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The 1975 Icelandic ‘Women’s day off’ in Nordic print media

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ABSTRACT

In October 1975, the Icelandic women’s movement organized a ‘Women’s Day Off’ (WDO), a one-day strike designed to reveal the societal importance of women’s work. In this article, we explore media coverage of the WDO in the Nordic countries. Through an analytical lens that focuses on media framing and journalistic practices, we analyse differences in the coverage’s scope and content. We also contextualize the coverage against the background of sociopolitical factors that may have affected the cultural filtering of the news, as well as journalistic practices and resources in each country. In doing so, we demonstrate that the coverage relied on each newsroom’s estimation of the event’s newsworthiness for local readers. That news value was influenced by the country in question’s cultural proximity to Iceland, the state of local feminist organizing and public discussions regarding gender equality, and other news topics in circulation at the time. Our analysis is based on a reading of media texts related to the WDO that we gathered using digital interfaces of the national libraries of Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland, complemented by a manual search in cases where such digitization was lacking.

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Tomorrow, Iceland will come to a standstill. The women have decided that. [...] This is a unique strike – not because it is a women’s strike, but because it looks like it will be total.¹

The quote above comes from the Swedish tabloid *Expressen*, and it refers to a one-day women’s strike that took place in Iceland on 24 October 1975. The intention of this work stoppage – or ‘Women’s Day Off’ (WDO), as it was officially named – was to reveal the societal importance of women’s work. The idea of a general women’s strike had been promoted in Iceland by the radical feminist *Rauðsokkahreyfingin* (Redstockings) since 1970, and with the declaration of the United Nations’ (UN) International Women’s Year (IWY) in 1975, a window of opportunity opened up to mobilize a broad number of women. Therefore, on the Redstockings’ initiative, a heterogeneous collection of women’s associations from across the political spectrum united behind the plan for a one-day work stoppage by all women across the country, no matter whether they were waged workers or unpaid housewives. The decision was made at an IWY conference in Reykjavik in June 1975, and an executive committee

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was formed soon afterwards.² A prerequisite for the agreement to unite was that the name of the action be changed from 'strike' to 'day off'. Consequently, the majority of women in Iceland participated in or supported the WDO, and it affected the whole of society, just as the Swedish journalist Monika Björk had anticipated in *Expressen* the day before.

The organizers of the WDO worked extensively to promote the action, and they widely circulated their expectation that the participation rate would be between eighty and 100 per cent.³ Icelandic journalists therefore followed the organizing, the events of the day, and the aftermath intensively throughout the autumn of 1975.⁴ The expectation of a high participation rate also made the WDO a newsworthy topic that circulated globally through international news agencies such as Reuters and United Press International (UPI). Several foreign journalists, especially from other Nordic countries, even arrived in Reykjavik to report on the day.⁵ As it turned out, the near totality of the work stoppage distinguished the WDO from similar previous feminist demonstrations, such as the Strike for Equality in the United States in 1970 and the women's strike in France in 1974,⁶ further contributing to the 'world news' angle.

In this article, we focus on print media coverage of the WDO in the Nordic countries and ask in what ways news about the action circulated in the region. Through what cultural and discursive frames was the WDO presented? As we will show, the scope and framing of the coverage differed somewhat in different Nordic countries: what explains these differences? We answer these questions by demonstrating how journalists' understanding of the news factors in foreign news stories affected the spread of the WDO's conception and political message in each country.⁷ Additionally, we explore the materiality of the news, i.e. we pay attention to the role of journalists and international news agencies in its circulation.⁸ We argue that Nordic journalists and national news agencies acted as gatekeepers for local understandings of the WDO, although its portrayal was more influenced by both the capacity for on-the-spot reporting and the level of feminist organizing in each country. This also explains why the organizers' conscious attempt to create a global media event did not yield greater results in the Nordic coverage.⁹ According to Ytreberg, media events are actualized along a continuum between past, present and future, and this has an impact on the mediated experience of a given event.¹⁰ In the case of the WDO, the Nordic media coverage might have been affected by women's protests in the recent past, or by the then-present context of the IWY, or it could have fostered discussion of future actions – but in practice the coverage rarely did any of this, as our article demonstrates.

Our research method consists of close reading, including framing analysis and historical contextualization. Framing analysis focuses on the perspectives that affect and permeate the representation of phenomena and news events.¹¹ Not only does the mass media decide the agenda for public discussion, but journalists also select the viewpoint from which a given topic is presented.¹² In this article, we focus on the usage of words and images as parts of a narrative that transmits attitudes, ideas and discourses.¹³ Our interpretation takes account of two historical contexts: the context of professional journalism, and the respective context of each Nordic country. While discussing how journalists guided their readers' understanding of the Icelandic women's action, we pay particular attention to local notions about the role and relevance of feminism in society and women's organizing for gender equality.

We gathered our research data by using various combinations, in relevant languages, of search terms such as ‘women AND Iceland AND strike’, ‘Iceland AND strike’, ‘women AND day off’, ‘women’s day off’, ‘women’s leave’ and ‘women’s strike’ in the digital interfaces of the national libraries of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. We also used the names of the organizers as search terms. We complemented this digital corpus – 96 texts in total – with scrapbooks of Nordic and other foreign media coverage of the WDO gathered and compiled by the organizers immediately after the event.¹⁴ Finally, we combed through all the Finnish women’s magazines and a sample of Finnish newspapers manually, focusing on the weeks prior to the women’s strike as well as the coverage of the day and its aftermath.¹⁵ The analysis of the Icelandic material presented in this article is based on a similar collection of digital data from the national libraries of Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Greenland. We analyse this material in detail elsewhere.¹⁶ As the collected data consisted of print media texts written in five languages and rooted in somewhat different conceptual traditions, we did not deploy methods that rely on word frequency for comparison. The amount of textual material was insufficiently large to make quantitative analysis meaningful, although we occasionally make analytical points concerning the extent of coverage in each country.

Due to the limitations of digital print media archives in the Nordic region, the data is neither wholly representative nor entirely comparable, but it nevertheless offers sufficiently comprehensive material on which to base interpretations. In what follows, we begin by presenting the scope and depth of the media coverage in each country and discussing the origins of the news items. Next, we analyse the different framings we found in the data. Lastly, we discuss the extent to which the media coverage of the WDO was connected to local feminist organizing or debates about gender equality. As our aim is to demonstrate the impact of each country’s overall climate of discussion on its coverage of the Icelandic action, we do not focus on differences between the journalism genres. Obviously, the portrayal of the WDO and the time span of the coverage differed between newspapers, commercial women’s magazines and feminist magazines, but for our purposes, the magnitude and variety of the coverage across all print media in each country is the most significant factor. During the period in question, women’s magazines were important arenas for the discussion of women’s status and feminism in the Nordic region, and this is another justification for our approach.¹⁷ We focus on print media because the transnational flow of information is comparatively easy to trace in print. Print media texts usually include source credits and the name(s) of the author and/or photographer, and a text’s origin can often be detected through comparison with other news items. Recordings of television and radio broadcasts are not transparent in the same way, and the information is not always preserved in the metadata either. Therefore, we excluded broadcast media from our analysis.

On-the-spot reporting makes the difference

On 24 October 1975 and subsequent days, the WDO was front-page news in every newspaper in Iceland. The coverage continued on the inside pages, with interviews and reports from the day. Although the most substantial coverage appeared around the time the action took place, it had received steady media attention during the months beforehand, and it continued to do so until spring 1976.¹⁸ This extensive coverage indicates that

the event met the criteria for a newsworthy story: it was an ambitious endeavour that brought together women from different backgrounds to demonstrate collectively against gender inequality. Finally, the expectation of massive participation meant it was anticipated to be a historic event. These same factors also made the WDO news in other Nordic countries.¹⁹

Swedish and Danish newspapers and magazines gave the most extensive and varied coverage of the WDO, including short news items, longer feature articles and a variety of pictures. First impressions appeared in news stories about the upcoming strike from early October onwards.²⁰ The expectations built up by these pre-news items were then reiterated in more extensive articles that covered the event as it unfolded. Some of this coverage took the form of front-page news stories with photographs, while some of it was longer coverage by the newspapers' on-the-spot journalists. For example, Sweden's *Expressen* emphasized its own on-site presence under the rubric 'Expressen is there', contextualizing it with the sentence: 'In Iceland, where all women are on strike today'.²¹ The newspaper coverage was complemented in the following weeks by longer articles in Danish and Swedish women's magazines such as *Hjemmet* and *Femina*, often giving a personalized viewpoint and including interviews with organizers or participants.²²

The diversity of the coverage, and the sense of a media event it created, was in line with the relatively large number of Swedish and Danish journalists in Reykjavik. They were supplemented by the ongoing use of Icelandic journalists as stringers or foreign correspondents in the Nordic news agencies Ritzau, Tidningarnas Telegrambyrá (TT), Norsk telegrambyrá (NTB) and Associated Press (AP),²³ as well as in some individual newsrooms, such as the Danish *Politiken*. At the same time, the coverage was influenced by the newsrooms' active role in news selection, i.e. their estimation of the value of the WDO for their local readers. Selections were made in relation to other potential news items, based on the above-mentioned news factors. For instance, when the news broke about the upcoming women's strike, some Danish and Swedish newsrooms had already prepared to cover Iceland's unilateral extension of its fishery boundary to 200 nautical miles, which was due to take effect on 15 October.²⁴ The latter was probably regarded as hard news suitable for newspapers' foreign news sections, whereas the WDO's gendered aspect most likely had softer connotations, thus decreasing its news value.²⁵ Nevertheless, some of the journalists who were sent to Reykjavik to cover the fisheries story stayed on to cover the women's action as well. Others travelled to Reykjavik just for the WDO.²⁶

In the end, the Swedish and Danish print media gave much more comprehensive coverage to the WDO than to the fisheries extension. The coincidence of the two news stories perhaps generated greater interest in Iceland, thereby enabling journalism to include in-depth views of the WDO.²⁷ For example, the Danish news agency Ritzau emphasized the feeling of being on the spot, as can be read in a report published in many of Denmark's smaller newspapers:

Last Friday was a peculiar day in Iceland. The women disappeared from their workplaces, abandoned their homes and left the childcare to the men while they gathered by the thousands at a meeting in downtown Reykjavik, where they held speeches, sang and were happy.²⁸

The passage indicates a ‘sense of on-site presence’, which according to Zelizer is the key journalism practice when eye-witnessing is used to create a mediated foreign event.²⁹ The news item was written by Icelandic journalist Árni Gunnarsson. Previously deputy news manager for the national broadcasting service *Ríkisútvarpið*, at the time of WDO he was news editor for the non-aligned daily *Vísir*,³⁰ and he also served as a correspondent for Ritzau, TT and NTB during the 1970s.³¹ The constructed ‘liveness’ of Gunnarsson’s report offered Danish readers a potential connection to the shared experience of Icelandic women.³²

References to ‘our own correspondent’ could also be found in some news items published in Norway.³³ Interestingly, however, these items did not take a similar eye-witness perspective, instead consisting mainly of factual information. Likewise, Finnish newspapers had occasional opportunities for more comprehensive reporting but did not take them. For instance, Björn Jóhannsson, a journalist on *Morgunblaðið*, Iceland’s largest daily newspaper, worked as a news correspondent for Finland’s leading national daily, *Helsingin Sanomat*, but his services were not utilized in this matter.³⁴ It is unclear whether Finnish and Norwegian newsrooms had their own journalists on-site, but at a press conference in Reykjavik arranged by the WDO organizers on the eve of the event, no Finnish media outlets were listed, and the only Norwegian outlet present was the TV programme *Dagsrevyn* (Björn Egil Eide).

Most of the nineteen foreign journalists who attended the press conference were from Swedish newsrooms. These included *Göteborgs Posten* (Lars Helgen, whom we assume was also the pseudonymous Hgn), *Arbetet* (Herman Melzer), *Expressen* (Monika Björk), *Dagens Nyheter* (Mats Lundegård), *Aftonbladet* (Gudrun Ekeflo), *Femina* (Katarina Nordenfalk), *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* (Sonia Schlossman and Walter Backen) and *Tidningen Se* (Björn Larsson and Christel Carlborg). The Swedish journalists were accompanied by photographers, such as *Expressen*’s Kenneth Jonasson and *Dagens Nyheter*’s Lennart Isaksson. Additionally, the Swedish Broadcasting Company had a film crew in Iceland, including reporters from both TV1 and TV2, while Lotta Möller interviewed the organizers for her radio programme after the event. Among the Danish correspondents were Kaare Toftkær Jensen from *Politiken* and Niels Jørgen Haagerup from *Berlingske Tidende*, as well as Herdis Skov and Gitte Just from the tabloid *B.T.* and its weekend edition, *Søndags B.T.* Although this list does not include all the foreign journalists who were present in Iceland on the day, it nevertheless clearly indicates the differences between the Nordic newsrooms in terms of the volume of interest.³⁵ This was probably caused in part by differences in economic resources: Swedish and Danish newsrooms could afford to send their own journalists to cover the story.³⁶

Finnish and Norwegian newsrooms’ lack of on-site presence is important because it directly influenced the nature of their coverage of the WDO. In Norway, no images or major news articles appeared in the newspapers immediately after the action; the news coverage included only two rounds of short news items based on NTB newswires.³⁷ Although twenty-five news items in total were published around the country, the absence of longer articles immediately before and after the action differentiates the Norwegian coverage from that found in Denmark and Sweden. This lower level of interest can be connected to Norwegian coverage of feminism and gender equality issues in general: for instance, the Norwegian IWY committee’s final report concluded that the media had often ridiculed the IWY.³⁸ Nevertheless, NTB’s collaboration with an Icelandic stringer – most

likely Gunnarsson – along with its access to the Reuters newswire ensured that Norwegian readers would occasionally hear Icelandic voices, when some of the papers briefly quoted Gerður Steinhórsdóttir, who was one of the organizers, or referred to radio commentaries in Iceland on the day.³⁹ Furthermore, the left-leaning newspapers *Ný Tid* and *Dagbladet* returned to the topic ten days after the action, and this time the texts included images of the strike.⁴⁰ By that point, however, the WDO had already become a cultural reference point through which journalists could approach 1970s feminism as a wider phenomenon; it was no longer news.

In Finland, short news items based on Reuters, the Finnish news agency Suomen tietotoimisto (STT-FNB) and (in some cases) UPI could be found in *Helsingin Sanomat*, the leading bourgeois daily *Uusi Suomi*, and regional newspapers such as *Åbo Underrättelser*, *Turun Sanomat*, *Jakobstads Tidning*, *Aamulehti* and *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*.⁴¹ Although these small news items spread knowledge about the WDO to different parts of Finland, the news value of the action seems to have been relatively low, especially in the Finnish-language newspapers. For example, *Aamulehti* used the future tense in a news story published the day after the strike, indicating that the news-wire content – distributed by STT – had been handled rather perfunctorily. At the same time, Finnish newspapers published extensively about another IWY-related event: the World Congress of Women, organized by the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) – a transnational organization closely connected to the Soviet Union – and held in Berlin on 20–24 October 1975.⁴² The perception that the official women's congress was more important than the Icelandic women's grassroots action is evident when one looks at Finnish women's magazines, which made no mention of the WDO. The perception was clearly signalled in the late October issue of *Me naiset*, which listed both the World Congress of Women and the Finnish president's state visit to Sweden in its advertisement for the next issue, but said nothing about the WDO.⁴³ The Icelandic women's action would have been a reasonable topic for a Finnish weekly aimed at young urban women,⁴⁴ which leads us to the next section of our analysis. We will now demonstrate that Denmark's closer cultural proximity to Iceland influenced the coverage there, while the state of feminist organizing played a role in the coverage in each country.

Icelandic framings leak into Nordic news coverage, but not straightforwardly

Across the Nordic media landscape, long-standing party-political connections were beginning to loosen up in the mid-1970s, slowly moving the Nordic media towards the liberal model.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, many Icelandic newspapers still had ideological profiles, at least in their editorials, and some maintained implicit or explicit connections to political parties,⁴⁶ which affected their coverage of the WDO. Newspapers with connections to the political left tended to present the event's significance in political terms, as a serious women's and class struggle. They also persisted in naming the action a 'strike' rather than the less confrontational 'day off', and they underlined the importance of women's solidarity as workers across class differences, regardless of whether they worked for a wage or did (unpaid) work in the home. In contrast, newspapers more associated with the political right foregrounded the joyous and festive atmosphere of the 'day off' as a celebration of women and highlighted the dignity of Icelandic women, even invoking

nationalist connotations.⁴⁷ This dominant framing in the right-wing media highlighted the WDO's moderate nature and depoliticized its message. A third framing that was common in the Icelandic coverage – mostly in non-aligned newspapers – took a humorous perspective, sometimes including belittlement. But all across the spectrum, the WDO was regularly framed as historic and unique, with a hint of national pride that Iceland had made world news.⁴⁸

To some extent, these Icelandic framings leaked into the press coverage in other Nordic countries too, sometimes – but not always – following the original political divisions. Such framings might have come from an Icelandic stringer or a foreign news agency, and they were doubtless also influenced by the countries' different sociopolitical contexts and their relative geographical proximity to Iceland. This resulted in wide variation between the different Nordic countries' coverage, as we have already indicated in terms of its comprehensiveness. Although the usage of the words 'strike' and 'day off' was less politically laden in other Nordic countries than in Iceland, we will use these terms to mark what we identify as radical/political versus moderate/depoliticized framings of the event in the Nordic print media.

The Norwegian material reveals a similar framing to that found in Iceland's leftist newspapers. This material consists almost exclusively of coverage in liberal newspapers that used NTB as their source. Curiously, conservative-leaning papers such as *Aftenposten* and *Morgenbladet* also relied on NTB,⁴⁹ which can thus be identified as the point of origin for the WDO's Norwegian framing. Although NTB offered a less detailed analysis of the strike than the Icelandic coverage, the broad solidarity among Icelandic women remained the main framing of news items published in Norway after the day itself. While initial news items about the upcoming strike had focused on working women and their expected participation, the news on the day anticipated that 'working women and housewives [would] participate in the strike on equal terms'.⁵⁰ However, the radical potential of the day received mixed interpretations, an example of which is a slightly demeaning opening paragraph in *Morgenbladet* the next day: 'Instead of working, the women in Reykjavik yesterday participated in a demonstration that *almost* caused a traffic jam in the city centre'.⁵¹ The papers stressed the near total participation rate, but they did not present the action through a clear emancipatory framing. This can partly be explained by the composition of the coverage, which largely comprised short news items. At the same time, the wording used in the Norwegian coverage resembled that found in Finnish-language newspapers: it offered only brief descriptions of the day, emphasizing the WDO's organized and formal nature.⁵²

Interestingly, the conservative-leaning Finnish daily *Uusi Suomi* made reference to a slightly more radical view of the WDO when it quoted a militant women's representative who was fed up with the status quo: 'Our husbands leave us at eight o'clock in the morning. Then they come home as visitors in the evening, shovel food into their mouths, then disappear again to clubs and societies'.⁵³ This quote – which also appeared in a Reuters-based item in the US daily *Buffalo Evening News* – probably derived from the original newswire and thus reflected an anglophone view of the event. Otherwise, the tone of the Finnish-language news coverage was more moderate than the English-language coverage, where the reader was informed, for instance, that 'the men who treated all the strike threats as a huge joke began to get the point'.⁵⁴ By contrast with the radical potential of the action portrayed in the anglophone framing, the *Uusi Suomi* article

was constructed as a more objective report on events. The reader learned that ninety per cent of Iceland's women had participated in the action, meaning that almost the whole of society had been at a standstill. The article also described the idea behind the WDO as connected to Icelandic women's dissatisfaction with their status in society and the family.

The *Uusi Suomi* article reveals how journalists in local newsrooms acted as gatekeepers of information when selecting the news and its framing. News stories about the WDO underwent a process of cultural filtering before media consumers outside Iceland could learn about the event.⁵⁵ But the cultural filtering was often only partial, resulting in texts that included contradictory framings. For example, while the radical potential of the action remained obscure in the *Uusi Suomi* article, the reference to militant feminists nevertheless offered a glimpse of a more emancipatory framing. The latter might be interpreted as a way to dissociate the organizers from the moderate behaviour expected of bourgeois women, but the article's headline expressed the paper's support: 'Women's legitimate strike in Iceland'. Traces of cultural filtering can also be found in the wire news circulating in Finland: the STT-FNB reporter in charge of compiling the news seems to have deliberately omitted the action's more radical aspects when presenting the WDO to Finnish readers.⁵⁶

The coverage of the WDO was arguably also influenced by the composition of newsroom staff. For instance, the workforce on *Vasabladet*, the second-largest Finnish-Swedish newspaper, included prominent women who were in close contact with Swedish women's movement activists,⁵⁷ and this may have secured more space for the WDO than in other papers. However, this could not have happened without a journalist or journalists on-site. The most factual news item in *Vasabladet* was attributed to an FNB correspondent, whereas the slightly more informative news story that included Icelandic voices was written by the paper's own correspondent in Reykjavik. This is likely to have been Monika Björk, a Swedish journalist who was covering the strike for *Expressen* and whose byline was attached to *Vasabladet*'s most extensive article, published the day after the action.⁵⁸ The unmarked use of imported news items was not atypical in and of itself, since Finnish-Swedish newsrooms had no foreign correspondents of their own in the 1970s. Instead, they used stringers, who regularly reported on current affairs for Finnish-Swedish papers alongside their own jobs.⁵⁹ Thus, journalists' intellectual capital could create entanglements in the content of Nordic news stories that crossed national borders.⁶⁰

Björk's article in *Vasabladet* was an original piece, not a copy of texts she had written for *Expressen*. In the article, Björk describes the start of the day in the small town of Hveragerdi, where she interviews ordinary citizens as well as WDO organizers. In addition, she gives opponents of the WDO some space, quoting two men who were critical of the action and also mentioning the prime minister's secretary, who refused to participate in the strike. However, the overall tone is positive and presents the action as successful: 'We dreamt about this. But this has surpassed everything we dared to dream of, said Gudrun Fregeirsdottir [sic] and Björg Einarsdottir'.⁶¹ The framing of the day as a serious protest, which is visible in Björk's article, was also present in Swedish newspapers, most of which used the term 'women's strike' in their headlines and content. For example, a small local newspaper in Åmål declared 'It seems that Icelandic women are warlike Valkyries',⁶² while Herman Melzer described the action sympathetically in *Arbetet*, hinting at its radical

aspects and its significance with subheadings such as ‘important demonstration’ and ‘mass invasion’ – the latter referring to the anticipated stream of women travelling from the countryside to participate in the demonstration in Reykjavik.⁶³ Although some articles used the action’s official name, describing it as a ‘day off’, the word ‘strike’ seems to have functioned as a culturally recognizable emblem of women’s quest for gender equality in Sweden. While no explicit references to them were made, it is possible that striking women workers at the Swedish cleaning company ASAB had made an impact in this regard: they had received broad media coverage in Sweden the previous winter, initiating a wide-ranging public discussion.⁶⁴

Several pieces by Swedish journalists described how the forthcoming action had kindled fierce debates in Iceland, and how these were connected to the use of the words ‘strike’ and ‘day off’.⁶⁵ By offering different viewpoints on the day, the Swedish reporting followed the practice of balance, a basic news routine in professional journalism. However, in some instances, journalists did not remain merely neutral observers, instead offering a preferred reading of the events, in a way that echoes Mellado’s argument concerning the interventionist tendencies of journalists with political preferences.⁶⁶ For example, *Dagens Nyheter*’s Mats Lundegård downplayed the WDO’s radicalism and emphasized its joyful and playful aspects. Having followed a large group of women who had travelled by ferry from the small town of Akranes to participate in the action in Reykjavik, he described the atmosphere in detail: ‘It is more like a day trip than a journey to a struggle, more glam than conscious determination’.⁶⁷ The non-aligned liberal Swedish *Dagens Nyheter* used a framing that was somewhat similar to that found in right-wing newspapers in Iceland, albeit slightly more nuanced,⁶⁸ while the social democratic *Arbetet* and *Aftonbladet* resembled the left-wing coverage in Iceland.

A similar negotiation between different framings can be found in the Danish coverage. The WDO received a rather revolutionary framing in some newspapers, although this was often mixed with the more moderate official vocabulary of the ‘day off’. For instance, *Information*, *Ny Dag*, *Aktuelt* and *Herning Folkeblad* all published the same news story, which had originated from Ritzau: the story referred to the action as a ‘strike’ and stated that the women had managed to paralyse Icelandic society. However, the headlines varied in each paper, revealing the gatekeeping role of local journalists: the left-leaning *Information* framed the news with the headline ‘Women’s power paralyses the whole country’, while the social democratic *Ny Dag* wrote ‘Everything paralysed as women take a holiday’.⁶⁹ The original Ritzau item had probably been written by Gunnarsson, who was politically aligned with Iceland’s *Alþýðuflokkurinn* (Social Democratic Party).⁷⁰ It is noticeable that Gunnarsson referred exclusively to the action as a ‘strike’ in his reports for foreign media,⁷¹ as did Svavar Gestsson, editor of the daily *Þjóðviljinn*, which was the mouthpiece of *Alþýðubandalagið* (People’s Alliance), Iceland’s most left-wing party.⁷² In an article for the Danish *Information*, Gestsson explained that the WDO’s cross-political organizing committee had agreed to name the action a ‘day off’ but that ‘leftist women only speak about it in terms of a strike’.⁷³

Apart from these Icelandic voices, the most in-depth Danish analyses were provided by on-the-spot journalists such as Niels Jørgen Haagerup, whose report from Reykjavik described the day as follows: ‘The women of Iceland conquered the streets of Reykjavik and other towns yesterday when they gathered in protest marches and meetings [. . .]. The action affected the whole of Iceland’.⁷⁴ Haagerup’s text stressed the seriousness of the

action as a demonstration rather than a celebration. This extended to *Dagbladet's* article on the day of the action: 'The Icelandic women are [...] not out on a peaceful errand. They are organizing the most militant action of the Women's Year in support of themselves'.⁷⁵

Other Danish papers were slightly more reserved in their coverage. For instance, the day after the action, the right-wing tabloid *B.T.* published Herdis Skov's coverage in two parts.⁷⁶ The first part was an interview with a couple in their fifties, published under the headline 'Women of Iceland: Now the men will finally understand that we are serious'. The interviewees, Adalheidur Bjarnfredsdottir and Gudsteinn Thorsteinsson, were described as members of the 'unskilled' workforce, where the gender wage gap was up to thirty per cent, and they were portrayed as wholehearted in their support of the action:

Adalheidur smiles happily and looks down at the red pop socks she has bought for the occasion. [...] I'm doing it [participating in the WDO] because the men must understand that we are serious about this.

Gudsteinn too sympathized with the striking women: 'I think this women's day off is all right. We should have had it a long time ago'.⁷⁷ Interestingly, Adalheidur's role as a member of the organizing team⁷⁸ was not mentioned. In the second text, Skov similarly presented the WDO's comprehensive effects on Icelandic society, although the action's radical aspects were somewhat devalued by the use of the phrase 'women's day off' in the headline.⁷⁹

As our examples demonstrate, the headlines in the Danish papers often used the 'women's day off' terminology, even when the content of the texts presented a more serious interpretation of the action.⁸⁰ Although the demeaning framing was subtle in this way, it nevertheless minimized the impact of the Icelandic model on female Danish readers by offering a preferred interpretation. Another way to neutralize the WDO's critical message was to use a humorous framing, as the liberal non-aligned Icelandic papers frequently did.⁸¹ When stories travelled from Iceland to Denmark, however, the framings adopted did not automatically follow the Danish papers' political leanings. For example, the emancipatory emphasis in Gunnarsson's and Gestsson's articles was accompanied by a humorous framing of the women's strike when *Information* published a comic strip titled 'Eros and Power'. The strip showed a newlywed couple in bed and indicated that the woman was refusing to have sex with her husband, including the words: 'All the women of Iceland went on a protest strike for twenty-four hours'.⁸² Conversely, humour could also be used to underline the strike's importance by portraying men as helpless without women. This framing seems to have entered the Danish public discussion through the Ritzau news item mentioned earlier:

The office managers could not answer the phones themselves, and the few male bank clerks ran back and forth in a hopeless attempt to provide the necessary service. [...] In schools, the male teachers tried to do something for the students, but they had to give up, send the students home or show videos.⁸³

All things considered, newspaper coverage of the Icelandic women's action was more varied in Denmark than in other Nordic countries, and this highlights somewhat pointedly that a local connection to a foreign event increases the variety of its journalistic framings. The close historical and cultural ties between Iceland and Denmark meant there were

relatively large numbers of Icelandic people living in Denmark for study or work.⁸⁴ Their interest in the WDO can be seen, for instance, in readers' letters about the action, which had a somewhat agitational tone – emphasizing the radical aspects of the day.⁸⁵ Such cultural connections made coverage of the event more meaningful for local readers, and this in turn made it a viable topic for local discussion,⁸⁶ as we will show next.

Levels of local feminist organizing influence the reporting of the strike

As we noted in the introduction, the WDO was initiated by the Icelandic Redstockings, and to some extent the Icelandic newspapers identified the action with the Redstockings' struggle for women's liberation. Similarly, some of the coverage in Sweden, Norway and Denmark made the connection to the Icelandic Redstockings and thus to the feminist movement. For example, in an article published on the day of the WDO in the Swedish tabloid *Aftonbladet*, Gudrun Ekeflo pointed out Icelandic feminists' role as the originators of the strike, alongside a picture of women preparing feminist slogans for the event.⁸⁷ However, there were differences in the extent of the day's feminist framing in the different Nordic countries, and these differences can be explained by the variation in the respective forms, levels of development and overall situations of the new women's movement in the countries in question. Women's liberation groups had been established in Iceland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway around 1970 or slightly earlier; in Finland, feminist organizing had begun later, the first new feminist groups being established as late as 1973. The degree of radicalism also differed between the countries: the Danish and Icelandic movements shared a stronger emphasis on spectacular and provocative activist practices by comparison with their counterparts in Norway, Sweden and Finland.⁸⁸

The nature of women's feminist organizing in each country not only led to differences in the intensity of journalistic coverage of the WDO but also influenced the discussion – or absence of discussion – of the need for similar women's actions on home turf. For example, in connection with the WDO, the left-wing Norwegian local *Dagningen* interviewed Astrid Brekken, a well-known member of *Nyfeministerne* (New Feminists), and Elin Wedege, leader of the Norwegian housewives' association *Norsk husmorsførbund*. While Wedege was sceptical about the prospects of a local women's strike, the article used Brekken's enthusiasm for a Norwegian equivalent as its main framing: 'Women's strike over the Christmas period here at home?'⁸⁹ Another left-wing Norwegian newspaper, *Fremtiden*, used the opposite framing, highlighting the success of the Icelandic demonstration but declaring that it did not want to encourage similar activity at home.⁹⁰ Otherwise, Norwegian journalists did not see the WDO as a viable model for local actions, and immediate coverage remained scarce. The feminist magazine *Sirene* even commented on this, pondering whether the Norwegian press had remained almost silent 'because of fear that we could follow the example of our Icelandic sisters?'⁹¹ By contrast with the lack of interest in Norwegian newsrooms, the WDO organizers received telegrams conveying greetings and solidarity from a range of women's associations in Norway, and these were read aloud during the demonstration in Reykjavik.⁹² Furthermore, *Solsikken*, the journal of *Oslo kvinnesaksforening* (Oslo's Women's Rights Association), published a text by Astrid Benterud about the conception, organization and effects of the WDO in its September 1976 issue.⁹³

Knowledge about the WDO also reached the Danish women's associations, some of which expressed solidarity. For example, the Danish Redstockings sent greetings to the Icelandic women, as did the women's chapter of the Socialist People's Party, whose greeting was also published in several Icelandic newspapers at the senders' request.⁹⁴ Unlike in Norway, the Danish media often used local standpoints when reporting on the WDO. *B.T.* even conducted a vox pop about the idea of a women's day off as a potential tool in the struggle for gender equality in Denmark. Although the five women interviewees took somewhat different views of the issue, the paper's main framing presented the one-day action as a possible future scenario in Denmark, using the interviewees' words in the article headline: 'Danes: do the same here'.⁹⁵

B.T.'s localization of the story can be explained by the above-mentioned entanglement between Danish and Icelandic societies. Indeed, Herdis Skov's article on the WDO for *B.T.* was accompanied by a photograph of four Icelandic women who lived in Copenhagen, alongside a discussion of a potential sympathy strike by Icelanders living and working in Denmark.⁹⁶ A *Ny Dag* article published after the WDO used a picture of Icelandic women who had participated in an open-house event in Copenhagen that was organized by the Icelandic ambassador's wife.⁹⁷ Such localizations can also be seen as the offspring of the intensive media coverage given to the Danish Redstockings throughout the early 1970s,⁹⁸ which had arguably cultivated public opinion in favour of women's political agency, thereby enabling Danish journalists to connect local women's activism to the Icelandic action. A prominent example is Gitte Just's article in *B.T.*'s Sunday edition a few weeks after the WDO. Just was enthusiastic in the article, presenting an empathetic and personal perspective on the event.⁹⁹ She also outlined the radical possibilities launched by the WDO if the seeds of consciousness-raising it had planted were to flourish:

Amazing things will happen in Iceland in the future. I could almost see it in the little woman who stood beside me in the crowd, she was grey, neat and a little bit stooped, but she will go home and know that she dared to demonstrate. And tomorrow, she might start to wonder why she is paid less than her male colleague. Or why society considers her to be an appendage to men.¹⁰⁰

At the end of the article, however, this positive picture was contrasted with the views of Vilborg Hardardóttir, a journalist, Redstockings member and WDO organizer, who expressed reservations about the strike's potential to turn the majority of its participants into women's liberationists. Her somewhat pessimistic view seemed to suggest that a women's strike might not be the path that was needed in Denmark either.

The negotiation between the Icelandic model and the local context was particularly clear in the women's magazine *Alt for Damerne*, where the on-the-spot journalist Kirsten Jacobi gave a personal perspective on the events of the day, expressing her enthusiasm and admiration:

There were vibrations, as we say in contemporary Danish, when up to 40,000 women met and made world history in Reykjavik. We sang and clapped – and understood that when we stand united, we are strong.¹⁰¹

Similarly to Just in *B.T.*, Jacobi offered mixed interpretations. Despite the enthusiastic tone, she downplayed the radical aspects of the action by implying that the Icelandic Redstockings were less extreme than the Redstockings in Denmark. In light of the general

tenor of *Alt for Damerne* in the 1970s,¹⁰² we can interpret this framing as a conscious attempt to legitimize the Icelandic model for wider groups of women. Indeed, Jacobi's article suggested that Danish women too had reason to demonstrate. Nevertheless, she concluded that such events could probably only happen in Iceland, in part because of the size of the country, but mainly because the myth that Iceland was a classless society actually contained a lot of truth, and this facilitated collaboration and solidarity among women that would be harder to achieve elsewhere.¹⁰³

In Sweden, localizations of the Icelandic strike appeared only in *Arbetet*, whereas the radical framing of the event was relatively common. For instance, Melzer wrote about the women's strike in an appreciative tone and contrasted it with IWY activities in Sweden, which he described as 'calm'.¹⁰⁴ Likewise, describing the WDO organizers' varied opinions of the day's significance in *Expressen*, Björk favoured the Redstockings' radical interpretation of the WDO as a day of struggle.¹⁰⁵ The main framing of Björk's article implied a feminist perspective, which chimes with her own involvement in women journalists' struggle against male dominance in *Expressen* during the 1970s.¹⁰⁶ Feminist framings also appeared in other Swedish papers, such as the commercial women's magazine *Femina*, which published a six-page article about the WDO after the event.¹⁰⁷ The somewhat radical tone of the Swedish coverage was perhaps a result of the relatively widespread discussion of feminist aims in Swedish society, including in newsrooms. Although Sweden's biggest feminist organization, *Grupp 8* (Group 8), had not been as media-savvy as the Danish Redstockings, the topic had been widely covered in Swedish newspapers from 1970 onwards. The most prominent examples were the major article series on the 'women's revolt' and 'women's struggle' that appeared in *Dagens Nyheter* and *Expressen* in 1970 and 1971.¹⁰⁸

Interestingly, despite the radical framing of the WDO offered by the Swedish media, there was little interest in the event among women's or feminist associations. While the Icelandic organizers received telegrams of greeting from several Danish and Norwegian women's organizations and radical groups, the only greeting from Sweden was a telegram from women working in the office of the Swedish Enforcement Authority, who wrote simply 'We support you'.¹⁰⁹ Even the socialist feminist journal *Kvinnobulletinen* gave only brief coverage of the Icelandic women's strike, including its list of demands; although the piece included three pictures from the action, it was not accompanied by any detailed description or interviews, and it made no connections with the state of affairs in Sweden. The same can be said of the journal *Vi människor*,¹¹⁰ the mouthpiece of the leftist strand of the new women's movement in Sweden.¹¹¹ This was probably because of ideological differences within Nordic feminist organizing. The Redstocking movements in Denmark and Iceland, and the major radical women's organizations in Norway, i.e. the New Feminists and the Women's Front, shared the relatively straightforward aspiration to unite all women across class lines and to raise consciousness about the economic and ideological aspects of women's oppression.¹¹² By contrast, the idea of uniting all women across social classes (as in a general women's strike) may have been viewed with more scepticism in Sweden, where there was greater emphasis on the socialist aspects of the women's struggle, and where mixed attitudes towards feminism (i.e. an analysis based on gender rather than class) prevailed during the early 1970s.¹¹³

Different receptions of the IWY in the Nordic countries may also have affected their respective levels of interest in the WDO. Many of the new women's movement's demands

became institutionalized during 1975,¹¹⁴ but the radical women's movements regarded such governmental actions with a mixture of joy and scepticism. In Denmark and Norway, the IWY encouraged broad cooperation among various women's organizations, with the Danish Redstockings participating in their first and only official committee.¹¹⁵ In Sweden, on the other hand, Group 8 were highly critical of the state-appointed delegation that was organizing local IWY activities, and they refused to participate in what they saw as a bourgeois stunt alongside other, more moderate women's groups.¹¹⁶ Two Finnish women, UN Assistant-Secretary-General Helvi Sipilä and WIDF chair Hertta Kuusinen, were involved in the organization of the IWY at the international level. However, within Finland, activities based on female separatism were framed by the rhetoric that 'we are all human' in public discussions of gender equality. This rhetoric was characteristic of Nordic state feminisms in general, but in 1975 it seems to have had more weight in Finland than in other Nordic countries.¹¹⁷ This might explain why the Icelandic organizers received no solidarity greetings from Finland, although the WDO does seem to have caught the attention of local feminist activists. An indication of this is the Finnish-Swedish author Wawa Stürmer's brief mention of it in *Hufvudstadsbladet* later that year:

I remember [...] the women's strike in Iceland, on the UN day, 24 October. It was a women's general strike to show that women are needed. In Reykjavik alone, 20,000 women went on strike. [...] The women achieved their goal, they managed to show that society could not function without them. The newspapers didn't come out the next day, the fishing fleets couldn't go out, the schools couldn't operate.¹¹⁸

The last sentence of Stürmer's response in particular indicates knowledge about details that she must have gleaned from reading the brief news items published in Finland. Similarly, in March 1976, *Uusi Suomi* cited the idea of a women's strike while seeking women's opinions about a discussion of rape that was taking place in Finland at the time. The women interviewees, who represented various women's organizations and scholarly interests, had diverse viewpoints on the strike, but their awareness of the Icelandic action was evident.¹¹⁹ It is particularly significant that the *Uusi Suomi* journalist chose to use the Icelandic strike as the main framing for a local discussion of women's rights, suggesting that the strike had been acknowledged as a feminist practice despite Finland's rather thin news coverage of the WDO. The same applies to Norwegian newspapers, where the WDO was occasionally used as a reference point for feminist activism throughout 1976.¹²⁰ This indicates the level of impact that mediated circulation can have on women's feminist-inspired organizing, both in the Nordic region and globally. In practice, however, the WDO did not become a model for further action in the Nordic region.¹²¹

Conclusion

In this article, we have drawn on material from five Nordic countries in the hope of contributing a transnational perspective. We maintain the importance of transnational analysis for enriching knowledge about the circulation of political ideas and grassroots activities across borders, as well as the role of craft practices and cultural filtering in foreign journalism about those ideas and activities. However, this broad perspective also poses a challenge, since it comes at the expense of a deeper analysis of the situation in each country.

As the article has demonstrated, coverage of the WDO relied on each newsroom's estimation of the newsworthiness of the event for its local readers. The WDO's news value was influenced by each country's cultural proximity to Iceland and by other news topics at the time, such as the Finnish president's state visit to Sweden and Iceland's unilateral extension of its fisheries. The state of local feminist organizing also shaped the portrayal of the WDO in each country, and attitudes towards the new women's movement were a particularly central factor when journalists were choosing their framing for the news. In Sweden, feminist organizing had already sparked a wider societal discussion of women's rights, and this seems to have resulted in broad interest in covering the WDO. The same applies to Denmark, the Nordic country with the most vital feminist movement in the 1970s, and the country with the closest cultural proximity to Iceland. In Finland, feminist organizing was still relatively marginal in 1975, which seems to explain the rather brief coverage of the event compared with other Nordic countries. However, this explanation does not apply to Norway, where new feminist organizing had been rather intense during the early 1970s. In this case, the moderate interest of most major Norwegian dailies in the WDO can be interpreted as a semi-conscious choice to distance women's active organizing from the country in order to avoid a similar uprising in Norway. A similar strategic practice can also be identified in Denmark, where some newspaper headlines encouraged a moderate interpretation of the WDO and its significance.

The key factor behind Sweden's and Denmark's more extensive coverage of the strike compared with Finland and Norway was the presence of correspondents in Iceland during the strike. Newsrooms that lacked the capacity for on-the-spot reporting had to rely instead on short news items circulated by international and Nordic news agencies such as Reuters, TT, NTB, STT-FNB and Ritzau. This meant that the WDO received only minor coverage or was even ignored in many newsrooms, especially in Finland and Norway. Thus, the WDO was not always a newsworthy topic outside Iceland unless journalists from other countries were able to offer human-interest viewpoints. In addition to newsrooms' own on-the-spot journalists, Icelandic stringers added a local perspective to Nordic news-wire items, which to some extent offered more left-wing framings of the day, at least in Denmark and Norway. Thus, this case study highlights the role of on-the-spot journalists in reporting on foreign news, as well as the gatekeeper role of journalists in the respective countries, who chose the framing for news stories that had been compiled from news agency material. It also demonstrates that the scope for creating a media event was missed to some extent in all the Nordic countries insofar as neither the IWY nor previous gender-specific strikes were used as a wider context for coverage of the WDO.

Notes

1. Monika Björk. "Í morgun stár Ísland stilla: Kvinnorna strejkar." *Expressen*, October 23, 1975.
2. Einarsdóttir, "Kveikjan að kvennafrii"; Steinþórsdóttir, "Í samstöðunni felst sigur kvenna".
3. These figures came from polls conducted by the organizers in various workplaces to estimate the level of potential support before the action itself took place.
4. Pálmadóttir and Kurvinen, "If the day turns out well".
5. KSS 1, A3, list of foreign reporters; KSS 1, two scrapbooks of media coverage compiled by the organizers.
6. e.g. Bradley, *Mass Media*; Granjon, "Le féminisme radical français"; Greenwald, *Daughters of 1968*.

7. For news factor scholarship, see Galtung and Holmboe Ruge, "The Structure of Foreign News," 64–91; Östgaard, "Factors Influencing the Flow of News," 39–63; Hadenius and Weibull, *Press, radio, tv*, 269–74. For a critique of news factor scholarship, Joye, Heinrich and Wöhlert, "50 years of Galtung and Ruge".
8. e.g. Valaskivi and Sumiala, "Circulating social imaginaries"; Raetzsch and Bødker, "Journalism and the Circulation of Communicative Objects".
9. Pálmadóttir and Kurvinen, "If the day turns out well".
10. Ytreberg, "Towards historical understanding," 312–3; Ytreberg, *Media and Events in History*, 3–5.
11. Gamson, "Bystanders, Public Opinion, and the Media," 245.
12. Ettema, "Crafting cultural resonance," 132–4; Werenskjold, "Opprør på dagsorden," 48–9; Kurvinen, *Feminism in Finnish Print Media*; Couldry, *Media Rituals*, 41–2, 55–6, 71.
13. Khan and MacEachen, "Foucauldian Discourse Analysis".
14. KSS 1, scrapbooks. The scrapbooks include 37 articles from Nordic countries.
15. Extensive manual collection was required for the Finnish material because the National Library of Finland holds only limited digitized collections.
16. Pálmadóttir and Kurvinen, "If the day turns out well".
17. Saarenmaa and Ruoho, "Women's magazines," 290–4; Ytre-Arne, "Changing Magazine Journalism," 77.
18. Pálmadóttir and Kurvinen, "If the day turns out well".
19. In the 1970s media, the news factors for foreign news included elements such as unexpectedness (women striking), cultural proximity (Nordic region), intensity (high participation rate), non-ambiguity and significance (the clear message of women's importance to society). e.g. Galtung and Holmboe Ruge, "The Structure of Foreign News," 64–91; Östgaard, "Factors Influencing the Flow of News," 39–63; Hadenius and Weibull, *Press, radio, tv*, 269–74.
20. e.g. "Kvinde-oprør." *Amtavisen*, October 6, 1975; "Kvinde-fridagen på Island vækker opsigt i udlande." *Horsens Folkeblad*, October 13, 1975; "Kvinde-oprør i Island." *Næstved Tidende*, October 13, 1975; "Islandske kvinder vækker stor opsigt." *Sjællands Tidende*, October 13, 1975; "Kvinderne vil alle holde fri." *Midtjyllands Avis*, October 13, 1975; "Kvinde 'fridag' vækker opsigt." *Skive Folkeblad*, October 13, 1975; "Islands kvinder tager en fridag." *Amtavisen*, October 13, 1975; "Kvinder i Island holder en fridag." *Vendsyssel Tidende*, October 14, 1975; Hgn. "Kvinnostrejke om en vecka på Island." *Göteborgs-Posten*, October 14, 1975; "Intresse for kvindefridag." *Kolding Folkeblad*, October 20, 1975.
21. *Expressen*, October 24, 1975.
22. KSS 1, scrapbooks.
23. The US news agency AP had a Nordic bureau in Stockholm in the 1970s. Hadenius and Weibull, *Press, radio, tv*, 252.
24. This event was part of the 'Cod Wars' between Iceland and Britain and was widely reported internationally. Ingimundarson, "Fighting the Cod Wars in the Cold War".
25. The division between hard and soft news dates back to scholarship from the 1970s. Recently, the division has been problematized – for instance, with the introduction of the concept of general news. However, in the 1970s, professional journalism's gendered practices strongly maintained the division. Lehman-Wilzig and Seletzky, "Hard news, soft news, 'general news'," 37–43.
26. Steinþórsdóttir, "Í samstöðunni felst sigur kvenna," 52.
27. KSS 1, A3, report of the media committee.
28. e.g. "Alt lammet, da kvinder holdt fri." *Ny Dag*, October 25, 1975.
29. Zelizer, "Having Been There," 410–2.
30. "Árni Gunnarsson fréttastjóri Vísis." *Morgunblaðið*, August 28, 1975.
31. An article published in *Information* includes the same sentences and identifies Gunnarsson as the writer. Árni Gunnarsson, "Islandsk kvindemagt lammede hele landet." *Information*, undated, KSS 1, scrapbook.
32. Also Couldry, *Media Rituals*, 96–9; Ytreberg, "Towards historical understanding," 312–4.

33. e.g. "Island: Kvinnestreik på FN-dagen." *Oppland Arbeiderblad*, October 7, 1975; "Island: Kvinnestreik på FN-dagen." *Dagningen*, October 7, 1975; "Kvinnestreik på Island på FN-dagen." *Fiskaren*, October 9, 1975; "Effektiv kvinnestreik." *Bergens Tidende*, October 25, 1975; "Kvinnestreik på Island." *Dagningen*, October 25, 1975.
34. KSS 1, A3, Report of the media committee; Bláðamannafélag Íslands (The Icelandic journalist association).
35. KSS1, A3, Report from the media group.
36. Dunajska, "Den svenska dagspressens särskilda ställning," 224–6; Bjondeberg, "Dagspressens ombrudte Danmarkskort," 244. On economic constraints and their effect on the use of foreign correspondents, see Cohen, "Foreign press corps," 89–90, 98–9.
37. e.g. "Kvinnestreik på Island." *Adresseavisen*, October 7, 1975; "Kvinnestreik." *Gula Tidend*, October 7, 1975; "Kvinnestreik på Island på FN-dagen." *Fiskaren*, October 9, 1975; "Effektiv kvinnestreik på Island." *Stavanger Arbeiderblad*, October 24, 1975; "Kvinnestreik på Island." *Telen*, October 24, 1975; "Effektiv kvinnestreik." *Bergens Tidende*, October 25, 1975; "Kvinnestreik på Island." *Dagningen*, October 25, 1975; "Kvinnestreik på Island." *Oppland Arbeiderblad*, October 25, 1975; "Kvinnestreik i Island nesten hundre prosent effektiv." *Vårt Land*, October 25, 1975.
38. Halsaa, "FNs Internationale kvinneår 1975".
39. "Islands kvinner streiker." *Aftenposten*, October 24, 1975; "Kvinnestreik på Island." *Telen*, October 24, 1975; "Effektiv kvinnestreik på Island." *Stavanger Arbeiderblad*, October 24, 1975; "Kvinnestreik på Island." *Dagningen*, October 25, 1975; "Islands kvinnestreik." *Lillehammer Tilskuer*, October 25, 1975; "Når kvinnene ikke vil ..." *Morgenbladet*, October 25, 1975; "Islands kvinnestreik." *Samhold-Velgeren*, October 25, 1975.
40. "FN-dagen våknet Islandske kvinner." *Dagbladet*, October 30, 1975; "Stopp Island – vi vil med!" *Ny Tid*, October 31, 1975; *Dagbladet*, November 1, 1975.
41. "Naiset lakossa Islannissa." *Aamulehti*, October 25, 1975; "Islannin naiset päivän lakossa." *Turun Sanomat*, October 25, 1975; "Islands kvinnor tog ledig dag – vad hände då?" *Jakobstads Tidning*, October 25, 1975.
42. e.g. *Iltä-Sanomat*, October 20, 1975; Margareta Wenzel. "50% kvinnor på förtroendeposter inom fackföreningsrörelsen i DDR." *Folktidningen Ny Tid*, October 23, 1975; "2000 naisen työ." *Iltä-Sanomat*, October 23, 1975; Maija-Liisa Heini. "'Naisten vuosi ei saa jäädä keskusteluksi.'" *Helsingin Sanomat*, October 24, 1975; "Naisten vuoden konferenssit." *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*, October 26, 1974 (editorial); "Jämlikhet, utveckling, fred." *Folktidningen Ny Tid*, October 30, 1975.
43. *Me naiset* advert in *Iltä-Sanomat*, October 29, 1975.
44. Saarenmaa and Ruoho, "Women's magazines," 290.
45. Hallin and Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, 143–5, 153–4, 161–5, 169–83.
46. Weibull, "Är partipressen död"; Dahl, *History of the Norwegian Press*, 162–6; Bjondeberg, "Dagspressens ombrudte Danmarkskort," 247–52.
47. "Jákvæð baráttu konunnar." *Morgunblaðið*, October 25, 1975.
48. Pálmadóttir and Kurvinen, "If the day turns out well".
49. "Islands kvinner streiker." *Aftenposten*, October 24, 1975; "Når kvinnene ikke vil ..." *Morgenbladet*, October 25, 1975.
50. "Islands kvinner streiker." *Aftenposten*, October 24, 1975 (our italics).
51. "Når kvinnene ikke vil ..." *Morgenbladet*, October 25, 1975.
52. "Women's Strike Virtually Ties Up Iceland." *Buffalo Evening News*, undated. KSS 1, scrapbook.
53. "Naisten oikeutettu lakko Islannissa." *Uusi Suomi*, October 25, 1975.
54. KSS 1, scrapbooks.
55. e.g. Shoemaker, *Gatekeeping*; Nossek, "Our news and their news," 347, 361–4.
56. e.g. "Islannin naiset pitivät vapaata." *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*, October 25, 1975; "Islands kvinnor tog ledig dag – vad hände då?" *Jakobstads Tidning*, October 25, 1975.
57. Three female journalists who actively raised women's issues worked in the *Vasabladet* newsroom: Margit Kass, Anita Svensson and Anna-Lisa Sahlström. Marita Bagge. "Hon är journalist för alltid," *Vasabladet*, December 24, 2006.

58. Reykjavík/Vbl. "Íslands kvinnor vill visa männen hur nödvändiga de är." *Vasabladet*, October 24, 1975; Reykjavík/FNB korr. "Barnen på jobbet." *Vasabladet*, October 25, 1975; Monika Björk. "Reykjavík stod blickstill när kvinnorna tog fridag." *Vasabladet*, October 26, 1975.
59. Bonsdorff, "Hbl – ett instrument," 53–4.
60. On entangled media history, see Cronqvist and Hilgert, "Entangled Media Histories," 133–6.
61. Monika Björk. "Reykjavík stod blickstill när kvinnorna tog fridag." *Vasabladet*, October 26, 1975.
62. "Kvinnostrejki." *Provinstidningen Dalsland*, November 24, 1975.
63. Herman Melzer. "Kvinnostrejki lamslár Ísland?" *Arbetet*, October 7, 1975.
64. Pálmadóttir, Johansson-Wilén and Schmitz, "Collective identity," 483–4.
65. e.g. Mats Lundegård. "Lösenordet var 'kvinnafri' då Ísland gick på sparlåga." *Dagens Nyheter*, October 27, 1975; "Den stora kvinnostrejken på Ísland." *Femina*, undated, KSS1, scrapbook.
66. Mellado, "Professional roles," 600–8; Ryfe, "News Routines," 129–54.
67. Mats Lundegård. "Lösenordet var 'kvinnafri' då Ísland gick på sparlåga." *Dagens Nyheter*, October 27, 1975.
68. Mats Lundegård. "Kvinnostrejki stoppar allt på Ísland." *Dagens Nyheter*, October 21, 1975.
69. "Kvinde-aktion lammede Ísland." *Aktuelt*, October 25, 1975; "Alt lammet, da kvinder holdt fri." *Ny Dag*, October 25, 1975; "Íslands kvinder beviste deres uunværdighed." *Herning Folkeblad*, October 25, 1975.
70. Gunnarsson was a member of parliament for this party in 1978–1983 and 1987–1991.
71. e.g. "Ísland: kvinde-aktion." *Information*, October 8, 1975. It is notable that Gunnarsson's coverage of the WDO for the Icelandic daily *Vísir* did not use the word 'strike', instead speaking of the 'day off'.
72. "Ísland: kvinde-aktion." *Information*, October 8, 1975.
73. Svavar Gestsson. "Adskillige sektorer lammes." *Information*, October 24, 1975.
74. Niels Jørgen Haagerup. "Høj stemning under Íslands kvindestrejke: Men skepsis om resultatet." *Berlingske Tidende*, October 25, 1975.
75. "Vovet komedie bliver barsk saga." *Dagbladet*, October 24, 1975.
76. Bødker, "Tabloid and populist sensitivities in Denmark"; Bjondeberg, "Dagspressens ombrudte Danmarkskort," 252–5.
77. Herdis Skov. "Íslands kvinder: Nu kan mændene vel endelig se, at det er alvor." *B.T.*, October 25, 1975.
78. "Hvers vegna sameinast konur?" *Þjóðviljinn*, September 28, 1975.
79. Herdis Skov. "Kvindefridagens største møde i Íslands historie." *B.T.*, October 25, 1975.
80. "De islandske kvinder ta'r sig en fridag." *Aalborg Stiftstidende*, October 13, 1975; "Íslands kvinder holdt fri." *Jyllands-Posten*, October 25, 1975.
81. e.g. *Dagblaðið*, October 23, 1975; *Vísir*, October 25, 1975.
82. *Information*, October 29, 1975.
83. e.g. "Íslands kvinder beviste deres uundværlighed." *Herning Folkeblad*, October 25, 1975; "Alt lammet, da kvinder holdt fri." *Ny Dag*, October 25, 1975.
84. Friðriksson and Þór, *Kaupmannahöfn sem höfuðborg Íslands*; Between 1966 and 1975, 3298 people moved from Iceland to Denmark, compared with 2936 to Sweden, 1474 to Norway and 86 to Finland. Statistics Iceland, 1975, *Mannfjöldaskýrslur árin 1961–70*; Statistics Iceland, 1988, *Mannfjöldaskýrslur árin 1971–80*, 18.
85. Svavar Gestsson. "Adskillige sektorer lammes." *Information*, October 24, 1975; Loa Gurlisdatter. "Lad os inføre matriarkatet!" *Information*, October 24, 1975.
86. On cultural meaningfulness as a news factor, see Westerståhl and Johansson, "Foreign News".
87. Gudrun Ekeflo. "I dag får männen laga sin mat själv." *Aftonbladet*, October 24, 1975. Also "Kvinnostrejken stängde Ísland: 'Vi strider mot dåliga karlar.'" *Göteborgs-Posten*, October 25, 1975.
88. e.g. Dahlerup, *Rødstrømperne*; Elgán, *Att ge sig själv makt*; Danielsen, "Den nye kvinne- og mansbevegelsen," 12; Yoken, "Nordic Transnational Feminist Activism"; Pálmadóttir and Kurvinen, "If the day turns out well".

89. "Etter vellykka aksjon på Island: Kvinnestreik i julestrida her heime?" *Dagningen*, October 28, 1975.
90. "Kvinnestreik på Island." *Fremtiden*, October 29, 1975.
91. "Kvinnestreiken i Island." *Sirene* 8/1975.
92. These telegrams were from Norsk kvinnesaksforening, Norges husmorforbund, Kvinnefronten Elverum and Rød kor Trondheim. KSS1, A3.
93. Astrid Benterud. "Om kvinnestreiken på Island." *Solsikken*, September 2, 1976. KSS 1, scrapbooks.
94. The greeting appeared in *Tíminn*, October 24, 1975; *Vísir*, October 25, 1975; *Alþýðublaðið*, October 28, 1975 and *Þjóðviljinn*, October 29, 1975.
95. Helga Hoffman. "Kvinder lammer hel nation en dag for at få likeløn, danskere: gør det samme her." *B.T.*, October 15, 1975.
96. Herdis Skov. "Kvinderna lammer Island: trætte af at være andenklasses." *B.T.*, October 24, 1975.
97. "Kvindefridag i Island." *Ny Dag*, October 25, 1975.
98. Dahlerup, *Rødstrømperne bind 1*, 174–88, 533–5.
99. Gitte Just. "De kunne, de gjorde det, det lykkedes." *Søndags-B.T.*, November 13, 1975.
100. Ibid.
101. Kirsten Jacobi. "Den nye islandske kvinde-saga." *Alt for Damerne*, undated. KSS 1, scrapbooks.
102. Lahad and Madsen. "Like Having New Batteries Installed!," 186.
103. Ibid.
104. Herman Melzer. "Kvinnostrejk lamslår Island?" *Arbetet*, October 6, 1975.
105. Monika Björk. "Tjejerna höll ord. Ingen kom till jobbet." *Expressen*, October 24, 1975.
106. On feminist actions in Swedish newsrooms, see Kurvinen, "Women's non-unionised activism." Björk drew on her experience to write the fictional story *Audrey-flickorna* (2008).
107. "Den stora kvinnostrejken på Island." *Femina*, undated, KSS1, scrapbook. During this period *Femina* became radicalized, abandoning its previous focus on non-political and entertaining content to cover more feminist-oriented topics with emancipatory framings. This change of style irked the owners, who clashed with the editors over their political coverage of the Icelandic women's strike, among other topics. "Hon är general i slaget om Femina." *Expressen*, February 7, 1976.
108. Kurvinen, *Feminism in Finnish Print Media*.
109. KSS1, A 3.
110. "Kvinnor kan." *Vi människor* 5–6/1975.
111. Isaksson, *Kvinnokamp*, 58.
112. Dahlerup, *Rødstrømperne*; Bengtson, "Teori och strategi".
113. Elgán, *Att ge sig själva makt*; Isaksson, *Kvinnokamp*.
114. Florin and Nilsson, 'Något som liknar en oblodig revolution'; Halsaa, "FNs Internasjonale kvinneår 1975".
115. Halsaa, *ibid.*; Dahlerup, *Rødstrømperne bind 2*, 206.
116. Elgán, *Att ge sig själv makt*, 179.
117. Pietilä, *Engendering the global agenda*; Kurvinen, *Feminism in Finnish Print Media*.
118. "Inger Wirén i Hbl. Kvinnoårsbokslut." *Hufvudstadsbladet*, December 31, 1975. Also Karin Bengtson, "Isländska kvinnornas storstrejk." *Folktidningen Ny Tid* 48/1975.
119. "Väkisinmakaamiset 'tulkinnanvaraisia'." *Uusi Suomi*, March 15, 1976.
120. e.g. "Kvinnesak på Sagaøya." *Vårt Land*, January 21, 1976; "Kvinnestreiken satte håndjern på politikerne!" *Ny Tid*, February 5, 1976.
121. Yoken, "Nordic Transnational Feminist Activism," 229.

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