UNIVERSITÄT AUGSBURG
Universitätsbibliothek

OPEN ACCESS
OPUS AUGSBURG

Gender and power constructions in visual political reporting

Susanne Kinnebrock, Thomas Knieper

Angaben zur Veröffentlichung / Publication details:

Kinnebrock, Susanne, and Thomas Knieper. 2014. "Gender and power constructions in visual political reporting." *Historia Social y de la Educación / Social and Education History* 3 (1): 54–77. https://doi.org/10.4471/hse.2014.03.

Nutzungsbedingungen / Terms of use:

CC BY 4.0

Dieses Dokument wird unter folgenden Bedingungen zur Verfügung gestellt: / This document is made available under these conditions:
CC-BY 4.0: Creative Commons: Namensnennung
Weitere Informationen finden Sie unter: / For more information see:
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.de

HSE
Historia Social y de la Educación
Social and Education History

Hipatia Press
www.hipatiapress.com

Instructions for authors, subscriptions and further details:

http://hse.hipatiapress.com

Gender and Power Constructions in Visual Political Reporting[1]

Susanne Kinnebrock[1], Thomas Knieper[2]

1) University of Augsburg. Germany
2) University of Passau. Germany

Date of publication: February 23rd, 2014
Edition period: Edition period: February 2014 - June 2014

To cite this article: Kinnebrock, S.,& Knieper, T. (2014). Gender and Power Constructions in Visual Political Reporting. *Social and Education History 3*(1), 54-77. doi:10.4471/hse.2014.03

To link this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.4471/hse.2014.03

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

The terms and conditions of use are related to the Open Journal System and to Creative Commons Attribution License (CC-BY).

HSE – Social and Education History Vol. 3 No. 1 February 2014 pp. 54-77

Gender and Power Constructions in Visual Political Reporting

Susanne Kinnebrock
University of Augsburg

Thomas Knieper
University of Passau

Abstract

The analysis of visual press coverage is still in the early stages of development, although political communication today is no longer logo- but mainly icon-centered. In our paper, we first outline a way to analyze the meaning of journalistic pictures in a standardized manner, combining methodological insights from quantitative content analyses with findings from social psychology and (de-)constructivist feminist theory. In a second step, we present the results of an analysis of the front pages of German news magazines, showing how cross-sex-typing is applied to mark political power or powerlessness.

Keywords: journalism, gender, visual communication, content analysis

2014 Hipatia Press
ISSN: 2014-3567
DOI: 10.4471/hse.2014.03

Hipatia Press
www.hipatiapress.com

HSE – Social and Education History Vol. 3 No. 1 February 2014 pp. 54-77

Género y Construcciones de Poder en el Reportaje Visual Político

Susanne Kinnebrock
University of Augsburg

Thomas Knieper
University of Passau

Resumen

El análisis de la cobertura de la prensa visual todavía se encuentra en las primeras etapas de su desarrollo, a pesar que hoy la comunicación política ya no está centrada en el logo, sino que principalmente se centra en el icono. En nuestro artículo, primero perfilamos un método de analizar el significado de fotografías periodísticas de una forma estandarizada, combinando entendimientos metodológicos del análisis del contenido cuantitativo, con hallazgos de la psicología social y la teoría feminista (de-) constructiva. En una segunda etapa, presentamos los resultados de un análisis de las portadas de revistas de noticias alemanas, que muestran como el " Cross-Sex-Typing" es aplicado para marcar la impotencia o el poder político.

Palabras clave: periodismo, género, comunicación visual, análisis de contenido.

2014 Hipatia Press
ISSN: 2014-3567
DOI: 10.4471/hse.2014.03

Hipatia Press
www.hipatiapress.com

In the German federal elections in September 2005, former Chancellor Helmut Kohl's "Kohl's girl", Angela Merkel, was victorious. If the German press were to be believed, then Merkel had developed from being a former "pale minister's daughter" and an "East German broad", which was how she was referred to five years ago in the two most important German news magazines, "Spiegel" and "Focus" (Hildebrand, 2000; Stock, 2000), into an "Iron Angie" (Lambeck, 2005). The thoughtful, quality paper "Zeit" even certified Merkel "the political power of a genius" (Geis, 2005).

Press coverage of Angela Merkel as a person and politician therefore changed fundamentally (see also Gnändiger, 2007, pp. 99-134; Meyer, 2009, p. 15; Röser & Müller, 2012, p.61; Maier & Lünenborg, 2012, pp. 92-94). The chair of the German Association of Female Journalists, Eva Kohlrusch, describes the results of her analysis of more than 300 press articles on Merkel in 2005 as follows: "The woman who seized power irritates a lot. She does not meet the expectations women usually face – and nevertheless Merkel was primarily looked at and evaluated as a woman" (2006, p.1). This conclusion might not only refer to Angela Merkel, Germany and the year 2005. Indeed, Kohlrusch highlights the way in which female politicians are described in general – at least in Western industrial countries (see Norris, 1997; Pantti, 2007; Gallagher, 2005; Holtz-Bacha, 2009; Gallagher, 2010). Moreover, not only are male politicians described neutrally, but also as men by referring to gendered role expectations and gendered sociocultural positions. "Gender underlies everything" (Holtz-Bacha, 2007, p. 100), whereas gender constructions and power constructions intervene.

Gender and power are not only represented in text. Images also convey meanings that are linked to these concepts. Yet, difficulties in decoding the polysemous nature of pictures have led to content analyses being focused on textual gender and power representations. This article, however, tries to approach the so-called 'power of images' by showing how to capture visual gender and power constructions by using a standardized content analysis. Furthermore, there is a presentation of the results of an explorative study that analyzed images of individuals on the front pages of German news magazines in 2005, which were dominated by Angela Merkel, the first

female candidate for chancellor and, ultimately, Germany's first woman in the chancellor role. Using the visual reporting on Merkel as an example, our aim is to illustrate how visual gender stereotypes break-down as soon as the power dimension intervenes.

Images and their meaning

The social sciences and humanities primarily focus on logos. In particular, evaluations of press coverage are usually only based on written text. By using content analyses, social sciences (and especially communications) rely on a very standardized and elaborate method to detect central patterns and basic tendencies in large amounts of text (e.g. Rössler, 2010, pp. 15-17; Bock, Isermann & Knieper, 2011, p. 269; Rose, 2012, pp. 81-103).

The analysis of visual coverage, however, is still in an early stage of development. Although political communication today is no longer logo- but mainly icon-centered (Knieper & Müller, 2004, p. 7), the instruments for the standardized decoding of visual messages, or even meanings, are less elaborate (Grittmann, 2001; Petersen, 2001; Petersen, 2003). This is mainly due to the fact that visual signs are not subject to particular rules of codification to the same extent as linguistic signs and language in general. Accordingly, (journalistic) images seem to be very open to interpretation. Their manifest content, message and especially their meaning (to be understood as a shared interpretation between the communicator and the recipient) are at best barely recognizable (Marcinkowski, 1998, p. 236). In any case, the few standardized studies of visual coverage refer primarily to formal and rather descriptive aspects of images. Indeed, the decoding of their meaning is often completely abandoned and shifted to the domain of qualitative methodology (Rössler, 2001, p. 141; also see, for the limits of content analyses of the visual, Bock, Isermann & Knieper, 2011, p. 269).

The lack of tools for standardized and quantifying content analyses in the field of visual communication is foiled in the social sciences and humanities by a fascination with the "power of images" (Frey, 1999, p. 10). As neither methodological resignation nor the perpetuation of myths can be regarded as productive, we propose a way to categorize and decode the meanings of images of people in a standardized manner. Our starting point

is the insight that humans share interpretations of what certain facial expressions, gestures, and postures signalize and mean. These common interpretations are, again, for the most part connected to stereotypes.

Theoretical Framing: Stereotypes

Walter Lippmann characterized stereotypes as pictures in our head. In his 1922 book "Public Opinion" he wrote: "For the most part we do not see first, and then define, we define first and then see. …we pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture." (Lippmann, 1997, pp. 55-56) Two central aspects of stereotypes are mentioned here. On the one hand, stereotypes are products of individual cognitive processing, while on the other, these cognitive products or rather stereotypes are influenced by culture.

Individual stereotypes were described by Ashmore and Del Boca as structured sets of beliefs about the attributes of a group of people. If they relate to women and men, the authors talk about "structured sets of beliefs about the personal attributes of women and men." (1979, p. 222) Social perception and cognitive information processing are based on these sets of beliefs. Research on stereotypes in social psychology focuses on the identification of individual stereotypes, and attempts to capture patterns of categorization, inferences and the evaluations that occur while processing information (Eckes, 2004).

As already indicated by Lippmann, individual and cultural stereotypes continuously interplay. Cultural stereotypes can be defined as *collectively* shared sets of beliefs about groups of people. Peer groups and the media particularly communicate these cultural stereotypes to individuals, who adopt them in the course of socialization. These stereotypes are characterized by enormous stability and a wide reach, because they pervade all societal fields and public discourses, as well as individual life-worlds (Kleinsteuber, 1991, p. 63). This insight has remarkable consequences for the analysis of gender constructions in political reporting; the existence of gender stereotypes can be expected in the field of politics as well as in other societal fields. Indeed, even in times when role models actually change and

women and men have new options, gender stereotypes nevertheless remain incredibly stable.

When it comes to empirical studies on either individual or cultural stereotypes, the spectrum of methodological designs varies. While data on individual stereotypes are normally collected by surveys and observations (often based on experimental designs), cultural stereotypes can be examined either by aggregating data on individual stereotypes (e.g. Williams & Best, 1990), or by the analysis of cultural representations (mainly texts and pictures). Since this study focuses on images of people in news magazines, cultural representations are analyzed. However, as we intend to go beyond the mere description of pictures by also capturing their conveyed meanings, we want to refer to the insights from studies on stereotyping from social psychology that have made significant findings with respect to how pictures, or parts thereof, are interpreted by the vast majority of people. This approach will help us to detect the shared meanings of images.

Theoretical Framing: Gender research in communications

The discipline of communications can refer to a remarkable tradition of analyzing gender representations (see Lünenborg & Maier, 2013, pp. 98-106). Moreover, feminist theory-building has developed different paradigms that guide research on this issue (Klaus, 2005, pp. 14-19). In our study, we refer to the equality and the (de-)constructivist approaches.

The equality approach focuses on discrimination against women, arguing for the equal treatment of the two sexes in their portrayal in the media. If the media portrayals of women do not represent their real positioning, and if social reality and media reality clearly diverge, then these differences can be interpreted as discrimination (Klaus, 2005, pp. 50-58). In the main, standardized content analyses provide the empirical basis for studies in the tradition of the equality approach (e.g. Weiderer, 1995; Pfannes, 2004; Gallagher, 2005; Gallagher, 2010).

Summarizing the results of studies based on this approach, women in the media in general, and female politicians in political reporting in particular, are still underrepresented (Klaus, 2005, pp. 217-251; Pantti, 2007, pp. 34-37; Gallagher, 2010). Furthermore, women are mentioned an above-average

number of times in the context of "female topics" (Pantti, 2007, p. 37), such as the fields of education, health, children, family, social welfare and entertainment.

If one only considered the perspective of the equality approach for analyzing visual gender constructions, the aim would primarily be to try to find visual indicators for personal attributes (e.g. age) and to then compare how often these attributes are presented in the mass media to how frequently they are referred to in social data. So, you could, for example, match the ages of the women presented in the mass media with the age pyramid, thereby providing some evidence of the fact that, in general, the women presented in the media are much younger than the average female population.

Our study of visual gender constructions will not, however, only adopt the rather descriptive perspective of the equality approach, which primarily focuses on women and quantifiable results; we will also include a (de-) constructivist perspective. The latter approach represents a further development of feminist theory-building, and can be regarded as a paradigm shift. This perspective stresses the fact that the category of gender is a social and cultural construct. It also examines how men and women delimit themselves in their media activity and their social world by reproducing a bipolar gender structure (the idea of 'doing gender').

Content analyses that are inspired by a (de-)constructivist perspective not only concentrate on representations of women or constructions of femininity, but also on representations of men or constructions of masculinity. In addition, they analyze how phenomena which – at first sight – have nothing to do with gender nevertheless become gendered by conceptualizing them as dichotomous, thereby establishing hierarchies. For example, it was a strategy of the Bush-administration in the vanguard of the Iraq War in 2003 to portray war politics of the 'virile' US as male, at the same time devaluing the anti-war politics of 'old Europe' by assigning female characteristics to these nations (Griesebner, 2005, p. 131).

Yet (de-)constructivist studies not only analyze how gender is conceptionalized in a dichotomous way, but also question established categories, including that of biological sex. According to Butler (1990), physical representations of sex (except for genitals) have to be understood

as cultural constructions, as well as the coherence of the categories of sex and gender. The construction of the sexed body logically completes the process of the symbolic and social construction of gender. Culture and gender are therefore not only reproduced in our head, but also in our body. As a consequence, people normally develop not only gender-conforming opinions, attitudes and roles, but also gender-conforming body performances by accentuating sexed attributes (see Mühlen-Achs, 1998). To sum up, the body is also a cultural construction.

With this perspective, neither sex nor gender is a non-questionable and 'natural' fact. Consequently, the (de-)constructivist approach focuses on the process, namely how the bipolar gender structure is constructed and naturalized in our daily lives. Accordingly, in this way, the variability and complexity of (gender-) constructions and identities are made visible (Klaus, 2005).

The uncovering of the underlying aspect of power in relation to gender constructions is central to (de-)constructivist analyses. Power is hereby produced symbolically by the establishment of hierarchical dualisms. Moreover, (de-)constructivist analyses often focus on the parallel construction of dualisms between the rulers and those to be ruled and between masculinity and femininity. Male leadership – as Pierre Bourdieu puts it – is the paradigm of all leadership. It is characterized by an astonishing stability, because it appears natural. Furthermore, this naturalness derives from references to biological differences between the sexes. However, these differences are themselves naturalized social constructions (Bourdieu, 2005, pp. 44-45; see also Gerber, 1988).

Study Design

Theoretical and methodical implication from the equality and the (de-) constructivist approach

Taking all of the considerations discussed above into account, we understand both sex and gender as constructed, and this leads to the following assumptions:

a) Visual presentations of people build the focus of our analysis. Accordingly, if and how far individuals are presented with visual attributes of masculinity and femininity should be analyzed.

b) The complexity of gender constructions should be examined, whether bipolar and stereotypical gender representations still dominate, or whether the press presents new and multifaceted images of people which combine traditionally female and traditionally male attributes.

c) Special attention should be paid to symbolizations of power.

While the equality approach suggests a standardized registration of body images (in order to produce quantifiable results), we propose a three-level-analysis to integrate the de-constructivist perspective into our methodological design. In a first, rather descriptive, step the visual representations of individuals (e.g. the posture of parts of the body) and their contexts were coded in as detailed a way as possible and analyzed for typical patterns (e.g. well known gestures). In a second step, the meanings of the patterns relating to the power dimensions were coded. Finally, these patterns were analyzed to ascertain whether they matched traditional gender stereotypes. Since the description of bodies in the first step of our analysis mostly (but not always) revealed the biological sex of the individual, it was possible to reconstruct if and how far women were presented in a powerless or somewhat feminine stereotypical way and men as a powerful or rather masculine stereotype. As a result, conformity to, as well as deviance from, traditional gender stereotypes can be investigated.

Analyzed material

In order to analyze power and gender representations on the front pages of Germany's most important news magazines, the publications "Spiegel" and "Focus" were examined. Front pages were chosen as they can be regarded as condensed products of the journalistic construction process. In contrast to press photos that can occasionally be seen as spontaneous snapshots of a documentary nature, the selection process behind front pages is highly constructive; on these pages, the entire cover story has to be condensed into a single picture, while the cover should also be attractive enough to make readers buy the magazine. This explains why illustrations are often used

instead of photos; they can visualize the message and meaning in a more accentuated way.

We analyzed all of the covers of "Spiegel" and "Focus" published in 2005, where the unit of analysis was the single representation of a person, not the entire front page. In total, 128 representations – including photos, photomontages and illustrations – were analyzed, 66 from "Spiegel" and 62 from "Focus".

Quantitative analyses: contexts, technical conventions of presentation, and the characterizations of persons

While analyzing visual representations of people, it is possible to differentiate between aspects of the context, the technical conventions of presentation and the visual characterizations of those pictured.

With respect to the context (which is rarely reconstructed from a portrait itself, but mainly from its visual surroundings, headlines and the complete cover story inside the magazine), we differentiated between the general theme, the event in which the portrayed person was involved and, finally, the function of this individual. *Technical conventions of presentation* included camera angle, camera perspectives, the positioning of figures, the presented body parts and the accentuation of the face (face-ism). In order to capture the *characterizations* of those portrayed, we coded features of the face and hairstyle, facial displays, viewing directions, postures of the head, the figure itself, features of clothes, disrobement, postures of the body and its extremities, gestures, the occupied space, dynamic moves and actions, touched objects, body contact, and other interactions.

Semantization

Not much is learned about their meaning from the quantification of image aspects. Accordingly, in such contexts, *the technical conventions of presentation* and the visual *characterizations* of individuals were collected where their meaning or even impact had already been explored in different studies from the fields of social psychology and media effects.

It is known, for example, that certain camera angles - primarily the under lighting view – make those who are represented look better (Kepplinger, 1999, p. 18). Moreover, the combination of the under lighting view with a side lighting perspective causes people to attribute political competence to the pictured politician (Zillmann, Harris, & Schweitzer, 1993). Furthermore, close-up views enable those who are photographed to appear friendlier (Fleissner, 2002, p. 34, Fleissner, 2004, pp. 137-138). If a picture accentuates the face (face-ism), those represented are regarded as being more intelligent, ambitious and friendly (Archer et al., 1989, p. 71).

When it comes to the semantization of the technical conventions of presentation, studies from the discipline of communication are the most referable. Social psychology, however, instead deals with the meanings of single attributes, e.g. visual characterizations. Studies that are based on experimental designs could provide evidence of how certain body configurations – facial expressions, gestures, body postures – are observed and interpreted by the majority. The central line of interpretation usually runs along the power dimension, interpreting body postures, gestures and facial expressions as an occupation of territory and/or an expression of dominance. Moreover, signals which indicate the acceptance of dominance claims and the willingness to subordinate can be interpreted along the dimension of power as a lack of power.

When it comes to the issue of facial expressions, it was possible to confirm the efficacy of 'facial displays'. Three facial expressions (first, anger/threat; second, fear/avoidance; and third, happiness/self-confidence, see Sullivan & Masters, 1988, p. 347) were decoded in very similar ways, even if the cultural background differed. For political leaders, primarily happy and self-confident facial expressions seem to be adequate, sometimes also angry and threatening ones. Fearful facial expressions and those signaling avoidance, however, lead to a negative attitude towards the represented politician (Sullivan & Masters, 1988, pp. 361-363).

A self-confident facial expression can certainly not be equated with a smile; the smile is normally associated with a subordinated position, because it is an expression that is usually addressed to those with a higher status and serves as a signal of ritual appeasement (Henley, 1989, p. 247; Goffman, 1981, p. 190).

Moreover, the directions of views signal dominance or subordination. While a straight on viewing direction (focusing on the observer or someone else in the picture) is normally understood as a signal of power, views which are not focused on the observer are interpreted as an act of avoidance. The latter view is underlined by a head that tends to hang sideways, which indicates subordination (see overviews in Henley, 1989, pp. 222-227 and Frey, 1999, p. 139).

If body postures are interpreted along the power dimensions, upright and straight postures as well as those where the individual is leaning forwards towards the observer are regarded as dominant. This is in contrast to postures that are less stable and upright. Foot and leg postures also play an important role. If a person is shown as standing in a stable position with his or her legs slightly apart, but straight, this individual will be expected to be more powerful and threatening than someone with a less stable stance who has his or her feet positioned close together or is even (almost bashfully) twisting the knee of the free leg to an inside position (Henley, 1989, p. 197).

The space that a person requires for himself is dependent on body posture, whereas space that is taken intentionally is associated with a claim to power (Freedman, 1967). Body twisting and abnormal squirming, however, are interpreted as signs of timidity (Henley, 1989, p. 186).

Space is also being taken when an individual moves his body. Moreover, it is unsurprising that people who move about are normally regarded as being active and dominant; the extent of the dynamic movement goes along with the extent of the dominance.

Finally, the presented interactions between people allow some conclusions to be drawn about their power relationships. Accordingly, it is important to differentiate between those who have the power to touch another person and those who have to bear being touched. The people who can afford to touch others are usually expected to have a higher status than those being touched (Goffman, 1971, pp. 82 -83; Goffman, 1981, p. 117). Furthermore, the contrast in body size between those who are represented gives some clues with which to interpret power relations; larger people are usually evaluated as being more powerful (Henley, 1989, pp. 161-167; Goffman, 1981, pp. 120-122).

If a person touches him or herself (self-touching) or objects in a very careful manner, this normally signals timidity or avoidance. Self-touching and caressing items can often be seen in advertisements containing photos of women. Such gestures are also interpreted as a sign of subordination (Goffman, 1981, p. 125; Henley, 1989, pp. 141-182).

Results

Division of Gender

As this was a pilot study, the sample (n=128) was fairly small. Moreover, the fact that there were large numbers of missing cases, which occurred, for example, in the category of body postures if only faces were portrayed, means that some of our results only reflect first tendencies. Further empirical evidence is thus required.

Due to biological criteria and stereotypical clothes, the represented individuals in our study could be clearly identified as being male or female (there was only a single androgynous figure). Barely a third of the people who were shown on the front pages we analyzed were recognizable as women. "Focus" and "Spiegel" differed only slightly ("Spiegel": 27.3%; "Focus": 30.6%). This result is in line with previous studies (e.g. Winter, 2001, p. 87), as well as the finding that women are related to other topics than men.

Contexts

Women were disproportionately often shown in the context of culture, whereas men appeared in the context of foreign politics, war and economics. Indeed, only one female figure was presented in the context of these 'male topics'. Significantly, this was not a photo of an actual female politician, but an illustration of the French national figure Marianne, who symbolizes the fight against bureaucracy in the European Union ("Spiegel", No. 23).

With respect to the events that framed the actions of those represented on the analyzed front pages, it is surprising that only 38.8% of them were

presented in a political field. Differences between women and men could be found insofar as men were disproportionately portrayed in political or job-related fields, while women were predominantly shown within their home.

Aspects of Presentation

When it comes to the different technical conventions of presentation, no interpretable differences could be found; close-up photos and the normal perspective dominate. Even face-ism (the accentuation of the face) seems to have disappeared. In 1999, "Spiegel" differed significantly with respect to men and women concerning face-ism (Schmerl, 2004, p. 55). Our data, however, did not reveal any significant gender-differences, whether relating to this feature or the size of those pictured. In 2005, women were not presented as being smaller than men in either of the two studied German news magazines, even if male and female characters appeared together on a front page.

Aspects of Figures: Dimension of Gender

Clear differences were found by our analysis of the visual characterizations of people. The bodies of women on our front pages seemed to be a lot younger and slimmer than those of men. Almost half of the represented women were in the age group 18-29 (46.8% of females in comparison to 37.8% of the represented men), while more than a third of the men belonged to the over 50 category (34.4% of the men compared to 18.9% of the women). These results are highlighted by the following facts: there was only one grey-haired woman among the 26 grey-haired individuals pictured; there was only one woman among 16 wearers of glasses; and there were only two women among 26 wrinkled faces. This reveals certain patterns when it comes to how women are presented. Furthermore, light make-up, lighter (primarily blonder) hair and the partial uncovering of the arms, legs and neckline are typical of the pictures of women. The conventions we were able to identify in our data can be supported by other studies, including those on the visual representation of women in the cover

stories of news magazines (e.g. Winter, 2001), on television (e.g. Weiderer, 1995) and in advertisements (e.g. Lindner, 2004).

Aspects of Figures: Dimension of Power

Other visual characterizations of people are to be interpreted primarily along the dimension of power. When it comes to body postures, the represented women tended to be depicted with more unstable postures, and therefore seemed to be more fragile. Compared to men, women were more often shown smiling and with their head tending to hang in a sideways direction. In summary, signals of appeasement or even subordination were found to a disproportionately greater extent in the pictures of women. This conclusion is also supported by our findings on viewing directions. The straight view, namely a gaze that was fixed on an opponent or the camera (which is usually perceived as aggressive), was reserved for the depicted men, while the women tended to avoid eye-contact. As a result, there is an imbalance in the gender representations on the front pages of "Focus" and "Spiegel", signals of subordination in terms of facial expressions and body posture can still be found.

Astonishing and unexpected are the results concerning required space. The represented men did not take recognizably more space with their arm postures than the represented women. Moreover, men were not shown in a more dynamic manner than their female counterparts. Furthermore, with respect to the presented interactions between people, the men were not dominant when pictured with women. In summary, there was no clear subordination of women in the field of gestures. However, it is notable that there were clear gender differences with respect to barely controllable facial expressions. Given that politicians in particular are now very well aware of their body language and try to control it (Weinlich, 2002, p. 153), it seems plausible that the visual coverage reflects both the training with respect to power gestures that is applied by female politicians, and the traditional facial expressions of women that signal subordination.

The Merkel-Effect

Our results can be cautiously interpreted to mean that the gender hierarchy in visual reporting is no longer rigidly perpetuated. However, this interpretation must be relativized if the historical background is reflected. In particular, the fact that in 2005 Angela Merkel won the election against Chancellor Gerhard Schröder must be taken into consideration.

Female politicians were rarely represented on the front pages of "Spiegel" and "Focus" (nine female and 44 male politicians were portrayed). If one only takes into account the pictures of politicians, the percentage appearance rate of women is only 16.9%. This low figure is mainly due to the approach of "Spiegel", which prefers to have political topics on its front page, meaning that almost half of those represented on its covers are politicians (54.5%). Among the 36 images of politicians on the front page of "Spiegel" in 2005, only five were female: Merkel was depicted four times and the former US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, once. Accordingly, only 13.8% of the politicians on "Spiegel's" covers were female.

Only four female politicians were shown (three times Angela Merkel) on the front pages of "Focus". However, as there were only 17 politicians in total depicted on the covers of this magazine in 2005, the percentage appearance rate of female politicians appears to be higher than for "Spiegel" (23.5% instead of 13.8%).

In total, Angela Merkel was the one female politician to dominate the front pages of the studied news magazines, if seven images in connection with a cover story can be evaluated as a dominant position. More interesting than these rough quantifying factors is the more detailed analysis of Merkel' s facial expressions, gestures and body postures in comparison to her direct competitor, former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder.

To the same extent as Schröder's power was eroding, he was also stripped down visually, e.g. with images that showed him as: small from a bird's eye view, evasively looking to the side, or holding his arms tight to his body. Increasingly, Schröder was presented with the facial expressions and gestures of subordination that usually apply to pictures of women. Angela

Merkel, however, progressively developed into someone whose claim for power was also visually supported (see also Eitner, 2007, pp. 158-159; Holtz-Bacha & Koch, 2008, pp. 112-114; Grittmann, 2012, pp. 142-148). In July 2005, at the start of the election campaign, "Spiegel" published a front page with the headline "What does (can) Angela Merkel want?" (No.28). The accompanying image showing a strained looking Merkel, who was evasively looking to the side with an almost timid, tight posture. Yet these representations changed when she became chancellor. Under the headline "Eastern Dawn" (No.45), Merkel was represented by a space-filling victory pose, looking grimly resolute instead of politely smiling. The message of the picture was underlined by the application of the aesthetics of Socialist Realism, which primarily work with easily understandable visual symbols.

Conclusion

So, how can our results be summarized and interpreted? Firstly, stereotypical gender representations still exist in visual reporting. In general, there are obvious visual attributions with respect to whether a depicted individual should be decoded as a man or a woman. Furthermore, both sexes are portrayed in different contexts. The observer will recognize a distinct adjustment; women are mainly shown in social or cultural contexts, and men in work-related, economic or political contexts. When it comes to the technical aspects of presentation, there were no significant gender-differences. However, on average, the depicted women are much younger than the depicted men. The pattern in terms of how women are shown is reflected by light make-up, primarily blond hair, the absence of glasses and a partially uncovered neckline or arms and legs. If signals of appeasement or even subordination are found, it is unerringly, or at least most likely to be, a depiction of a woman. However, the fact that cross-sex-typing along the dimension of power could easily be applied (giving representations of men female connoted attributes of subordination and women male attributes of power), can lead to the assumption that gender stereotypes have lost rigidity, but not validity. Very interesting was the so-called Merkel-effect, which suggests that when there are opposing interests in depicting either gender roles or elected offices, the visual representations realign in favour

of the function. The images support the symbolization of power. However, if an office-holder loses power, visual symbols of weakness and inferiority are used by the magazines. So, a male politician loses his visually attributed power at the moment of his (probable) defeat. In our case, the former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder was represented by signs of instability and subordination at the moment he was expected to lose the German federal elections in 2005. Indeed, he not only lost his insignia and position, but also his depiction as a man. This could be called the Schröder-effect.

Notes

[1] This paper is a revised edition of our German essay "Männliche Angie und weiblicher Gerd? Visuelle Geschlechter- und Machtkonstruktionen auf Titelseiten von politischen Nachrichtenmagazinen" (Kinnebrock & Knieper, 2008).

References

Archer, D., Iritani, B., Kimes, D., & Barrios, M. (1989). Männer-Köpfe, Frauen-Körper. Studien zur unterschiedlichen Abbildung von Frauen und Männern auf Pressefotos [Male-heads, female-bodies. Studies of the different portrayals of men and women in press photos]. In Schmerl, C. (Ed.), *In die Presse geraten. Darstellungen von Frauen in der Presse und Frauenarbeit in den Medien* [Get into press. Representation of women in the press and women's work in the media.]. (pp. 53-75). Köln, Wien: Böhlau.

Ashmore, R.D., & Del Boca, F. K. (1979). Sex stereotypes an implicit personality theory. Towards a cognitive-social psychological conceptualization. *Sex Roles, 5*(2), 219-248. doi: 10.1007/BF00287932

Bock, A., Isermann, H., & Knieper, T. (2011). Quantitative Content Analysis of the Visual. In Margolis, E. & Pauwels, L. (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Visual Research Methods*. (pp. 265-282). London et al.: Sage.

Bourdieu, P. (2005). *Die männliche Herrschaft* [Male domination]. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

Butler, J. (1990). *Das Unbehagen der Geschlechter* [Gender trouble]. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

Eckes, T. (2004). Geschlechterstereotype. Von Rollen, Identitäten und Vorurteilen [Gender stereotypes. Roles, identities, and prejudices]. In Ruth, B., & Kortendiek, B. (Eds.), *Handbuch der Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung. Theorie, Methoden, Empirie* [Handbook of women studies and gender research. Theory, methods, empiricism]. (pp. 165-176). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Eitner, J. (2007). *Macht Macht männlich? Das Bild von Angela Merkel und Gerhard Schröder in der deutschen Tagespresse* [Does power masculinize? Images of Angela Merkel and Gerhard Schröder in the German daily newspapers]. Marburg: Tectum.

Fleissner, K. (2002). *Die Debatte um die Kanzlerkandidatenfrage in der CDU/CSU im Spiegel der Pressefotografie. Eine Analyse von Pressebildern der Konkurrenten Angela Merkel und Edmund Stoiber in ausgewählten Printmedien* [The debate on the chancellor nomination in the Christian Democratic Union depicted in press photography. An analysis of press photos of Angela Merkel and Edmund Stoiber in selected print media]. Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München: Magisterarbeit.

Fleissner, K. (2004). Vor der Kür ist nach der Kür? Bundestagswahl 2002: Die Kandidatendebatte der Union im Spiegel der Pressefotografie [The Elections for the German Federal Parliament 2002: The Christian Democrats Union's debate depicted in press photography]. In Knieper, T., & Müller, M. G. (Eds.) *Visuelle Wahlkampfkommunikation* [Visual Campaigning]. (pp. 129-147). Köln: Herbert von Halem Verlag.

Frey, S. (1999). *Die Macht des Bildes. Der Einfluß der nonverbalen Kommunikation auf Kultur und Politik* [The power of images. The influence of nonverbal communication on culture and politics]. Bern: Hans Huber.

Freedman, D. G. (1967). A biological view of man's social behavior. In William, E. (Ed.). *Social behavior. From fish to man.* (pp. 152-188). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gallagher, M. (2005). *Global media monitoring project 2005.* London: Wacc.

Gallagher, M. (2010). *Who makes the news? Global Media Monitoring Project Report 2010*. London: Wacc.

Geis, M. (2005). Die Doch-noch-Kanzlerin [The scrape through chancellor]. *Die Zeit,* May, 13, 2005, p. 5.

Gerber, G. L. (1988). Leadership roles and the gender stereotypes traits. *Sex Roles, 18*(11-12), 649-668.

Gnändiger, C. (2007). *Politikerinnen in deutschen Printmedien. Vorurteile und Klischees in der Berichterstattung* [Female politicians in the German print media. Prejudices and stereotypes in media coverage]. Saarbrücken: VDM.

Goffman, E. (1981). *Geschlecht und Werbung* [Gender advertisements]. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

Goffman, E. (1971). *Interaktionsrituale. Über Verhalten in direkter Kommunikation* [Interaction ritual]. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

Griesebner, A. (2005). *Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft. Eine Einführung* [Feminist Historiography. An introduction]. Wien: Löckehr.

Grittmann, E. (2012). Der Blick auf die Macht. Geschlechterkonstruktionen von Spitzenpersonal in der Bildberichterstattung [Looking at power. Gender constructions of leaders in visual press coverage]. In Lünenborg, M., & Röser, J. (Eds.), *Ungleich mächtig. Das Gendering von Führungspersonen aus Politik, Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft in der Medienkommunikation* [Differently powerful. Gendered representations of leaders in politics, economics and science]. (pp. 127-171). Bielefeld: transcript.

Grittmann, E. (2001). Photojournalismus und Ikonographie. Zur Inhaltsanalyse von Pressefotos [Photojournalism and iconography. Content analysis of press photos]. In: Wirth, W., & Lauf, E. (Eds.), *Inhaltsanalyse. Perspektiven, Probleme, Potentiale* [Content

analysis. Perspectives, problems, potentials]. (pp. 262-279). Köln: Herbert von Halem.

Henley, N. M. (1989). *Körperstrategien. Geschlecht, Macht und nonverbale Kommunikation* [Body-strategies. Gender, power and nonverbal communication]. Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer.

Hildebrandt, T. (2000). Angriff auf die neue Mitte [The attack on the new center]. *Der Spiegel*, May 4, 2000, 24-32.

Holtz-Bacha, C. (2007). Mit den Waffen einer Frau? Politikerinnen im Wahlkampf [With the weapons of a women? Female politicians in election campaigns]. In Holtz-Bacha, C., & König-Reiling, N. (Eds.), *Warum nicht gleich? Wie die Medien mit Frauen in der Politik umgehen* [Why not immediately? How the media treats women in politics]. (pp. 79-104). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Holtz-Bacha, C. (2009). Politikerinnen-Bilder im internationalen Vergleich [Representations of female politicians. An international comparison]. *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, (50), 3-8.

Holtz-Bacha, C., & Koch, T. (2008). Das Auge wählt mit: Bildberichterstattung über Angela Merkel [The eye votes too. Visual media coverage of Angela Merkel]. In Holtz-Bacha, C. (Ed.), *Frauen, Politik und Medien* [Women, politics, and media]. (pp. 104-121). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Kepplinger, H. M. (1999). Nonverbal communication. In Brosius, H.-B., & Holtz-Bacha, C. (Ed.) *The German Communication Yearbook*. (pp. 9-37). Cresskill: Hampton Press.

Kinnebrock, S., & Knieper, T. (2008). Männliche Angie und weiblicher Gerd? Visuelle Geschlechter- und Machtkonstruktionen auf Titelseiten von politischen Nachrichtenmagazinen [Male Angie and female Gerd? Gender and power constructions on covers of news magazines]. In: Holtz-Bacha, C. (Ed.), *Frauen, Politik und Medien* [Women, politics and media]. (pp.83-103). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Kleinsteuber, H. J. (1991). Stereotype, Images und Vorurteile. Die Bilder in den Köpfen der Menschen [Stereotypes, images, and prejudices. Images in the people's mind]. In Trautmann, G. (Ed.), Die *häßlichen Deutschen? Die Deutschen aus der Sicht ihrer Nachbarn* [Ugly

Germans? Germans in the perception of their neighbours]. (pp. 60-68). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Klaus, E. (2005). *Kommunikationswissenschaftliche Geschlechterforschung. Zur Bedeutung der Frauen in den Massenmedien und im Journalismus* [Gender research from the communication studies' point of view. The relevance of women in mass media and journalism]. (new edition) Wien: Lit.

Knieper, T., & Müller, M. G. (2004). Vorwort [Preface]. In Knieper, T., & Müller, M. G. (Eds.), *Visuelle Wahlkampfkommunikation* [Visual Campaigning]. (pp. 7-11.). Köln: Herbert von Halem.

Kohlrusch, E. (2006). *Is' was, Kanzlerin? Eine Analyse des Journalistinnenbundes zur Darstellung von Angela Merkel in den Medien* [What's up chancellor? An analysis of the presentation of Angela Merkel in the media by the Journalistinnenbund]. Retrieved February 6, 2014 from http://static.twoday.net/fsg5/files/angelawatch-analyse-auszug.pdf

Lambeck, M. S. (2005). Die Ossi-Tusse wird's euch zeigen [The East German broad will show you the ropes]. *Bild am Sonntag*, May 29, 2005, 4.

Lindner, K. (2004). Images of women in general interest and fashion magazine advertisements from 1955 to 2002. *Sex Roles, 51*(7-8), 409-421. doi: 10.1023/B:SERS.0000049230.86869.4d

Lippman,W.(1997). *Public Opinion [1922]*. New York et al.: Free Press Paperbacks.

Lünenborg, M., & Maier, T. (2013). *Gender Media Studies. Eine Einführung* [Gender media studies. An introduction]. Konstanz: UVK/UTB.

Maier, T., & Lünenborg, M. (2012). "Kann der das überhaupt? Eine qualitative Textanalyse zum Wandel medialer Geschlechterrepräsentationen [Is he competent to do that? A qualitative text analysis on the change of gender representations in mass media]. In Lünenborg, M., & Röser, J. (Eds.), *Ungleich mächtig. Das Gendering von Führungspersonen aus Politik, Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft in der Medienkommunikation*

[Differently powerful. Gendered representations of leaders in politics, economics and science]. (pp. 37-63). Bielefeld: transcript.

Marcinkowski, F. [F.M.] (1998). Visualisierung [Visualization]. In Jarren, O., Sarcinelli, U., & Saxer, U. (Eds.), *Politische Kommunikation in der demokratischen Gesellschaft. Ein Handbuch [Political communication in the democratic society. A handbook]*. (pp. 235-236).Wiesbaden et al.: Westdeutscher Verlag.

Meyer, B. (2009). Nachts, wenn der Generalsekretär weint". Politikerinnen in der Presse [At night, when the Secretary General cries. Female politicians in the press]. *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, (50), 9-15.

Mühlen-Achs, G. (1998). *Geschlecht bewußt gemacht. Körpersprachliche Inszenierungen. Ein Bilder- und Arbeitsbuch* [Reflecting gender. Body language and staging. A picture and hand book]. München: Frauenoffensive.

Norris, P. (1997). Women leaders worldwide. A splash of color in the photo op. In Norris, P. (Eds.), *Women, media and politics*. (pp. 146-165). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pantti, M. (2007). Portraying Politics. Gender, Politik und Medien [Portraying politics. Gender, politics, and media]. In Holtz-Bacha, C., & König-Reiling, N. (Ed.): *Warum nicht gleich? Wie die Medien mit Frauen in der Politik umgehen* [Why not immediately? How the media treats women in politics]. (pp. 17-51). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag.

Petersen, T. (2001). Der Test von Bildsignalen in Repräsentativumfragen. Vorschlag für ein Forschungsprogramm [Testing visual signals in representative surveys. Proposal of a research program]. In Knieper, T., & Müller, M. G. (Eds.), *Kommunikation visuell. Das Bild als Forschungsgegenstand – Grundlagen und Perspektiven* [Visual communication. The image as an object of research – basics and perspectives]. (pp. 159-175). Köln: Herbert von Halem.

Petersen, T. (2003) Der Test von Bildsignalen in Repräsentativumfragen. Erste Ergebnisse [The test of visual signals in representative surveys. First results]. In Knieper, T., & Müller, M. G. (Ed.). *Authentizität und Inszenierung von Bilderwelten* [Authenticity and staging of pictures]. (pp. 102-122). Köln: Herbert von Halem.

Pfannes, P. (2004). *Powerfrau, Quotenfrau, Ausnahmefrau…? Die Darstellung von Politikerinnen in der deutschen Tagespresse* [Powerful woman, token woman, exceptional woman…? The portrayal of female politicians by the German daily press]. Marburg: Tectum.

Rose, G. (2012). *Visual methodologies. An introduction to researching with visual materials*. 3rd edition. Los Angeles et al.: Sage.

Röser, J. & Müller, K.F. (2012). Merkel als ‚einsame Spitze'. Eine quantitative Inhaltsanalyse zum Geschlechterverhältnis von Spitzenkräften in den Medien. [Merkel lonely in front. A quantitative content analysis of media coverage of leaders and gender relations]. In Lünenborg, M., & Röser, J. (Eds.), *Ungleich mächtig. Das Gendering von Führungspersonen aus Politik, Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft in der Medienkommunikation [Differently powerful. Gendered representations of leaders in politics, economics and science]*. (pp. 37-63). Bielefeld: transcript.

Rössler, P. (2010). *Inhaltsanalyse* [Content analysis]. Konstanz: UVK/UTB.

Rössler, P. (2001). Visuelle Codierung und Vielfalts-Analysen auf Mikroebene. Kategorisierungs- und Auswertungsstrategien für die ikonographische Untersuchung journalistischer Berichterstattung [Visual coding and analysis of diversity at the micro level. Strategies for categorization and an evaluation for the iconographic analysis of media coverage]. In Wirth W., & Lauf E. (Eds.), *Inhaltsanalyse. Perspektiven, Probleme, Potentiale* [Content analysis. Perspectives, problems, and potentials]. *(*pp. 140-156). Köln: Herbert von Halem.

Schmerl, C. (2004). "Kluge" Köpfe — "dumme" Körper? Einige Wirkungen der Kopfbetonung bei männlichen und der Körperbetonung bei weiblichen Pressefotos ["Bright" minds – "dumb" bodies? Some impacts of the emphasis on male heads and female bodies in press photos.], *Publizistik, 49*(1), 48-65. doi 10.1007/s11616-004-0004-5

Sullivan, D. G., & Masters, R. (1988). "Happy Warriors". Leader's facial displays, viewers emotions, and political support. *American Journal of Political Science, 32*(2), 345-368.

Stock, W. (2000). Nie mehr Mauerblümchen [No longer a wallflower]. *Focus,* April 3, 2000, 116-124.

Weiderer, M. (1995). *Das Frauen- und Männerbild im Deutschen Fernsehen. Eine inhaltsanalytische Untersuchung der Programme von ARD, ZDF und RTLplus.* [Portrayals of women and men on German television. A content analysis of the TV-programs ARD, ZDF, and RTLplus]. Regensburg: Roderer.

Weinlich, A. (2002) *Körpersprache von Politikern. Machtdemonstration und Selbstdarstellung.* [Body language of politicians. Power demonstration and self-portrayals]. Münster: Agenda.

Williams, J. E., & Best, D. L. (1990). *Measuring sex stereotypes. A thirty-nation study.* Beverly Hills et al.: Sage.

Winter, S. (2001). *Sexismus in deutschen Nachrichtenmagazinen. Geschlechtsspezifische Darstellungskonventionen in Spiegel und Focus* [Sexism in German news magazines. The conventions of gender portrayals in "Spiegel" and "Focus"]. Münster et al.: Lit.

Zillmann, D., Harris, C. R., & Schweitzer, K. (1993). Effects of perspective and angle manipulations in portrait photographs on the attribution of traits to depicted persons. *Medienpsychologie*, *5*(2), 106-123.

Prof. Dr. Susanne Kinnebrock: Department of Media, Knowledge and Communication, University of Augsburg.
Prof. Dr. Thomas Knieper: Department of Language, Text and Media, University of Passau

Address: University of Augsburg, Universitätsstraße 10, 86135 Augsburg, Germany. University of Passau, Innstraße 33a, 94032 Passau, Germany. susanne.kinnebrock@phil.uni-augsburg.de / Thomas.Knieper@Uni-Passau.De