

**POLISH WOMEN DURING COMMUNISM  
AND AFTER:  
AS PORTRAYED BY THE POLISH PRESS FROM  
1978 TO 1998**

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**Introduction**

Changes in government are believed to affect all areas of human life, including professional, social and domestic spheres. The collapse of communism in Poland in 1989 had the potential to bring significant change to Polish society. Such changes could open new doors in the ongoing process of defining gender roles. Women in particular might have sought new gender identity during the transition from a government that sought to rigidly define women's roles to a democratic system that gave women the freedom to choose.

The Polish media also experienced new freedoms during the transition period. Under communism, the press in Poland was not simply a "pawn" of the government. Generally, newspapers were allowed to publish reasonable and accurate reports of Polish society. However, a low level of agenda setting, governmental control and censorship existed. Thus, the communist press in Poland contained a paradoxical mix of government-controlled content and honest reports on the poor condition of society.

For this reason, Polish newspapers provide a window

to Polish culture in general and the situation of Polish women in particular. This research will examine the images of women portrayed in one Polish newspaper, *Zycie Warszawy* (*Warsaw Life*), during the years 1978, 1988 and 1998. More specifically, it will answer the questions, “Is there any change in the way women are represented in the press in those three years? If so, what is the nature of the change?”

### **Communist ideals for women**

From 1945 to 1990, Poland was under communist control. The social theory of communism promotes state or community ownership of property and means of production. Communist theory emphasizes work as the way materials are produced for the common social good. Communists envision a classless society, where all members equally participate in the socially constructive activity of work.

The communist ideals for women, however, were in apparent contradiction with each other. First, as citizens of the communist state, women were required to work. The 1952 Constitution of Poland, written under communist rule, says “work is the right, the duty and a matter of honor of every citizen” (Article 14.1). On the other end is the contrasting ideal of motherhood. Women had a duty to give birth to, nurture and teach children—the future generation of communist citizens. The communist government in Poland saw this as a crucial responsibility and designed legislation to accommodate mothers in the workforce. (Article 66.2 of the Constitution guaranteed paid maternity leave, day care, nursery schools, and a network of maternity homes, service establishments and

restaurants.) Though legislation was designed to help women live up to both ideals, the government seemed to pressure women into two contradictory roles. They were told to be mothers without giving up their role as workers.

This legal action, however, required social support. Ruzara (2000) emphasizes that rights cannot simply be “given” to women. While the communist government boldly proclaimed gender equality in the Constitution of 1952, Polish women did not see its effect in their lives. “More and more often, we also find that what we were given were merely symbolic rights that lacked actual import” (Ruzara, p. 1071).

This research sought to discover the extent that these communist ideals for women were portrayed in the press. Did women who read the newspapers primarily see images of “do-it-all” women who successfully achieved both communist ideals for women? The author hypothesized that because of the dominant political system the newspapers would be saturated with images of working women participating in the economy.

### **Function of the press**

To further comprehend the potential impact of governmental control of the media, it is important to consider the functions of the media in society. Sociologist Charles Wright (1964) labeled four social roles of the media: surveillance, interpretation, transmission of culture, and entertainment. The surveillance activities of the media warn the public of impending danger and maintain routine functioning of institutions within society. In the interpretive role, the media call attention to societal

developments and prescribe appropriate responses. The media also transmit culture from one generation to the next, creating social cohesion. Finally, the media offer a diversion to members of society through entertainment. Wright suggests that when the media do not perform these functions, society suffers—particularly minorities and other groups who are underrepresented in the media, such as women.

In every society the media accomplish these functions differently, due to unique definitions of the link between media, government and society. Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (as cited in Merrill & Odell, 1983) identified four models of this connection between media and state. The model of communist theory argues that the purpose of the media is to expand the socialist system and mass media are instruments of the government to transmit social policy and contribute to the socialist state.

Vladimir Lenin advocated a citizen-owned press that worked toward the common goal of building communism (see Merrill, 1983). In what became the socialist equivalent of the First Amendment, Lenin wrote, “to all who would change the social order, the press is a vehicle for manipulating public opinion and stirring the public to action” (quoted in Altschull, 100). By Lenin’s definition, then, the press should promote the communist ideal of a gender-neutral view of society. Ideally, then, Polish women should be given the same representation as men in the press under communism, as well as in the post-communist period. The same should also be true in the U.S. press.

In part, this research sought to discover whether the message of the communist government was being passed

to women through the newspapers. However, the broader goal of this research was to determine how the images of women in the press changed during the communist transition period and how these images may have impacted Polish women's lives.

### *Literature Review*

#### **Women in the press are presented in “traditional” female roles**

Research on the representation of women in the U.S. media consistently shows that women receive less coverage than men (see P. M. Miller, 1996; Jolliffe, 1989; Blackwood, 1983; Davis, 1982; Ceulemans & Fauconier, 1979; S. H. Miller, 1975).

While many studies emphasize that women do not receive as much media coverage as men, other research examines the type of coverage that women do receive. S.H. Miller (1975) examined the content of news photos in the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Washington Post*. Miller categorized the photographic images based on what the subject of the photo was doing. Three-fourths of the photos of men showed them as politicians, professionals or sports figures, while over half of the photos of women showed them as spouses, socialites or entertainers. Blackwood repeated Miller's study seven years later and concluded that “the disparity is greater now than in 1974” (1983, p. 714).

Research on the press in Europe leads to similar findings on the press representations of women. An analysis of British newspapers in 1974 showed that women were less likely to appear as politicians, professionals, criminals

and sports figures. They were more likely to be seen as sex objects or wives or mothers. Furthermore, even when a woman was in the news as a political or professional figure, the visual images and textual references still tended to relate to the woman's mothering or sexual role. (Ceulemans & Fauconnier, 1979)

The variety of research on women's images in the media suggests that more than a simple statistic of women's coverage as compared to men's can be gleaned from an examination of news articles. It is also of value to consider *how* the press communicates messages about women.

### **The Polish press under communism promoted conflicting roles for women**

Rukszto's (1999/2000) study of women's magazines in Poland researched the gender identity of citizenship as portrayed by women's magazines during the communist period and at present. She identified three primary and conflicting roles ascribed to Polish women: those of "citizen-worker" and "mother-worker," the ideals of the communist government, and the "sacrificing mother" ideal of the Catholic Church. Rukszto found traces of this gender conflict in her study of women's magazines. On the surface, many magazines boldly supported working women, while subtly suggesting that God-fearing women should sacrifice personal achievement to rear children. With the fall of communism, the religious view burst into the open, but was met by women who had already established careers. Rukszto argues that the perpetuation of these conflicting roles in the popular media reflects the internal struggle women faced during political restructur-

ing in Poland.

Though much of the research on women in the media addresses the situation of women in the United States and Europe, several principles can be applied to the study of the Polish press. It is important not only to consider the *amount* of coverage women receive, but also the type of coverage. Past research has shown that women do not appear in the newspaper in the same roles that men do. However, the study of the press in a formerly communist country involves a different ideology, including different beliefs about the roles of women. Furthermore, the communist government believed that the press functioned to promote communist ideals, but a democratic press seeks to report the truth.

### *Methods*

This research compared the newspaper articles regarding women's lives found in *Zycie Warszawy* in 1978, 1988 and 1998. This newspaper has several advantages for the purposes of this research. First, it is one of the only newspapers in Poland that existed during the communist era and still exists today. During the communist transition period, many papers ceased publication, while new papers sprung to life in the zeal of democratic freedom. *Zycie Warszawy* has been published continually since 1947. A second advantage is its specific audience: the nation's capital city, Warsaw, which was the government and economic center of Poland during communism. As a news source in a nation cut off from most means of communication with the outside world, *Zycie Warszawy* had an important social function in providing information and transmitting culture from one genera-

tion to another. This may have increased the well-established newspaper's role as an agenda setter in Polish society.

The sample contained 39 editions of *Zycie Warszawy*, with 13 issues a year in 1978, 1988 and 1998. The Tuesday editions of the newspaper during the months of May, June and July were analyzed for coverage of women's lives. (The author selected newspapers published before the anti-communist movement gained strength, during the fall of communism, and after the change to a democratic system. The specific years and months were chosen based on newspaper availability.) The author was able to read the papers in the Polish language.

In order to verify reliable coding, five Polish speakers read and categorized a sample of articles and photographs. These readers placed 83 percent of the articles in the same categories. The most common variation occurred when one reader placed an article in two categories and another only chose one category.

After counting the total number of articles in each edition, the author limited the sample to major articles (approximately 250 words, or half a column in the 1978 and 1988 papers, 3/4 column in the 1998 papers) and photographs. Because the 1978 and 1988 editions had minimal advertising, the sample did not include advertisements or classified ads. Brief articles, obituaries (unless written as a story and featured on a regular page), athletic scores, calendars, TV and movie listings were also omitted. In order to make a fair comparison of impact, text and photographs were analyzed separately. Figure 1 shows the different ways the newspaper content was analyzed:

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The major articles and photographs that dealt with women's lives were identified and categorized according to content. Specifically, the author considered what the women were doing that was considered newsworthy. The wife of the president, for example, was classified as an activist when she spoke about poverty issues, but in a photograph accompanying an article about her husband, she was classified as a spouse. When a question arose regarding classification, the first determinant was the action or the event that had attracted the attention of the media. Articles could be classed in more than one category.

The categories in this study were based on S.H. Miller's (1975) categories for the classification of news photos. In order to assess the relevance of these categories, a test sample of three newspapers, one from each year, was analyzed and categorized according to Miller's definitions. A few modifications were made to Miller's categories based on the test sample. Specifically, the categories of "worker" and "mother/domestic" were added to accommodate photos that did not fit in Miller's categories. These adjustments reflected cultural differences between the U.S. and Poland, as well as the difference in the way photographs and written articles represent the news. Finally, the author identified the major articles that did not specifically address women's lives, but still expressed women's voices. In analyzing these articles, the main topic of the article (for example, foreign trade or fashion) was considered as well as the significant voice (such as an expert opinion or an eyewitness account).

Thus, the data showed not only what kind of women were talking, but also what they were talking about.

## *Results*

### **Profile of the sample**

In 1978, *Zycie Warszawy* was a 12- to 16-page paper. In addition to the front page, a typical edition had pages on world news, national news, local news, science, culture, sports, special interest and two pages of classified advertising. The newspaper looked much like U.S. newspapers during that time period, with small print, seven narrow columns, stacked headlines and often only one photograph per page, if any. Each edition contained about 70 stories from two column-inches to two full pages in length.

The 1988 editions closely resembled those published 10 years earlier.

By 1998, the paper had expanded to an average of 20 pages per edition, though the average number of stories was still the same. This can be explained by the use of a larger font size, more photographs, bigger advertisements and more white space. The major section titles were the same, with an additional economic section, public response section, and a follow-up to the front page called "Events."

The selected editions of *Zycie Warszawy* contained 2,468 articles. Almost half of these articles were brief articles, less than one column, one-half page in length. Table 1 shows the number of major articles and photographs from each year.

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### **Bylines**

Many of the newspaper articles did not have bylines and only the articles that credited the authors were identified in this research. The Polish language has gender-specific word endings, particularly for proper names; so when a name was given, it was easily identifiable as male or female.

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From 1978 to 1998 the number of articles attributed to women increased by over 30 percent. In 1978, only 12 percent of the articles were written by women, but 20 years later almost half of the articles had women's bylines. Figure 2 shows the changes in men's and women's bylines over the 20-year period.

In considering the content of newspaper articles as they pertain to women's lives, it is important to know how many women are writing articles that appear in the paper. Whether it impacts the presentation of the news or not, it is apparent that women's voices as reporters could not be heard as loudly as men's during the 1970s and 1980s. However, this research suggests that the gender gap is narrowing and more women are reporting for the newspaper.

These numbers alone suggest that women did not experience the Marxist ideal of a gender-blind division of labor. If the authors of the unattributed articles in 1978 (about 649 articles, or 76 percent of the total number of articles) were in about the same proportion of women to

men as the attributed bylines, then it would appear that the newspaper employed significantly more men than women. If the newspaper did employ as many women reporters as men reporters, then the women were not getting credit for the work they did. This discrimination is incongruent with the communist ideal of the division of labor.

### **Photographs**

Most of the photos in the newspaper sample were of objects (including art work, buildings, maps, nature scenes, and photos of crowds too distant to distinguish individuals). In Figure 3, these photos are represented by the white area. The more recent newspapers have more human photos than object photos, though the majority of those photos are pictures of men. Photos of women were consistently about 15 percent of the sample. Between 1988 and 1998, however, the number of men's photographs rose by almost 20 percent, to more than half of the photographs in the 1998 sample. The discrepancy between the number of photographs of men and women is growing worse.

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In order to facilitate comparison between Polish newspapers and the US newspapers, this study used the following categories originally developed by S. H. Miller (1975):

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All photographs in *Zycie Warszawy* showing one or

more women were categorized according to these definitions. Out of 680 total photographs, 107 showed women. Photos of objects or large crowds where the gender of the individuals was not obvious were not included.

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The most frequent photographic images of women over the twenty-year period were of professionals, entertainers and socialites/celebrities. In 1978, photographs of professional women equaled one-third of the total photographs. By 1988 that number had dropped to less than one-fourth, and by 1998 images of professional women made up only 13 percent of the sample. (See Figure 5). This trend suggests that communist ideals for women were being injected into the press, for as the influence of the communist party waned, the number of representations of women in the workforce also decreased.

With the decline in images of working women, the newspapers more frequently ran photographs of socialites, celebrities and entertainers. Almost half of the photographs in 1988 showed women in social situations. In that year images of women in non-professional, non-socialite roles were few, and no photographs showed women as workers, athletes, activists, criminals or mothers.

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The newspapers from 1998 contained the largest number of photographs as well as the most diverse role portrayals. No single image dominated the photographs

in that year. This was the first year that women were shown as workers, activists and mothers.

These numbers show a slight increase in the number of photographs of women in *Zycie Warszawy* over the past 20 years. However, women have not broken out of the professional and activist roles enough to receive equal coverage in the male-dominated arenas of sports and government.

### Articles

Photographs in newspapers tend to grab the reader's attention, but the substance of newspaper content is in the articles. For the purpose of this study, only major articles (measuring at least one column, half a page in length) were examined for themes about women's lives. Every reference to a woman was highlighted. The author found three general types of references: articles that focused on women's lives or issues, articles that brought out women's voices, and articles that briefly mentioned a woman. This research considered the first two types of references.

Out of 1,198 major articles examined, only 63 dealt significantly with women. Another 67 had significant use of women's voices. Both the number of articles that focused on women's lives and the number of articles that expressed women's voices rose each year. (See Figure 6)

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### Women's Lives

Only 4 percent of the 1,198 major articles sampled addressed women's lives in a significant way. Using a sample of three newspapers, one from each year, major arti-

cles were coded according to the roles assigned to women in the articles. The same categories used to classify the photographs were applied to the article classification. (See Figure 7)

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As shown in Figure 7, 27 articles focusing on women's lives were written in 1998, more than in either of the other two years. An examination of the types of articles, however, shows that the images of women varied greatly from year to year.

In 1998, 10 articles portrayed women as athletes and 5 articles portrayed women as criminals. These two categories account for 56 percent of the articles in that year. During the communist years, articles were written about women's sports, but they were always brief, only a paragraph or two in length. In 1998 the sports section filled two to four pages of the paper, giving more space to cover women's sports in greater depth. Crime stories in general did not exist in the communist papers, most likely due to the press ideology of promoting the common good and the socialist system.

Only two articles portrayed professional women, though the 1978 and 1998 papers contained several articles about public officials. The most consistent role for women in the three years of the sample was that of entertainer.

### **Women's Issues**

Nine articles in the sample addressed feminist issues. Six of those articles were in the 1978 sample. The other

three appeared in 1998. In 1988, when the communist government was on the brink of collapse, there was no discussion of feminist issues. Perhaps the media were focused on other social and political issues. Furthermore, while articles about women were published more frequently in the 1998 sample, there were still more articles about women's sports than women's issues.

Though the international women's movement in the 1970s may account for some of the media attention given to women's issues in the 1978 sample, there was no single event that could explain why the subject received attention at that time and not in the other years. The small number of articles in 1988 and 1998 suggests that there was some sympathy to the feminist cause under the communist system.

### **Women's voices**

Some articles did not specifically address women's lives and issues, but did express women's thoughts and ideas through quotes and interviews. These articles were considered separately in this analysis. Table 2 shows the articles that contained significant feminine voices. The table is divided by year, then by the type of commentary: Was the woman speaking as an expert, a government official or simply as a resident or citizen—an average "person on the street"?

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In 1998, both the number of comments made by women and the variety of subjects they addressed dramatically increased over the previous years. In part, this is

due to the changing style of journalism. Rarely were direct quotations used in the earlier papers. Articles were pre-digested by the writer who condensed the issue into smooth-flowing commentary. The 1998 paper reflects current writing trends that lean upon direct quotations as best evidence for or against the subject of the article.

As important as the number of opportunities for letting women speak, however, are the subjects upon which they are asked to comment. In all three years, the most frequent comments from women were made by government officials who spoke on current affairs. Half of the responses in the sample (37 out of 65) were comments on social issues, such as urban development, education and social security. Women were rarely used as sources in sports stories, foreign affairs, commentaries, or economic analyses.

## *Discussion*

### **Timeline**

Several crucial events surround the years of publication in this sample. The communist government took power in Poland after World War II. The Polish people were never content under foreign control, and several underground movements fought the communist regime. The 1978 editions of *Zycie Warszawy* came out between the last two major political crises in 1976 and 1980. The 1980 protest marked the rise of the Solidarność (*Solidarity*) movement, which began when Lech Waesa and a group of dock workers staged a strike in the shipyards of Gdansk. The communist government responded to the threat of insurrection by establishing military rule

throughout Poland, thereby tightening governmental control of the private and public domains. What Solidarność had begun, however, could not be stopped. On January 1, 1990, a new democratic government began implementing its plans for economic recovery. Thus, the second set of newspapers, from 1988, precedes the collapse of the communist system by about one year. When these papers were published, the nation was still under strict military control. In 1998, after a decade of struggle and transition Poland was finally on the path to economic stability.

### **Women did not receive significant coverage in the Polish press**

Only two percent of the articles in a sample of almost 2,500 specifically focused on women's lives. While this research did not compare the amount of coverage received by women and men, the sample does show that women's lives and women's issues received minimal attention from the press, during communism and after.

### **Women's issues received more attention in the 1970s than in the 1980s or 1990s**

Only nine major articles in the newspaper sample directly and substantially addressed women's issues. Six of these articles were written in 1978. The worldwide feminist movement of the 1970s and 1980s brought many women's issues into the media spotlight, which might explain why more articles appeared in the 1978 editions. These six articles included:

- a report on an international women's forum,
- a speech by the national Secretary General on "the

protection of the family and motherhood,”

an article discussing issues facing working women,

an interview with a professor researching the situation of women in the countryside,

a discussion of the situation of women who work from their homes, and

an article mentioning women's ability to work as pilots.

### **Women received contradictory messages from the media**

Four of the articles above consider the issue of working women, but three of them also discuss mothering responsibilities. These articles exemplify the conflicting messages sent to women through the media. For example, the lengthy article about women in the countryside describes women as efficient, capable workers who are no longer companions to their farmer husbands, but are now independent, self-sufficient farmers themselves. On the other hand, the front-page coverage of a speech by the highest-ranking government official in Poland emphasizes women's maternal role. Secretary Kania says

The growth of the nation is first and foremost the growth of the family. We recognize the family as the fundamental social cell in which moral principles are formed and principles of common social life, where the biological growth of the nation occurs. Families perform a principal role in raising the young generation and in shaping patriotism, ethical-moral foundations, respect for work, life ambition and cultural aspirations. (June 27, 1978, p.1)

The first article shows a “citizen-worker” who is de-

voted and independent in her work. The second emphasizes the “mother-worker” role, where a woman is fulfilling a higher calling than work by rearing children and teaching them socialist principles.

One article called “Krzyż i Strza»ka” (“The Cross and the Arrow”) from the May 9, 1978, issue identifies a conflict in men’s and women’s gender roles. The article addresses the division of labor in a household. It suggests that when women work outside the home, men tend to participate more in domestic tasks, unless other family members are around to do the work instead. The tone of the article is somewhat flippant, pointing out that men take longer and more frequent naps than busy working women. This article supports the high and contradictory expectations of Polish women in communist society. Instead of resolving the issue of overworked mothers, it validates the capability of women to perform as mothers and as workers.

### **Feminist thought is nearly absent in the Polish press**

According to Lenin’s definition of press responsibility, the primary purpose of the press is to further the socialist agenda. Because communist society idealized equality between all classes and social groups, the press should have promoted gender equality. Obodzinska (2000) suggests that the press instead tried to hide the failures of the communist government to produce a classless society. Under libertarian press theory, the first responsibility of the press is to report the truth, bringing about social change. Under the communist theory, however, it is more important for the press to promote the communist agenda than to report the truth. Social change comes

from government action, not from the press. Thus, the communist government may have tried to limit the coverage of the feminist movement because its existence suggested that the government was not achieving its goal of gender equality.

The lack of media coverage of feminist issues may have contributed to the apathetic attitude of Polish women towards feminist issues which never got on the public agenda. One 1998 article written by a woman states that the battle of the Parliamentary Group of Women over a political issue approached “the level of the Marxist war of the classes” (Luniewska, 1992, 2). The author’s mocking tone, however, implies that the struggle between men and women for equal representation is a thing of the past, a battle that has already been fought. In general, the minimal coverage of women’s issues in all three years examined by this research suggests that both during and after communism, the press failed to represent feminist thought.

### **The communist press emphasized ideals of women as workers and activists**

Bucher (2000), in a study on the media coverage of women in the former Soviet Union, says that the press gave women hardworking, do-everything role models to follow. Such images of women who successfully met all the demands placed upon them can also be seen in Polish newspapers. The articles examined by this research, for example, portray a woman running her own country farm, a woman raising a loyal, communist family, and a woman working professionally, while running an efficient household on the side.

Beyond the professional and domestic spheres, women were expected to participate in social movements. Images of women in the newspapers were constantly connected to current social issues. For example, the lead paragraph of an article about a meeting of the World Democratic Federation of Women mentions four main purposes of the group: “to fight for the rights of all women, to protect children, to defend peace and to fight for the independence of nations” (Koprowski, 1978, p. 4). However, the article focuses almost entirely on the fight for disarmament and plans to protest the neutron bomb. There are no references to any issues facing women. Thus, the focus of the article on the conference shifts from the gender-specific arena to the more inclusive arena of political activism. A photograph in the same edition, three pages later, shows a group of women waiving a sign that reads, “Pres. Carter Ban the Neutron Bomb.” Based on the images in the press, women were expected to be social activists, but not for their own purposes.

### **Women’s voices were heard more often after the fall of communism**

The results of this research show a dramatic increase in the number of quotations and interviews with women. Only 13 times in 1978 and 14 times in 1988 were women quoted in the newspaper. In the 1998 sample, 38 major articles contained women’s voices. Women also commented on a wider variety of issues in 1998 than in the other years. In all three samples, the most common topics of comment from women were social issues. Often, the comment came from women acting in official government capacities. Women were rarely sought for

comment on foreign affairs, the economy, sports or culture.

The rise in number of comments from women might be attributed to changes in journalistic style during the communist transition era. In the 1978 and 1988 papers, direct quotations were rare, and the writing focused on issues more than events. Many stories contained no sources or references. The 1998 style was similar to the journalism style currently used in the United States. Articles were timely, focusing on events and relying on sources and expert opinions to analyze the news items.

While these articles did not specifically address the roles women have in society, they are significant articles because they give women a “voice” in the newspaper. Anand says this gender perspective is “one in which women’s knowledge, experiences and perceptions are given validity and allowed to come to the fore in analyzing and presenting issues” (quoted in Luthra, 1996, p. 45).

### *Conclusion*

Although the style and visual layout of *Zycie Warszawy* changed significantly from 1978 to 1998, the portrayal of women’s lives showed little change after the fall of communism. In all three years examined by this research, visual and textual references to women’s lives were minimal. Only nine major articles, out of 1,200, dealt significantly with women’s issues. Even in 1998, when nearly half of the reporters were women, feminist issues received little attention. Instead, most of the articles about women were sports stories.

While there were more articles written by women and

about women in the 1998 newspapers, the 1978 paper included more feminist thought. These articles generally supported the communist ideal of working women. Underlying themes, however, suggested a conflicting ideal of elite womanhood and motherhood. The press seemed to support the communist ideal of equality in the workforce, while simultaneously giving them special consideration because they were responsible for rearing children.

Women were portrayed in several roles throughout the years examined. Images of women entertainers, socialites, professionals and sports figures were more common than other roles. In 1998, the papers were strongly dominated by stories about women's athletics. The 1978 photographs were mostly of professional women, as might be predicted due to the dominant communist ideology. Not one article in that same year, however, described a woman in a professional role. Consequently, women readers saw attractive photos of career women, but did not learn about their daily lives through detailed articles. The most consistent women's role over all three years was "entertainer," perhaps because the high-profile lives of entertainers attract significant media attention. The prevalence of these articles indicates that the role of entertainer was and continues to be one of the most socially acceptable women's roles.

One way that the representation of women has noticeably improved is the extent that women's perspectives are included in the newspaper. In the 1998 articles, three times more women were sought for comment and expert opinion than in 1978 and 1988. Perhaps this is because more women are writing for the paper, and women reporters are more likely to ask other women for their per-

spectives.

Still, while women's voices can be heard in the media today, they do not appear to be speaking up for their own rights. Perhaps, as Ruzara (2000) suggests, Polish women do not feel inclined to pursue feminist action. This indifference may be caused by the media or it may be simply a reflection of an alternate ideology in Polish society. Whatever feminist thought exists in Poland, though, does not find its way into the newspaper. Instead, women in the Polish press continue to be under-represented and confined to traditional gender roles.

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