

USDA PUBLICATION MESSAGING AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

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INTRODUCTION

- During World Wars I and II, millions of women took on tasks left behind by the nearly six million men who had left to serve in the war. (Rasmussen, 1951).
- Historical research regarding agricultural publication messaging toward women shows that gender roles and frames of bias are prevalent (Enns and Martin, 2015; Schwieder, 1990).
- Knowing the effect of various frames and messages on women's motivation to become involved in agricultural efforts can help communicators craft persuasive messages for their own audiences.
- By identifying and understanding frames and message themes, practitioners can implement the same messaging strategies to encourage industry involvement.

FRAMEWORK

- This study was guided by Goffman's framing theory (1974).
- Framing theory posits that the media play a part in establishing the saliency of issues and the media's intentional depiction of certain issues will influence how they are processed by audiences (Entman, 2004; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).
- Framing theory was incorporated to understand how USDA framed its messages toward women and common framing themes for publications.

METHODOLOGY

- The purpose of this exploratory study was to describe the intended audiences of USDA publications and identify frames within USDA publications during World Wars I and II.
- Qualitative content analysis of pamphlets, technical bulletins, posters, and other written or visual works produced by USDA.
- Publications were coded by frame theme, developed using a modified data-driven strategy.
- Descriptive statistics implemented to analyze the audience gender and frame theme for the final set of publications (N = 179).

RESULTS

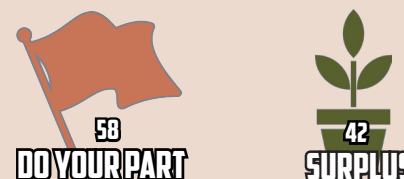
RESEARCH QUESTION ONE:



RESEARCH QUESTION TWO:



RESEARCH QUESTION THREE:



CONCLUSIONS

- Evident that specific message frame themes were implemented in order to promote involvement in the war effort.
- USDA made an appeal to the audience's sense of patriotism in publications where the 'Do Your Part' code was applied.
- Frame theme of surplus and increased productivity emerged by means of the 'Surplus' code.
- 13.41% of publications could be identified as specifically targeting women.

IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations for future research include analyzing publications from other sources and continuing to perform content analyses on USDA publications from other significant time periods.
- Understanding how USDA rallied women and men to increase food production, food conservation, and general involvement in supplying agricultural resources to the war effort can be used today.
- When planning communication strategies, agricultural communicators could implement messaging tactics that involve evoking specific emotions or appealing to patriotic values.
- In the process of encouraging women and minorities to become involved in the agriculture and natural resource industries, developing a campaign specifically targeted to these audiences that appeals to their emotions and values is essential in seeing visible results.

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