

Effects of the Japanese News Media on Images of U.S. Foreign Policy and Society : A Survey of Japanese College Students

Yasuhiro INOUE* ✉

The present study examines the relationship between news media exposure and images of the U.S. and its foreign policy based on a survey of college students. Survey questionnaires were administered to 502 college students between October and November 2002. With reference to cultivation theory, this study hypothesized that negative images of the U.S. would be partly attributable to Japanese news media that criticize U.S. foreign policy as being unilateral and portray the U.S. in violent terms. Cultivation theory suggests that the more people are exposed to media content, the more likely it is that they adopt the social reality portrayed in the media. This study provided partial support for the hypotheses linking news media exposure and respondents' negative images/opinions about the U.S. foreign policy. For example, heavy news media users are more likely to regard U.S. foreign policy as "unilateral." It should be noted that Web news viewing has stronger effects than the other news media even though the medium is the newest addition to the news media and respondents' use of the medium was much less frequent than that of television news and newspaper. This study provided new empirical evidence regarding Web news effects. The findings, however, generally failed to support the association between news media viewing and violent images of the U.S.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| I . Introduction | 3 . Items and Preliminary Results |
| II . News Media Coverage of the U.S. | (1) U.S. Foreign Policy Items |
| 1 . Criticism against Unilateralism | (2) Violent Image Items |
| 2 . Biased Television News | (3) Personal Experience Items |
| 3 . Web News | (4) Media Exposure |
| III . Theoretical Framework | 4 . Statistical Analysis |
| 1 . Cultivation Theory | VI . Results |
| 2 . International Effects | 1 . Television News |
| IV . Hypotheses and Research Questions | 2 . Newspaper |
| V . Method | 3 . Web News |
| 1 . Participants | 4 . Multiple Regression Analysis |
| 2 . Questionnaire | VII . Discussion & Conclusion |

Author Note : The author wishes to thank anonymous reviewers for their useful comments about this paper. Correspondence regarding this article should be directed to INOUE Yasuhiro ; email : spartan@intl.hiroshima-cu.ac.jp.

Key words : media effects, international cultivation, public opinion, news media, newspaper, television news programs, Web news sites, U.S. foreign policy, unilateralism, foreign images

I. Introduction

After September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, people all over the world sympathized with the U.S. and regarded the nation as a victim of terrorism. However, *Asahi Shimbun* reported that their images of and attitudes toward the U.S. have deteriorated due to aggressive U.S. diplomacy that followed the terrorist attacks ("Tai Bei Kanjou," 2003). Images of the U.S. in the minds of most Japanese have long been of violence even though Japanese have generally held favorable attitudes toward the U.S. and its citizen. According to a public opinion survey conducted a decade ago (Mainichi Shimbun, 1994), Japanese associated the U.S. with "guns and murder" (ranked first), "drugs" (ranked third), and "discrimination" (ranked fourth) while they also associated the nation with "freedom" (ranked second). A recent public opinion poll demonstrated that Japanese hold new images of the U.S.: "unilateralism" and "arrogance" (Mainichi Shimbun, 2003). According to the poll, 60% of Japanese believed that the U.S. looks only at its own interests and has turned out to be unilateral in international relations. Further, about 80% believed that the U.S. government "should take other countries' opinions into consideration." How have Japanese come to have such images and opinions of the U.S.?

The present study examined a plausible cause of negative images and opinions of the U.S. by conceptualizing the Japanese mass media as "cultivators" of negative images/opinions in Japanese people's minds. Cultivation theory suggests that the more people are exposed to media content, the more likely it is that they adopt the social reality portrayed in the media. Survey questionnaires were administered to 502 college students between October and November 2002. Because (1) the content of the Japanese news media reports about the U.S.—especially television news—tends to focus on violence in the U.S. and (2) the Japanese media criticize the unilateral and aggressive manners of the U.S. foreign policy (detailed here later), the amount of media exposure is expected to positively correlate with an international cultivation effect.

Portrayals of America and Americans by the media are expected to have a strong effect on viewers' images and opinions about the U.S. The media are the primary

information sources about U.S. matters for most Japanese because only a limited number of Japanese have direct experience of living in the U.S. It is thus reasonable to expect that their images and opinions about the U.S. will be in part formed by viewing media depictions of the U.S. Previous studies have found that the influence of the media on the formation of foreign images is greatest when dependence on the media is high, and when direct experience is limited (for example, Tan, Li, & Simpson, 1986). Determining what causes international cultivation could lead to other studies designed to enhance better relations between countries. Therefore, this study is important not only in terms of mass media effect research but also in terms of international relations.

II. News Media Coverage of the U.S.

1. Criticism against Unilateralism

After the 911 terrorist attacks in 2001, the Japanese media scarcely criticized the underlying causes of the attacks, but generally supported the U.S. retaliatory action against the alleged terrorists and patronizing organizations. Public opinion also supported the U.S. operation. However, the media support for the U.S. action phased out and was replaced by criticism in 2002 probably because the U.S. government was carried away by taking unilateral and aggressive foreign policies. Since then, the Japanese media seemed to portray U.S. foreign policy matters in negative terms, as unilateral, hegemonic, and militaristic.

A June 25 editorial in *Mainichi Shimbun*, a national newspaper, criticized the unilateral attitude of the U.S. government with a provocative headline "Stop Self-Righteous Logic" and stated, "It is outrageous that the U.S. self-righteously designates nations as 'threats' and unilaterally takes actions against them" (original in Japanese, translated by the author, "Nichi-bei shin anpo," 2002). *Mainichi Shimbun* editorials continuously pointed out the negative ramifications of the U.S. policy and attacked its militaristic manner:

We urge the U.S. not to give up right away on diplomacy and other peaceful means... Japan and many countries in Europe and other parts of the world have warned of the dangers of U.S. unilateralism. It should be noted that if the U.S. pursues a

flawed policy, the international community would be reluctant to go along (*Mainichi Shimbun's* English edition, "U.S. War Resolution," 2002).

Another editorial criticized George W. Bush for his political stance change from moderate conservatism to "aggressive" conservatism as follows :

When George W. Bush emerged as the Republican Party front-runner in the race for the presidency, he cited his intention to pursue a compassionate conservatism and a modest foreign policy... Indeed, he criticized the Clinton years for excessive interference in foreign issues, and he denied any desire to play the world's policeman... But everything changed following the Sept [ember] 11 terrorist attacks. Bush's State of Union address in January 2002 named Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as forming an "axis of evil," and he has adopted a preemptive strategy of maximum intervention against these "rogue states"... Who could have imagined, then, that America would become a "hyperpower" that insisted the world accept its unilateral demands and that crushed any force that opposed it (*Mainichi Shimbun's* English edition, "Whither Modest Foreign Policy?" 2002).

It can be said that these editorials exemplified the overall tone of the Japanese media regarding U.S. foreign policy. Consistent with the *Mainichi Shimbun's* editorial position, another national newspaper, *Asahi Shimbun*, devoted considerable space to criticism of U.S. international policy. For example, an *Asahi* editorial titled "The Bush Doctrine : The only Superpower Wants to Make All the Rules" appeared on September 22, 2002. The editorial criticized the U.S. government as follows :

The U.S. government has announced "The National Security Strategy of the United States," nicknamed the Bush Doctrine... This has prompted George W. Bush's administration to state that while the United States will seek allies in the battle against terrorism, it will also not hesitate to act alone... With this, Bush has underscored his willingness to resort to unilateral action or first strikes against Iraq or other members of the "axis of evil"... Yet this new strat-

egy also reveals the desire of the Bush administration to make up the rules for what lies ahead... Without international cooperation and a stance of humility toward the weaker members of the global community, the Bush Doctrine will be little more than a self-serving show of brute strength by a misguided superpower (*Asahi Shimbun's* English edition, "The Bush Doctrine," 2002).

Criticism against the U.S. international policy was abundant not only in newspapers but also in television journalism. For example, TV Asahi, a major television network in Japan, broadcast a television debate program titled "Debate! Is the United States a nation of justice?" on September 27, 2002. The television debate program featured national diet members, professors and other specialists of foreign affairs. Participants cast doubt on the justification for the U.S. planned attack on Iraq. Although empirical evidence of television news opinions about U.S. foreign policy is not available, it seemed apparent that anchor persons on major television news programs often criticized U.S. diplomacy as unilateral and raised doubts regarding the justification for resorting to preemptive military actions against adversary "rogue" nations.

2. Biased Television News

Aside from recent criticism against U.S. foreign policy, television news programs "traditionally" focus on violent and negative aspects of the U.S. A content-analysis conducted by Hara (1996) found this biased tendency. Hara sorted each news report aired during a certain sampling period by image. News items were coded into 13 contrastive paired keywords : Fair/unfair, trustworthy/untrustworthy, responsible/irresponsible, diligent/lazy, corrupt/honest, friendly/hostile, open/closed, demanding/reasonable, racist/non-racist, peaceful/violent, cohesive/individualistic, advancing/declining, and arrogant/not arrogant. Of all Japanese television news items (N=1,121) about U.S.-related matters, 9% were violent, 5% were hostile, 4% were declining, 3% were demanding, 3% were corrupt, and 2% were untrustworthy. No positive news images of U.S. exceeded 2%. All other news stories (74%) were coded as neutral.

In light of these implications, the content of the Japanese media may contribute to forming negative opin-

ions about U.S. foreign policy among readers and viewers of the news media. It is logical to expect that heavy readers/viewers of Japanese newspapers/television news programs are more likely to cultivate the realities of the U.S. presented as unilateral and violent.

3. Web News

The Internet can not be omitted from media effect research in the information and communications technology era. The Internet is dramatically changing the communications environment. An ever increasing number of people go online, retrieve information and communicate by email. The diffusion rate of Internet access among Japanese people is growing rapidly. According to a survey conducted by Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, while 44% of Japanese had Internet access in 2001, the percentage increased to 55% in 2002 (Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, 2003).

The diffusion and increase rates for younger generations are much higher. Taking people in their 20s for example, 69% of them had access in 2001 and the following year, the rate increased to 90%. In terms of how people utilize the Internet, "communication" (40%) was the most popular function among Internet users followed by "information gathering" (32%). Web news sites are thought to be among the primary places where Internet users gather information.

Every national newspaper company and even most of the regional newspaper companies have established Web news sites in Japan. The popularity is growing because news stories are constantly updated and users can select what they want to read for free. News content on Web news sites is identical to that of newspaper and television news because most of these sites are run by the news media. Some Web news sites are run by non-news media companies such as Yahoo! News; however, news stories on these sites are provided by the news media. It is thus expected that the possible effects of Web news on people's perceptions and opinions are similar to those of the other news media. This study will investigate the above three news media—television news, newspaper, and Web news—as effect-causing factors.

III. Theoretical Framework

1. Cultivation Theory

Research investigating media effects on the formation of images and opinions has a long history. There are some theoretical approaches through which media effect studies were conducted. Cultivation theory, which is among the most empirically tested ones, was introduced by George Gerbner and his colleagues in the 1970s (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner, et al., 1977). *Cultivation* originally refers to the relationship between exposure to television messages and subsequent audience beliefs and perceptions about violence. However, the theory has been tested regarding various aspects of social life such as aging (Gerbner, et al., 1980), soap opera viewing (Perse, 1986), perceptions of attorneys (Pfau, et al., 1995), erosion of local cultures (Morgan, 1986), and political attitudes (Morgan & Shanahan, 1991).

Most cultivation research has examined and confirmed the relationship between the amount of total television viewing and the perceived social reality depicted in prime time entertainment programs (Gerbner, et al., 1986). It was also found that news media such as newspaper and television news can shape perceptions of social issues in consequential ways (Romer, Jamieson, & Aday, 2003). For example, newspaper and television news can set political agendas not only among the public but also among policy-makers (McCombs, Lopez-Escobar, & Llamas, 2000).

How the news media affect public opinion on social and political issues can be illustrated by examining the drug issue, which has risen and fallen in the minds of Americans as the problem most in need of government attention. Media researchers Danielian and Reese (1986) showed that drugs as a social problem attracted increased media attention throughout the 1980s but only gradually. It was not until the Reagan administration launched its well-known "just say no" anti-drug campaign that the drug issue had fully captured the full attention of the media and became salient as an important public policy issue. This is significant because public perceptions that the drug problem was the most important issue facing the U.S. Government increased only as media attention to this issue expanded.

2. International Effects

The media impact may be less important when an issue is domestic in nature and people have access to information in a way that allows them to recognize the issue by themselves. However, for most people information about international matters can only be obtained through media coverage. Thus, the potential for media impact on opinions of international issues should be far greater than those regarding a domestic issue.

Cultivation theory has been used for international studies including the formation of images of America and Americans (Pingree & Hawkins, 1981; Weiman, 1984; Tan, et al., 1986; Tan, et al., 1987; Kang and Morgan, 1988; Tan & Suarchavarat, 1988). Pingree and Hawkins (1981) studied the influence of U.S. television programs using Australian elementary and middle school students. They found effects of American television programs on conceptions of social reality among the Australian children. However, exposure to American programs was more highly correlated with children's beliefs about Australia than their beliefs about the U.S.; children who watched more American programs were more likely to believe Australia was dangerous and mean, not the U.S.

Weimann (1984) examined youngsters' perception of the American reality among high school and college students in Israel where more than 60 percent of broadcasting time is allocated to imported programs, most of which are American. Weimann compared the estimates given by respondents with the percentage of actual reality in the U.S. such as income, ownership of electrical appliances and cars, the number of rooms per unit and the like. It was found that heavy television viewers demonstrated a strong and consistent tendency to overestimate, thus painting a rosier picture of the reality of the U.S., in terms of wealth and standard of living.

On the other hand, Tan, et al. (1986) reported that the frequency of viewing some American programs aired in Taiwan and Mexico was correlated with negative images of Americans. The pattern of results is consistent in both countries' samples. In the Taiwanese sample, the amount of viewing U.S. programs was positively correlated with characterization of Americans as materialistic, and negatively correlated with characterization of Americans as honest and faithful. Similarly, in the Mexican sample, there is a relationship between the viewing of

American programs and the characterizations of Americans as less honest, aggressive, and cruel. In the Philippines where 60 percent of all television programs were imported from the U.S., it was found that heavy viewing of American programs led to an emphasis on non-traditional values of high school students (Tan, et al., 1987). Heavy viewers of American programs were more likely than light viewers to regard pleasure as an important value, and disregard salvation and wisdom. In terms of attitudes towards the U.S., the findings suggested that heavy viewers of American programs were more likely than light viewers to intend to visit the U.S. Similar results were also found in Thailand (Tan and Suarchavarat, 1988).

Kang and Morgan (1988) examined the relationship between viewing American programs and attitudes of Korean college students, finding that exposure to U.S. programs was related to Westernization of traditional cultural values among females. Female heavy viewers were less likely to endorse the traditional values of filial piety, obedience to their parents, and arranged marriages. They were more likely to endorse American-style jeans and rock'n roll music. In contrast, greater American program viewing by males was associated with more hostility toward the U.S. and protective attitudes toward Korean culture. At the same time, however, male heavy viewers were more likely to endorse some non-traditional Korean cultural values, such as questioning one's parents and sharing dating expenses.

Overall, these intercultural cultivation studies found that the frequency of viewing American television by foreign audiences is associated with characterizations of Americans closely corresponding to the television portrayals (Tan & Suarchavarat, 1988). However, as suggested by the literature reviewed, there are some discrepancies in these studies' results. The effects of U.S. television programs may vary in different countries and the impact of U.S. programs should not be consistent across different cultures (Kang & Morgan, 1988). More importantly, the media environment in Japan is quite different from that of other countries where American television programs dominate the ratings and broadcasting time. U.S. television programs are not very popular in Japan. The programs occupy a small percentage of all Japanese broadcasting time (Kawatake and Hara, 1994). Further, ratings for most of the U.S. programs were low in Japan

and most were aired after midnight as "fillings." Thus, the study of the international cultivation effect of U.S. television programs in Japan should be inapplicable.

IV. Hypotheses and Research Questions

This study was designed to determine whether exposure to news media affects images and opinions about the U.S., and to examine international cultivation effects based on the three news media: Japanese television news programs, newspaper and Web news. The above overview of Japanese media content about the U.S. and the literature review provide the following hypotheses concerning television news viewing and newspaper reading.

H1 : Japanese who are heavy viewers of television news programs will be more likely to cultivate negative images/opinions about the United States as reflected in the medium ; e.g., that the U.S. foreign policy is unilateral.

H2 : Japanese who are heavy readers of newspapers will be more likely to cultivate negative images/opinions about the United States as reflected in the medium ; e.g., that the U.S. foreign policy is unilateral.

The roles of Web news in forming images/opinions of foreign countries seldom have been documented because the Internet is the most recent addition to the news media, but the roles should be investigated. Even though the content of Web news sites is similar to that of the traditional news media, the effects of Web news might be distinct from those of the traditional news media because the characteristics of the Internet are quite different from those of the other media. Due to the non-existence of research on the influence of Web news sites, it is impossible to derive a firm hypothesis. Therefore, this study presents research questions which will explore Web sites' role on international cultivation and differences between Web news and the traditional news media :

RQ1 : Does Web news viewing have any effect on forming Japanese images/opinions about the U.S. and its foreign policy?

RQ2 : Is there any difference in terms of interna-

tional cultivation effects among television news, newspaper, and Web news?

V. Method

1. Participants

Participants were college students from three universities located in western Japan (two are in Hiroshima and the other in Fukuoka). Instructors at the three universities distributed questionnaires to their students in October and November of 2002 for the investigator. The total number of returned questionnaires was 502, with 52 % female (n=261) and 48% male (n=241) respondents. Most of the participants were freshmen (87%) and the others were sophomores and juniors.

2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to elicit respondents' opinions about U.S. diplomacy, images of the U.S. and media exposure (detailed below). Each item for respondents' images/opinions was answered on Likert scales ranging from 5 to 1 (5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=not either, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree). Data were also collapsed into three categories : agree (5 and 4 on Likert scales), neither (3), and disagree (2 and 1). These categories were used for cross-tabular analysis. Media exposure items included not only their exposure to the news media but also television viewing and American video movie viewing.

3. Items and Preliminary Results

(1) U.S. Foreign Policy Items

Respondents were asked to answer their evaluation/opinion of U.S. foreign policy matters. Eight percent strongly agreed, and 25% of the respondents agreed ; 33 % disagreed, and 15% strongly disagreed to the item "U. S. military power does not contribute to world peace."

Sixteen percent strongly thought, and 39% thought that U.S. diplomacy is unilateral ; 19% thought oppositely and 4% strongly thought oppositely. On the other hand, answers about the U.S. diplomatic relation with Japan are relatively balanced. Nineteen percent agreed and 2% strongly agreed to the item "U.S. diplomatic relation with Japan is bad" while 26% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed. The reliability coefficient of internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha) for these three items was .50. These

three items were added into one variable, US Diplomacy Image Index, which represents the respondents' overall opinions about the U.S. international policy. The US Diplomacy Index ($M=10.42$, $SD=2.0$) ranges from 3 (most positive) to 15 (most negative), and was used for regression analysis between the index and media exposure.

(2) Violent Image Items

Fifty-two percent of respondents agreed, and 11% strongly agreed, that "America is a dangerous nation;" 14% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed. Forty one percent agreed and 12% strongly agreed that "America is a crime-ridden country;" 19% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed. However, 7% agreed and 1% strongly agreed with the item "In general, Americans are violent;" altogether, more respondents disagreed (49%) and strongly disagreed (10%). The respondents seem to regard America as more violent than they do individual Americans. The reliability coefficient of internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha) for these three items was .53. These three items were added into one variable, US Violent Image Index, which represents the respondents' violent images of the U.S. The Violence Index ($M=9.4$, $SD=2.0$) ranges from 3 (least violent) to 15 (most violent), and was used for regression analysis between the index and media exposure.

(3) Personal Experience Items

Since personal experiences may have an overriding effect on mass mediated cultivation, respondents were questioned about their personal experiences concerning the U.S. Fourteen percent ($n=70$) of respondents had been to and/or had stayed in the U.S. (US Visit: coded 1 for yes, 0 for no). Since only 5% ($n=24$) had American friends, the variable of friendship was not used as a control variable in the analysis. Thus, US Visit and Gender (coded 1 for male, 0 for female) were used as control variables for regression analysis.

(4) Media Exposure

Respondents were asked to give estimates of their amount/frequency of media consumption on an 8-point scale for the following categories: television as a whole (none=3%, less than 30 minutes=7%; 30 minutes-1 hour=12%; 1-2 hours=24%; 2-3 hours=26%; 3-4 hours=18%; 4-5 hours=8%; more than 5 hours=4%), televi-

sion news programs (none=6%; less than 15 minutes=14%; 15-30 minutes=19%; 30 minutes-1 hour=38%; 1-1.5 hours=16%; 1.5-2 hours=6%; 2-2.5 hours=.6%; more than 2.5 hours=.4%), newspaper reading (none=42%; less than 5 minutes=16%; 5-10 minutes=21%; 10-30 minutes=17%; 30 minutes-1 hour=3%; 1-1.5 hours=1%; 1.5-2 hours=0%; more than 2 hours=0%), Web news viewing (none=70%; less than 15 minutes=15%; 15-30 minutes=6%; 30 minutes-1 hour=5%; 1-1.5 hours=2%; 1.5-2 hours=1%; 2-2.5 hours=0%; more than 2.5 hours=1%), American video movie (Never=8%; once a year=7%; a couple of times a year=8%; a couple of times a half year=38%; a couple of times a month=17%; once a week=9%; a couple of times a week=5%; three times or more a week=3%).

Determining what constitutes light, medium, and heavy viewing was done on a sample by sample basis. Respondents were divided into light, medium, and heavy watchers by using as close to an approximate normal distribution split as possible. What is important are differences in three viewing levels, not the specific amount of viewing (Morgan & Signorielli, 1990). The definitions of light, medium, and heavy watchers for each media type are as follows: television as a whole (light=less than 1 hour, medium=1-3 hours, heavy=more than 3 hours), television news (light=less than 15 minutes, medium=15 minutes-1 hour, and heavy=more than 1 hour); newspaper (light=never, medium=5-10 minutes, heavy=more than 10 minutes); Web news (light=never, medium=less than 30 minutes, and heavy=30 minutes or more), American videos (light=less than a couple of times a year, medium=a couple of times a half year - a couple of times a month, heavy=a couple of times a month or more).

4. Statistical Analysis

Cross-tabular analysis was conducted for questions concerning images and opinions about the U.S. This analysis was employed by Gerbner et al. (1980) and other similar studies. Contingency tables compare responses of light, medium, and heavy viewers, as defined in the previous section, for television news viewing, newspaper reading, and Web news viewing. The difference between heavy and light viewers is defined as the Cultivation Differential (CD). Gamma was used to measure the strength and direction of the cross-tabular

association between media exposure and respondents' perception and attitudes. The sign of gamma indicates whether the overall association is positive or negative, and the magnitude of gamma is the strength of the association. If respondents are higher overall on one variable as well as higher on the other variable, then the association is positive. On the other hand, if they are higher on one variable and lower on the other variable, the association is negative (see, for example, Agresti & Finlay, 1997). Cross-tabular analysis may lose some information because the data are collapsed. Thus, the correlation coefficients between media exposure and images/opinions were also calculated to double-check the relationship by using the indexes which are defined above.

Multiple regression was used to measure the relative correlations between the amount or frequency of media exposure and cultivation by using the U.S. Diplomacy and U.S. Violent Indexes to assess the overall contribution of demographic and experience factors to cultivation. Two control variables were dummy coded: Gender (female=0; male=1); experience of visiting and/or staying in the U.S. (US Visit: yes=1, no=0). Dummy coding is a way of coding categorical or dichotomous variables. Coded 1 indicates the presence of an attribute and 0 indicates its absence (e.g., 1=male; 0=not male, i.e., female). These control variables were entered first in the equation. In order to measure the relative correlation, news media exposure variables along with television viewing and American video movie viewing were then

entered second.

VI. Results

1. Television News

Survey results indicate a slight association between negative opinions about U.S. diplomatic matters and the amount of the respondents' television news exposure (Table 1). Seventy-seven percent of heavy news watchers thought that U.S. diplomacy was unilateral. In contrast, 69% of light news watchers did so (gamma=.13, n.s.; $r=.10$, $p<.05$). While there was no significant difference between heavy and light news watchers in the other questionnaire items, the U.S. Diplomacy Index suggests that heavy news watchers are more likely to hold negative opinions about the U.S. diplomacy ($r=.09$, $p<.05$).

In terms of violent images of the U.S., results generally indicate that there is no association between news viewing and violent images of the U.S. It seems that heavy news viewers are more likely to believe "America is a dangerous nation;" however, neither gamma nor correlation coefficient was statistically significant. Hypothesis 1 is supported only in respondents' opinions about U.S. foreign policy.

2. Newspaper

Table 2 shows that heavy newspaper readers tend to believe that U.S. diplomacy is unilateral (gamma=.22, p

Table 1 : Television News Viewing and Images/Opinions about U.S.

Questionnaire Items		Light Viewer %	Medium Viewer %	Heavy Viewer %	CD	Gamma	r
US DIPLOMACY IMAGES	U.S. military power does not contribute to world peace.	53	48	53	0	.00	.08
	U.S. diplomacy is self-centered.	69	73	77	8	.13	.10*
	US diplomatic relations with Japan are bad.	13	24	23	10	.02	.02
	US Diplomacy Image Index (combination of the above 3)						.09*
US VIOLENT IMAGES	America is a dangerous nation.	58	65	72	14	.07	.09
	Americans are violent.	8	7	11	3	.05	.01
	The U.S. is inflicted with crime.	49	55	54	5	.06	.03
	US Violent Image Index (combination of the above 3)						.05

Note

- Percentages of respondents, who answer "Agree (Yes, I do)" or "Strongly agree (Absolutely, yes)," were used for contingency tables.
- CD=Cultivation Differential (percent of heavy viewer minus percent of light viewer).
- Significance for gamma and correlation: * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$

Table 2 : Newspaper Reading and Images/Opinions about U.S.

Questionnaire Items		Light Reader %	Medium Reader %	Heavy Reader %	CD	Gamma	<i>r</i>
US DIPLOMACY IMAGES	U.S. military power does not contribute to world peace.	47	51	56	9	.09	.04
	U.S. diplomacy is self-centered.	68	76	80	12	.22**	.12*
	US diplomatic relations with Japan are bad.	20	17	31	11	.01	.01
	US Diplomacy Image Index (combination of the above 3)						.08
US VIOLENT IMAGES	America is a dangerous nation.	58	70	62	4	.09	.07
	Americans are violent.	10	8	6	-4	.02	-.03
	The U.S. is inflicted with crime.	48	59	53	-5	.07	.02
	US Violent Image Index (combination of the above 3)						.03

Table 3 : Web News Viewing and Images/Opinions about U.S.

Questionnaire Items		Light Viewer %	Medium Viewer %	Heavy Viewer %	CD	Gamma	<i>r</i>
US DIPLOMACY IMAGES	U.S. military power does not contribute to world peace.	50	49	54	4	.00	.05
	U.S. diplomacy is self-centered.	71	76	87	16	.24*	.16**
	US diplomatic relations with Japan are bad.	19	25	30	11	.12	.10*
	US Diplomacy Image Index (combination of the above 3)						.14**
US VIOLENT IMAGES	America is a dangerous nation.	61	70	67	6	.10	.05
	Americans are violent.	7	11	13	5	.10	.04
	The U.S. is inflicted with crime.	56	50	46	-10	-.12	-.03
	US Violent Image Index (combination of the above 3)						.03

$<.01$; $r=.12$, $p<.05$). Specifically, while 80% of heavy readers believed that "U.S. diplomacy is unilateral," 68% of light readers believed that to be true. This finding may be attributed to the editorial criticism of Japanese newspapers against U.S. unilateral attitudes in international relations. In term of the other question items, the differences between heavy readers and light readers seem significant: 9-point and 11-point, respectively. However, statistical analysis demonstrates that neither gamma nor correlation coefficient was significant. In addition, there is no association between the U.S. Diplomacy Index and newspaper reading. As for the violent image items, no difference was observed. Hypothesis 2 is supported only in the questionnaire item of negative opinions about U.S. unilateral foreign policy.

3. Web News

Research Question 1 explored whether Web news

viewing would have any effect on forming Japanese images/opinions about the U.S. and its foreign policy. Generally, Web news viewing was positively associated with critical opinions about U.S. diplomacy (Table 3). Heavy Web news viewers were more likely to believe "U.S. diplomacy is unilateral" than light viewers (gamma=.24, $p<.05$; $r=.16$, $p<.01$). In addition, heavy viewers regarded U.S. diplomatic relations with Japan as bad more than light viewers did (gamma=.12, n.s.; $r=.10$, $p<.05$). The U.S. Diplomacy Index also confirmed the relation: heavy viewers had more negative opinions about U.S. diplomatic attitudes (US Diplomacy Index: $r=.14$, $p<.01$). On the other hand, there was no significant relationship between Web news viewing and violent images of the U.S. just as was observed in relation to television news viewing and newspaper reading.

Table 4 : Multiple Regression Results Indicating Impact of Media Exposure on Opinions and Images about the U.S.

	Step	US Diplomacy Image Index					US Violent Image Index				
		R ²		Final		<i>p</i>	R ²		Final		<i>p</i>
		R	R ²	Change	β		R	R ²	Change	β	
Demographics & Experience	1	.077	.006	.006		.227	.167	.028	.028		.001
Gender (0=female, 1=male)					.166	.188				.511**	.004
US Visit (0=no, 1=yes)					-.174	.474				-.509*	.049
Media Exposure	2	.190	.022	.016		.009	.186	.035	.007		.014
TV Viewing					-.098	.091				.041	.503
TV News					.161*	.024				.052	.490
Newspaper					.051	.441				.037	.591
Web News					.172*	.017				.023	.762
US Video Movie					.014	.778				.055	.310
Step 1: F (2, 497)=1.49, <i>p</i> =.23							Step 1: F (2, 497)=7.11, <i>p</i> <.001				
Step 2: F (7, 492)=2.64, <i>p</i> <.01							Step 2: F (2, 492)=2.53, <i>p</i> <.05				

Note: Significance for Beta : **p*<.05, ***p*<.01

4. Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was then conducted to measure the relative correlations between media exposure and images/opinions, and to assess the overall contribution of demographic and experience factors to image/opinion forming. Results of the multiple regression analysis generally confirmed the above findings: television news and Web news viewing have significant influence on respondents' opinions about U.S. diplomacy. Respondents' gender and experience have a significant impact on violent images of the U.S., but not on negative opinions about U.S. foreign policy.

Table 4 shows the results of the multiple regression tests whose dependent variables were U.S. Diplomacy and U.S. Violent Image Indexes, respectively. For the U.S. Diplomacy Index, while none of the control variables were significant, television news viewing ($\beta = .16$, *p*<.05) and Web news viewing ($\beta = .17$, *p*<.05) are significant positive predictors among the media exposure variables ($R=19$, *p*<.01). However, newspaper reading was not found to be a significant predictor after control. This finding reconfirmed the effects of television news and Web news viewing observed in the cross tabular analysis.

For the U.S. Violent Index, gender and experience variables were also entered on the first step. At this step,

gender and the experience of visiting and/or staying in the U.S. were significant predictors. In contrast to the previous result, no media exposure variables explain the variance of the respondents' violent images of the U.S. This finding is consistent with what was revealed in the first analysis of Cultivation Differentials and correlation: there is no relation between media exposure and violent images of the U.S. Only Gender ($\beta = .51$, *p*<.01) and US Visit ($\beta = -.51$, *p*<.05) remained significant in the second step ($R=19$, *p*<.05), which is interpreted that male respondents are more likely to hold violent images of the U.S. while those who visited and/or stayed in the U.S. are less likely to have violent images of the U.S.

VII. Discussion & Conclusion

This study provides partial support for the hypotheses linking news media exposure and respondents' negative images and opinions about the U.S. foreign policy. The findings, however, generally failed to support the association between media viewing and violent images of the U.S. Why is it that a relationship between news media viewing and negative images of U.S. foreign policy were found, but not a relationship between media viewing and violent images?

One plausible answer could be attributed to the in-

tensity of Japanese media coverage against U.S. foreign policy. Unfortunately, no empirical content-analysis of the coverage was found. However, it is apparent that the Japanese media as a whole portrayed U.S. foreign policy in negative terms as demonstrated in Section II "News Media Coverage of the U.S." In addition, ordinary people do not have any direct experience with such foreign issues. The issue may be unobservable, which means that the media coverage is the sole information source for most people. Therefore, they have to rely heavily on media reports so that the tone of the coverage may influence how people think about the issues, or even how they judge the issues. If the topic of this study were domestic and local issues, the influence of news media on images and opinions would probably not have been prominent because people have a chance to learn about the issues directly.

Another interpretation could be attributed to the respondents. Since the respondents were all college students and the majority of them were freshmen, they may be particularly susceptible to the tone of media coverage. This is also a limitation of the present study. One should be very careful about generalizing results because the respondents were not representative of the general population. Further, this study's results were all obtained through a survey questionnaire. Most of the questionnaire items, measure of opinions, and media exposure, are fixed multiple choice items. The results may have been different if they had been obtained by a more in-depth method, such as focus group participant observation, or personal interviews.

It should be noted that Web news viewing has stronger effects than the other news media even though the medium is the newest addition to the news media and respondents' use of the medium was much less frequent than that of television news and newspaper. This finding may not be of surprise when one thinks about the features of the Internet. Information on the Internet is of the "pull" variety, which means that Web information must be sought and selected by users. On the other hand, information on television news and newspaper is "pushed" to viewers and readers. They may watch a television news program mindlessly so that potential effects on viewers would be diminished. However, Web news viewers log on to a Web news site to seek information so that potential effects would be magnified. This study did

not examine exactly how respondents used the news media, so this interpretation of stronger effects of Web news is still speculative. Future research should examine this understudied medium.

All in all, the present results generally attest to the relationship between news media exposure and respondents' negative images/opinions about the U.S. foreign policy. This does not necessarily mean that news media did actually form images/opinions about international issues. The causality of the relationship cannot be stated, of course. It is entirely possible that people who have negative opinions about the U.S. foreign policy may then watch more television news programs and log on to Web news sites than those who do not care about the policy. An alternative explanation of selective exposure may account for the relationship: Prior disposition toward the foreign issue is followed by their choice of news media to affirm their beliefs. Thus, these two factors, inherent negative opinions about the U.S. policy and media exposure, may influence each other and interact to raise negative images/opinions toward the policy.

One interpretation accounting for the non-existence of relationships between media viewing and violent images of the U.S. is that information about the U.S., especially about violence, exists to the point of saturation in Japan. Japanese television news programs provide a lot of news and information about the U.S.; however, Japanese may still have many other channels—like television entertainment shows, books, magazines, movies—through which they obtain information. The effect of media exposure might be diluted by many information channels so that it is difficult to discern effects. In contrast, news media such as television news, newspaper and Web news virtually "monopolize" information about foreign affairs. There is no doubt that few comedy shows and entertainment magazines carry such serious information as that related to U.S. foreign policy.

Lastly, this study addressed the complex relationship between media exposure and images/opinions. It also cast light on the influences of the news media in an international context. However, considering the sea of international issues we face in the global and information age, the complex mechanisms should be further elucidated in various contexts. Application of the findings to international relations was beyond the scope of this study. Future studies should seek ways to utilize the me-

dia to improve the world in the 21 century that is still inflicted with wars and conflicts.

References

- Agresti, A. and Finlay, B. 1997. *Statistical Methods for the Social Science*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Danielian, L.H., and Reese, S. 1989. "A Closer Look at Intermedia Influences on Agenda Setting: The Cocaine Issue of 1986," in P.J. Shoemaker, ed., *Communication Campaigns about Drugs*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 47-66.
- Gerbner, G. and Gross, L. 1976. "Living with Television: The Violence Profile." *Journal of Communication* 26, 172-199.
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Eleey, M. F., Jackson-Beeck, M., Jeffries-Fox, S. and Signorielli, N. 1977. "TV Violence Profile no. 8: The Highlights." *Journal of Communication* 27, 171-180.
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Signorielli, N., and Morgan, M. 1980. "Aging with Television: Images on Television Drama and Conceptions of Social Reality." *Journal of Communication* 30, 37-47.
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., and Signorielli, N. 1986. "Living with Television: The Dynamics of the Cultivation Process," in J. Bryant and D. Zillmann, eds., *Perspectives on Media Effects*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 17-48.
- Hara Y. 1996. "Aitekoku Image wo Tsutaeru News no Tokuchou" (Characteristics of News Stories That Pass Foreign Images), in *Nichibei Terebi Houdou Hikaku Kenkyu*. Tokyo: Nichibei Terebi Houdou Hikaku Kenkyu linkai, pp. 29-42.
- Kang, J. G. and Morgan, M. 1988. "Culture Clash: Impact of U. S. Television in Korea." *Journalism Quarterly* 65, 431-438.
- Kawatake, K. & Hara, Y. 1994, November. "Nihon wo Chushinntosuru Terebi Bangumi no Ryutujokyo" (Television Program Circulation in Japan). *Hoso Kenkyu to Chousa* 2-17.
- Mainichi Shimbun. 1994. *Nichi-Bei Kankei ni Kansuru Zenkoku Yoron Chosa* (Public Opinion Poll about Japan-U.S. Relations). Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbun.
- Mainichi Shimbun. 2003. *Nihoni-jin no Beikoku Kan* (Japanese Images of the U.S.). Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbun.
- McCombs, M., Lopez-Escobar, E., and Llamas, J.P. 2000. "Setting the Agenda of Attributes in the 1996 Spanish General Election." *Journal of Communication* 50, 77-92.
- Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications. 2003. "Heisei 14-nen Tsushin Riyou Doukou Chosa" (Heisei 14 Communications Use Survey). Available: www.soumu.go.jp/s-news/2003/pdf/030307_1a1.pdf
- Morgan, M. 1986. "Television and the Erosion of Regional Diversity." *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 30, 123-139.
- Morgan, M. 1990. "International Cultivation Analysis," in M. Morgan and N. Signorielli, eds., *Cultivation Analysis: New Directions in Media Effects Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, pp. 225-247.
- Morgan, M. and Signorielli, N. 1990. "Cultivation Analysis: Conceptualization and Methodology," in M. Morgan and N. Signorielli, eds., *Cultivation Analysis: New Directions in Media Effects Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, pp. 13-34.
- Morgan, M. and Shanahan, J. 1991. "Television and the Cultivation of Political Attitudes in Argentina." *Journal of Communication* 41, 88-103.
- "Nichi-Bei Shin Anpo Senryaku-Hitori Yogarino Ronri Suteyo" (New Japan-U.S. Security Strategy-Stop Self-Righteous Logic). 2002, June 25. *Mainichi Shimbun*, available: <http://www.mainichi.co.jp/eye/shasetsu/200206/200206.html>.
- Perse, E. M. 1986. "Soap Opera Viewing Patterns of College Students and Cultivation." *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 30, 175-193.
- Pfau, M., Mullen, L. J., Diedrich, T., and Garrow, K. 1995. "Television Viewing and Public Perceptions of Attorneys." *Human Communication Research* 21, 307-330.
- Pingree, S. and Hawkins, R. 1981. "U.S. Programs on Australian Television: The Cultivation Effect." *Journal of Communication* 31, 97-105.
- Romer, D., Jamieson, K.H., and Aday, S. 2003. "Television News and the Cultivation of Fear of Crime." *Journal of Communication* 53, 88-104.
- "Tai Bei Kanjou Akka no Keikou" (Degrading Feeling about the U.S.) 2003, January 15. *Asahi Shimbun*, p. 6.
- Tan, A. S., Li, S., and Simpson, C. 1986. "American TV and Social Stereotypes of Americans in Taiwan and Mexico." *Journalism Quarterly* 63, 809-814.
- Tan, A. S. and Suarchavarat, K. 1988. "American TV and Social Stereotypes of Americans in Thailand." *Journalism Quarterly* 65, 3, 648-660.
- Tan, A. S., Tan, G. K., and Tan, A. S. 1987. "American TV in the Philippines: A Test of Cultural Impact." *Journalism*