or two presenters and many stories and reporters. The presenter/announcer is coded several different times, as many times as the number of stories in that newscast. Thus, it is important that readers of this report recognize that we are not providing information about the overall percentage of female reporters in the news, or in newsrooms – that is beyond the scope of this project. Rather, we provide the percentage of *stories* by female reporters or percentage of *stories* introduced by female presenters/announcers. Since we do not study newsrooms *per se*, the GMMP research cannot tell us what percentage of reporters or presenters are women. Instead, the research tells us what percentage of stories are reported by women. With this explanation in mind, we can identify the following.

News Presenters and Announcers.

- The overall percentage of stories with female announcers in broadcast news (radio and television) in North America was 39% (Table 5.1). Radio news stories were much more likely to have female announcers than television stories with 46% compared to 31% of the stories having female news announcers.

Table 5.1: Announcers across all stories, by sex

Media Type	% Female	% Male
Radio	46%	54%
Television	31%	69%
	39%	61%

- In all broadcast news stories (both television and radio) most women announcers were found in national news (50%) while ‘national and other’ stories (those that concerned national as well as international

concerns) were least likely to have women reporters (18%). Female announcers were present in foreign or international news 39% of the time, and local news stories about a third of the time (35%). See Table 5.2.

- In the two most frequent story topics – *crime and violence*, and *politics and government* – women announcers were present in 38% of crime stories and 22% of political stories, and almost equally likely as men to be announcers in stories about *science and health* (45%) and *celebrity news and sports* (42%). Women announcers were *most* likely to be found in stories about social and legal issues (58%), although the low numbers of these stories makes this statistic less reliable. See Table 5.3.

Table 5.2: Television & Radio Announcers in domestic & foreign stories,

Media Type	% Female	% Male
Local	35%	17
National	50%	16
National and other	18%	2
Foreign/International	39%	13
	39%	48

Table 5.3 – Television and Radio Announcers by major story topic by sex

Story Topic	% Female	% Male
Crime and Violence	38%	62%
Politics and Government	22%	78%
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	42%	58%
Economy	41%	59%
Science and Health	45%	55%
Social and Legal	58%	42%
	39%	61%

Reporters.

- The overall percentage of stories by female reporters was 34% of all stories, with radio accounting for the least number of stories with female reports (29%). See Table 5.4.
- In terms of scope of the story, women reporters were least likely to be reporting on stories with a news scope that had a reach of ‘*national and other*’, where only 17% of all stories were reported by women. Stories with national and international reach each were covered by 32% female reporters. Stories with a *local* scope were most likely to have a female reporter (41%). (See Table 5.5).

Figure 5.4: Television, Radio & Newspapers Reporters, by sex

Media Type	% Female	% Male
Print	34%	69
Radio	29%	6
Television	33%	30
	34%	105

Table 5.5: Reporters in domestic & foreign stories, by sex

Scope of Story	% Female	% Male
Local	41%	59%
National	32%	68%
Foreign/International	32%	68%
National and other	17%	83%
	34%	104

- In terms of the major story topics covered by female and male reporters, crime news was the area where stories were more likely to be reported by females (40%). Stories about politics and government were more than 2.5 times more likely to have male reporters, and stories about the economy and science and health were twice as likely to have male reporters. Figure 5.6.
- Finally, female news sources were slightly more likely to be found in stories where the reporter was a woman, with female sources accounting for 43% compared to 39% for male sources.

Table 5.6: Reporters, by sex on major topics

Reporters on major topics	% Female	% Male
Crime and Violence	40%	60%
Politics and Government	28%	72%
Economy	31%	69%
Science and Health	33%	67%
Social and Legal	28%	72%
	34%	89

GENDER AND THE NEWS

- **Women as a central focus:** Less than 10% of all news stories (9.5%) have women as a central focus. Of the 63 stories that had women as a central focus 14% reported on ‘violent crime, murder, abduction, kidnapping, assault, and drug-related violence’, and 8% reported on women in political power and decision. Three other sub-topics each accounted for 6% of the stories: stories about cultural attitudes and practices impinging on girls, education, health, economic exploitation, & violence; stories about birth control, fertility, sterilisation, amniocentesis, and termination of pregnancy; and domestic politics/government with a focus on elections, speeches, and the political process. Because there were so few stories that focused on women it is difficult to make statistically relevant conclusions the rest of the topics.
- **Challenging or reinforcing stereotypes?** While perceptions of stereotypes differ widely across global regions, monitors were asked to identify items in the news that ‘clearly’ reinforced or ‘clearly’ challenged stereotypes about women or men. An example of a story that reinforced stereotypes might be one where women are shown as emotional and men as rational – or where a story about a woman in a powerful position emphasizes her role as a mother and/or wife. A story that challenges stereotypes, although there are few of them, may show men as homemakers and nurturing children, or where female strength in sports is given a high profile. In total, 58% of the news stories were seen as supporting existing stereotypes and only 10% of all stories actually challenged sexual stereotypes about gender. Thus, as news story is almost 6 times more likely to reinforce stereotypes about both women and men rather than challenge them. Further, sexual stereotypes were reinforced in 66% of the stories about *celebrity and sports*, and 65% of the stories about *crime and violence*. It did not seem to matter whether the reporter was male or female – in all cases the majority stories was seen to reinforce gender stereotypes. A total of 32% of all stories neither reinforced nor challenged gender and sexual stereotypes. See Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 - Stories where stereotypes are reinforced or challenged by news topic

Topic	Reinforces Stereotypes	Challenges Stereotypes	Neither
Crime and Violence	65%	9%	26%
Politics and Government	53%	8%	39%
Economy	58%	10%	32%
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	66%	11%	23%
Science and Health	54%	6%	39%
Social and Legal	57%	17%	26%
Other	61%	0%	0%
Total	58%	10%	32%

- **Stories that highlight issues of gender equality or inequality issues:** Few stories highlighted issues of gender equality or inequality. The top twelve story topics where these issues were raised is indicated in table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: Equality/inequality stories

	Equality Issues Raised	Total number of stories in topic
Other domestic politics/government (local, regional, national), elections, speeches, the political process ...	9%	127
Gender-based violence, femicide, harassment, domestic violence, rape, trafficking, genital mutilation ...	9%	87
Human rights, women's rights, children's rights, gay & lesbian rights, rights of minorities ..	8%	111
Violent crime, murder, abduction, kidnapping, assault, drug-related violence ...	8%	111
Birth control, fertility, sterilisation, amniocentesis, termination of pregnancy ...	6%	63
Women in political power and decision-making (local, regional, national),	5%	41
Foreign/international politics, relations with other countries, negotiations, treaties, UN peacekeeping ...	4%	43
HIV and AIDS, incidence, policy, treatment, people affected ...	3%	29
Religion, culture, tradition, controversies, teachings, celebrations, practices ...	3%	31
Other stories on social or legal issues (specify the subject in 'Comments' section of coding sheet)	3%	19
Non-violent crime, bribery, theft, drug-dealing, corruption, (including political corruption/malpractice) ...	3%	30
Changing gender relations, roles and relationships of women and men inside and outside the home ...	3%	22

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

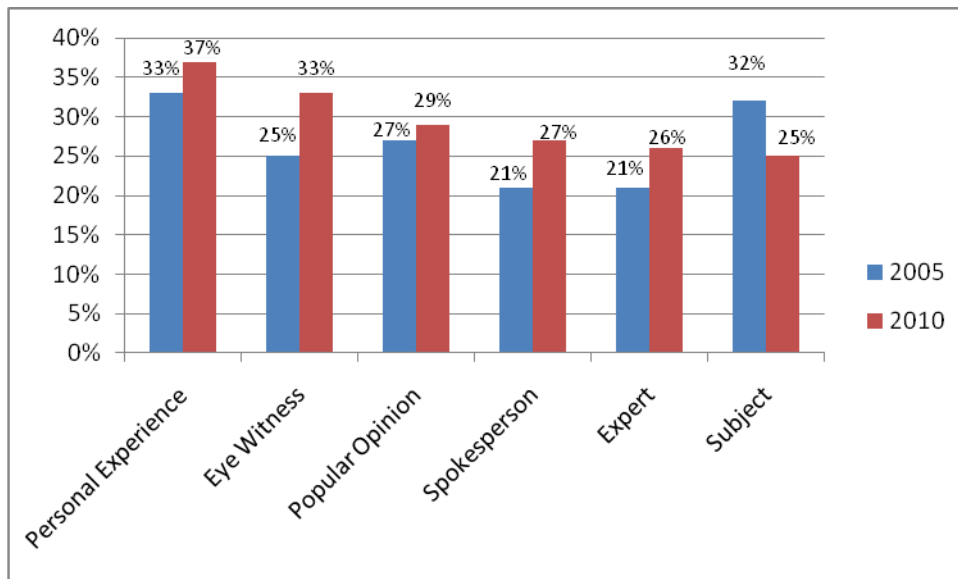
Gender inequality in the news continues to persist. While the findings from this, the fourth GMMP study, show a slight increase in the presence of women in the news in most areas, the increase remains glacially slow. In summary, this report found that:

- Women are still dramatically under-represented in North American news—at 28% of all news subjects. While this shows as slight increase by 2 percentage points from the findings in 2005, it only represents a 1 percentage point increase from 1995 numbers. (see Table 7.1 below)
- When women *are* in the news, they mostly function as providers of personal accounts, and rarely as knowledgeable experts. (See figure 7.2 below). Women were quoted as experts, spokespersons for organizations, or the main subject of the story only 25-27% of the time compared to men, while they were used to provide personal experience or eye witness accounts 33% - 37% of the time. Interestingly, the percentage of women as persons who the news stories are about dramatically decreased from 32% in 2005 to only 25% in 2010. The reasons for this decrease are unclear.

Table 7.1: Change in Presence of women in news by major topic

Topic	2005 %F	2010 % F
Crime and Violence	26%	20%
Politics and Government	22%	31%
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	25%	31%
Science and Health	22%	21%
Social and Legal	41%	37%
Economy	22%	37%
Overall	26%	28%

Figure 7.2: Change in female subject's function in news story



- As newsmakers, females were under-represented in professional categories, compared to their actual occurrences in North America.
- Less than 10% of all news stories (9.5%) have women as a central focus, i.e., stories that focused directly on a woman or a group of women, or stories that reported on issues that affected women in a particular way, such as women's unemployment. Interestingly, this number is dramatically different than the 2005 results for North America, which saw 20% of stories that focused on women, however is consistent with results from 2000 (11%). This finding suggests that 2005 may have been an unusual year.
- Where women *were* central focus they were twice as likely to be in highlighted in stories about violent crime than women in political or other decision making roles.
- Women were twice as likely as men to be identified in relation to their family status (eg: as mothers, wives, etc., and male reporters were three times more likely to report a woman's family status than a man's).
- Overall, news stories were dramatically more likely to reinforce gender stereotypes rather than to challenge them. Only 10% of the news stories challenged gender stereotype compared to 58% that reinforced them. News stories on gender (in)equality were almost non-existent. Further, sexual stereotypes were reinforced in 66% of the stories about *celebrity and sports*, and 65% of the stories about *crime and violence*.
- Women reporters were least likely to be found in stories about *politics and government* and *social and legal issues* (both 28%), and most likely to be reporting on stories about *crime and violence* (40%). The overall percentage of stories reported by women journalists remained static over the five years (35% in 2005 and 34% in 2010), and were least likely to be found in radio than in print or television.
- There have been some improvements. While the overall increase of women in the news has been marginal in North America since 2005, there have been differences in the nature of that coverage. Women's overall visibility in stories about *politics and government* has increased in the last five years (from 22% to 31%), as have those about the economy (from 22% to 37%) and celebrity and sports (from 25% to 31%). However, the most frequent topic in the news – *crime and violence* – saw women's visibility decrease from 26% to 20%.
- The overall slight increase in the visibility of women in North America news loses some of its significance when combined with the results of *how* women are presented in the news when they are included. When taken into consideration that the first three topics represent over 70% of all stories in the news, most of the increase in women's visibility seems to be in the areas of crime/violence and celebrity/sports. Further, although women were in the news stories, they were rarely there as professionals, expert commentators, or the central subjects in the story. As noted earlier, while women may represent only one third of the overall subjects in the news, they are more likely to be present as

unnamed or unaffiliated ‘people on the street’ (*vox pop*) or eyewitnesses. Thus, the presence of women in the news in North America continues to reinforce stereotypes that subjects, experts and spokespersons – *important people in North America* – are men.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

The reality of women’s lives and experiences remain relatively marginalized in North American news media. This in turn reinforces gender stereotypes and guides the way we see our world. Further, the habitual representations of gender in the news become entrenched as journalistic conventions – short-cuts to meaning that continue to reinforce themselves through repetition, regardless of their impact or accuracy. What we are trying to do in this report is to make these conventions visible through empirical research in order to challenge the limiting stereotypes. It is a project that started with the United Nation’s 1995 Beijing Platform for Action to improve the status of women around the world. Every five years the GMMP assesses whether and how the media’s portrayal of women and men has changed, drawing upon women’s organizations, scholars and researchers to do so. The goal of the GMMP is to use these results as a tool for change – as a way to promote fair and balanced representation of women and men in North America, and internationally.

Over the next five years these results will be used by countless organizations to begin dialogues, lobby media organizations and governments, and increase the accountability of news to the community it represents. Some of the actions that may help increase the relative invisibility of women as newsmakers include:

1. **Advocacy and Lobbying** – This report, along with the regional and global results, can be used to promote advocacy and lobbying activities, to promote change through dialogue and raise our expectations for how our news *should* be. Too often women and media activists become resigned to unequal representations in the news, and media professionals become immune to reports that critique their work. Yet, we need to continue to expect more from the news media, and make these expectations clear to those who run news organizations. The data in this report, and the three that have come before, show the results of 15 years of media monitoring. The evidence is solid and the conclusions irrefutable. There is a habitual pattern of coverage that under-represents, misrepresents and stereotypes women in North America, and this needs to change.
2. **Creating Targets and Goals** – One of the best evaluative tools one can use is to create a goal and measure its success. Over the next five years, media organizations and advocacy groups can develop targets for improvement, choosing a few key areas and focusing on those, and provide updates on the results. For example, if a group wishes to have more women represented as experts in the news, create a target and then plan a way to increase the number of women experts known to journalists and media organizations and see how often they are used.
3. **Ongoing monitoring** – the GMMP provides both a template and a data base for advocacy and research organizations to continue to monitor the news in North America over the next five years. Groups can focus on local media, and compare their results to those identified here. Where is local media doing better and where is it doing worse? Small media organizations are far more open to community input, especially if accompanied by suggestions for change, such as gender training for journalists, or ways to organize in-house targets.
4. **Skill development** – Using these and other tools, groups can increase media analysis skills in the community by holding workshops for youth, women and other marginalized groups on media monitoring and advocacy.
5. **Promote Communication Rights** – everyone has a right to fair representation. Efforts from civil society groups to promote and enhance communication rights have become increasingly vocal. Groups such as WACC and others across North America advance the concept of communications rights and work towards ways to enshrine such concepts through active engagement and advocacy. See for example, the Centre for Communication Rights – www.centreforcommunicationrights.org.

Annex 1. Methodology

Each participating region was assigned a specific number of newspapers, and radio and television newscasts to monitor based on the regional media density. This was done to ensure that global results would reliably reflect the distribution of the world's news media, while respecting the need to balance results from smaller countries with those of larger countries. The number and selection of media outlets monitored in each region reflects the density and diversity – audience, ownership, language – of media in each region.

Efforts were made to ensure a uniform understanding and application of the methodology across the world. Clear instructions on how to code were provided. Some regional and regional coordinators benefited from face-to-face or virtual training while others and the broader global teams of volunteers developed skills in monitoring through online self-administered tutorials. In one region, regional coordinators were trained by the regional coordinator via teleconference. In some countries, regional coordinators provided advance training to volunteer monitoring groups.

In each region monitors coded the most important television and radio newscasts of the day in their entirety. For newspapers, 12 to 14 stories appearing on the main news pages – defined as the pages devoted to regional, interregional and, in some cases, regional news – were coded. Internet news was included for the first time in the global monitoring on a pilot basis in a few countries selected on the basis of the importance of the Internet as a news source for local news consumers.

The quantitative research captured statistical data on news topics, women and men in the news, the types of news stories in which they appeared, and their function in the news. Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) in South Africa was responsible for the quantitative analysis.

An in-depth and more nuanced analysis of selected news stories examined the means, themes and patterns of gender in the news. This qualitative analysis took into account the role of story angle, language and visual representations in constructing and sustaining or challenging gender stereotypes.

A full discussion of the methodology, including considerations on reliability, accuracy and limitations, is contained in the global report *Who Makes the News? The Global Media Monitoring Project 2010*.



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