

# The Media's War on Terror

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*Analyzing network news coverage of successful and failed terror events to more clearly understand the American War on Terror Narrative between 2001-2013*

Thesis for Doctoral Degree

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## Abstract

The goal of this thesis is to provide a clearer understanding of the evolution of the War on Terror Narrative. It does so by identifying and analyzing the boundaries of key media frames operating within the Narrative, across multiple terror events through close analysis of live-media coverage. The resulting methodology can be visually represented in a matrix grid, and may be applied to other media formats and news topics such that media narrative mapping might enhance our understanding and appreciation of the effects and nature of contemporary mass-communication. The Central Research Question: How did the War on Terror Narrative evolve in American rolling television news between 2001-2013; and can this evolution be more precisely identified and analysed by tracking pre-selected media frames across multiple terror events?

This thesis found, through a mixed method examination of six case studies, that the media's War on Terror Narrative began with nearly identical rhetorical patterns as those of the Bush Administration's War on Terror; but the two Narratives diverged along party lines during President Obama's first term. This thesis also found that the coverage of successful and failed terror events varied based on the proximity of the event to the east coast of the United States; and, that this physical distance was more significant in determining the degree of media coverage an event received than the success or failure of the event itself. This thesis found that the consistent identification of specific media frames across a span of 12-years was a useful new method of framing and narrative analysis that broadened certain understandings of contemporary mediation and mediatization. The originality of this thesis in pre-selecting media frames and analyzing their changes against multiple case studies was ultimately successful, and establishes grounds for future research efforts towards understanding how violent media narratives respond to (and are processed by) corporate media networks and rolling television news.

## Acknowledgements

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# Chapter 1: Introduction & Literature Review

## 1.1 Introduction

This doctoral thesis concerns the War on Terror Narrative in American rolling television news between 2001 and 2013. The research query involves the mapping and analysis of the boundaries of the War on Terror Narrative as a rolling news narrative, introducing a new methodology designed to identify (through direct comparisons between case studies) how the Narrative evolved between the September 11, 2001 attacks, and the Boston Marathon Bombings on April 15, 2013. At its core this thesis represents an experimental method of news narrative identification and narrative mapping. Its original contribution rests in the perspectives afforded through the comparing clustered case studies with a multi-year gap using pre-selected media frames, allowing long-term frame and narrative developments and analysis. This project is motivated by a lack of understanding and appreciation of the potential damaging affects that violent news narratives can cause, as how we talk about threats and violence impacts our responses to them. While the physical War on Terror has its own consequences on global affairs, the Media's War on Terror Narrative has a lesser-known effect, primarily as the Narrative itself requires far more academic understanding than currently exists.

The Central Research Question of this thesis is: How did the War on Terror Narrative evolve in American rolling television news between 2001-2013; and can this evolution be more precisely identified and analysed by tracking pre-selected media frames across multiple terror events?

This project specifically engages with the War on Terror Narrative that is the result of (and operates within) one of the most prolific portrayers of the War on Terror and other contemporary violent narratives: live television news. As a means and method of communication that reaches persons all around the globe, the significance of television news on social and political discourse should never be underestimated. This timeframe between 2001-2013 also highlights an era of the modern media ecology of particular significance, wherein the

communication of important news narratives shifted from being almost singularly under the control of a few network news media groups, to expanding into newly formed online platforms. The consistent observation of television media at the height of this shift is important for future research into media communications and mediation of news narratives. Specifically, this project will research, develop, and test an original mixed research methodology, combining two methods of media framing analysis, and a linear tracking of case studies, in order to more clearly define the boundaries and track the changes of the War on Terror Narrative between events in 2001-2003, and 2009-2013. Following six case studies employing this new methodology, conclusions towards a more defined War on Terror Narrative through the tracking and comparison of four media frames across the case studies will be offered as new material towards literature concerning terror mediation and mediatisation.

## **1.2 Significance and Contribution**

There are questions to be asked concerning the media's behavior surrounding the coverage of terrorism in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century that are not adequately understood, and which need analysis before a comprehensive explanation of the War on Terror Narrative (and its evolution) can be appreciated. The damage caused by the September 11, 2001, terror attacks in the United States (hereafter called '9/11'), was not limited to its immense physical ramifications. Issues also arose when the events of 9/11 were drilled into the American psyche through the repetition of video and images of terrorism by the media on and after 9/11. The relationship between American network media and its coverage of topics of terrorism should not be taken lightly; particularly when it is not as thoroughly understood as other forms of media (such as a daily newspaper or weekly news magazines) which have been around for a longer period of time, and which operate under different technological and temporal constraints. Understanding this relationship between rolling news media and terrorism is a challenge that evolves with each new terror attack and attempt, and understanding this relationship is important in democratic nations

where the press have relative freedom to influence public discourse.

This thesis seeks to design, test, and offer a new tool for media narrative identification and analysis. Through linear identification and mapping, followed by case study cluster comparisons, this thesis may serve future research efforts concerning the mediation and mediatization of terrorism. By applying identical procedures of frame identification to a cluster of case studies at the outset of the War on Terror (2001-2002), and comparing these cases with a cluster seven-years later (between 2009-2013) the development of both the media frames and the overall narrative become clearer. As a diagnostic tool, the methodology of this thesis may be applied to various media formats such as newspaper, radio, magazine, and Internet mediums in future research efforts. Additionally, the methodology may be applied to topics beyond terrorism, observing topics or narratives of medical, technological, or cultural subjects.

The contribution and originality of this thesis rests in its consistent linear identification of pre-selected media frames as they manifested in multiple terror events, which are representative of two key periods of the War on Terror Narrative. As these four frames are analysed for their resonance across various types of successful and failed terror events, and in different years of the Narrative's manifestation, any shifts and changes to the frame (and thus the wider narrative) are more acutely observable. This enables the thesis to detect long-term shifts in the Narrative, something standard framing identification techniques typically do not encompass. The comparative analysis provided by this Methodology has not been conducted before, and as such, represents the original contribution of this thesis to terror mediation studies. This will be further discussed in both the Methodology Chapter, as well as in the Conclusions Chapter of this thesis.



### **1.3 Central Research Question**

How did the War on Terror Narrative evolve in American rolling television news between 2001-2013; and can this evolution be more precisely identified and analysed by tracking pre-selected media frames across multiple terror events?

### **1.4 Hypotheses**

This thesis seeks to test four hypotheses focused on the War On Terror Narrative and its framing in TV media coverage. The key findings and implications of substantiating or dispelling these hypotheses will be revisited and detailed in the Conclusions Chapter of this thesis.

Hypothesis 1: Clustering, comparing, then analyzing terror events through historical comparison can reveal significant nuances and shifts in the 'War on Terror' Narrative as a defining catalyst for the early twenty-first century US television news.

It is hypothesized that through observing the resonance of pre-selected, individual media frames within the wider War on Terror Narrative during multiple terror attacks and attempted attacks over 12 years, changes to the War on Terror Narrative can be observed and more clearly defined. The three events are clustered at the beginning of the War on Terror, then three more clustered seven-years later. The case studies also represent an equal number of successful and failed terror events, such that the resonance of the pre-selected frames can be tested in the extremes of terrorism reporting (where major events did unfold, and where ultimately there was little to report due to a lack of a definitive event). By purposely allowing for a time-gap between the first and second group of three cases, it is hypothesized that changes to the Narrative will be more noticeable between the first and second halves of the thesis' case studies.

Hypothesis 2: Media framing analysis can benefit from longitudinal tracking.

Speaking to media framing, at the time of this writing there exists no common academically accepted framing identification and longitudinal tracking method across the

disciplines of this thesis (media and communications studies and terrorism studies, respectively). It is hypothesized that this thesis' methodology, which includes the pre-selection of multiple media frames, followed by a linear, consistent analysis of those frames' conditions during multiple case studies, will yield a useful method of identifying any shifts in topics or discussions related to a wider media narrative. While frames change, appear and may not even show up in certain events, their presence (or lack thereof) is significant nonetheless.

Hypothesis 3: All terror events are incorporated into the War on Terror Narrative by the media.

The success or failure of a terror event will not necessarily influence whether or not the event is incorporated into the wider War on Terror Narrative. It is hypothesized that a terror event (attempt or attack) will be incorporated into the War on Terror Narrative regardless of its physical impact, success, or failure. While a certain degree of categorization and 'sorting' of news topics is not uncommon, the manner of this lacing is anticipated to be that all terror attempts will be headed under the War on Terror Narrative.

Hypothesis 4: A network's political affiliation impacts War on Terror coverage.

It is hypothesized that the American media's War on Terror Narrative is subject to the political bias of the network operators. Historically, CNN and MSNBC have carried content that is more favorable to the Democratic Party, and FOX has been more supportive of Republican politics and politicians. Because this thesis' time frame encompasses two Presidential administrations of both the Republican and Democratic parties, and looks at coverage of the conflict at the start of the 'war' and then again 12-years on, the comparisons between these periods of time should allow for some insight into how political power and control may influence the Narrative overall.

## **1.5 The War on Terror Narrative**

As long as there is no agreement as to what terrorism is, it is impossible to assign

responsibility to nations that (may or may not) support terrorism, to formulate steps to cope on an international level with terrorism, and to fight effectively the terrorists, terror organizations and their allies.<sup>1</sup>

It is more advantageous for an administration *not* to have a single definition of terrorism; this way, the needs and considerations of the administration can be served by adapting (or manipulating) terms and definitions towards various purposes and agendas. However, this state of flux is not free from a means of checks and balances, which would otherwise give the elite free reign over social and political definitions of the term ‘terrorism’. An example of this act by a nation of ‘defining terrorism based on the needs of the contemporary environment’, is the argument of this thesis, that a ‘war’ on terror narrative was strategically formed, in order to encompass and locate ‘terrorism’ (and its definitions), within a ‘war’ paradigm by the United States Government. This allowed the US government, specifically the Executive Branch, the breadth of military prerogatives that would traditionally accompany a ‘state of war’.<sup>2</sup> Arguably, treating the events of 9/11 as an act of war (both by the Executive and Legislative branches of the American Government) enabled more traditional military mobilization efforts that ultimately lead to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. This response also led to a more unilateral type of power structure within the upper levels of the US government, not otherwise permissible except during conditions of war. These powers (speaking directly towards the Executive Branch’s various Authorizations for the Use of Military Force, AUMF) eventually needed confining by US court systems and various congressional appeals.<sup>3</sup> Examples of instances where the terminology and rhetorical selection of ‘terrorism’ was arguably abused, was in the creation of Guantanamo Bay by the Bush Administration and the prevalence of selective drone strike

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<sup>1</sup> Ganor, B., 2005, *The Counterterrorism Puzzle: A Guide for Decision Makers*, New Brunswick, NJ, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Under the same premises of ‘strategic narratives’ discussed in Miskimmon, A., O’Loughlin, B., & Rosalee, L., 2013, *Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order* Taylor & Francis.

<sup>3</sup> Authorization for the Use of Force, Pub. L. No. 107-40, 115 Stat. 224 (2001).

activity by the Obama Administration.<sup>4</sup> In each of these instances, the US government committed acts of questionable legal standing, something only permissible in a state of war, all *because* the Bush Administration labelled contemporary ‘terrorism’ (and the specific events of 9/11), as an act of war in 2001. This is why the narrative with which this thesis will be engaging is called the *War* on Terror.

We organize our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narratives – stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing, and so on. The Bush “War on Terror” Narrative has provided ‘the official story, the dominant frame’ for understanding 9/11 and America’s response to terrorism. It has allowed for the discursive justification not just of a metaphorical “war on terror” but the very real wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>5</sup>

Before 9/11, without a common understanding of how terrorism would be recognized or defined in the new century (which 9/11 then provided), arguably, these regulations and reactions to terrorism could not justly or legally have been established in the United States. This first UMAF was shortly followed by an Executive Order that led to the creation of the Guantanamo Bay Detention Center<sup>6</sup> (hereafter called Gitmo), and the expansion of the CIA’s authority to pursue terrorism around the globe and engage in targeted killings.<sup>7</sup> This went against President Ford and the Church Committee’s 1970’s initiatives, which condemned assassination plots by the CIA.<sup>8</sup> All of these actions were facilitated by the (then) established War on Terror Narrative, and its discursive functions as a harbinger of militaristic repercussions against attacks by individuals or any non-military group. So, what made the War on Terror Narrative function so well as to prompt massive political reform within the US in early 2001?

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<sup>4</sup> The Obama administration ordered more drone strikes in 2009 alone than President Bush did in two presidential terms.

<sup>5</sup> Hodge, A., 2011, *The “War on Terror” Narrative: Discourse and Intertextuality in the construction and Contestation of Sociopolitical Reality*, Oxford University Press, Introduction.

<sup>6</sup> Military Order: Detention, Treatment, and Trial of Certain Non-Citizens in the War Against Terrorism, 66 Fed. Reg. 57,833, 13 November 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Examples of such killings (or attempts thereof) include those of Mullah Muhammad Omar in October 2001, in Afghanistan, and Mohammed Atef in Kabul, on November 3, 2001.

<sup>8</sup> Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations (known as the Church Committee, after chairman Senator Frank Church), S. Rep. No 94-755, Book I, 1976.

The understanding of a narrative's function most relevant to this project is: "the way of representing the knowledge about a particular historical moment."<sup>9</sup> Politically, locating 9/11 within the discourse of *war*, rather than a criminal offence was a discursive achievement of the Executive Branch under George W. Bush. However, it was also individual agencies, media groups and citizens who played a role in the discursive environment established in response to 9/11, as each enlisted a particular 'retelling' of the situation which occurred before, after, and during the development of the overarching macro-level discourse, running alongside the Executive Branch Narrative. Each news agency, each government branch, and each social group who had an outlet to reflect on the events of 9/11, was capable of communicating 9/11 towards various ends, incidentally or intentionally. However, of those actors, this thesis will focus on the rolling television news media's War on Terror Narrative, as it is significant in the construction of public opinion, and because corporate media groups in the US stand at the intersection of most communications between the US government and its citizens. It is the argument of this thesis that while the 'war' paradigm surrounding the War on Terror Narrative originated from the Bush Administration, the Narrative that was transmitted by rolling television news media carried nearly identical rhetorical features as the US government for the first few years following 9/11.

### **1.5.1 How this thesis engages with the War on Terror**

This thesis' main contribution to research surrounding the War on Terror is its new methodological approach to narrative identification, which can expand the existing research's understanding of how mediation of the War on Terror occurred during the timeframe of this thesis. There are three main features of this method that set it apart from other research on the subject. First, this thesis combines two framing identification techniques in its methodology, rather than only using a single technique to test a frame's fortitude; those techniques are Robert Entman's Framing via Attributes, and Giles & Shaw's Media Framing Analysis, further detailed

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<sup>9</sup> Hall, S., 1997, 'The Work of Representation' in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, Stuart Hall (ed.), 13(4): pp.721-744.

in the Methodology Chapter. Second, rather than attempt to extract and identify *all* the media frames that may be present during a specific case study, this thesis will track four pre-determined frames across all of this thesis' case studies, using the ebb and flow of those frames to establish boundaries and shifts in the wider narrative. Third, in looking at six case studies in total, three that are clustered at the beginning and three at the end of the timeline of this thesis, the contrasts between the two time periods will also give insight into the more salient changes to the narrative.

The bulk of this thesis is devoted to the case studies and analysis of the footage from rolling news during terror-related events. The case studies are: the September 11, 2001 attacks, the December, 2001 Shoe Bomber attempt, the 2002 Bali Bombings in Indonesia, the 2009 Underpants Bomber attempt, the Times Square Bombing attempt of 2010, and the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombings. Against these six attacks and attempts, four media frames will be uniformly analyzed in this thesis. The first frame will be *9/11*; primarily investigating if and how both successful and failed terror attempts are laced back to the start of the War on Terror [*the What*]. Second, the *Evil* Frame looks at how the media conveyed the morality and reasoning for terrorism [*the Why*]. Third, the *Scope of Threat* Frame will look at all references to the locality (perceived or real) of terrorism between 2001 and 2013 [*The Where & When*]. Finally, the *al Qaeda* frame will look at discussions of the group and how the conversation about terrorists themselves changed over time [*The Who*].

The first chapter of this thesis will look further into the specific topics and disciplines where this thesis is rooted, identifying the literature and concepts leading up to the need for a new method of narrative identification for the War on Terror. This will be followed by an extensive explanation of the new methodology, with detailed research design procedures and information on the networks and sources for all research materials. The case studies themselves represent the bulk of the thesis, which will be followed by a conclusions chapter revisiting the hypothesis, and presenting the findings of the new methodologies' approach. Ultimately, the methodology will be visually assembled in a matrix table, which is why the working title for this

approach is, The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification.

## **1.6 Literature Review**

The focus of this thesis and the methodology being developed and tested requires an empirical foundation within communications and media studies. However, the thesis also clearly has connections to Terrorism Studies. Hence, this section will first discuss the components of Terrorism Studies that informed this thesis; in particular, the methodological approach of the academic study of terrorism towards its subject matter will be discussed. Terrorism Studies alone would not be able to support the investigations of this thesis into the War on Terror Narrative. This is primarily because Terrorism Studies most commonly observes the media as a tool through which terrorists and terrorism are communicated to an audience; but without looking at what changes the media affect on the message over time through the actual process of mediation. While Terrorism Studies regards the media as a critical component of terrorism from the perspective of communicating violence, neither Orthodox Terrorism Studies nor Critical Terrorism Studies sufficiently explains the impact and influence the intricate mediation process has on the narrative itself. This thesis specifically investigates this relationship between the process of mediation and the War on Terror Narrative, and requires a combination of academic disciplines in order to do so thoroughly. However, the multidisciplinary nature of this thesis is not revolutionary in terms of terrorism related research, as the next section will explain. This literature review will commence with a breakdown of the core concepts of terrorism studies, followed by media studies, first looking at the history of the study of communications, then at media framing and information transmission tools, and finally at the concepts of mediation and mediatisation as they pertain to violent media narratives.

### 1.6.1 Terrorism Studies

This thesis requires a concise review of the academic field of Terrorism Studies, as terrorism is the topic, or lens, through which this thesis explores the communication and adaptation of a media narrative over time. Terrorism Studies as an academic field remains controversial not only because of what it is trying to analyze, but because of the interdisciplinary nature of scholarly contributions to its study, as well as the fact that the field itself is relatively new compared with other political fields of study.

It is hard to escape the judgment that academic terrorism research has stagnated for the past dozen years because of a lack of both primary sources and vigorous efforts to police the quality of research, thus preventing the establishment of standards of academic excellence and flooding the field with charlatans, spouting some of the vilest prejudices under the cloak of national security.<sup>10</sup>

Regardless of these negative sentiments, Terrorism Studies hasn't lost utility or merit as an means towards understanding real world problems. For this thesis, Terrorism Studies' inherently diverse composition of interdisciplinary subjects means that there are rigorous scholarly works pertaining to the relationship between the media and terrorism which guided this thesis towards its original central research question (see section 1.6.3.2 *The Media and Terrorism After 9/11*). However, this section will serve to illuminate the overall structure of Terrorism Studies at large, highlighting its history, academic evolution, and what functions certain factions of the field suit. In order to best address this thesis' queries this section will elucidate where its engagement with the field diverges.

The first step towards understanding what Terrorism Studies is (as an academic field), is to identify when and why Terrorism Studies began.<sup>11</sup> "Terrorism research emerged as a branch

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<sup>10</sup> Sageman, M., 2014, 'The Stagnation of Research on Terrorism' in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 26, no. 4 (2014): 565-580, p. 572.

<sup>11</sup> One of most well known pieces concerning the chronological evolution of terrorism itself (not the academic study) is David Rapoport's 'four stages' of terrorism principle, see Rapoport, D., 2004, 'The Four Waves of Terrorism', last available as Chapter 3 of



of counter-insurgency studies and soon established itself as an influential epistemic community centered on the work and activities of a key set of scholars and research institutions.”<sup>12</sup> Those ‘research institutions’ were predominantly Western funded, as the Cold War marks the timeframe within which the contemporary field of Terrorism Studies emerged.<sup>13</sup> At that time, sub-state actors participating in war-type engagements required explanations beyond those afforded by traditional war studies. The key debates at this time included how to explain and contextualize the anti-colonial movements in Latin America<sup>14</sup>, the Irish Troubles<sup>15</sup>, Israeli and Palestinian conflict<sup>16</sup>, and violent political movements in Europe.<sup>17</sup>

The first hurdle facing Terrorism Studies, and one which it has never cleared, concerned establishing a definition of terrorism. Because the particular type of violence recognizable as terrorism encompasses political and social motivations, individual and state-level participants, and because it crosses civilian and military lines regarding the legality of any prosecution, the

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Horgan, J. G., and Braddock, K., 2013, *Terrorism Studies: A Reader*, Taylor & Francis Group.

<sup>12</sup> Jackson, R., Jarvis, L., Gunning, J., Smyth, M. B., 2011, *Terrorism: A Critical Introduction*, Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan Ch. 1, p. 9.

<sup>13</sup> The production of knowledge on how to combat the terrorists’ threats of the 1970’s was largely funded by the US and other Western powers. Key literatures within Terrorism Studies at this time include Debray, R. 1968, *Revolution in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin American*, London, Pelian. And Taber, R., 1972, *The War of the Flea Guerrilla Warfare Theory and Practice*, London Paladin.

<sup>14</sup> For Latin American terrorism and counter insurgency literature see the article by Coronil, F., and Skurski, J., 1991, ‘Dismembering and Remembering the Nation: The Semantics of Political Violence in Venezuela’, in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33, no 2. (1991): 288-337. Also see the book Debray, R., 1968, *Revolution in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin American*. London, Pelican.

<sup>15</sup> See the article by Frykberg, E. R., and Teppas III, J. J., 1988 ‘Terrorist Bombings: Lessons Learned from Belfast to Beirut’ in *Annals of Surgery*, 208, no. 5 (1988): 569-576, and further details on the Troubles are detailed in Wilkinson, P., 1986, *Terrorism and Liberal State*, Macmillian, London.

<sup>16</sup> This literature is widely debated by either platform’s opposition, however, an introductory explanation towards media portrayals of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be found in Thussu, D. K., and Freedman, D., 2003, *War and the Media: reporting conflict 24/7*, Chapter 9: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: TV News and Public Understanding, by Philo, G., Gilmour, A., Rust, S., Gaskell, E., and West. L., Sage Publications, London.

<sup>17</sup> See Rapoport, D. C., 1984, ‘Fear and Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions’, in *The American Political Science Review* (1984): 658-667.

matter of a definition is still debated. In 1988, there were 109 recognized academic definitions of terrorism.<sup>18</sup> In 2011, Alex P. Schmid devoted Chapter 2 of his book, *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, to trying to grasp the definition of terrorism, ultimately finding that there were by that point in time over 250 definitions of terrorism in use across academic, governmental, and non-governmental groups.<sup>19</sup> The inability of the study to agree on a definition is partly due to an acceptance that the concept of terrorism is not an ontologically stable entity.<sup>20</sup> More importantly, a single definition of terrorism would require such a lengthy definition that its main purpose of providing structural clarity would become lost amongst the complexities required to encompass all of terrorism's expressions. According to Schmid & Jongman (1998/2005), the most comprehensive definition (in their own words) of terrorism is:

An anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group of state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby – in contrast to assassination – the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human targets are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat and violence-based communication processes between terrorists (organization), (imperilled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought.<sup>21</sup>

This definitional quandary is just one point of contention within Terrorism Studies as a whole.<sup>22</sup> Another issue debated since the field emerged concerns the scholar's aims and

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<sup>18</sup> Schmid, A., Jongman, A., 1988/2005, *Political Terrorism: A new Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Databases, Theories and Literature*, Oxford And New York, NY:Transaction.

<sup>19</sup> Schmid, A. P., 2011, *The Routledge Handbook of Terrorism Research*, Routledge. Chapter 2: The Definition of Terrorism.

<sup>20</sup> Becker, who notes the inability of Terrorism Studies to provide an example of terrorism that is universal, as it is a social expression dependent on social and historical context, furthers this idea. See: Becker, H., 1963, *Outsiders; studies in the sociology of deviance*, London: Free Press of Glencoe.

<sup>21</sup> Schmid, A., Jongman, A., 1988/2005, p. 28.

<sup>22</sup> Also see Wardlaw, G., 1982 *Political Terrorism: Theory, Tactics and Counter-Measures*, Cambridge,

objectives, more specifically, the ‘what’ (and ‘who’) the field was designed to suit. This meant that a considerable amount of the original research by terrorism scholars focused on singularly Western counterinsurgency efforts during the Cold War (as opposed to other, non-Western threats both past and present<sup>23</sup>). As an example, one of the most prolific and frequently cited terrorism research organizations is RAND Corporation, based in California. “From the 1970s through the early 2000s organizations such as the RAND Corporation mainly secured funding from government agencies to conduct terrorism research, investigated policy-oriented research questions, created a terrorism research center, created their own terrorism incident databases based on the popular press’ coverage of terrorism, and generated numerous RAND reports on terrorism.”<sup>24</sup> Initially, RAND emphasized counter-insurgency based solutions towards terrorism issues or projects. This influence of counter-insurgency maintains its prevalence in the discipline as of 2017, as evidenced by the single most cited article on terrorism remains James D. Fearson and David D. Laitin’s, 2003 ‘Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War’ in *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1, 75-90.<sup>25</sup> (The most cited book concerning terrorism is Ted Gurr’s 1970 *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton University Press), and the author with the most publications remains Paul Wilkinson, with 87 publications on terrorism.<sup>26</sup>)

Two issues; creating a definition of terrorism, and locating funding sources for terrorism research, are key points of contention between Orthodox Terrorism Studies (OTS) scholars and Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) scholars (a self-named group that emerged post 9/11). CTS is a

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Cambridge University Press. p. 16. And the United States Department of State, 2001, *Annual Country Reports on Terrorism, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office p. 13*).

<sup>23</sup> For a full history of terror-type events before the formation of Terrorism Studies, see Laqueur, W., 1977, *History of Terrorism*, Little Brown, Boston.

<sup>24</sup> Reid, E. F., and Chen, H., 2007, ‘Mapping the contemporary terrorism research domain’, in *The International Journal for Human-Computer Studies* 65 (2007) 42-56, p. 52.

<sup>25</sup> According to Silke, A., and Schmidt-Petersen, J., 2017, ‘The Golden Age? What the 100 Most Cited Articles in Terrorism Studies Tell Us’ in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 29:692-712, Taylor and Francis Group LLC, p. 704.

<sup>26</sup> Reid, E. F., and Chen, H., 2007, ‘Mapping the contemporary terrorism research domain’, in *The International Journal for Human-Computer Studies* 65 (2007) 42-56, p. 48. See Table 6.

sub-field of terrorism scholarship that has been described as a reaction of terrorism scholars to their field of study's inability to fully explain the events of 9/11. CTS attempts to explain OTS' academic weaknesses.. Jackson,<sup>27</sup> and Smyth, and Gunning,<sup>28</sup> for example, argue that OTS lacked the primary resources and unbiased eye of observation that could fully appreciate and explain events like 9/11. At the time of writing, the defining premises and orthodoxy of the study are still disputed.<sup>29</sup> Jackson, Smyth, and Gunning identify one of the failings of the discipline as owing to its funding (as well as its key scholars) originating primarily from Western institutions, resulting in a leaning towards pathologizing terrorists as morally inferior. This is a disposition argued by CTS scholars to over-generalize, decontextualize, and detract from a comprehensive analysis of terror events and terrorists themselves. CTS approaches terrorism as a social construction which is (historically) adaptable in its labeling of certain acts of violence (and not others) as terror. Because of this malleability of typography, the means and structures (social and political) by which 'terrorism' comes to be labeled must continue to be scrutinized.

"There are probably few areas in the social science literature in which so much is written on the basis of so little research".<sup>30</sup> CTS rejects that there can ever be a real or absolutely neutral knowledge of Terrorism Studies, as the researchers can never fully dismiss political, ethical, or ideological elements impacting on their own research and writings.<sup>31</sup> The components and concepts surrounding the core structure of Critical Terrorism Studies and the creation thereof

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<sup>27</sup> Jackson, R., 2007, 'The Core Commitments of Critical Terrorism Studies', *European Political Science*, Vol.6 No. 3, pp. 244-251.

<sup>28</sup> Jackson, R., Gunning, J., And Breen Smyth, M., 2007, *The Case for a Critical Terrorism Studies*, presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Hyatt Regency Chicago and the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, Chicago, IL. –By the same authors – See Jackson, R., Breen Smyth, M., Gunning, J., and Jarvis, L., 2011, *Terrorism: A Critical Introduction*, Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, Palgrave-Macmillan.

<sup>29</sup> Silke, A., 2004, p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> Ranstorp, M., 2009, *Mapping Terrorism Studies after 9/11: An Academic Field of Old Problems and New Prospects*, p. 13, in Jackson, R., Breen Smyth, M, and Gunning, J. *Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda*, Routledge New York.

<sup>31</sup> Toros, H., Gunning, J., 2009, 'Exploring a Critical Theory Approach to Terrorism Studies', in Jackson, R., Breen Smyth, M. and Gunning, J., Eds., *Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda*, London: Routledge, pp. 87-108.

have not been unchallenged.<sup>32</sup> Weinburg and Eubank,<sup>33</sup> and Michel and Richards,<sup>34</sup> have debated the pitfalls of the creation of CTS while Terrorism Studies at large are still able to function in an explanatory capacity for some manifestation of contemporary violence. Before 9/11, Booth<sup>35</sup> and MacDonald<sup>36</sup> explored the idea of an ‘emancipation’ of the close disciplinary relative of Critical Security Studies, noting how any shift in the school of thought should first create space for a productive debate on *what* questions function towards what ends. Similar arguments surrounding an academic emancipation are made by Wyn Jones, who questions what role emancipation may play to assist in addressing more contemporary epistemological queries surrounding both terrorism and security studies.<sup>37</sup>

So, what role do Terrorism Studies play in this thesis? Ultimately, the most impactful component of Terrorism Studies on this thesis is how terrorism topics and events (and the discussions surrounding them) have been processed and perceived by academia and projected in the media. This relationship of the media towards terrorism is detailed in section 1.6.2.1 *Media*

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<sup>32</sup> CTS is also *critical* of the following directives and methodologies of OTS:

- Over-use by OTS of secondary, rather than primary resources concerning terrorist ideology and motivation.
- Over-generalizing terrorist actors, which diffuses the responsibility of critical investigations away from terrorist scholars themselves. CTS argues that this mentality leads to moralistic and antithetical research approaches in addition to being a futile quest to find the ‘terrorist personality’.
- OTS literature being frequently overly descriptive, derivative, and narrative-based rather than analytical, and adopting a morally condemnatory tone towards its subject matter.
- OTS’s western and specifically American-centric approach.
- OTS’s lack of critique of state-terrorism, specifically a lack of focus on state-terrorism in the global south - this is attributed to the western-centric nature of OTS. For information on state sponsored terrorism, see Jackson, R., Murphy, E., and Poynting, S. (eds.) 2010, *Contemporary State Terrorism: Theory and Cases*, Routledge.

<sup>33</sup> Weinberg, L. & Eubank, W., 2008, ‘Problems with the critical studies approach to the study of terrorism’, *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, Vol. 1 Number 2 August 2008, pp. 185-196.

<sup>34</sup> Michel, T. & Richards, A., 2009, ‘False Dawns or New horizons? Further issues and challenges for critical Terrorism Studies’ *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 2 , 3, pp. 399-413.

<sup>35</sup> Booth, K., 1991, 'Security and emancipation' *Review of International Studies*, 17, 4, pp. 313–326.

<sup>36</sup> McDonald, M., 2007, ‘Emancipation and critical Terrorism Studies’ in *European Political Science*, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 252-259.

<sup>37</sup> Jones, R. W., 1999, *Security, Strategy and Critical Theory*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner and Jones, R. W., 2005, 'On Emancipation: Necessity, Capacity, and Concrete Utopias' in K. Booth, ed., *Critical Security Studies and World Politics*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

*and Violence Before 9/11*, and section 1.6.3.2 *The Media and Terrorism After 9/11*. Terrorism Studies' system of documenting the histories of certain terror activities and events has allows this thesis a format from which to conduct initial research and gather evidentiary data. The interdisciplinary nature and composition of Terrorism Studies provides a diverse literary landscape from which to investigate individual case studies and to guide wider research questions. For instance, terror psychology (which strives towards understanding the motivations and mindsets of individuals who perpetrate terrorism through analyzing social contributions to terrorism) has found that terror organizations are motivated by, and seek to replicate, attack styles that have gained extensive media coverage in the past.<sup>38</sup> (This strand of Terrorism Studies, however, ultimately suffers from the same weakness as the rest of Terrorism Studies, which is a lack of first-hand material.<sup>39</sup>) How the media covers terrorism and its efforts to inform the audience of an individual's profile or a terror group's history informs this thesis' methodology. This relationship is detailed in section 1.6.3.2 *The Media and Terrorism After 9/11*. Terrorism Studies continue to evolve within the modern media ecology wherein cross-disciplinary academic investigations can rapidly expand the knowledge base, even without a static definition or a singular and objective approach towards its subject matter. However, both Orthodox Terrorism Studies and Critical Terrorism Studies fail to substantially investigate the media's management (direct or incidental) of such a well known terror narrative as the War on Terror. As such, this thesis' Literature

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<sup>38</sup> See Silke, A., 2003, *Terrorists, Victims and Society: Psychological Perspectives on Terrorism and its Consequences*, Wiley & Sons, Chichester. Also, see Horgan, J., 2005, *The Psychology of Terrorism*, Routledge.

<sup>39</sup> The September 11 attacks partly overcame this setback, providing firsthand research material and subjects for projects investigating the emotional and psychological impact terrorism on Americans – But this research avenue is a departure from the original investigations of the field. See Fredrickson, B. L., Tugade, M. M., Waugh, C. E., and Larkin, G. R., 2003, 'What good are positive emotions in crisis? A prospective Study of Resilience and Emotions following the terrorist attacks on the united states on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001' in *The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84, no. 2 (2003): 365. However, the inability for scholars to interview persons either convicted of terrorism or involved in terror organizations prohibits the expansion of terror psychology beyond second-hand research material.

Review will now detail the academic materials surrounding communication studies and the media itself.

## **1.6.2 Media Studies**

The following section consists of media and communications studies' contributions to this thesis and detail those principles and ideas that will be employed by each case study (further detailed in the following Methodology Chapter). Given their centrality to the following concepts, this section will address the various media components involved in rolling television news, starting with media framing and communications psychology, and introducing the contemporary communications theories this thesis will employ in its analysis of the case studies.

### 1.6.2.1 Communications and Media Framing

As previously stated, while this thesis concerns the War on Terror Narrative and the management of media narratives in rolling television news, the primary objective of this thesis is to present, develop, and test a new type of understanding of the War on Terror Narrative. The analysis used towards this end is based upon the identification of media frames present in rolling news, further detailed in the Methodology Chapter. Starting with the broadest conceptualization of a media frame, a successful frame serves to identify and locate a story, then translates this message to an audience by presenting the story in a particular way, specifically, one which is more easily assimilated into the audience's rhetorical narrative. A frame is a subset (or micro) function of a wider (macro) media narrative. Multiple frames can function within a single narrative, changing over time and across media events. Ultimately, the frames at work within a narrative serve to contextualize, summarize, and signify meaning to an audience. See the Methodology Chapter Section, 'Key Terms and Phrases', for more detail on framing and the concepts specific to this thesis' methodology.

To begin we will look at Anderson and Pichert's work on Schema Theory, as many academic works on media framing briefly mention the processes of knowledge acquisition and assimilation.<sup>40</sup> Essentially, any new knowledge or information to which an individual is exposed, is assimilated by first attaching itself to an individual's existing knowledge-base in schemas; or similar-topic based groupings. Anderson and Pichert explain how recalling facts from a memory schema can be observed through examining how well test subjects recall facts of a particular (sample) story, if the subjects were instructed by an interviewer to draw upon a certain topic and knowledge clusters before they were given the new information. The researchers were able to demonstrate that, "instruction (by the interviewer to the subject in the study) to take a new perspective (drawing on prior knowledge-bases) led subjects to invoke a schema that provided implicit cues for different categories of story information."<sup>41</sup> The suggestion by researchers (acting as 'interviewers') to the subjects to approach the same set of facts from a different perspective led the subjects to different conclusions concerning their own understanding of the situation. In other words, the mere suggestion of relating new information to existing information specified by an external force (in this case, the researchers) allowed the subjects to recall more about the situation and increased their retention of information.

Following in this vein of cognitive psychology, Brandford and Johnson expanded on the necessity of prior knowledge as a basis for understanding and retaining new information.<sup>42</sup> Essentially this is how a media frame functions at the individual level. By working with existing knowledge-bases, and using them as a foundation for discussions, information from a broadcast can be more successfully passed from the media to the audience. Brandford and Johnson assert that certain amounts of prior knowledge are necessary in order for an individual to process and

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<sup>40</sup> Anderson, R. C. & Pichert, J. W., (1978). Recall of previously unrecalable information following a shift in perspective, *Journal and Verbal Learning and Verbal Behaviour*, 17, p. 12.

<sup>41</sup> Anderson, R. C. & Pichert, J. W., 1978, p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> Brandford, J. D. & Johnson, M. K., 1972, Contextual prerequisites for understanding: Some investigations of comprehension and recall, *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behaviour*, 11, pp. 717-726.



retain new information, and that new information can only be successfully and accurately recalled later if the new information rests upon established knowledge. Brandford & Johnson tested this theory by presenting seemingly unrelated sentences to a group of test subjects with no contextual aids, such as a picture or title, as well as to a control group of subjects with contextual aids. The researchers found that the subjects with contextual aids consistently recalled more sentences with more accuracy, owing to the ability of the person to sort through and contextualize the new information around these aids (even in the absence of prior knowledge). The visual cues acted as contextual aids, and allowed for a more substantial retention of information by the subjects. These psychological theories pertain to media framing because, in the possible absence of prior-knowledge by an audience member, contextual aids (such as analogies of and reference to better known stories), serve to package the story together. They, in effect, serve as schema; and this allows the audience to contextualize and comprehend a story more successfully, regardless of prior information, variations in general knowledge, or cultural literacy.

Concerning the audiences processing of ‘new’ events in the media, there is a sub-strand of literature within social cognitive theory on agency and self-efficacy concerning consciousness and thought which is relevant to the topics of this thesis, as 9/11 was very much a ‘new’ type of televised terrorism at the time. Building on the concept that prior knowledge is necessary upon which an individual may rest new knowledge, Albert Bandura details how this prior knowledge also asserts a level of prediction that aids in the integration of new events (covered in the media) into an individual’s rhetorical narrative.

A major function of thought is to enable people to predict the occurrence of events and to create the means for exercising control over those that affect their daily lives. Many activities involve inferential judgments about conditional relations between events in probabilistic environments. Discernment of predictive rules requires cognitive processing of multidimensional information that contains many ambiguities and uncertainties. In ferreting out predictive rules, people must draw upon their state of knowledge to

generate hypotheses about predictive factors, to weigh and integrate them into composite rules.<sup>43</sup>

By ‘state of knowledge’ Bandura is referring to the prior knowledge or information base referenced first by Bradford and Johnson. In essence, if an audience is to make sense of a news event that is the first of its kind, its members will need to base their thoughts on the matter upon prior knowledge. If prior knowledge does not exist, the media, or source of the new information, is tasked with framing the event in such a way that the story can more easily be communicated and absorbed into all viewers’ common rhetorical narratives.

If creating, or drawing upon common knowledge is the goal of a communication, then what are the tools through which this goal is achieved? To successfully transmit knowledge and information from one person to another, the quintessential tool used by the media is the aforementioned media frame; or, the structuring of a story in such that it may be more easily understood. However, within Communications Studies there are debates preventing the formation of a unified, singular explanation or understanding of media framing and its function as a communications device. Historically, any attempts to lay a framework for a methodology of media framing comprehension are done on a case-by-case basis, to suit the individual researcher’s needs. However, this has not allowed for the creation of an overarching analytical methodology that could apply to different types of events in the media, or different mediums of communication. As such, without a cohesive or standardized methodology within the discipline to comprehend a frame as a unique entity, it becomes “extremely difficult to neutralize the impact of the researcher in framing research.”<sup>44</sup>

In the wake of this challenge, one approach to understanding and being able to explain what a frame is (let alone what it can do), has been through trying to establish what a ‘frame’ must have, thus, a definition via attributes. Robert Entman discusses what attributes can be

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<sup>43</sup> Bandura, A., 1989, *Human agency in social cognitive theory*, Stanford University, p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> Van Gorp, B., 2005, Where is the frame? Victims and intruders in the Belgian press coverage of the asylum issue, *European Journal of Communication*, 20, 485–508, p. 503.

found in a media story that may serve to locate a frame.<sup>45</sup> Entman credits Gamson with first recognizing the utility of a ‘diagnose, evaluate, and prescribe’ approach to frame identifiers.<sup>46</sup> However, Gamson’s focus of frame identification revolves around the comprehension of framing a single event as a single frame. As such, his research involving the classification of social perception frames and the framing of adversarial groups in the Arab-Israeli conflict, are not inherently transferable to the wider efforts of framing for this thesis. Entman’s definitions are more useful for this thesis in identifying a single media frame (and his methodology has lent itself successfully to larger projects which codified his attributes and the wider frames via cluster analysis<sup>47</sup>). Accordingly, his ‘framing via attributes method’ will be the primary method of framing identification employed by this project, and will be further detailed in the Methodology Chapter.

Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the term described.<sup>48</sup>

Here, Entman narrows Fillmore’s understanding and assessment of framing down to a micro-level discursive tool.<sup>49</sup> This method is the most appropriate for those engaging with media framing and live media coverage. Entman discusses how the attributes found in the media coverage of a story serve to locate a frame, and calls these attributes, *frame criteria*. His four criteria detailed in *Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm* are: the **problem identification** in the reporting; the presentation of a **causal interpretation**; a clear **moral evaluation** (of the situation in news events); and, a **treatment recommendation** offered to the

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<sup>45</sup> Entman, R. M., 1993, Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm, *Journal of Communication*, 43, pp. 51–58, doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x.

<sup>46</sup> Gamson, W., 1992, *Talking politics*, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, p. 63.

<sup>47</sup> Matthes, J. & Kohring, M., 2008, The content analysis of media frames: Toward improving reliability and validity, *Journal of Communications*, 58, pp. 258-279.

<sup>48</sup> Entman, R. M., 1993, p. 52.

<sup>49</sup> See Entman, R. M., 1993.

audience. As a building block-type feature that precludes other discursive functions, Entman's definition of a frame via attributes (or identifiable components) will assist this project's methodology (as detailed in the Methodology Chapter under Research Design) to identify and track a media frame's lifespan and salience across multiple events.

#### 1.6.2.2 Mediation

The following section will introduce and explain the concepts of mediation, mediality, mediatization, and the modern media ecology, which is the act of representing a reality through any medium of communication. This could be considered the next level of analysis up from framing, as it is a more macro-level approach to media communications. Given their centrality to the topics, this section will chronologically introduce the works of Richard Grusin, Jay David Bolter, and Stephanie Marriott, respectively. The works herein delve into reflections on how American identity evolved against mediality and technological evolutions of various media ecologies. They speak to the nature of the procedures that capture various realities, ranging from the natural world to the news of the day. However, the representational images captured are also reflective of the social, political, and cultural standards of any given era. The central idea is that any mediation or representation of a reality, may speak more to the era of its mediation, than the truth of the thing itself. These ideas and how the media functions within this paradox are detailed in the following works, and are important towards establishing the foundations of the significance of mediation in the War on Terror Narrative. These topics are also discussed as they pertain to this thesis' Methodology in section 2.6.3 *Televised Visuals are Seldom Live*.

Richard Grusin's 2004, *Culture, Technology, And The Creation Of America's National Parks*, details some of the first mediation processes of the United States, which occurred as Americans expanded westward in the mid 19th century.<sup>50</sup> Specifically, the book details the technologies utilized by explorers of that age in their efforts to communicate and capture the grandeur of the

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<sup>50</sup> Grusin, R., 2004, *Culture, technology, and the creation of America's National Parks*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

three first national parks in the United States: Yosemite, Yellowstone, and the Grand Canyon. In the absence of GPS and satellite imagery, this communication was heavily reliant on landscape paintings and crude manual measurements.<sup>51</sup> Grusin argues that the respective acts of deciding to map an area of land, mapping that area of land, and then communicating where that land is (and where it is not), is mediation. Grusin even contemplates the relationship of various political philosophies to this mapping of the national parks, arriving at the idea that the push towards preservation is representative of a collective acknowledgement of a need to protect some parts of nature from human intervention (i.e. natural resource destruction). Furthering this concept, Grusin argues throughout the book that any mediation of nature is more a reflection of man and society, than of nature and truth. “I have not set out to deny the ‘naturalness’ of these parks, but to emphasize the way in which national parks function as heterogeneous cultural formations that help to preserve and reproduce that which resists or exceeds cultural practice.”<sup>52</sup> Beyond the natural wonders depicted in the works, the very concept of a national park, Grusin argues, is representative of American identity, culture, and politics.

I set out from the premise that the origins of America’s national parks can be fruitfully understood not as straightforward instances of the preservation of nature but rather as complex cultural representations or productions....To establish a national park is not to put an institutional fence around nature...Rather, to establish a national park is to construct a complex technology, an ‘organic machine’ that operates according and within a discursive formation, a set or network of discursive practices.<sup>53</sup>

This is relevant to this thesis topic, as terrorism (or any media-generated narrative) is similarly representative of such “complex cultural representations or productions” as mentioned above. However, whereas Grusin is speaking towards an era of slower-paced technological distribution, in the hyper-mediated world of network news during the timeframe of this thesis, those cultural representations and productions are infinitely more complex and impactful upon

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<sup>51</sup> Such as Thomas Moran, Albert Bierstadt, John Gast, Fanny Palmer, and John Wesley Powell.

<sup>52</sup> Grusin, R., 2004, pp. xiv.

<sup>53</sup> Grusin, R., 2004, p. 3.

the narratives they produce and manage. If a national park can construct an ‘organic machine’ of discursive production without satellite communication and rolling news broadcasts, then the machine of network television must have profoundly intricate influences upon the constructions it manages.

Grusin also details how the artistic movement of the time, which was used to capture and communicate the newly explored park lands, represented and embodied the political climate of the age. Specifically, he highlights the movement of explorers westward, and reflects on how this movement could be used to overcome North-South divides following the American Civil War. “In citing Leutze’s *Westward the Course of Empire Takes its Way*, which depicts a tableau of Westward-Bound settlers crossing the continental divide, Olmstead aligns himself with those artists who would use landscape painting to depict American national identity as oriented along an East-West rather than a North-South axis.”<sup>54</sup>

Grusin continues to unpack the concept that mediality is ultimately reflective of the era that bore the mediation throughout the book.

The interrelation of cognition and recognition is in certain respects at the heart of ethnographic (or other forms of descriptive) knowledge. Arguably the central epistemological question raised by anthropology is whether it is possible for an ethnographer to conceive another culture without first recognizing it within the conceptual framework of the anthropologist’s own disciplinary or cultural practices of knowledge production.<sup>55</sup>

In other words, the mediation of anything is more a representation of the individual mediator’s craft, than the subject being mediated. The processes of the author, illustrator, photographer, cartographer, director, will always profoundly impact the mediation which is manifested at a certain time - thereby representing the contexts of the mediation as well as the nature of the mediator. This directly pertains to the topics of this thesis, because, if what Grusin

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<sup>54</sup> Grusin, R., 2004, p. 24.

<sup>55</sup> Grusin, R., 2004, p. 119.

is explaining maintains its relevance in contemporary media ecologies, (which it does, and is detailed to do later in this section) then any mediation, including rolling television news, is reflective of the era of the mediation, more so than the reality attempting to be communicated. So, a single media narrative, such as the War on Terror, communicates a topic or idea, just as much as it communicates the timely social and political standards practiced by its creators at the time of production. That is to say, that while the media may cover stories and ‘facts’ of the time, the truest component of the news is how the mediation of the content was conducted, which, ironically, is what media companies try to conceal the most.

The IMAX film and its exhibition space epitomize how, in today’s media-saturated environment, the logic of recognition invoked by the sublimity of the Grand Canyon takes the form of a double logic of remediation - the simultaneous attempt to erase and to proliferate signs of mediation.<sup>56</sup>

In other words, the more a media ecology (being the media’s functionality and output based on the technological affordances during a specific period in time) attempts to deliver a pure experience of a truth devoid of mediated components, the more mediation (or processing of information through the media machine) must occur. Ultimately, the act of representing anything is paradoxical at best; because to represent a scene more clearly, and to be perceived as not having been reproduced, additional processing must occur.

Building on these concepts of mediality and the relationships between the ideas being represented in a mediation and the media ecologies of the era, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, brings the ideas born of *Culture, Technology, And The Creation Of America’s National Parks*, into the new century.<sup>57</sup> This book’s period of writing, between 1996-1999, embodies a specific era of media technology, which represents the foundations of the media ecology in operation on 9/11. The central concept is that each new media technology is always (at its introduction) a means of improving upon another form of

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<sup>56</sup> Grusin, R., 2004, p. 158.

<sup>57</sup> Bolter, D. & Grusin, R., 2000, *Remediation: Understanding new media*, First MIT Press.

mediation; thus it will inevitably be improved upon by subsequent advances, a process called remediation. “What is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media and the ways in which older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media.”<sup>58</sup> Remediation is summarized by its intent, which, according to the authors’, is a double-logic. In essence, each act of remediation, is designed to bring what is being mediated (such as a picture, text, or news story) closer to feeling like unmediated reality for the viewer. However, in order to project the closest representation of reality, the medium must seek to minimize its impact and presence, thus the ‘dual-logic’. “Our culture [speaking specifically to American culture in the 1990’s] wants both to multiply its media and to erase all traces of mediation: ideally, it wants to erase its media in the very act of multiplying them.”<sup>59</sup>

Concerning the type of mediation and remediation that television news experiences, and pertinent to this thesis, Bolter and Grusin observe the use of ‘windows’ and constructions of visuals that mirror webpage design of the late 1990’s in broadcast news (such as two reporters in different places being visually shown side by side in the live broadcast). However, aside from aesthetic considerations, the component that differentiates television news from other forms of media and other types of news reporting at this period of time (at the turn of the century), is the assumption of ‘live’ truths, which are implied in television news.

News and information shows are a different matter because their claim to immediacy is based on the shared belief that they are presenting what ‘really happened.’ The insistence on the liveness of the action is what gives television news its special claim among journalistic media.<sup>60</sup>

Refining and expanding upon these discussions of mediality and mediation, for the third time, Grusin’s 2010 work, *Premediation: Affect and Mediality After 9/11*, is perhaps the most

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<sup>58</sup> Bolter, D. & Grusin, R., 2000, p. 15.

<sup>59</sup> Bolter, D. & Grusin, R., 2000, p. 5.

<sup>60</sup> Bolter, D. & Grusin, R., 2000, p. 189.



pertinent of his trilogy to this thesis' topic.<sup>61</sup> Remediation is the notion that the media simultaneously aims for immediacy and hypermediacy, which Grusin argues embodied the media ecology of the late 1990's, wherein media sought to "simultaneously erase themselves and to proliferate multiple forms and practices of mediation."<sup>62</sup> Premediation, Grusin states, emerged after 9/11 as a form of pre-emptive mediation. "Premediation works to prevent citizens of the global mediasphere from experiencing again that kind of systemic or traumatic shock produced by the events of 9/11."<sup>63</sup> While Grusin clarifies that premediation is not the same as prediction, the overarching theme of the book is how mediation and premediation serve the purpose of perpetually preparing the audience for shock. This is so that when shock occurs (such as it did on 9/11) the audience is prepared because they are constantly 'at the ready', kept in a state of fear. However, it is not all about the audience, and one of the major concepts of premediation is how the media self-censors, self-edits, and self-fulfills its own predictions towards how the 'next big event' will unfold, and to what degree of shock and awe.

Grusin's 2010 book speaks to the same culture, time-frame, post-9/11 media management, and overall concerns regarding media communication (at least pertaining to the processing of the War on Terror Narrative) as this thesis. However, the book's central concepts are all to do with the theory that media actively influences its own coverage, and that this self-influence ultimately affects how the news is projected, processed, and then forms public opinion (for better or worse). This hypothesis is tested throughout the book, starting with an analysis of media coverage on 9/11, then on to media coverage leading up to the (Second) Iraq War. Discussions about the Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay images (Hooded Man) are discussed with a focus on how the mediation of the pictures is what carried influence, rather than their content.

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<sup>61</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, *Premediation: Affect and mediality after 9/11*, Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>62</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, p. 2.

To think of premediation as characterizing the media regime of post-9/11 America is therefore to be concerned not with the truth or falsity of specific future scenarios but with the widespread proliferation of pre-mediated futures. Premediation entails the generation of possible future scenarios or possibilities which may come true or may not, but which work in any event to guide action (or shape public sentiment) in the present.<sup>64</sup>

However, unlike Hollywood, the Main Stream Media's (MSM) processing and projecting of terrorism is not about telling a story or creating a moral message, but rather, creating and sustaining the anticipation of a 'next' attack.

Just as the US government multiplies and extends its own networks of political, investigative, and judicial practices to prevent the occurrence of another 9/11, so the media multiply or proliferate their own premeditations of potential terror attacks, as a way to try to prevent the occurrence of another media 9/11.<sup>65</sup>

This conceptualization of the media is a fluid entity, thereby the definitions/concepts of its affects requiring a similar flexibility, is furthered through discussions of the media/government dynamic, explored through Bush's 2002 State of the Union address and other communiqués circa the Iraq Invasion.

In addition to their role as agents of judicality, the US media also participate as agents of governmentality. This was particularly evident in the nearly 18-month run-up to the Iraq War, as the print, televisual, and networked news media serves as willing participants in the Bush Administration's propaganda campaign for the Iraq War. It is now a matter of historical record that, beginning almost immediately after the terrorist attack of 9/11, the Bush Administration systematically mislead the American public in making its case for a pre-emptive war against Iraq.<sup>66</sup>

So, no matter what happens, it is already, pre-emptively, capable of being instantly contextualized within the model of news delivery established in the post-9/11 media ecology. Finally, in *Chapter 5: The Anticipation of Security*, Grusin discusses a media behavior that directly corroborates one of the findings of this thesis, nearly word for word. This thesis identified a

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<sup>64</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, p. 47.

<sup>65</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, p. 15.

<sup>66</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, p. 42.

media behavior involving the phrase, ‘connect the dots’, used on all networks in the later portion of the thesis. While this was identified as a finding by this thesis, it was not investigated within the thesis. However, Grusin offers an explanation that supports not only the use of the phrase, but the function of its existence.

Such transactions [pertaining to the mobility and securitization of physical bodies as they move across cultural or geopolitical borders] make it possible to “connect the dots,” as it is called in the post-9/11 security environment. This incentive to connect the dots grows out of the belief in the security community that there was enough data available prior to 9/11 that it would have been possible to have pre-empted these terrorist attacks if someone had known how or where to look, or had even been looking...Connecting the dots involved more precisely the implementation of premediated algorithms of data mining and risk analysis to uncover patterns of suspicious behavior before they could be actualized in terrorist acts like those of 9/11 in the United States, 7/7 in Britain, or “India’s 9/11”, The November 2008 attacks in Mumbai....Premediation operates in the current security regime to ensure that there will always be enough data (enough dots) in any particular, potential, or imagined future to be able to know in advance, before something happens, that it is about to happen – enough transaction data to prevent (or pre-empt) future threats to national or international security.<sup>67</sup>

In other words, both the security services and the media industry function within a state of pre-empting the next disaster through the search for these ‘dots’, and blame any surprises (attacks) on a lack of ‘connecting the dots’ in time.

To conclude this section on the concepts of mediality and mediation, Stephanie Marriott’s 2007, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*, will be discussed.<sup>68</sup> This work unpacks the overarching ethos of television as a multi-faceted system of live and simultaneously un-live communication of contemporary rhetorical narration and mediation. Through detailing how telecasts’ construction plays into the ‘live-ness’ of an event, and using the examples of the Kennedy assassination, *election97* (British Election), 9/11, 7/7, and the Menezes Shooting,

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<sup>67</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, pp. 123-124.

<sup>68</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, *Live television: Time, space and the broadcast event*, Sage Publications.

Marriott breaks down any inherent assumptions about news mediation and its profound impact on the messages being communicated across time. The web of ‘live-ness’ is deconstructed to its most elemental foundations, finding that even with minute-by-minute explanations and analysis, clarifying precisely how news, truth, ‘live-ness’, and time, are actually communicated, is next to futile.

To seize upon some individual instant and attempt to map these communication flows in the manner of a time-and-motion expert charting the movement of individuals around a workplace would be an impossible endeavor: the world is thick with messages, invisibly crossing and recrossing each other in apparently endless and interlinked circuits of interaction.<sup>69</sup>

While the explicitly stated focus of the book is the “shifts that the development of electronic forms of communication have brought about for our experience of time, space and interactivity,”<sup>70</sup> this work forces the reader to contemplate the very nature of time; its passing, its representation, and its re-representation, as well as the reader’s relationship to its communication.

Increasingly, too, programmes advertised to the audience as live would consist of a patchwork of properly ‘live’ material – material ‘transmitted and received in the same moment as it is produced (Ellis, 1992: 132) – and inserts filmed or taped earlier. A quick overview of a morning’s viewing on American television on one particular extraordinary day (referring to 9/11) will make clear the extent to which even broadcasts overtly promoted as ‘live’ can, in fact, only intermittently claim that status.<sup>71</sup>

This passage clearly identifies how the ‘live’ nature of rolling television contains inherent misnomers from the start. Marriott notes that even during the broadcast of ‘live’ news, and even with the labelling of a ‘live’ button/icon in the corner of the screen, the only actual ‘live’ component is the mediation itself, not the video, not the images, commercials, station-ID, and not the pre-recorded segments.

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<sup>69</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 129.

<sup>70</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 4.

<sup>71</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 42.

We can never access the world through the broadcast; we can only access the world of the broadcast, a world that has been multiply-mediated on its way from the remote places in which it unfolded to the locale in which we encounter it. The world of the event, as we encounter it when we switch on our television, is the world of the television event.<sup>72</sup>

Speaking to how different mediums of communication inherently impact how the ‘liveness’ of a broadcast is represented, Marriott directly compares the necessity and usage of radio vs. television commentary.

Radio commentary is produced for the benefit of an audience which has no visual access to the unfolding events, and which is therefore dependent on talk – together with whatever subset of ambient sound has been selected for transmission – for the mediation and realization of what is happening in the world. Live television commentary, by contrast, serves to accompany an existing set of mediations of the event (in the form of images, sounds and graphics) with which it unfolds in tandem. Its principal function is therefore – occasional interjections and discretion apart – to contextualize and specify this material for the absent audience.<sup>73</sup>

In narrowing down the focus of the academic analysis of a broadcast component to the function of certain types of discourse, Marriott breaks down how ‘vicinity’ and concepts of presence shape the necessity or absence of certain linguistic functions of the news. This furthers a concept established earlier in Chapter 1 and is described as ‘co-presence’.

Co-presence is thus a fundamental condition for the optimal interpretation of a range of deictic uses of language. It is the shared vicinity, in all of these instances, which supplies the relevant common ground for identifying the indicated object, individual or event: and a co-operative speaker (Grice, 1975) will reserve their use of deictic expressions for those circumstances where other relevant participants will share the appropriate common ground, whether this be the locale-at-large or a particular demonstratively identified object.

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<sup>72</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 73.

<sup>73</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 87.

<sup>74</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 9.

Overall, Marriott directly challenged any inherent assumptions regarding news production, self-identification by the media as ‘reporting live’, and any relationships in and amongst the different mediums of communication represented in the media (between audio/video formats). The book also delved into the philosophical queries one should raise regarding the technological evolution of the narration of human rhetorical processing (both active and reflective). Speaking to the mosaic construction of news production, Marriott calls into question how basic human needs to process certain events will interfere with the news, such as the following reflection. “To watch the early states of the live coverage of 9/11 is to become aware of one important consequence of this superabundance of raw footage: a preoccupation with the moment of witnessing.”<sup>75</sup>

Marriott’s work touches on a media behavior noticed by this thesis during the 9/11 case study, detailed further in the following case study chapter. As 9/11 unfolded on the three networks, there was a certain ‘preoccupation with the moment of witnessing’, particularly on CNN, which, out of the three networks used the greatest number of telephone-witnesses for their audio content during the attacks. Dozens of persons who had witnessed first hand the planes crashing or towers collapsing called in and were asked about where they were, what they saw while re-caps of the video images played on screen. While MSNBC and FOX did have telephone interviews, they were with persons affiliated with the networks, unlike CNN, whose interviewees were all civilians and predominantly not related to the network professionally. (See the 9/11 Case Study Chapter for more details.) Moving on from the construction and ethos of news stylus and liveliness, the next topic of this literature review will look specifically at how war and violence has been managed by television news in the past and during the timeframe of this thesis.

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<sup>75</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 110.

### 1.6.3 The Media and War

This section will examine the literature and research closest to this thesis' lines of inquiry and topic, those works within which this thesis would most closely locate itself. First, literature concerning the coverage of violence in the media before 9/11 will be analyzed in *Mediation Violence Before 9/11*. This will cover the rise of 'live' war coverage, and discuss the issues the new age of reporting faced such as its influence on social opinion, and how the boom in available images led to new ways of formatting news delivery on the home front. In the second subheading of this section, *The Media and Terrorism After 9/11*, the academic literature focused on broadcast media's War on Terror Narrative will be discussed. These works will provide an understanding as to how academia approached the newest American War, and what role the media played in forming the shape of the War on Terror at its outset.

#### 1.6.2.1 Mediating Violence Before 9/11

There is a historical precedent in the media's management of narratives of violence and war, which formed the foundations of how the 2001 start of the War on Terror Narrative would come to be processed by the American media machine. Even the designation of 'war on' is not unique to the War on Terror, having been employed in American rhetoric surrounding the 'War on Drugs', the 'War on Crime', and other campaign style, agenda driven efforts by various socio-political entities. Speaking to narratives concerning violent, war-like discourse fuelled by both commercial media outlets and the US military apparatus, Susan Carruthers's, *The Media at War*, is the quintessential piece of literature for understanding the history and foundations that enabled and shaped the War on Terror Narrative's structure.<sup>76</sup> Carruthers details how the media interacted with war stories going back to World War I, and lays the foundations for a critical understanding of television's beginning and evolving role in war management by the state and in public opinion. Importantly, the book outlines the boundaries of the media's behavior during times of war or violence, sometimes acting as a mouthpiece of the state (or propaganda tool), or,

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<sup>76</sup> Carruthers, S., 2000/2011, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, *The Media At War*, Palgrave Macmillan.

conversely, critiquing and pressuring the state to act in certain ways (primarily concerning humanitarian intervention). In essence, Carruthers details how journalism evolved with technological innovations concerning global communications, thus highlighting changes in the socio-political influence the media has had on public discourse (and its ability to pressure the government into/against certain actions) since 1914. The major turning point for war journalism is noted as the Vietnam War, which is commonly referenced as the first major televised war, which is argued to have contributed to the United States' defeat during the conflict. However, Operation Desert Storm is noted by Carruthers as representing the first 'real' televised 'war' story, due to the 'live' component of satellite broadcasting (as opposed to the Vietnam War's pre-recorded video footage).

It was also during the first Gulf War that *The CNN Effect* is said to have been born.

For some commentators, the 'CNN Effect' described the capacity of images of human suffering, delivered in real time, to mobilize outrage worldwide, forcing national governments and international agencies to ameliorate humanitarian crises or take up arms on behalf of beleaguered underdogs in 'other people's wars.'<sup>77</sup>

In essence, the immediate streaming of images of war, violence, and suffering, devoid of government censorship (as opposed to historical war-time communication, wherein governments had near omnipotent control over what was and what was not said about the goings-on in the field), ripped the contextualization of a government's 'justified violence' narrative out from under official control. But, beyond removing the government's control of defending acts of war as necessary or righteous, the media's new-found influence over public opinion made it possible for technological advances to control policy support or criticism singularly through the media, which was under the control of non-state corporations. The War on Terror Narrative was created in the midst of this media ecology; and its impact furthered by the sensational and stage-like attacks of war and terrorism of the new millennium.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Carruthers, 2011, p. 142.

<sup>78</sup> 'Media Ecology' used in this thesis as defined in Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B., 2010, *War and*



Piers Robinson details the CNN Effect extensively in 2002 book of the same name.<sup>79</sup> In that book Robinson extensively details the shifts in public opinion made possible through the presence of rolling coverage during a conflict, beginning with the 1991-1992 Civil War in Somalia, then moving on to *Operation Restore Hope*, and the possible ‘manufacturing of consent’ observed during that time.<sup>80</sup> Then, Robinson, as did Carruthers, looks at the Kurdish crisis of 1991 and *Operation Provide Comfort*, as evidence that the CNN Effect did force the US Government to take humanitarian intervention more seriously than if live-broadcasting of the situation had not occurred. This control, however, and what corporate media groups have done with their newfound political influence, is still researched extensively under media and communications studies, strategic studies, and security studies. According to contemporary works on the subject of media-government relations, the media ecology’s shift from the corporate-centric dissemination of conflict information has become decentralized thanks to social media, leading to a divide in the literature (based on technological advances) surrounding the topic.<sup>81</sup>

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*Media: The Emergence of Diffused War*, Polity Press, p. 2. See the Methodology Chapter, ‘Key Terms and Phrases’ section for details.

<sup>79</sup> Robinson, R., 2002, *The CNN Effect: The myth of news, foreign policy and intervention*, Routledge, London. – It should be noted that Robinson states that the “focus of this study is on the alleged influence of the media upon decisions to intervene during humanitarian crises with the use, or threat of use, of force. As such, the research does not examine other types of policy response, for example, diplomatic engagement or non-coercive military intervention, peacekeeping, , that governments might peruse in response to humanitarian crisis.” p. 2. Akin to that direction of research, this thesis also does not engage in the diplomatic resonance of the War on Terror Narrative, similarly favoring the use of case study assessments of media communications, rather than an overall assessment of media-government interactions.

<sup>80</sup> Made in reference to Herman, E. D., and Chomsky, N., 1998/2002, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Pantheon Books, New York.

<sup>81</sup> Hoskins, A. and O’Loughlin, B., note the media-government relationship of power to have three distinct phases between the 1990’s and the mid twenty-teens. The first phase they call Broadcast War, referring to the CNN Effect in the 1990’s. The second phase, which coincides with the timeframe of this thesis between 2001-2013, is Diffused War, detailed in their 2010 publication, *War and Media*. The final phase, or the one which follows Diffused War, is Arrested War, wherein the mediatization of violence and war U-turns from the chaos of diffused war to become reabsorbed under the control of corporate

Building on this timeframe of media ecology and communication methods, *Televising War: from Vietnam to Iraq* by Andrew Hoskins, speaks specifically to this age of television war reporting.<sup>82</sup> This book details the similarities, shifts, and effects of media technology development and involvement from the Vietnam War to the Gulf War of the 1990s, and then the Iraq War of the early 2000s. Hoskins' central argument focuses on the impact that visual imagery has on the recollection of wars and conflict reporting at the start of the medium's 24-hour cycle, and how the importance of visual representation, placement, and symbolic imagery exponentially increased during this time. However, the text also details the fragility and temperamental nature of image distribution, assimilation, and resonance. It presses this point with the examples of 'Vietnam Napalm' (by Nick Ut, 1972), the bloody pictures of Saddam's sons in British print media, through discussions on the temporal disconnect of reporting 'live' from Iraq during periods of inactivity (and from press hotels), and the iconic function of images in political reporting. The piece narrates the development of media formatting of war coverage from the video-delays of Vietnam, to the immediately uneventful lulls of the Gulf War, to the gun-battles and press-casualties of the Iraq War.

"The negotiation of the social memory of warfare, therefore, is increasingly a matter concerning audiences."<sup>83</sup> This statement begs the question: if imagery, video, and the virtual memory of events are so reliant on the audience, is the image then over-injected with emotional value, such that it becomes less reliable as a tool of understanding, let alone for study? There is no agreed upon model for frame identification that encompasses both visuals and text/verbal content for the news. Hoskins also addresses the 'set-dressing' components of news delivery, such as patriotic band-tunes that accompanied war reports on the radio during WWI and WWII;

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media structures and, to a lesser but growing extent, the government. See Hoskins, A. & O'Loughlin, B., 2015, *Arrested War: The Third Phase of Mediatization*, in 'Information, Communication & Society', Volume 18, 2015, Issue 11, Streets to Screens: Mediating Conflict through Digital Networks, from Taylor and Francis, pp. 1320-1338.

<sup>82</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, *Televising War: From Vietnam to Iraq*, Continuum.

<sup>83</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 15.

then noting the use of the American Flag perpetually waving during 9/11 and the Iraq War rolling television coverage. Such dressings may bolster the political message of the report, but they cannot be academically quantified. They also become even more problematic concerning scholarly debates due to their highly subjective nature as ‘patriotic’ efforts, leading their study into multiple disciplines beyond communications, into propaganda, intelligence studies, history and other rhetorical studies.

If coverage of the Vietnam War is remembered as conveying at least a tangible (if very limited) understanding of events, then the Gulf War signified a more abstract view of warfare, dominated by an obsession with on-screen visual effects, namely ‘videographics’. In this respect 1991 witnesses the first TV video war. However, despite the TV coverage of Vietnam and the later Gulf Wars being inextricable from their respective and now entangled histories, what images actually dominate these accounts? If a new experience of warfare has been mediated by television, does this in a similar way force a new memory of these conflicts, compared with earlier, less-mediated ones?<sup>84</sup>

Here, Hoskins eludes to a very real problem with the new media landscape: there is very little understanding of how it will impact the ability of a public to react, retain and later remember, war and violence. Beyond the aforementioned CNN Effect, the actual social processing of violence has been thrown into a little understood age of borderless, timeless, continuous coverage. However, as new memory is shaped by perceptions as much as by reality or history, it is important to underline that the perceived effects of the television coverage of the Vietnam War were based upon three flawed and related assumptions: firstly, the singularity of ‘the’ audience; secondly, its capacity to effect a change in military strategy and government policy; and thirdly, the actual proportion and unambiguous nature of graphic images of war shown on television at the time.<sup>85</sup> Hoskins goes on to detail the issue of the discontinuity of time and space during the first Gulf War.

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<sup>84</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 16.

<sup>85</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 15.

The sense of the passage of time is conveyed in the programme itself with ‘night’ falling over the ‘Middle East’. Jennings, silhouetted, actually walks off the darkened set to leave an empty place (i.e. empty desert’ full of anticipation of the war to come at the end of the programme. The relationship constructed between the here-and-now (the shared studio space with presenter and audience) and the there-and-now (the desert of the Middle East) is intrinsically part of the view constructed through televisual apparatuses of the time.<sup>86</sup>

Hoskins details how the Gulf War’s coverage was unique and revolutionary, but it also immediately proved that “information-flow about the war rarely kept pace with the televisual news-flow. Consequently, much of the television coverage consisted of the recycling of earlier images and endless speculation by talking heads about what *might* happen later that hour or day.”<sup>87</sup> This quote segways into the topics and queries detailed in the third chapter, *Reality TV – war in real-time*, beginning with the question: “How do journalists routinely sift and select from incoming ‘raw’ material? Why is one image chosen and used over another?”<sup>88</sup>

At the outset of the war, newsrooms had to contend with the sheer volume of images and videos that had become immediately available thanks to the technological innovations of the early 1990’s. With more footage than ever, more access than ever, and more time to fill than ever (with the new 24-hour news channels); keeping audiences engaged became a real problem. The imbedded correspondents (dubbed ‘imbeds’ in *Televising War*) soon learned some valuable lessons about reporting and narrating war from the journalism side of production. Chiefly, sometimes days could pass between one ‘action shot’ and the next, as fighting was not continuous. Additionally, when there was trouble, the news crews had to stay in extremely close proximity with military troops. This created some interesting discourse anomalies noted by Hoskins later in chapter three with Sky News’ David Chater’s on-air descriptions while waiting for, and then after, Marines arrived to their position in Baghdad (broadcast April 9, 2003 via Sky News).

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<sup>86</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 27.

<sup>87</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 33.

<sup>88</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 45.

Before the US Marines arrived there was a sense of solitude and isolation in Chater's description of the news crews and staff who were stranded behind the front lines of fighting in Baghdad. However, once the Marines arrived, the terminology shifts to 'us' and 'we' encompassing both the news crews and the Marines, describing them as a whole, not as military and civilian entities.

According to Baudrillard, the use of a selection of images to portray or mediate real events leads to the 'contamination' of the real by 'the structural reality of images' (1995 [1991]: 46-7). This results in a virtual media event, which is open to speculation, interpretation and analysis ad infinitum.<sup>89</sup>

If this statement is not an argument for moderation, limitation, or negation of images and stock images being used in reporting (other than in their original context), then it would be difficult to argue what would. Hoskins then details the handling, censoring, or omission of particularly vivid images from Amiriya recorded by Jordanian TV. John Taylor (1998: 172) is discussed here; "The general tone of reporting during the Gulf War represents a 'movement in the press away from disconcerting knowledge towards comforting knowledge, away from harsh realities towards a squeamish denial of reality.'<sup>90</sup> Hoskins details the self-censorship that the press engaged in during this time with examples of how CBS Evening News on 13 February, 1991 'sanitized' the footage from Amiriya to make it more watchable, but in so doing, less accurate.

Finally, *Watching Babylon: The War in Iraq and Global Visual Culture*<sup>91</sup>, also details this same era of media production as both Robinson's *The CNN Effect*, and Hoskins' *Televising War: From Vietnam to Iraq*. *Watching Babylon* covers a range of topics surrounding the overarching theme of modern communications. It is significant to this thesis because of its discussions of the physical, militaristic 'War on Terror' that occurred during the timeframe of this thesis' observations. Additionally, it is an important piece concerning how warfare was managed by the media during

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<sup>89</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 86.

<sup>90</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 87.

<sup>91</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, *Watching Babylon: The War in Iraq and Global Visual Culture*, Routledge.

the first half of this thesis' period of observation. As the title suggests, the focus of the work is the concept of contemporary 'Babylon' and all of its literal and symbolic manifestation in the media. The book starts with a history of the actual Babylon, and chronologically examines the representation of Babylon in contemporary settings, primarily Western, as the European author, at the time of writing, was based in the Eastern United States. "Babylon is a metaphor for complexity, exile, decadence that has resonated throughout Western modernity as well as the site of a series of historical and mythical experiences."<sup>92</sup> So, Mirzoeff proposes the use of the city and all its cultural symbolism to observe, analyze, and explain the wars of yesteryear and post 9/11. The author stresses the visual components of war and the mediation thereof, but understands the complexities of the visual as relying on three distinct layers: "the locality of the viewer, the contents and the contexts of the image, and the global imaginary within which the viewer attempts to make sense of the screen-images."<sup>93</sup> He argues that images have become highly weaponized, and that any single image or series thereof is completely subjective, political, and always manipulated in some manner. The result of this rather disenchanting opinion of modern media, leads to Mirzoeff borrowing from Hannah Arendt, in labelling the MSM at large "a banality of images."<sup>94</sup> However, Mirzoeff then directly contests Mitchell's 2011 opinion of the Saddam dental cleaning images while trying to explain how the war became virtually impossible to win (again, based on Arendt's perspective that if no two people perceive an image the same way, then no image can be said to be special).

It is however important to stress that this banality of images is no accident, but the result of a deliberate effort by those fighting the war to reduce its visual impact by saturating our senses with non-stop indistinguishable and undistinguished images. This policy has had the unintended consequence of making it very hard to create an image of victory.

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<sup>92</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, p. 4.

<sup>93</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, p. 12.

<sup>94</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, p. 14.

Even the video of the captured Saddam Hussein being subjected to the biopower of America in his media examination seemed to fade from the memory very quickly.<sup>95</sup>

In essence, the argument is that because visuals are completely subject to the subjectivity of the viewer; power, and the traditional power hold achieved through visuals (particularly in war) has inherently attempted, but failed thus far, to adapt to the modern media ecology. The text also goes into the ‘fakeness’ of news production and ‘faking news’ on the part of the Bush Administration concerning such images as President Bush on the USS Abraham Lincoln.

Details follow on the actual production of the visuals for a standard American newscast. The ‘jumping’ feature of location settings and references to ‘here’ and ‘now’ further discussions such as A. Hoskins 2004, concerning the temporal discrepancies of ‘live-ness’ in rolling news. This bleeds into discussion on how “all this spatial and temporal jumping creates an idealized ‘American’ viewpoint that has no specificity.”<sup>96</sup> This is followed by a reflection on the spatial considerations of suburbia in America, the ‘nothing to see’ attitude of authorities during vehicle accidents, and ‘vernacular’ watching of news - or watching in passing such that images are only taken in stride and never actually processed. As a final judgement cast on the rolling coverage of war, Mirzoeff states:

In the second Gulf War, more images were created to less effect than at any other period in human history. Consider that the American networks CNN, MSNBC, and Fox News were broadcasting continuously throughout the six weeks of the war...More journalists were present in combat than ever before, using all the advantages of new digital technology to transmit reports even as fighting was taking place. What was in retrospect remarkable about this mass of material was the lack of any truly memorable images. For all the constant circulation of images, there was still nothing to see.<sup>97</sup>

It would seem that Mirzoeff’s opinion of the unfolding of the mediatization of the Iraq War is that the explosion of localities, infinite number of viewers, and continuous coverage, was

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<sup>95</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, p. 14.

<sup>96</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, p. 28.

<sup>97</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, p. 67.

a death sentence for any significance and conditions of importance that may have otherwise been instilled upon the war. While he does not detail the verbal content and/or subsequent transcribing of any footage from the war with such detail as he gives the visual components, it would seem that delivery of perpetually diffused content to more people than ever before is the key reason that importance does not stick to contemporary news coverage. “This distance between image and perceived reality is the signature of the irony that has dominated western mass media imagery for the past decade.”<sup>98</sup> In essence, the very condition of ‘live news’ is in and of itself, a fallacy. Something can be transmitted in a debatable state of ‘liveliness’, and it can be something considered newsworthy, but it can never be effectively communicated as ‘live news’ to any two viewers while maintaining a single modicum of uniform understanding.

Mirzoeff’s book concludes with an extensive reflection on the social requisites American and Western life have towards the warranting of the ‘Babylon’ label. Considerations of social justice, social mobility (or lack thereof), and other facets of ‘social’ and societal life are juxtaposed with ancient social protocols and their consequences. “Babylon was the name given to the ancient within the modern that doomed that modernity to becoming ancient itself. This is Babylonian modernity, a fusion of the past and the present that creates a remembrance that was not there before.”<sup>99</sup> Overall, the analogy of Babylon does its job to instill upon the reader the understanding that humanity has ultimately not changed over the past few thousand years.

#### 1.6.3.2 The Media and Terrorism After 9/11

*“And as our fields of perceptions continue to change, conflict and the people involved in it become visible in new ways, affecting our relations to war.”<sup>100</sup>*

At the start of the new century, terrorism proved to be the issue that rallied the US Government and the US media under a single flag known as the ‘War on Terror’. The language of the War on Terror was of course significant to how the *real* War on Terror was waged by the

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<sup>98</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, p. 69.

<sup>99</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, p. 93.

<sup>100</sup> Hoskins, A., O’Loughlin, B, 2010, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused Warfare*, Polity, p. 1.



US Government. It should be noted that there did exist a ‘rally around the flag’ effect, which unified some of the media and the government’s communications’ during this time frame.<sup>101</sup> However, it is also agreed upon that this language and its physical impact is significantly misunderstood.<sup>102</sup> According to data generated by Pew Research for the Project for Excellence in Journalism, in the four years before 9/11, compared with the four years after 9/11,

The number of minutes devoted to foreign policy was up 102%...Coverage of armed conflict rose 69%. Coverage of terrorism rose 135%. At the same time, there (was) a serious decline in reporting about domestic issues. Coverage of crime and law enforcement dropped by half (47%). Science and technology coverage fell by half (50%). Coverage of issues involving alcohol, tobacco and drugs dropped 66%.<sup>103</sup>

This means that the percentage of media content devoted to terrorism inarguably rose following 9/11, but what is not clear in the literature is the legitimacy of those proportions to any real threat of terrorism in the United States.

As for public reaction to terrorism news, some researchers have concluded that exposure to television is less predictive of high levels of fear than are viewers’ personal characteristics, but there is also evidence that heavy consumers of TV news are far more likely to perceive the threat of terrorism in the United States as higher than are people who pay less attention to the news.<sup>104</sup>

So the issue is, that following 9/11, at the start of the War on Terror (and this thesis’ timeline), there was both a drastic increase in the coverage of terrorism in the news, and an increase in the amount of fear in American audiences *because* of terrorism coverage.

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<sup>101</sup> Aside from the interview with Richard Jackson, this ‘rally’ consensus is reached in the media’s coverage itself, detailed in Nacos, B. L., Bloch-Elkon, Y., Shapiro, R. Y., 2011, *Selling Fear: Counterterrorism, the Media, and Public Opinion* University of Chicago Press. p. 8. “In the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 strikes, the news reflected a broad consensus on the need to suspend bipartisanship for the benefit of a united front.”

<sup>102</sup> As detailed in Nacos, B. L., Bloch-Elkon, Y., Shapiro, R. Y., 2011, pp. xxi, 11, 17.

<sup>103</sup> See PEW Research Center, September 11, 2006, ‘How 9-11 Changed the Evening News’. Source, Andrew Tyndall available at <http://www.journalism.org/2006/09/11/how-9-11-changed-the-evening-news/>

<sup>104</sup> Nacos, B. L., Bloch-Elkon, Y., & Shapiro, R. Y., 2007, ‘Post 9/11 Terrorism Threats, News Coverage, and Public Perceptions in the United States’ in *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*: Vol. 1, 2, 2007, pp. 105-125, p. 107.

*War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War*, by Andrew Hoskins and Ben O'Loughlin (2010 Polity Press), looks at the potential impact the modern media ecology has on perceptions of violence and terror. Significant to this thesis is the authors' concept of 'effects without causes', wherein audiences experience symptoms of fear and anxiety, but these emotions are invoked by the media's perpetual coverage of terror-events and violent-narratives, and not the result of just 'causes', such as a direct threat upon their person. *War and Media* details how network media in the early 2000's represents a unique technological landscape, and stresses that this landscape must be better understood in order to counteract negative effects of any potential mismanagement of violent narratives in or by the media. The phrase, *diffused warfare*, refers to: "A new paradigm of war in which (i) the mediatization of war (ii) makes possible more diffuse causal relations between action and effect, (iii) creating greater uncertainty for policy makers in the conduct of war."<sup>105</sup>

This thesis' theoretical framework argues that this *diffusion* of information, detailed in *War and Media*, can be observed through a critical analysis of the War on Terror Narrative in American rolling television news across multiple case studies, all of which take place during the 'second phase of mediatization' identified by Hoskins and O'Loughlin.<sup>106</sup> It should be noted that the authors have built on this concept and written extensively on the various life spans and stages that the modern media ecology has transcended. However, it is this second state of mediatization which speaks to the timeframe of this thesis' research and subject matter. By diffusion, the authors refer to the breaking of the cyclical movement of information from the source, in times of war, the source would most likely be the government, to the media, and then into public opinion, which would be the basis for policy response, which would then become the

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<sup>105</sup> Hoskins, A., O'Loughlin, B., 2010, p. 3.

<sup>106</sup> At the time of writing, the authors had identified three stages of mediatization to date – see Hoskins, A. and O'Loughlin, B., 2015, *Arrested War: The Third Phase of Mediatization*, in 'Information, Communication & Society', Volume 18, 2015- Issue 11 – Streets to Screens: Mediating Conflict through Digital Networks, from Taylor and Francis, Pp. 1320-1338.

new source-media-public opinion-policy change cycle. The diffusion occurs when the sources become multiplied exponentially, and with the advent of social media, the ‘media’ is similarly broken down into countless outlets such that public opinion is ‘diffused’, and no longer under the influence of a more elite structure, or a handful of government-only sources. This fraying of the threads of the cycle of communication leaves policy makers without a singular or even single-digit composition of public opinions from which to form their policy recommendations or construct decisive political action. “If we probe the connections between humans, technology and media to interrogate the emergent character of war and terrorism, we find that they all inhabit the same and unavoidable knowledge environment, what we have called our new media ecology.”<sup>107</sup>

It is within this dissemination of information that the War on Terror Narrative emerged and evolved, thus the discussions on how the media managed information of war and violence during this time are pertinent to any basis of understanding the findings of this thesis. And, as this chaos that impacts nearly all facets of communications and media during this timeframe, it is important to clearly and narrowly identify what specific communications will be observed by the current research project, and attempt to clarify what effect the ‘emergence of diffused war’ had on that type of communication. This thesis only looks at live, rolling television news in the United States and its broadcasts during specific case studies, divorced of any other part of the communications cycle. The level of *diffusion* here is restricted by the selection of a small representative number of television networks, rather an exhaustive range of media sources. The influence of Hoskins and O’Loughlin’s *effects without causes*, is also lessened by the selection of a single type of communication rather than the observation of broader communications cycles. By narrowly analyzing a single type of communication over a period of time, the impact of *diffused warfare* is anticipated to be more clearly identifiable by this thesis pertaining to rolling television news. However, this method of singling out individual components of communication involved

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<sup>107</sup> Hoskins, A., O’Loughlin, B., 2010, p. 5.

in the War on Terror Narrative does not make this thesis' approach impervious to the chaos of the media ecology of the early 2000's.

Military headquarters and major media organization can not guarantee the success of their framing or narrative because of a key phenomena, 'emergence': namely the massive increased potential for media data literally to 'emerge; to be 'discovered' and/or disseminated – instantaneously – and at unprescribed and unpredictable times after the moment of recording, and so to transcend and transform that which is known, or thought to be known, about an event.<sup>108</sup>

In essence, even a single facet of communication is not free from *diffused war's* impact, because the new chaotic movement of information is intrinsically woven into contemporary discourse, regardless of the original medium of communication.

Furthering the literature looking specifically at how the media processed the beginnings of the War on Terror is *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present*. This book details multiple metaphors and analogies that can be argued as representative of the relationship between the Christian-American issues with cloning (and scientific reproduction advances at the turn of the century), and the images of the Hooded Man, taken at Guantanamo Bay Detention Center, as a 'central image-event' of the epoch.<sup>109</sup> The book extensively engages with image-based concepts of war and identity; making multiple pop-cultural references including Star Wars, The Clone Wars, Dolly the Sheep, the Silhouetted iPod dancers, and many journalistic snapshots of the Iraq War. There are extensive undertakings into the analysis of the significance of these images and other American issues they represent beyond their own inherent topics or display. The book is described by the author at the beginning as: "at bottom a fairly simple exercise in the memory and prevention of historical amnesia."<sup>110</sup> A summary quote:

The images of the clone and the terrorist exemplify the new symbolic complex that I call the "biopicture," a fusion of new techno-scientific images and the literalization of image-

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<sup>108</sup> Hoskins, A., O'Loughlin, B., 2010, p. 9.

<sup>109</sup> Mitchell, W. J. T., 2011, *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present*, University of Chicago Press.

<sup>110</sup> Mitchell, W.J.T, 2011, p. xvi.

fears (especially religious) that have emerged in the epoch of the War on Terror and the Clone Wars.<sup>111</sup>

This work pertains to this thesis in its understanding of the two phases of the War on Terror between the Bush and Obama Administrations, respectively.

If the Bush administration presided over an era of wars on cloning and terror, the arrival of the Obama administration has been punctuated by decisions that break more or less sharply with both of these “fronts”. Obama has basically “undeclared” the wars on cloning and terrorism...By April 5, 2009, news organizations began to notice an unspoken parallel in the conspicuous silence surrounding the War on Terror. As Hillary Clinton noted when asked about this disappearance of the phrase: “I have not heard it used. I have not gotten any directive about using it or not using it. It’s just not being used.”<sup>112</sup>

Here, the author argues that cloning and terror are related based on a perceived lack of evidence, not the ‘unspoken parallel in the conspicuous silence’ phase. To quote Rumsfeld, “the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, or vice versa.” Mitchell suggests that the absence of evidence of two narratives is not evidence of absence, but rather evidence of a correlation between the two due to the timing of the perceived absences.

Continuing with the comparison of contemporary analogies, the chapter, *Autoimmunity*, discusses what was originally Derrida’s analogy of the autoimmune system as a means for understanding terrorism by the bodies it affects. “In selecting the figure of autoimmunity as a tool for analyzing modern terrorism, Derrida chose an image with considerable surplus value, one whose immediate applicability is startling, and which continues to resonate well beyond the use he makes of it.”<sup>113</sup> This is followed by analogies and imagery of the immune system, metaphors of cancer, and other ‘literal vs. symbolic’ discussions of a similar ilk.

Terrorism, then, is a war of words and images carried by the media, a form of psychological warfare whose aim is the demoralization of the enemy, and not the direct

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<sup>111</sup> Mitchell, W.J.T, 2011, p. 67.

<sup>112</sup> Mitchell, W.J.T, 2011, p. 23.

<sup>113</sup> Mitchell, W.J.T, 2011, p. 47.

destruction of military personnel or equipment...Terrorists do not occupy territory. They deterritorialize violence, making it possible for it to strike anywhere.<sup>114</sup>

Moving on from Mitchell, the media feedback loop and interactions by the public with the media must be contextualized, and this is best done through the work of Diana Mutz. Branching out from how terrorism might be understood through its visual manifestation, the actual engagement of the visuals and concepts they produce is covered in detail in *Hearing The Other Side: Deliberative Versus Participatory Democracy*.<sup>115</sup> This book's central research questions, as stated by the author are, "could deliberation and participation really be part and parcel of the same goal? Would the same kind of social and political environment conducive to diverse political networks also promote participation?"<sup>116</sup> The author's research included extensive polling specifically conducted for the project. She also utilized other organizations' polls, which were processed by the project to gauge where, when, and how often people did or did not engage in political discussions or debate. The author found that the differences between talk/no talk, action/no action, were divided, because people want to 'keep the peace', more than anything else. The other significant finding was that "like-minded people can spur one another on to collective action and promote the kind of passion and enthusiasm that are central to motivating political participation", more so than politically opposed groups and potentially conflicting interactions.<sup>117</sup> "Social environments that include close contact among people of differing perspectives may promote a give and take of political ideas, but they are unlikely to foster political fervor."<sup>118</sup>

What is most relevant from Mutz's book for this thesis is the representation of the political spectrum in daily American life. This thesis identified and represented both the left and

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<sup>114</sup> Mitchell, W.J.T, 2011, p. 64.

<sup>115</sup> Mutz, D. C., 2006, *Hearing The Other Side: Deliberative Versus Participatory Democracy*, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>116</sup> Mutz, D. C., 2006, p. 17.

<sup>117</sup> Mutz, D. C., 2006, p. 3.

<sup>118</sup> Mutz, D. C., 2006, p. 3.

the right leaning media outlets of the United States, a political system that is later deemed un-conductive to both participatory and deliberative democracy.

Those who consider themselves liberals or conservatives and those who self-identify as partisans on either end of the spectrum are less likely to be exposed to cross-cutting political communication...In addition, there is a significant asymmetry to the patterns...such that being a strong Republican or a conservative corresponds to a lower level of cross-cutting exposure than being a strong Democrat or a liberal. This finding appears regularly across social network studies. Republicans' networks tend to be more politically homogeneous.<sup>119</sup>

This statement by Mutz was observed within the frames and narrative originating from FOX news versus CNN and MSNBC. Where CNN and MSNBC would change and adapt certain representations or ideas and hosted guests who directly contested the views of the network, FOX seldom deviated from their core views and opinions, which continue to be predominantly Republican oriented.

Although...it is not clear which came first, the strong partisanship or the homogeneous social network, one can easily imagine just how mutually reinforcing these two conditions are. Strong partisan views lead one to seek out like-minded partisans, while the homogeneity of the network reinforces those same views.<sup>120</sup>

Mutz' second work, *In Your Face Politics*, similarly deals with media coverage and management during the timeframe of this thesis, as well as the presentation of perceived civility in political debate in the media. While this thesis did not directly set out to observe the intricacies of, nor academically analyse debate, it was nonetheless a part of some of the footage analyzed for this thesis. While this thesis looked specifically at the product of American rolling television news (The War on Terror Narrative), Mutz' book looked at the next step in the communications process, which is the public opinion on what was being viewed concerning a specific type of media event, political debate and discussions. The term 'In-Your-Face' politics is applied here in

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<sup>119</sup> Mutz, D. C., 2006, p. 33.

<sup>120</sup> Mutz, D. C., 2006, p. 34.

reference to the specific camera angles and (picture) framing of persons discussing politics. Beyond the talking heads delivering news, the core concern is how the scale of the person talking, combined with how and what that person is saying in defence of or against another political candidate can be represented on a scale of ‘civility’. ‘Civility’ here refers chiefly to the style of delivery by a politician, not the content.

“I am interested in the impact of incivility *independent of* political substance, and thus go to great lengths methodologically to separate the two.”<sup>121</sup> Setting up the rest of the book, incivility is also distinguished from negativity, and Mutz goes on to clarify that the basis of civil versus non-civil behavior is based on the premise of whether or not the behaviors would be tolerable face-to-face, in real life conditions, rather than just existing in the proximity-fluent ether of television production and viewing. The central research questions aim to unpack the paradox between television and humanity: a human connection may be felt when one person is viewing another person on a screen, and when the close-ups of influential figures are larger than life, it creates its own type of physiological responses. Mutz’ research focuses on what impact this relationship of viewing has on the degree of perceived civility, trustworthiness (of the individual and the government), likability, legitimacy, political affiliation (concurrence or distrust), and other factors across a rigorous series of experiments. This is relative to this thesis as the planning of ideal responses might play a part in the production of the media as well as the feedback to audience participation later on in the feedback loop.

Ultimately, I argue that television poses unique problems as a political medium because, more so than other media, people respond to it in fundamentally social ways...People do, in fact, respond to mediated representations of other people in ways that are rooted in expectations drawn from the world of face-to-face interactions...it turns out that we respond to having politicians in our faces in much the way we would to any other person with whom we disagree.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Mutz D. C., 2015, *In-Your-Face-Politics: The Consequences of Uncivil Media*, Princeton University Press, p. 5.

<sup>122</sup> Mutz D. C., 2015, p. 15.



The entire premise of this book is to figure out exactly what this entails, and how in-your-face politics impacts viewers, impacts their perceptions of civility, influences their understanding of partisan discussions, and influences their relationship to political discourse in various ways. One of these ways is processing the perceived legitimacy that a viewer may feel exists or does not exist for a particular political opponent based on the perceived emotional engagement between the viewer's favored opponent and whomever he is debating.

In short, it is critical that political systems incorporate a means by which partisans can develop some degree of respect for the other side. If citizens remain unaware of any legitimate opposition, then political conflict itself seems petty and unnecessary, a view largely held by many Americans.<sup>123</sup>

An interesting finding, and related to the selection of networks by this thesis aiming to represent the active political spectrum of the United States, Mutz found no visual differences between left-leaning and right-leaning political programming. Rather, she found that the more partisan the program, the higher the degree of perceivable incivility by audience members.

Interestingly, I found no significant relationship between the left-right political leanings of programs and their level of incivility or camera perspective....programs with some partisan leaning-in either direction-were significantly more likely to involve high levels of incivility. Moreover, they were likely to be the programs with heavy doses of political content rather than ones that only occasionally dabbled in political topics.<sup>124</sup>

What this finding may imply for this thesis, is that the visual components of the coverage of the War on Terror, as a predominantly political narrative, may not differ significantly between the Republican-orientated FOX news, and the more left-leaning CNN at either point of this thesis' time-frame between 2001-2013. As detailed in the Conclusions Chapter of this thesis, the case study analysis found that there did exist a significant discursive shift between the first set of cases between 2001-2002, and a second set of years between 2009-2013. In the earlier years of the Media's War on Terror Narrative, the discourse amongst the three networks was relatively

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<sup>123</sup> Mutz D. C., 2015, p. 49.

<sup>124</sup> Mutz D. C., 2015, p 122.

similar and supportive of the US Government's War on Terror rhetoric. However, during the Obama Administration (commencing in the thesis with the Underpants Bomber case study), there was a divergence of discourse amongst the networks, wherein the Republican orientated FOX News became far more pro-war and anti-Executive Branch. (See the Conclusion Chapter for more details.)

From Mutz, and supportive of this thesis' use of television as the medium of study for the War on Terror, is that while people may react more physiologically when watching television news (versus when engaging with radio or print media), the inherent message and information being transmitted is not substantially altered. However, the War on Terror narrative still has not (at time of writing) been substantially scrutinized from the standpoint of a simultaneous analysis of visual *and* discursive analysis. While this provides room for future research on the War on Terror, what Mutz' research suggests is that the visual component of the political communication of the narrative does not necessarily impact the narrative itself in a measurable way.

So, does an audience member feeling as though the narrative is sad, negative, civil, real (or not) actually contribute to or influence a political narrative in a substantial way? If one were to approach a narrative as a whole, as it spreads across all mediums of communication, then the answer is no.

On the whole, my findings suggest that the arousal-related outcomes of in-your-face politics are probably television-dependent. They require heightened arousal to trigger higher levels of attention and recall, and emotional intensification of audience attitudes.<sup>125</sup>

Here again, Mutz' research was directly related to candidate-centric political television news and the degree of civility perceived by audience members. However, this research process and experimentations could arguably be applied to the War on Terror's television coverage. The

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<sup>125</sup> Mutz D. C., 2015, p. 169.

question is: would civility be the measured variable, and, whatever variable analyzed, would the public opinion on the coverage affect the narrative itself?

This literature review has summarized the key research areas and academic concepts behind this thesis' methodology and subject matter. This thesis locates itself firmly within media and communications studies' branch of strategic narrative identification and analysis. While the War on Terror is a topic and subject matter concerning violence and terror in the media, the methodology of this thesis, indeed the purpose of this thesis, is to develop, test, and analyze a new method of narrowly identifying the media narrative of the War on Terror as it manifested within rolling television news between 2001 and 2013. The aforementioned media and communications literature provides the groundwork for this thesis methodological approach, which will be detailed in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 2: Methodology**

### **2.1 Research Design Introduction**

This thesis' research will employ a mixed-method experiment bridging multiple sub-disciplines of media and terrorism studies respectively. In order to explain how a particular expression of violence resonated in rolling media in the United States between 2001-2013, this project will clarify how that expression of violence affected the media's communication of terror events and how that evolution fed into future coverage of terrorism in the media in the early 21st century. This thesis will look at a chronology of six terrorism events' coverage on American rolling news television between 2001 and 2013. Those case studies are: 9/11, the 2001 Shoe Bomber attempt, the 2003 Bali Bombings in Indonesia, the 2009 Underpants Bomber attempt, the 2010 Times Square Bombing attempt, and finally, the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombings. Against the six case studies, four specific media frames will be analyzed such that any changes in the frames amongst the case studies will yield insight into shifts in the wider War on Terror Narrative. Ultimately, a matrix chart of the events and frames (which will be visually represented at the start of each case study chapter) will yield a new way of perceiving and visually representing the War on Terror Narrative.

This methodology chapter will begin with a section discussing the key terms and phrases that will be used across this thesis. This will be followed by details on the specific method of framing identification this thesis has constructed based on existing framing theories. A detailing of the frames that have been selected for this thesis will follow, as well as full disclosure concerning how those frames will be examined and managed across the six case studies of this thesis. Then, the case studies themselves will be discussed. A detailing of the source materials for this project will follow, as well as details on the raw-data acquisition process. This will be followed by an explanation of why this thesis has selected to exclude visual analysis in the section titled, 'Emphasizing Discourse over Visuals'. Finally, the Matrix Methodology will be detailed,

which serves as this thesis' experimental method of media narrative identification, will be detailed, culminating with discussions on the thesis' original contribution to terror narrative research.

### 2.1.1 Central Research Question

How did the War on Terror Narrative evolve in American rolling television news between 2001-2013; and can this evolution be more precisely identified and analysed by tracking pre-selected media frames across multiple terror events?

## 2.2 Terms and Phrases

This section will briefly clarify the terms and phrases that are found throughout this thesis. Some of the following concepts have already been detailed in the preceding Literature Review Chapter, however; the terms specific use within this thesis require concise definitions. First, the phrases associated with media and communications studies will be presented in the order of their categorical progression of scale within the academic field. This will be followed by the relevant terms and definitions concerning terrorism studies, and real-world terror-related jargon, which will be established and explained in relation to their utility within this thesis. Ultimately, this *Term and Phrases* section will clarify which definition of the following terms and phrases this thesis will employ, with some general contextualization and literature-based justifications for their selection. This thesis will not seek to challenge or critique any of the following terms and phrases. Rather, it will aim to develop and expand upon the following concepts throughout the thesis.

**Media:** Media within this thesis predominantly refers to *The Media*, or a communications outlet that is received by audiences. While media broadly may refer to any format in which a communication may exist, within the topics and analysis of this thesis, media typically refers to corporate network media outlets.

**Mediation:** Mediation as a concept is meticulously unpacked within the Literature Review under the subheading, *Mediation*. It is defined within this thesis as the broadest act of representing a reality through any medium of communication.

**Mediatization:** Unlike mediation, mediatization is the literal step-by-step processing that information goes through while in the hands of a communicator, on the way to becoming mediated. This is further detailed in Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2010) in the Introduction, speaking on contemporary mediatization as it pertains to warfare: "The mediatization of war makes possible more diffuse causal relations between actions and effect. The pervasive delivery of connectivity and visibility disrupts the notion of intentionality and control."<sup>126</sup> During the mediatization process, information can be altered towards serving various agendas, fitting into different frames, and even challenging the narratives they represent.

**Mainstream Media: (MSM):** This thesis' emphasis on how the mainstream media managed topics of terrorism automatically calls into question what is, and what is not, 'mainstream' media during the time frame of this thesis' research. In 2001, the majority of what was considered mainstream media included the massive network television institution of corporatized media in the United States, daily domestic and international newspapers, nationally distributed periodical magazines, and major radio channels with multiple regional covers. In 2001, the Internet web pages of such media groups had been set up in some of their first formats (some sources being text only-sites without video or pictures beside the company's logos), but they were not the predominant source through which Americans obtained their news at the time of the 9/11 attacks. Mainstream Media, for this thesis, speaks specifically to the readily available, rolling television cable news networks which had the highest viewership in the US for the duration of this thesis' time frame, between 2001-2013: CNN (Cable News Network), FOX (Fox News

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<sup>126</sup> Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B, 2010, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War*, Polity, p. 8.

Network), and MSNBC (an abbreviation of Microsoft and the National Broadcasting Company's merger).

**Media Frame:** Media framing, specifically the framing functions observed in the media, has also been called news framing by some researchers.<sup>127</sup> However, the concept and definition remain similar regardless of whether one calls it media framing or news framing. A frame is a subset (or micro function) of the wider (macro) media narrative. It is also a smaller-scale media tool than a media template, which will be addressed next. Multiple frames can function within a single narrative, changing over time and across media events. Ultimately, the frames at work within a narrative serve to contextualize, summarize, and convey meaning to an audience. The definition of a frame throughout which this thesis adheres is, those “organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world.”<sup>128</sup> The reason for the selection of this particular and deliberately broad definition is that it emphasizes ‘meaning in the social world’, which is typical of any media born communication. Additionally, this definition is well-suited towards the establishment of Robert Entman’s methodology of framing via attributes, which is how this thesis explicitly identifies and analyses the frames it tracks.<sup>129</sup> For more details on these frames, and exactly how Entman’s methodology is applied to this thesis, see chapter 2, Methodology and Research Design.

**Media Templates:** While it may appear to be a confusion of terms, media frames and media templates are different academic concepts within communications studies. Media templates, as defined by Kitzinger (and understood by this thesis) are, “key events which have an on-going

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<sup>127</sup> D’Angelo, P., 2002, News Framing as a multi-paradigmatic research program: A response to Entman, in the *Journal of Communication*, 52(4), pp. 870-888.

<sup>128</sup> Reese, S., D., 2010, *Finding Frames in a Web of Culture: The Case of the War on Terror* in D’Angelo, P. & Kuypers, J. A., 2010, *Doing News Framing Analysis: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives*, Routledge: New York. P. 17.

<sup>129</sup> Entman, R., 2004, *Projections of Power: Framing news, public opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy*, University of Chicago Press.

shelf life which extends beyond the conclusions of news happenings. Indeed, media templates are defined by their retrospective use in secondary reporting rather than contemporaneous coverage.”<sup>130</sup> The second defining trait of a media template overlaps in part with media frames, which is where some confusion can occur. Kitzinger states, “media templates are used to *explain* current events, as a point of comparison and, often as proof of an on-going problem.”<sup>131</sup> This can be understood in two ways. First, news reporting will relate one event to another in order to draw importance to the unfolding event by ‘legitimizing’ it through correlation with the previous event (prior knowledge). Second, similar to media framing, a media template explains the current event through contextualizing the event and grounding it within a previous and well-established event. In essence, a media template is a fixed event used like an anchor, or “as rhetorical shorthand, helping journalists and audiences to make sense of fresh news stories.”<sup>132</sup>

Kitzinger’s research looks into why certain events are granted an ‘immortalization’, finding that those events which represent larger issues at work in society are iconic for such a symbolic representation.<sup>133</sup> As examples of media templates at work: Watergate became synonymous with political corruption and power struggles in Washington; Pearl Harbor became synonymous with surprise attacks against the US by foreign powers. It is the perpetuation of these terms and phrases in society and their establishment within society as a reference point that grants them resonance across the years. For instance, the ‘-gate’ additive is used in contemporary news stories to establish that an event is worthy of the same large reaction that ‘Watergate’ received. Van Gorp argues that it is this social and cultural integration of a media story (leading to its immortalization, as discussed by Kitzinger) that constitutes an additional type of framing in and of itself.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Kitzinger, J., 2000, Media templates: Patterns of association and the (re) construction of meaning over time. *Media, Culture and Society*, 22:61, Sage Publications, p. 76.

<sup>131</sup> Kitzinger, J., 2000, p. 76.

<sup>132</sup> Kitzinger, J., 2000, p. 61.

<sup>133</sup> Kitzinger, J., 2000, p. 61.

<sup>134</sup> Van Gorp, B., 2007, The constructionist approach to framing: Bringing culture back in, *Journal*



**Media Narrative:** A media narrative is the wider level of media tool for topic-based understanding above media frames and templates, which applies to all of what is said about a particular topic, idea, or event, in all forms of media of a certain point in time. The definition of a media narrative is perhaps one of the most debated concepts within communications studies, and there is no single agreed upon definition. As with framing research, the individual researcher or aims of a project are the real determining factors as to which definition is used towards what ends. For this project, the predominant media narrative being discussed, the War on Terror, is defined herein as all conversations about (or in reference to) the War on 'Terror Narrative' which occurred on rolling television news in the United States within the confines of the analysis' time frame per each case study.

**Media Ecology:** Media ecology, specifically the phrase 'modern media ecology' is the discursive territory of Professors Ben O'Loughlin and Andrew Hoskins, detailed in their work *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused Warfare*.<sup>135</sup> The authors build upon and arguably combine the concepts of media ecology spearheaded by McLuhan<sup>136</sup> and Fuller,<sup>137</sup> concerning the academic

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*of Communications*, 57, pp. 60-78.

<sup>135</sup> Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B, 2010, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War*, Polity.

<sup>136</sup> McLuhan M., 1964, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, (CreateSpace Independent Publishing), speaks to ideas similar to Grusin's notions of mediatization and mediation; and how the influence of those performing the contextualization of a message profoundly impact the message itself. McLuhan details his anticipated impact of the media ecology in the 1960's on day-to-day life, and emphasises how the centrality of life will be diffused and decentralized in the wake of technological innovation.

<sup>137</sup> Fuller, M., 2007, *Media Ecologies: Materialist Energies in Art and Techno Culture*, (MIT Press), approaches the concept of media ecologies from a more philosophical perspective, noting that the existence of the ecology is defined by and identified exclusively through its interactions with other things, more so than as a singular entity onto itself. While this abstract approach is interesting and engaging as an interpretation of the relationship between communication as an action, and the pathways it takes within contemporary technological affordances; it is not the definition nor the area of research this thesis seeks to engage with, as this thesis seeks to better understand a specific narrative's evolution through a single medium, via a more methodical approach.

understanding of how technological affordances impact our communications landscape. Both the general media ecology, and the modern media ecology, refer to the complete picture of the physical infrastructures of technology and processing behind the (news) media and its mediation of information during a particular moment in time. During 2001, the media ecology of the United States was predominantly comprised of slower, truck-mounted satellite relays and required the manual collection and handling of physical tapes of various events; whereas, by 2013, that infrastructure was marked by instantaneous, digital transmissions of video from around the globe, live. The definition of a media ecology used by Hoskins and O'Loughlin defers to Simon Cottle, "Media systems (ecologies) today comprise multiple and overlapping channels of communication, different media forms and interlinking networks that span from the interpersonal to the local and the global. Together they constitute a patchwork quilt of horizontal and vertical communication flows (Bennett, 2003; Cottle 2006a: 51; Donk et al., 2004; McNair, 2006)."<sup>138</sup> This thesis will conduct its methodology assuming the parameters of this particular definition, as it speaks well to rolling television news media and its practices during the timeframe of this thesis' focus.

**Terror Narrative:** Simply stated, this refers most often in this thesis to the War on Terror Narrative. However, there are other narratives within the media concerning terrorism, such as suicide terrorism, vehicle-based terrorism (e.g. airplane or automobile based-attacks), and other typologies of attacks. A terror narrative is any broader discussion of terrorism that serves to connect attacks and attempted attacks together in the media, narrating and explaining their interrelation with one another and how they fit within the wider terror narrative of a particular conflict.

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<sup>138</sup> Cottle, S., 2008, Reporting demonstrations: The changing media political of dissent, in *Media, Culture & Society* 30(6) p. 858.

**Terrorism:** Following the examination of the complexities involved in defining terrorism from an academic standpoint (See .6.1. Terrorism Studies), this thesis will not attempt to add another definition simply for its own purposes within this thesis, as some projects that engage with the topic of terrorism have in the past. For this thesis, terrorism will be identified and defined based on the media's labeling and use of the phrase; as the media and its behavior is what this thesis aims to understand.

**Terror Attacks:** This thesis will define a terror *attack* as a terror event that was partially or completely successful inline with the intentions or goals of the attackers. The terror attacks analyzed by this thesis include the 9/11 attacks, the Bali Bombings, and the Boston Marathon Bombings.

**Terror Attempts:** This thesis will define any terror *attempt* as a terror event that was not successful or was not executed inline with the principal objectives of those who conducted the event. The terror attempts analyzed by this thesis include the Shoe Bomber, the Underpants Bomber, and the Times Square Bomber.

**Terrorism Studies:** As detailed in section 1.6.1 Terrorism Studies (as a review of the related literature), terrorism studies encompasses all academic research and efforts concerning terrorism as a topic or concept.

### 2.3 Framing for this Thesis

How does the concept of 'frames' and framing serve this project? Building on the aforementioned definition in the Terms and Phrases section, a frame is a micro level discursive tool observed within the macro level discourse, and is a critical component in the construction of any discursive narrative surrounding an event or topic. However, framing research is not

static, and there is no single cross-discipline (or cross-media) definition or methodology of framing identification and analysis at the time of this writing. As such, all research and any projects employing framing must identify, justify, and defend their use of a particular framing method, on a case-by-case basis.

Framing has been called an approach (e.g., framing analysis approach to news discourse; Pan & Kosicki, 1993; see also McLeod & Detenber, 1999), a theory (e.g., a theory of media effects; Scheufele, 1999), a class of media effects (Prince & Tewksbury, 1997), a Perspective (Kuypers, 2005), an analytical technique (Endres, 2004), a paradigm (Entman, 1993), and a multiparadigmatic research program (D'Angelo, 2002). Some researchers have used more than one term, for example, Reese (2001) called framing an approach and a paradigm.<sup>139</sup>

This excerpt gives a brief insight into the complexities and overlapping concepts that exist in media and communications studies' understanding of the form and function of frames, and the act of framing in the media detailed in the previous chapter. Pertinent to political research, Fillmore describes a frame as, "a specific unified framework of knowledge, or coherent schematizations of experience."<sup>140</sup> This understanding of a frame refers to the larger, macro-discursive form of knowledge and its organization in collective language environments. Fillmore's notion of a frame pertains to the context and background through which understanding and meaning can be inferred or derived by those engaged in the discourse. The weakness of frames and media framing as a field of study (and communications tool) rests in the subjectivity that can be exhibited by the individual researcher, or influence of various project directives. "Although this concept (framing) has become more of a unifying thread in political communications research, it has been vulnerable to criticism as an imprecise catchall that means slightly different things to each researcher employing it."<sup>141</sup> The problem identified here alludes

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<sup>139</sup> D'Angelo, P. & Kuypers, J. A., 2010, *Doing News Framing Analysis: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives* Routledge: New York, p. 2.

<sup>140</sup> Fillmore, C., 1985, 'Frames and the Semantics of Understanding' *Quaderni di Semantica*, 6(2): pp. 222-254. Also see Fillmore, C., 1982, *The Archaeology of the Human Sciences* New York: Random House.

<sup>141</sup> See Entman, R., 2004, *Projections of Power: Framing news, public opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy*,

to the interpretive component of framing research – each researcher customizes, selects, and manages frames in varying manners to suit their needs. In order for academically rigorous, productive research to be conducted in this field or regarding these topics, this discrepancy is the first hurdle any project must overcome. Again, the definition of a frame which this thesis will use is: the “organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world.”<sup>142</sup>

### 2.3.1 Merging Entman and MFA

To counteract the aforementioned problem, this project will merge the two most compatible methods of framing identification for rolling television news media: Entman’s framing (identification) via *attributes*, and Media Framing Analysis’ frame identification via *considerations*. As a reminder, Entman’s four criteria are: the **problem identification**, (the presentation of a) **causal interpretation**, a **moral evaluation** (of the situation in news events), and a **treatment recommendation** offered to the audience.<sup>143</sup> In 2009, Giles and Shaw (MFA founders) presented “(a) formal procedure for conducting analysis of (primarily news) media text.”<sup>144</sup> Their research was originally intended for psychological studies aimed at addressing components of mass social cognition and trying to observe the effects mass media had on human behavior. MFA, however, is appropriate to act as an expansion on Entman’s framing criteria basis for the aims of this thesis towards identifying the frames present in live news broadcasts.

We conceive MFA as comprising two broad analyses: a (largely quantitative) microanalysis of a broad data set [for this thesis, the news coverage as a whole] sampled

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University of Chicago Press.

<sup>142</sup> Reese, S., D., 2010, *Finding Frames in a Web of Culture: The Case of the War on Terror* in D’Angelo, P. & Kuypers, J. A., 2010 *Doing News Framing Analysis: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives*, Routledge: New York. p. 17.

<sup>143</sup> Entman, R. M., 1993, ‘Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm’, *Journal of Communication*, 43: 51–58. p. 52.

<sup>144</sup> Giles, D., Shaw, R., 2009, ‘The Psychology of News Influence and the Development of Media Framing Analysis’ *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 3/4, pp. 375-393. p. 378.

carefully and purposefully from a specific range of media sources [for this thesis, case study specific live-television news] and a qualitative microanalysis of selected materials [for this thesis, Entman's attributes, and this thesis' pre-selected frames to be analyzed across the case studies] perhaps to illustrate one of the broader framing processes identified in the microanalysis.<sup>145</sup>

Their work goes on to detail their eight considerations towards a more refined understanding of a media frame. MFA's considerations are: the initial **data collection**, the **screening** of collected materials, **identification of the story**, identifying **character**, **reader identification**, **narrative form**, **analysis of language** categories, and **generalizations**.<sup>146</sup>

Initially, in *Projecting Power*, Entman titles these substantive frame functions as: 'defining effects or conditions as problematic', 'identifying causes', 'conveying a moral judgment', and 'endorsing remedies or improvements'.<sup>147</sup> For the sake of this project, this substantive (rather than procedural) framing identification process will be conducted under the lens of a specific frame, rather than against the event as a whole. This is done in order to narrow the focus of the frame to greater detail, such that cross-case-study comparisons are more finite in their observations of changes to the frame. In *Projections of Power*, Entman suggests a more macro approach for this same case study of 9/11, naming the '*Problem*: act of war, surprise attack on US civilians; *Cause*: terrorism, *Evaluation*: evil, irrational & competent; Americans innocent, and *Remedy*: unity, protection.<sup>148</sup> However, to track multiple frames across multiple case studies in more detail, choosing a frame (first) as a lens through which to observe Entman's identifiers, allows for a richer discursive analysis to be conducted across the case studies.

Pertaining to the microanalysis of a broad data set, this project will be looking at the data of 60-hours of material for each case study and breaking those hours down by the frames selected by this project. Giles and Shaw's original suggestion for this stage of analysis includes

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<sup>145</sup> Giles, D., & Shaw, R., 2009, *A methodological Framework for MFA* pp. 380-393.

<sup>146</sup> Giles, D., Shaw, R., 2009, p. 378.

<sup>147</sup> Entman, R., 2004, p. 24.

<sup>148</sup> Entman, R., 2004, p. 25.

key word searches via Nexus, although as this project is concerned with television news and not print news, the hard data has been selected appropriately through archival research, material requests, and direct acquisition of the footage per each day of media coverage of each case study. The video material was manually transcribed in order to preserve the context of the reporting and assist the researcher with establishing additional familiarity with the materials. The eight considerations of the Media Framing Analysis that this project will apply in a consideration capacity towards the support of the frames identified for each case study begin with the **initial data collection**. This has been incorporated into this project through the selection of only dates and hours of footage following a terror attack or attempt. The **screening of selected materials** can be observed in this thesis through confining the material selection to three major networks: CNN, FOX & MSNBC. This cuts down on the sheer quantity of television reporting and archives available. If these networks are unavailable for any reason, the next largest networks ABC or CBS will be employed. The **identification of the story** here is similarly predetermined, as is the **character identification**. Both will have been integrated into the framing identification (via Entman), which, and as such, it can be left out (this was also a specific criteria for microanalysis created by Giles and Shaw, specifically for psychological research). The **reader identification** is similarly pre-empted for this project's purposes, as only domestic news sources have been selected, and a background on the types of persons/audiences each news channel (political affiliations included) will be presented accordingly. **Narrative form** is a particularly important component of MFA as the narration that occurs on (live) rolling news is less subject to censorship or the heavy scripting and editing that nightly newscasts are able to impose prior to their broadcast. Live-rolling news television was selected as it was the format of news most relied upon during the events of 9/11. Therefore, the same medium of broadcasting helps us understand subsequent terror attacks. The **analysis of language categories** is a criterion that is the least detailed by Giles and Shaw; so this project has integrated this component through narrowing the scope of possible frames 'in play', pre-selecting frames to be used in the Matrix

offered above. Finally, **generalization** in MFA is the analysis of how a specific report may be linked to an on-going story. For this project, this component is considered by applying the same frame to multiple events in order to trace that frame's development over time and identify how each event is connected in the media. Each of these components will be carefully identified for each case study before the end result is finally examined in its macro state, which is the War on Terror Narrative as it was presented by the American media between 2001-2013. In short, the eight considerations of MFA can be grouped under Entman's attributes once the first of MFA's considerations ('data collection' and 'screening of collected materials') is complete. MFA's 'identification of a story' and 'identifying character' can be absorbed into Entman's 'Problem Identification'. MFA's 'reader identification' and 'narrative form' can be absorbed into Entman's 'Causal Interpretation'. MFA's 'analysis of language' can be absorbed into Entman's 'Moral Evaluation', and MFA's 'generalizations' can be absorbed into Entman's 'Treatment Recommendation'. In this manner, MFA acts as a crosscheck to Entman's framing via attributes identification process (of substantiating the four attributes within a broadcast), to ensure the researcher or project is assessing the materials in a comprehensive and consistent manner.

In merging two framing identification processes this thesis will be able to identify and more clearly 'measure' media frames, which can then be tracked across the six aforementioned terror events. The reason this method was selected for this thesis was due to the perceived lack of 'scientifically astute' procedures for frame identification at the time of this writing. 'Scientifically' here refers to the ability for multiple researchers to execute the same methodology against the same body of data to produce compatible results. In the humanities there is less research of this nature due to the philosophical and political theories at work within most projects and queries. However, this thesis argues that the ability of researchers to employ more standardized approaches to framing and communications issues would yield more productive, real-world relevant research. Communications is inherently non-scientific, particularly when one medium of communications is transcribed onto another (such as with this thesis, reforming live-



video oration into printed transcripts), however, the inherent idiosyncrasies of researcher biases can be less impactful if the research first strives for a degree of uniformity amongst researchers and projects of similar directives and enquiries.

For this thesis, the analysis of a specific media frame will start by asking questions of Entman's *attributes*, and Giles & Shaw's *considerations*, of the transcripts made (by this thesis) from the newscasts of selected networks for specific dates of the six case studies. The selection of materials and case studies are discussed in full later in this chapter. However, the frames, as the critical component of this thesis (and the War on Terror Narrative as a whole), take precedence. To analyze each frame, a single day of media coverage was collected and manually transcribed, totalling 12-hours of news footage per five days of each case study. (The four-hours taken from each of the three-networks were randomly selected unless the same hours were available amongst the networks.) Those materials were read to the point of familiarity by the researcher (meaning that the order of events, lines of inquiry, and differences in network's coverage were known before proceeding to the next step). As an example, the first day of coverage analyzed by this thesis, September 11, 2001: the 12-hours of footage was digitally assembled, viewed multiple times (chronologically) in order to accurately transcribe the broadcasts, then the transcripts were read back during the broadcasts to ensure accuracy, then read on their own (without replaying the broadcast). This process was repeated as necessary to the point where familiarity with the reporting (the transcripts) was adequate to begin asking the questions of the *attributes* and *considerations* respectively without returning to the footage. (Of course, if varying lines of inquiry arise, the footage will be reviewed as needed.) Then, one of the four pre-determined frames was selected for identification as it manifested within the transcripts for a given day. Eventually, for the sake of space, the five days of one frame's analysis per each case study was merged into a single 'frame' section in each case study chapter, and done per each of the four frames.

### 2.3.2 This Thesis' Selected Frames

The following frames were selected for their representation (in varying intensities during initial research phases) across the 12-year time period of this thesis during initial research into each of the case studies: *9/11*, *Evil*, *Scope of Threat*, and *al Qaeda*. It should be noted that while other frames (aside from these four) coincided and intermittently engaged with the case studies, the above frames are the only ones with which this thesis directly engaged through extensive analysis and time sampling across the case studies. As a single-researcher project, it was necessary to limit the observed number of frames to four, rather than strictly employing Entman's procedure for identifying *all* functioning frames within a given case study. Additionally, one of the key purposes of this thesis was to test the methodology of same-frame identification and linear tracking over multiple case studies and clusters of case studies across an interim of time. If all frames that existed per each case study were identified and analysed, then this process of directly comparing the condition of the selected frames (in a 'before and after' fashion) would not have been as rigorously conducted. It is also unlikely that all the frames in operation during this thesis' timeframe had the longevity of the frames selected, and as such any comparative analysis would have been futile. Should a project be conducted with more resources, the method of selecting the frames first (even if more frames and more case studies were to be analyzed), *then* observing their manifestations, would still be preferable to identifying *all* perceivable frames active during a report, due to the sheer number of frames present during any given hour of media footage. This tracking of the four frames (and their detailed analyses) has been simplified into a matrix chart, which will be presented at the outset of each case study; with the final 'War on Terror Matrix' presented in the conclusions chapter. (Note: The Frames [of this thesis] will be capitalized and italicized in all text of this thesis to clarify the differences among those frames.)

### *9/11*

The 9/11 attacks were anticipated to function as a frame, icon, and a contextual reference point for any subsequent terror attacks, attempts, and terror-related discussions in the

media during the 12-year time period of this thesis. As a frame, the use of ‘9/11’ by network news might serve to contextualize stories for audiences, making direct correlations between ‘unfolding’ or ‘new’ terror attacks or attempts, and the more infamous 9/11. As a frame across multiple case studies, 9/11 was identified initially by phrase-tagging, such as ‘9/11’, ‘September 11<sup>th</sup>’, ‘9-1-1’, ‘Ground Zero’, ‘The Twin Tower Attacks’, and ‘The Attack on the World Trade Center’. However, as this thesis conducted its own transcription of all newscasts (4-hours per day, per three networks, per five days, per six case studies), other such mentions or references to 9/11 (as an event and speaking to the frame, 9/11) were identified during the transcribing process. (This is where the manual transcription process is more effective than digital transcription programs.) Also during that transcription process, deeper references (beyond semantics) were highlighted or manually extracted to a separate document, then cross-examined amongst the networks (for similarities/differences/shifts), and then for each day of observation. For this thesis, 9/11 was expected to be the easiest frame to identify, the most consistent (in terms of the calibre of its representation), and the one that maintained its core *considerations* and *attributes* across the 12-years of this thesis’ observations.

### *Evil*

*Evil* was selected by this thesis as the frame through which to measure the level of emotional response and moral judgements by network media, which can occur during the live coverage of terror events, particularly successful attacks. While news is meant to be a factual and informative conduit of information, this thesis hypothesizes that during the coverage of terror events, the political, cultural, and religious underpinnings and ideological foundations of the different networks might manifest in their live-news discourse. This frame was selected to catch those opinions and biases under a single heading, as ‘evil’ is not a factual entity, rather, an opinionated judgement of morality. Here, Entman’s *attribute of moral judgement* may be the most clearly communicated, and MFA’s *analysis of language and narrative form* may be most recognizable. *Evil* was anticipated to strongly manifest in the *causal interpretations* offered by the networks (even

if in the contexts of speculation) for both successful and failed terror attacks.

### *Scope of Threat*

This frame was designed to engage with the media's speculation of the location(s) of the 'War on Terror', as well as other hypothetical parameters and 'signs' of the ever-present conflict at the time of reporting. This frame identified the 'where and when' concerns of a predominantly symbolic/conceptual 'war', and directly asked of the networks: who did they ascertain as being at risk or imminently threatened, where did 'terrorism' exist in relation to the case study's coverage and contexts, and what are any other 'unknown' concepts involved in the coverage. This frame also encompassed the media-to-audience direction of information concerning how afraid the audience should be (according to the networks) because of 'where' terrorism was during a period of time. The flow of information concerning 'threat' and 'risk' are headed under this frame, because, regardless of legitimate physical danger to the audience, the threat level transmitted by the media was anticipated to be disproportionate. Simply, *Scope of Threat* asked of the coverage where the War on Terror was taking place during each case study, in an effort to further define and locate the boundaries of the War on Terror Narrative.

### *al Qaeda*

Focusing on both the specific group and the wider maturation of the concept of 'terrorists' as represented in rolling network news, this frame looked at the 'who and why' detailed in the network coverage of each case study. While the leadership of al Qaeda changed between 2001-2013, and other groups (such as ISIL/ISIS) rose during the time frame of this thesis, any notion of attribution or blame for specific terror events will be managed under this frame. This frame contended with the 'us versus them' notes of media coverage of terror events, as well as any representations of 'othering' that took place. Additionally, this frame encompassed such 'terror' centric notions as 'lone wolf', 'al Qaeda-inspired', and 'home-grown' terrorism, as these concepts directly concerned the 'who and why' of the War on Terror Narrative. This frame was anticipated to weaken across the timeframe of this thesis' case studies, because the group

never executed as successful an attack as 9/11 (after the attacks themselves) – thus losing ‘brand’ influence. However, al Qaeda was still selected as a frame due to its overwhelming strength as a media frame at the outset of the War on Terror.

### 2.3.3 Testing: How A Selected Frame Will Be Analyzed

Rather than using the traditional approach of taking a single event and looking for all the media frames operating within that event, this thesis will start with the four selected frames and track and analyze only those frames. This study will start with a frame hypothesized to operate during a case study, then assess the salience and saturation of the frame, even if it does not present in a consistently substantial manner, across a number of case studies. In doing this for four frames for six case studies, the frames act as depth-charges to measure (through Entman, Giles and Shaw) each case studies’ similarities and differences to the others, allowing the wider (War on Terror) narrative to be represented and examined in a new manner. This method was selected because examining each of the six aforementioned case studies for every possible media frame that could be manifested would not have been feasible for a single-researcher project, and focusing on a single case study (rather than testing for the similarities and differences among numerous cases) would yield very little new information about the larger War on Terror Narrative. This thesis’ main challenge is to prove the effectiveness of the hypothesized method of ‘Frames x Cases = Narrative’.

This challenge will be addressed by conducting an analysis of the four frames on all days of the case studies (five days including the day of the event) after all the transcripts (from all three networks) have been assessed by the researcher. The following questions were then asked against all the networks’ coverage of a day as a whole (meaning, asked against the entirety of the coverage of a day, noting differences amongst the networks, then re-assessing that frame every single day of the case study’s observational period of five-days). In this way, changes in the frames across the five days of the case study could be accounted for and documented. Note: for some case studies, the different news networks may not have exhibited compatible framing

messages for a particular day or an entire case study of footage. The mis-alignment of frames amongst the three networks was expected to be a result of the selected sampling of news networks across the political spectrum (of left, left-center, and right) in the United States. This was noted in the case study chapters if it occurred, as it represented shifts or changes in the macro-level narrative. (This will be detailed in the following section, Media Materials: Networks and Sources).

### 2.3.3.1 An example of questions asked for analysis of the *Evil* frame in any case study:

#### Problem Identification under Entman:

- What is the problem as stated by the reporter/anchor, or announced at the start of each news segment?
- Is evil directly mentioned in the broadcasts as part of the problem?
- MFA Considerations: *Identifying the Story* and *Identifying the Character(s)*
  - Is the terror event the top story?
  - Is identifying the story ever problematic?
  - Is the development of the story and characters immediate or a more prolonged process?
  - Are the characters/culprits called evil immediately? When/if called evil, how long did that semantic take to develop? Does that description stop at a certain point or is it permanent?

#### Causal Interpretation under Entman:

- What is the cause of the problem offered by the media to audiences?
- What is the general interpretation offered to the audience as to why this situation is occurring? (Why a certain place, why a certain time, why against a certain group, what the impact of those factors may be, etc...)
- According to the media, how did this situation come to be?
- Does the causal interpretation involve *evil*?
- MFA's *Reader Identification & Narrative Form*
  - The *reader identification* is the audience of each network – How is the media speaking to their (reader/audience) during this event? Is there any indication that the media is speaking to certain viewers and/or not others?
  - The *narrative form* is the medium of communication (considered by Giles & Shaw to weigh on the delivery and intensity of the story's transmission to the readers). The *narrative form*'s origin is further detailed under the heading, 'News Coverage', of each case study. Is there a sense of urgency or panic in the reporting? Or, is the story not given the top story placement in its coverage? How was this case study's reporting different from the others?

#### Moral Evaluation under Entman:

- What/Are moral judgments were made against the perpetrators of the event?
- Are there any use of moral indicators such as, good vs. evil, us vs. them, strong vs. weak,

etc.? Any terms that are not factual (imperative in terms of reporting accuracy) could arguably have been subjective to moral biases of the networks.

- MFA's *Analysis of language*:
  - Giles and Shaw noted this *Consideration* (of *analysis of language*) to be, 'probably the loosest in our conception of MFA thus far, largely because the way language is analysed will depend on the particular research question under investigation, and on the size of the project.'<sup>149</sup>
- So, the *investigation* herein involves live, spoken, television news; rather than, say, a full-page article in a weekly magazine, which may be more selective in its word choice, or be less dramatic or emotionally charged due to the space and time that may take place between an event (such as 9/11) and the actual composition of the piece. Taking the landscape of live-broadcast news for what it is, (timely, immediate, and less deliberated upon than print mediums of communications), the analysis of language used by this thesis largely rests on the identification of the number of reiterated or repeated, similar words or phrases, during broadcasts for a specific day per case study. Much like a day's stories follow in similar ordering from one broadcast hour to the next, similar semantics are utilized across a day's coverage when referring to a single event or story. The number of times a word or phrase is used and repeated during the observed footage, often associated with the degree of media 'saturation' in discourse analysis, can serve as MFA's *analysis of language* for this thesis. Specific to the *Evil* frame, the linguistic functions and implied moral evaluation of 'evil', make this frame one of the easiest of this thesis to track across the six case studies.

#### Treatment Recommendation under Entman:

- What is the solution offered by the media for the event at hand? (What is the call to action by the networks?)
- What recommendations are offered towards helping or amending the situation, if a more absolute solution is not offered?
- Is there an 'easy fix', or does the language suggest a longer effort towards the problem?
- MFA's *Generalizations* – "Taken directly from Entman (1991), this final step in MFA requires analysis of the way that a specific article, or cluster of articles (per this thesis, news hours and the stories therein), may be linked – either explicitly or implicitly – with

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<sup>149</sup> Giles, D. & Shaw, R., 2009, p. 388.



an on-going phenomenon...'<sup>150</sup>

- How is the treatment/solution for this event laced in with other case studies' treatments/solutions? What similarities and differences are observed between this case study and the others to date? (The case studies will be conducted chronologically.)

## **2.4 The Case Studies/Terror Events**

The following section will detail the six case studies selected by this thesis as examples of domestic, international, successful, and failed terror events. Successful events will hereafter be called 'attacks', failed events, called 'attempts'. In observing the similarities and differences among the coverage of the different types of terror events (ones which achieved the terrorists' goals and ones which did not succeed in their execution), this project seeks to identify the contrasting components of four media frames which operate amongst these events, to their furthest point of explanation (in this thesis' capacity). It is thought that through employing this strategy of observing the extremes in terms of the type of terror event, notable differences in coverage can be observed.

To clarify; the Shoe Bomber, Underpants Bomber, and Times Square Bombing have been identified as 'failed' terror attempts due to lack of completion of the attack as planned, and their subsequent labeling as 'failed' in the media. 9/11, the Bali Bombings, and the Boston Marathon Bombings have been identified as 'successful' terror attacks, as their plan was executed to the fullest known extent, and they were labeled as 'successful' in the media. There are extensive definitional quandaries regarding the phrases 'successful' and 'failed' terror events within terrorism studies literature; however, for this thesis, the fact that network media communicated an attack as successful or failed is more significant to the purposes of this project than any qualifier originating from terrorism studies. This thesis is concerned with the media's War on Terror Narrative. As such, identifying the media's stances and interpretations of terror

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<sup>150</sup> Giles, D. & Shaw, R., 2009, p. 388.

events is imperative (more so than academic labeling).

Of those successful and failed terror events, an equal number of domestic and internationally based terror events has been selected in order to identify a hypothetical component of influence in the media's terrorism coverage; proximity to the United States (and consequently, the American media's audience). It is hypothesized that the media's coverage of a terror event closer to the United States, regardless of its failure or success, will be notably more frequent and intense than coverage of a terror event further away from American soil. Domestic events include 9/11, the Times Square Bombing, and the Boston Marathon Bombings. International events include the Shoe Bomber, the Bali Bombings, and the Underpants Bomber. (While the Shoe and Underpants Bomber attempts occurred in the air over international waters and US/Canadian airspace respectively, their physical separation from US soil combined with the international origin of the flights is what has led them to be classified as 'international' incidents.) The remainder of this section will look into each case study in brief, giving an explanation of the event's significance both as an event within the War on Terror, and as a media event important for this thesis.

**9/11:** September 11, 2001. The hijacking and crashing of four commercial airliners (American Airlines Flights 11 and 77, United Airlines Flights 175 and 93) by 19 Al Qaeda operatives, into the two World Trade Center Towers in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, DC, and a field in Pennsylvania (intended destination debated). Fatalities: 2,977 and 19 hijackers. The 9/11 attacks are notable not only for the magnitude of the physical assault on the US soil, but also for the attacks' significance as commensurate of a new age of violence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which became known as the War on Terror. On Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the deaths of 2,977 persons on American soil, in a symbolically anti-American attack, not only brought the United States to a physical standstill (with all flights in the US grounded for the first time in history), but also altered the American media machine's flow. There were no

commercials on American television news networks for three days following 9/11, an unprecedented interruption to regular programming that had not occurred before. To put that into perspective, in 2013, the final year of observation for this thesis, the average amount of commercial time per hour on network television was 15 minutes and 38 seconds, over 25% of the hour.<sup>151</sup> Within the media, 9/11 served as a reset button for the relationship between network news and the US government. Those three days after 9/11, wherein the networks were still broadcasting 24-hours a day, were saturated with government communications (press conferences, official statements from the various branches of government, a constant tracking of where the President and major heads of state were, and what branches of the government and local services were open/closed following the attacks). Because of this injection of government materials, the narrative and official story transmitted by the media following 9/11 was uniformly government orientated across networks known for typically polarized political views. This facilitated the assimilation of the Bush Administration's War on Terror Narrative (discussed in Jackson, 2005) into the Media's War on Terror Narrative, which will be discussed in detail in the 9/11 Case Study and Conclusion Chapters.

**The Shoe Bomber** Attempt: Dec 22, 2001. The attempted bombing of American Airlines Flight 63 from Paris (CDG) to Miami, by Richard Reid, also known as Abdul Abdel Rahim, via explosives hidden in shoes. This was the first airline-based attack by a radicalized individual following 9/11. Thus, its importance to this thesis rests in both its proximity to 9/11 (as the event unfolded in a nearly identical media ecology), and its failed nature. The event was covered in the media, but in having most of the facts known about the attack and its perpetrator within hours of the story breaking, the media's management and procedures towards the coverage of terror attacks may be observed in a less chaotic state of news delivery (than during successful, drawn-out terror attacks). This event holds significance as a reference point and

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<sup>151</sup> LA Times, *TV Networks Load Up on Commercials*, Joe Flint, Publication May 12, 2014, reporting on Nielsen Advertising firm findings.

media template for subsequent failed terror attempts across this thesis' time span and beyond.

**The Bali Bombings** Attack: October 12, 2002. Bombings in Bali, Indonesia, involving a backpack-suicide bomber in a nightclub and a larger bomb in a car outside a dance club, also (not extensively covered) a small bomb detonated outside of the American Embassy in Bali by the same group of al Qaeda inspired terrorists. Fatalities: 202. This event was the first successful large scale al Qaeda motivated attack since 9/11 to occur in a similar media ecology to 9/11, but on the other side of the world from Ground Zero. This event is significant to this thesis in measuring the impact that location has on the coverage of a terror attack, which by all accounts, was a perfect example of an attack befitting the War on Terror label. This event occurred the furthest distance from the East Coast of the United States out of all six case studies.

**The Underpants Bomber** Attempt: December 25, 2009. The attempted bombing of Northwest Airlines Flight 253 from Amsterdam to Detroit, by Umar Farouk Abdulmatallab, who claimed inspiration and support from Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). This case study was selected seven-years out from the Bali Bombings in order to allow both the War on Terror Narrative and the American network media ecology to develop sufficiently that any changes in news management might be observed through direct comparisons. Additionally, this failed attempt represents a similar type of attack as the Shoe Bomber Case study, allowing direct comparisons between the failed events to be made.

**The Times Square Bombing** Attempt: May 1, 2010. A car bomb planted by Faisal Shahzad, who trained in Pakistan in an Al Qaeda run 'terror training camp'. Location was directly outside the MTV studio in Times Square, New York City. Street vendors reported a suspicious vehicle to the local police who then disarmed the devices. Arrest was made within three days, with no casualties. This case study was selected as the third failed event, second domestic event, for its location only a few miles from Ground Zero. This component of the event's physical proximity to Ground Zero is expected to impact the coverage of the attempt,

through references to 9/11 as well as comparisons and discussion on what security and changes were made to NYC before and after 9/11.

**Boston Marathon Bombings** Attack: April 15, 2013. Two pressure cooker bombs exploded near the finish line of the annual Boston Marathon set by brothers Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev. The events lead to a police chase, manhunt, and two shootouts. Fatalities: three spectators, 1 suspect, and 1 police officer (killed during subsequent manhunt). The Boston Marathon Bombings were the largest successful terror attack on American soil under the War on Terror heading since 9/11. This event's significance lies primarily in its extensive media coverage. The event's location, in a northeastern American city similar to New York City, and its targeting of a civilian and symbolically American culture icons, are also significant for this thesis' understanding of the War on Terror Narrative. As the final event for this thesis and the second most heavily covered event (to 9/11), this event allows for comparisons to be made of the news coverage on terror attacks between 2001 and 2013 for successful, domestic attacks.

## 2.5 Media Materials: Networks and Sources

*“The question of how intrinsic properties of the medium (of communication) shape the form of narrative and affect the narrative experience can no longer be ignored.”<sup>152</sup>*

Rolling television news is a unique medium of communication with the potential to influence the management of political and social narratives across the globe. Because of its far-reaching influence, further research and academic understanding should be conducted on the medium. It is the aim of this project to assist in unpacking some concepts surrounding how rolling television news manages narratives of terror, doing this through its analysis of the aforementioned selection of case studies. As the events of 9/11 unfolded in their entirety on rolling television news, the medium’s significance to the War on Terror Narrative is critical.

Simply stated, for each of the six case studies, the three most watched rolling news networks in the United States; CNN, FOX and MSNBC, will be observed for four hours per day, for five days following each terror event. This means that each of the three networks will be observed for 20-hours per case study, totalling 60-hours of material per case study (at three networks), totalling (at six case studies) 360-hours of materials for this thesis as a whole. These quantities were selected as they are manageable by a single researcher, yet (at four hours per day) give insight into each network’s daily content beyond a single news hour or network show. If only one hour was selected, then if the hour were a news show delivered by a host who favored a particular political leaning or topics, the news selected would carry bias not necessarily representative of the network as a whole. Conversely, if every hour of a day were selected for analysis, the single-researcher would not be able to observe enough days of coverage or enough case studies to draw any significant conclusions as to changes in semantics or topic. With the amount of topic and content repetition amongst news hours on a single network, four hours of content per network, totalling 12-hours of footage per day of each case study can demonstrate

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<sup>152</sup> Ryan, M., 2004, *Narrative across Media: The Languages of Storytelling*, Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska, Introduction.

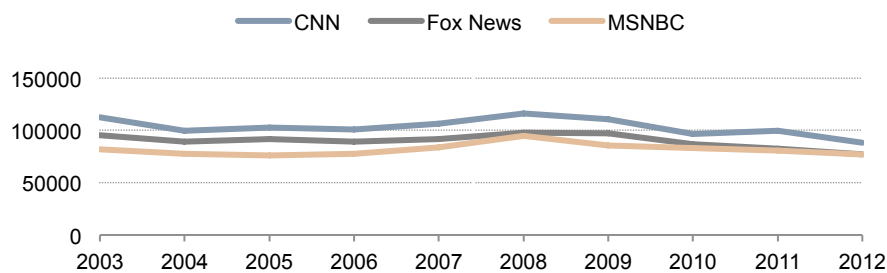
the similarities and differences in semantics, topic coverage and emphasis sufficiently to identify and assess the conditions of the media frames.

The specific hours were chosen based on the availability of footage or transcripts – This thesis did not assign specific hours across all networks for all days of each case study. If there had been enough footage/archive material available consistently between 2001 and 2013, the method of selecting the same news hours for all networks for all days across all case studies would have been employed. As the material presented for research purposes, four hours of content per day were selected for this project's analyses. This was based on the pre-requisite that the four hours originate from the rolling news channel of the network (CNN has multiple channels, but only one consistent rolling channel between 2001-2013), that at least four hours be available for each day, and four hours of programming be available for five days following the day of the terror event. The only case studies where this is not the case are 9/11 and the Boston Marathon Bombings. For 9/11, all hours of news coverage are available for the day itself, so the hours surrounding the attack, then those hours surrounding the President's speech, have been selected. For the Boston Marathon Bombings, by happenstance, the same hours for all networks for all days were available.

Should one of the three main networks have been un-available for certain hours or a full day, the next most widely watched, rolling news' television network (ABC or CBS) will be substituted. This methodology is designed practically to adapt its resource pool in the event of a lack of research material (or if there is no archive material from certain archives), through observing the networks' coverage based on a total/sum of hours per day for observation, rather than mandating specific hours for each day. In short, as long as rolling news networks are observed, instead being confined to a single archive or resource, any archive (and a combination thereof) may be used, so long as the date, news hours, and preferred networks conform to the methodology.

### 2.5.1 Why CNN, FOX, and MSNBC?

Combined, these three networks represent the majority of American viewership for rolling television news during the period of this thesis' case studies.<sup>153</sup> CNN, FOX and MSNBC also serve to broadly represent the political spectrum between Democratic/Left (CNN) and Republican/Right (FOX) in the United States between 2001 and 2013 (with MSNBC lying center/left). The following chart from the Pew Research Center represents the most accurate assessment of combined viewership between Primetime and Daytime audiences in the United States during the timeframe of this thesis. (From the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, *The State of the News Media 2013: an Annual Report on American Journalism*.) Numbers represent monthly cumulative audience in the thousands of audience members who tuned into a single channel for over one minute.



The Pew chart below shows FOX as appealing to more Republican orientated audiences, CNN to audiences that are more Democratic, and MSNBC (less Democratic than CNN), with

<sup>153</sup> It must be noted that exact audience sizes, rankings amongst the three networks, viewership demographics, and other questions as to which network was most watched during what years for certain times of day will not be addressed by this project. These networks were chosen simply for their 24-hour broadcasting nature and their representation of a spectrum of political ideology. They are the top three networks for rolling news in the United States between 2001-2013, although their ratings, rankings and cross-network competition are widely debated. An additional disruption to statistics on viewership and ratings for these three networks during this thesis' time-period is the evolution of online media consumption half way through this project's timeline. At time of writing latest Pew figures indicate that 57% of Americans still turn to network television for their main source of daily news. With the three selected networks representing the majority of the networks observed, this indicates that the majority of news watching Americans observes the networks selected by this thesis. See *The Modern News Consumer: News attitudes and practices in the digital era*, by Mitchell, A., Gottfried, J., Barthel, M., and Shearer, E. from Pew Research Center, Release July 7, 2016.



more 'Independent' affiliations.

| <b>Party ID</b>            | <b>Partisan Profile of "Regular Viewers"</b> |                                 |     |       |                      |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|-----|-------|----------------------|
|                            | General public                               | Among those who regularly watch |     |       |                      |
|                            |  | Fox News Channel                | CNN | MSNBC | Nightly news network |
| %                          | %  | %                               | %   | %     |                      |
| Republican                 | 25   | 39                              | 18  | 18    | 22                   |
| Democrat                   | 36   | 33                              | 51  | 45    | 45                   |
| Independent                | 29   | 22                              | 23  | 27    | 26                   |
| Other/Don't know           | 10   | 6                               | 8   | 10    | 7                    |
|                            | 100  | 100                             | 100 | 100   | 100                  |
| <b>Party incl. leaners</b> |  |                                 |     |       |                      |
| Republican /lean Rep       | 33   | 49                              | 23  | 25    | 29                   |
| Democrat/lean Dem          | 50   | 39                              | 64  | 60    | 59                   |
| No leaning                 | 17   | 12                              | 13  | 15    | 12                   |
|                            | 100  | 100                             | 100 | 100   | 100                  |
| Percent of public          | 100%   | 23%                             | 24% | 15%   | 29%                  |
| Number of cases*           | 3615   | 450                             | 424 | 271   | 559                  |

Source: Pew Research News Media Consumption Survey: April 30-June 1, 2008. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. \*News networks asked of half-samples.

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## CNN

Founded in 1980 by Ted Turner in Atlanta, Georgia, CNN (Cable News Network) is the oldest 24-hour all news network in the United States, and has consistently represented the Democratic left in its broadcasts' stances and viewership. CNN cemented 24-hour news in American culture arguably most through its coverage of the first Gulf War, where it had reporters covering live fighting across the globe using satellites and state-of-the-art communications technology. This shift in war correspondence was so notable as to lead to academic research and reflection on its impact and influence in wider policy and international relations issues. The hallmark work on the topic, *The CNN Effect*, by Piers Robinson, highlights some of the considerations of bringing events and issues across the globe to the forefront of American social and political consciousness. The term 'CNN Effect' is not limited to the CNN network, but refers to broader impact that the 24-hour news cycle can have on altering perceptions of socio-political issues in a democratic society, thus bringing awareness to a representation-based nation, creating pressure on policy makers to act in accordance with new social perceptions of urgency, violence, and power. CNN was selected by this thesis in part for

<sup>154</sup> Pew Research Center, October 2009, *Partisanship and Cable News Audiences* report available at [pewresearch.org/2009/10/30/partisanship-and-cable-news-audiences](http://pewresearch.org/2009/10/30/partisanship-and-cable-news-audiences).

its historical presence of 24-hour news delivery, and because it has maintained its standing within the top three most viewer networks in the American media industry since its inception.

### **FOX**

FOX News Channel, founded by Rupert Murdoch in 1996, has been consistently more (American) Republican and right leaning in its content and audience than CNN or MSNBC. (Murdoch also owns Sky News in the United Kingdom as well as 20<sup>th</sup> Century FOX – both headed under the parent company, News Corp.) Concerning the political spectrum of viewership: “As the regular audience of the FOX News Channel has grown...it has become much more conservative and more Republican...Since (1998), the percentage of FOX News Channel viewers who identify as Republicans has increased steadily from 24% in 1998, to 29% in 2000, 34% in 2002, 41% in 2004, and 60% in 2012.<sup>155</sup> Over the same period, the percentage of FOX viewers who describe themselves as conservative had increased from 40% to 52%...By contrast, the regular audience for CNN is somewhat more Democratic than the general public and almost identical to the public in terms of ideology.”<sup>156</sup> FOX consistently has more primetime viewers than CNN or MSNBC, but its viewers tune in for shorter amounts of time than the other networks respectively.<sup>157</sup>

### **MSNBC**

MSNBC, launched in 1996, was a partnership effort between Microsoft and General Electric’s NBC (the National Broadcasting Company) News, with MSNBC’s television headquarters located inside the NBC headquarters in New York City, and its website headquarters in Redmond, Washington. Owned by NBC Universal, it was originally lead by

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<sup>155</sup> Pew Research Center, Holcomb, J., *5 facts about Fox News*, Released January 14, 2014.

<sup>156</sup> Pew Research Center, US Politics & Policy, *News Audiences Increasingly Politicised*, ‘Where Americans

Go for News’ Released June 8, 2004.

<sup>157</sup> Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism, *The State of the News Media 2013: An*

*Annual report on American Journalism* by Jesse Holcomb and Amy Mitchell, subheading *Only MSNBC Grows in Prime Time*. Cable News Median Prime-Time Viewership ©2013

NBC Executive, Tom Rogers. MSNBC regularly airs NBC News content (a separate channel), and between 2001-2013 (this thesis' time frame) was a rolling news outlet third in viewership to FOX and CNN. In 2009, MSNBC redirected its focus to politics and primetime opinion news programming, but its website lost ground to the other news organizations' online presence. It should be noted that as MSNBC is a subsidiary of Microsoft, its online content and archive of footage was the most extensive of the three networks after 2009, with a browse-by-date feature existing for MSNBC content on its corporate website which is still not available (at time of writing) for CNN or FOX.

### 2.5.2 Sources of Research Material

The sources for the news material required by this methodology were various virtual video and media archives. For case studies before 2009, the primary database was Nexus, followed by Vanderbilt University's TV Archive. While 9/11 was such a significant event that finding footage was not an issue (Youtube.com provided a sufficient number of broadcast hours for each network for five days). For the Shoe Bomber and Bali Bombings, Nexus was used, and news show transcripts were the primary source of research material for the first half of this thesis' case studies. However, after 2009, (for the second half of this thesis' case studies') considerable television and network content had been digitized and made available online by various organizations, accessible through archive.org. These websites (those used before and after the digitization of 2009) and this thesis' search methods will be detailed below. (All examples will be shown as they would be conducted for a materials search for CNN footage from 9/11/2001.)

The Nexus database was used under the Academic Sign-In feature for Aberystwyth University, under the individual researcher's login ID. This first page of Search > News, is where the custom date was selected:

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**Related Searches**  
» News

**My Favorite Search Forms ▾**  
Power Search  
News  
Company Profiles  
Market Insight  
Biographies

**Useful Links**  
Help me search news  
**View tutorials**

**News**

Anywhere in the text Search

+ Add another search term Tips for using search connectors

Custom date ▾

From 09/11/2001 To 09/11/2001

All News, All Languages ⓘ

+ More sources  
+ Add Index Terms

Group duplicates  
 Exclude Newswires  
 Exclude Non-business news  
 Exclude Websites  
 Exclude documents with fewer than 500 words

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Next, under the 'Sources' tab, the filter categories all remained the same for each network, but then all network affiliations were selected (for a single network), before 'OK-Continue'.

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Browse Sources Find Sources Make This My Start Page

**Browse Sources** Help

1. By  Publication Type  News & Business Topics  Industry  Area of Law

2 Filter by: Country United States (All Regions) Topics All Topics Language English Multiple/Single Source All sources Active Sources Only

Trail: Publication Type > News > News Transcripts

Name Selected Sources Save as a favorite 06 Selected View OK - Continue

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Charlie Rose Show                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> NPR Fresh Air  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CNBC News*  | <input type="checkbox"/> NPR Morning Edition                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CNBC/Dow Jones Business Video                               | <input type="checkbox"/> NPR TED Radio Hour                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CNN   | <input type="checkbox"/> NPR Wait Wait Don't Tell Me!                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CNN Financial All                                | <input type="checkbox"/> NPR Weekend All Things Considered                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CNN Financial All - Business and Finance Stories | <input type="checkbox"/> NPR Weekend Edition Saturday                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CNN Financial Network Transcripts*               | <input type="checkbox"/> NPR Weekend Edition Sunday                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CNN International                                | <input type="checkbox"/> PBS NewsHour (formerly The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CNN Transcripts                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Power and Money*                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dan Rather Reports*   | <input type="checkbox"/> Presidential Campaign Press Materials*               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FDA ADVISORY COMMITTEE HEARINGS                             | <input type="checkbox"/> SEC Wire   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal News Service  | <input type="checkbox"/> Stossel  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Follow The Money*   | <input type="checkbox"/> The Willis Report                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fox Business Happy Hour*                                    |   |

1-57 of 57 Sources ⓘ

**Key**  
 Click icon to view single source information.  
 Click icon to view multiple-source file information.  
 Click icon to view aggregate source information.  
 Click icon to view gateway source information.

With the custom date set, and all CNN sources selected, under the 'Power Search' sub-heading under 'Search', no 'terms or connections' were selected, nor any other preferences before 'Search'.

The 'Search' yields all materials from CNN for the specific date. Here, the researcher identified and selected content from the rolling news network channel only (not HLN, CNN International, CNN Airport or other CNN channels).

Item four yields a full hour of transcripts. These 'hours' were checked again to make sure they originated from the main network channel of rolling news (24-hours news) before selection for this thesis as a source of news content.

CNN

September 11, 2001 Tuesday

SHOW: CNN BREAKING NEWS COVERAGE 9:00 AM EST

## Two Planes Crash Into World Trade Center. Aired 9-10a ET.

BYLINE: Leon Harris; Daryn Kagan; Kelli Arena; Rose Arce; Major Garrett; David Ensor; Aaron Brown; Chris Plante; Greta Van Susteren; Chad Myers; John King; Jamie McIntyre

GUESTS: Jeanne Yurman; Winston Mitchell; Steve Bartelstein; Jay Atlasberg; Jim Ryan; Ira Furman; Todd Harris; Joe Tractonburg; James Lee Witt

SECTION: NEWS; Domestic

LENGTH: 11323 words

**HIGHLIGHT:** Breaking News. Two planes crash into World Trade Center.

LEON HARRIS, CNN ANCHOR: We believe a commercial jet has crashed in one of the towers of the World Trade Center. And you can see the smoke billowing out, there are flames billowing out there, and a commercial jet crashing into one of these towers. At this point, we did not have official injury updates to bring you, but we are only now beginning to put together the pieces of this horrible incident.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Right. Just a few seconds ago we were tuning in to one of our affiliates in New York, WNYW. Right now we want to go to an eyewitness on the telephone right now. Jeanne, what can you tell us about what you saw?


JEANNE YURMAN, WITNESS: I can tell you that I was watching T.V. and there was this sonic boom and the T.V. went out. Maybe that the Concorde was back in service because I've heard about the sonic booms I got up to my window, I live in Battery Park City right next to the twin towers. And I look up and the side of the

For the Internet Archive, from the main page, 'Advanced Search' was selected.

Search the history of over 284 billion web pages on the Internet.

**waybackmachine**

SIGN IN



**Internet Archive** is a non-profit library of millions of free books, movies, software, music, websites, and more.

284B 12M 3.2M 3.9M 1.3M 166K 1.4M 175K 250K

[Advanced Search](#)

**Announcements**

TV News highlights: NATO, Russian influence, coal miners, and more

TV news highlights with fact checks: proposed health care reform

TV news highlights: overtime pay, Middle East, murder rate and more

[SEE MORE](#)

Top Collections at the Archive

Then an individual date was entered with no other fields or restrictions added.

### Advanced Search returning JSON, XML, and more

This will return results in the format of your choice.

Query:

Fields to return (pick one or more):

- avg\_rating
- backup\_location
- btih
- call\_number
- ..

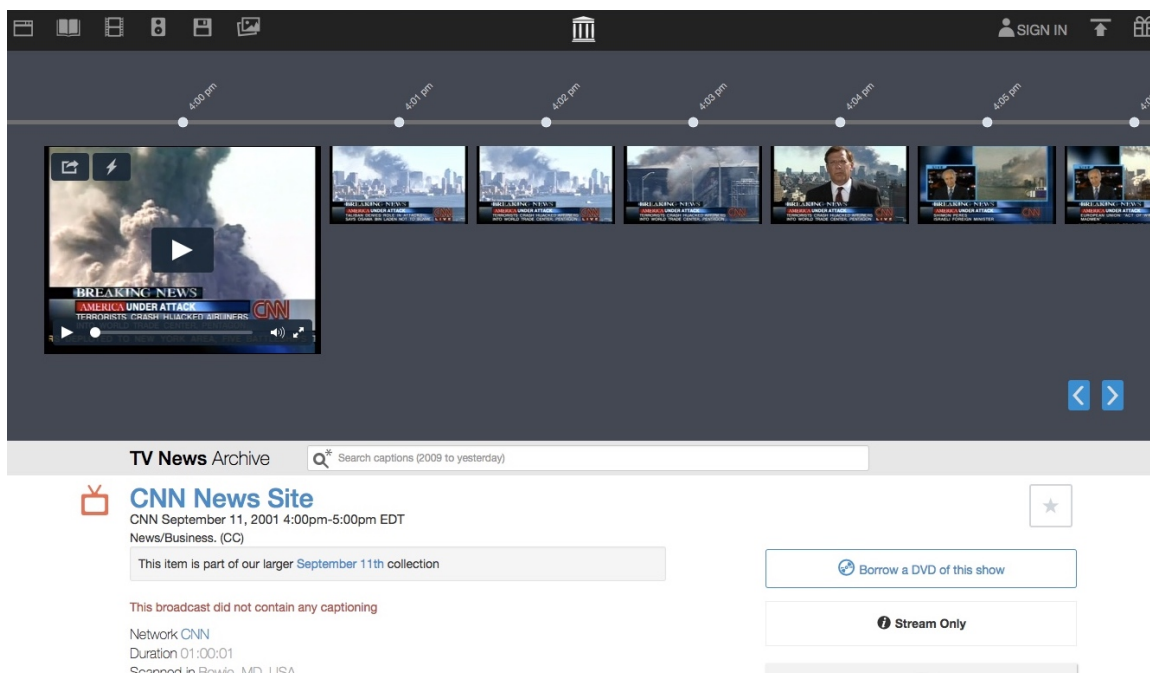
(optional) Sort results by:

- 
- 
- 

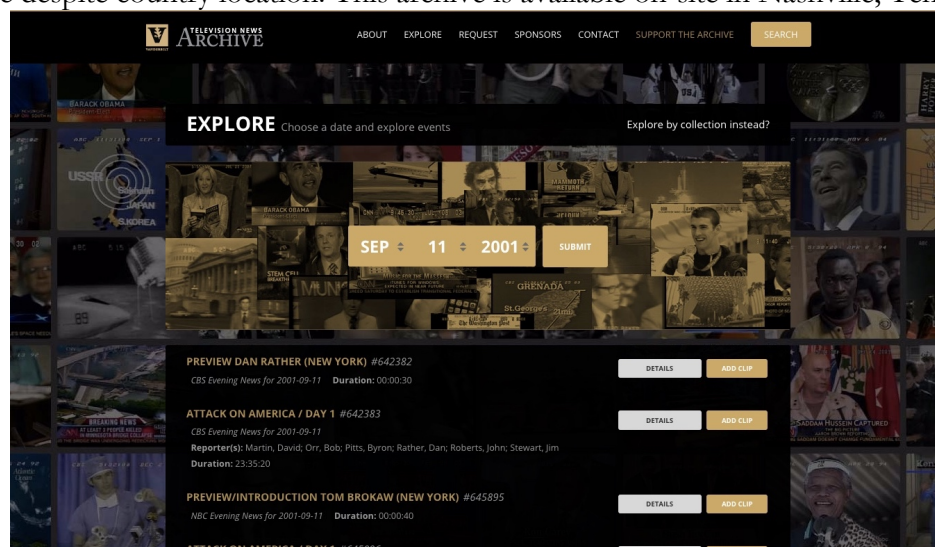
Then the 'Search' was conducted, and materials from the desired network were selected from the results (without additional sorting parameters).

From that selection, the broadcast was observed and manually transcribed (for the practical sake of researcher familiarity with the materials) by this thesis (as all hours of footage were transcribed for this thesis.) Transcripts, notes made on these transcripts, and other original research may be requested, but will not be included in the annex of this thesis due to the amount of data collected.





For the Vanderbilt University TV Archive, a similar method was selected of searching primarily by date, then finding the network needed, then observing and transcribing the broadcast for this thesis. At the time this thesis engaged with the Vanderbilt TV archive, the researcher was able to VPN as an associated/sponsoring university from Aberystwyth University, thus given access to the archive despite country location. This archive is available on-site in Nashville, Tennessee.



## 2.6 Emphasizing Discourse over Visuals in This Thesis

This section will address a critical methodological decision; to exclude visual analysis from this project. Although this thesis looks exclusively at rolling television news, which by design is never without a visual component, the visuals were deliberately excluded from this thesis' analysis for multiple reasons. This decision is not meant to downplay the critical importance of visuals to the communications medium of television rolling news. This thesis,



however, has opted to limit its empirical research and analysis to the discourse extracted from transcripts of newscasts made by this thesis, as this method is more suitable for the linear study of discursive narrative evolution. This section will refer only to works detailed in section 1.6 Literature Review, as a way of further explaining how this thesis looks to develop those author's ideas and concepts. Additionally, the following concepts are used in the case study chapters' 'Narrative Status' sections, as they further certain findings on a case by case basis.

Visuals have been excluded for four reasons. First, the visual component of the War on Terror is arguably the most captivating feature of the conflict. This has resulted in extensive coverage within academic and non-academic research regarding the visuals of the War on Terror Narrative, leaving other aspects of the conflict, such as the discourse, less scrutinised.<sup>158</sup> Second, the visuals used from one network to the next are nearly identical; therefore, any comparisons among the networks would yield little new information.<sup>159</sup> Third, the majority of the visuals (stock images, logos, professional and amateur video) are not actually 'live', nor up-to-the-minute (as compared to the discourse of a newscast, which is live, more often than not). Following along this line of thought, the most 'live' component of

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<sup>158</sup> The following works delve extensively into the visual components of the War on Terror Narrative include:

Ben-Shaul, N., 2007, *A Violent World: TV News Images of Middle Eastern Terror and War*, Rowman & Littlefield.

Griffin, M., 2004, 'Picturing America's 'War on Terror' in Afghanistan and Iraq: Photographic motifs as news frames' in *Journalism*, Sage Journals, Vol. 5, Issue 4, pp. 381-402.

Hammond, P., 2011, *Screens of Terror: Representations of War and Terrorism in Film and Television Since 9/11*, Arima Publishers.

Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B., 2010, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War*, Polity.

Lacey, S., & Paget, D., 2015, *The 'War on Terror': Post-9/11 Television Drama, Docudrama and Documentary*, University of Wales Press.

Mitchell, W. J. T., 2011, *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present*, University of Chicago Press.

O'Loughlin, B., 2011, 'Images as weapons of War: representation, mediation and interpretation' in the *BISA Review of International Studies*, Volume 37, Issue 1, January 2011, pp. 71-91.

<sup>159</sup> This lack of difference between political agendas as represented in the US networks is substantiated by Mutz, D. C., 2006, *Hearing The Other Side: Deliberative Versus Participatory Democracy*, Cambridge University Press.

televised visuals is often how they are described in the broadcast, which is captured by this thesis in its transcript analysis.<sup>160</sup> Third, and last, at the time of writing, there is no single agreed upon communications methodology that allows for the simultaneous identification and analysis of media frames across the discursive and visual components of a broadcast. It was never the aim of this thesis to create such an encompassing methodology, but rather, to engage with the frames (as established through Entman's framing via attributes method) that can be more scientifically reproduced, a process that can be done through discourse analysis.

### 2.6.1 Existing Literature on the Visuals of the War on Terror Narrative

There exists extensive literature concerning the visual components of rolling television news during this period of observation between 2001-2013, specifically analysis of the War on Terror Narrative. As such, conducting similar research aimed towards the visual components of the conflict would detract from the thesis' aims: towards understanding longitudinal shifts in the War on Terror Narrative across successful and failed terror events, evident through discursive framing identification and analysis. Expanding on discussions from this thesis' Literature Review, the following text will briefly highlight some of the books and key points concerning visuals of media coverage of the War on Terror, and explain why this thesis does not require the visual aspect of news coverage to effectively analyse shifts in the Narrative.

Before 9/11, academic war correspondence research looked at how war was visually depicted in the media beginning with the first televised war in Vietnam. For a detailed synopsis of this topic, Andrew Hoskins' 2004, *Televising War: From Vietnam to Iraq*, gives key examples as to how the visual components of the War on Terror were ultimately inherited from previous televised conflicts.<sup>161</sup> Hoskins notes the importance of still imagery (over video) in earlier television newscasts, referring to 'The Execution' by Eddie Adams (1968), as discussed in the

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<sup>160</sup> 'Liveness' defined in Marriott, S., 2007, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*, Sage Publications, p. 87.

<sup>161</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, *Televising War: From Vietnam to Iraq*, Continuum.

documentary, *Vietnam: the Camera at War*, BBC2, broadcast during 1999. ‘The still images lingered in the memories because people could look at them as long as they wanted – they could go back to them and people really had an opportunity to linger on them in a way they couldn’t linger on television. And so they were seared into people’s brains in the way that television just couldn’t be.’<sup>162</sup> This would suggest that while television was new and exciting during the evolution of the newscast from nightly reports to continuous coverage, the ability for the audience to gaze as long as they wanted upon individual images as they could with print media, retained its significance. Ultimately, a format of news was adopted that incorporated the attention span of the audience as well as the information-portion size that was deemed (at the time) sufficient for war reporting. ‘The ‘reordering’ of the images of (the Vietnam) war produced a version that fitted the predominant televisual network form of evening news of 22-and-a-half-minutes. The news-cycles of this era (1970’s) were geared around recorded reports edited and simplified to fit a couple of minutes of air-time.’<sup>163</sup> Ultimately, this format of pre-arranged and recorded segments using the same still images and video clips used repetitively has not changed substantially since the Vietnam War.

By the end of the Vietnam War, ‘wartime news’ had somewhat successfully liberated itself from being solely under the influence of the government (as all communications of war historically were). Additionally, news networks had already begun to self-moderate the production and dissemination of information with a consideration to their viewers’ wants and attention levels.<sup>164</sup> However, this process was not seamless or without amendments. A frequently noted issue in the literature concerned the potential over-saturation of war stories in the media; a problem that forced the networks to try to keep audiences from becoming numb amidst so much new content. This led networks to self-assess how images were being used against the

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<sup>162</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 19.

<sup>163</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 17.

<sup>164</sup> Also see Hoskins, A., & O’Loughlin, B, 2010, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War*, Polity, Chapter 2, *Images*, which details exactly how the media (and government) self-regulate the distribution of images

surge of content with technological improvements such as satellite coverage and live-reporting from active combat zones, allowing for near continuous coverage of any conflict. “Yet in the visually-saturated media environment of today, familiarity can soon develop into fatigue...Sontag argues, “an image is drained of its force by the way it is used, where and how often it is seen. Images shown on television are by definition images of which, sooner or later, one tires.” (2003:105)<sup>165</sup> So the problem with the use of still images and video in the news changed from simply getting images to the audience, to getting them to the audience while preserving their context, to not using too many images, and not over using the images deemed ‘iconic’. Compounding these issues, the evolution of satellite-based media allowing for constant live footage presented media groups with even greater challenges as to how to manage audience engagement.

Concerning the media’s use of imagery, specifically around the War on Terror, Mitchell’s *Cloning Terror*, details through comparison, how the media processes still pictures from government detention camps, and juxtaposes them with commercial advertisements distributed at the same time. This book exemplifies how imagery and visuals are one of the most unreliable and subjective means through which the War on Terror may be understood.<sup>166</sup> Imagery, as detailed by Mitchell, derives its significance and power through its symbolism, and is subject to interpretation by the producer, the narrator, and the audience, more so than visual components of any broadcast. Mitchell notes how meaning and truth can become lost against the symbolic power of an image in the modern media ecology, arguing that with the increased pace of communications, the associated contexts may be separated from the original piece.

In preparing the background for *Standard Operating Procedure*, Morris had discovered (along with many other researchers) that the Hooded Man was actually Abdou Hussain Saad Faleh, nicknamed ‘Gilligan.’ Morris derives a lesson about photography from this mistake, namely, “the central role that photography itself played in the mistaken

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<sup>165</sup> Hoskins, A., 2004, p. 108.

<sup>166</sup> Mitchell, W. J. T., 2011, *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present*, University of Chicago Press.

identification (the subject initially misidentified) and the way that photography lends itself to those errors and may even endanger them. It is as if photographs, by virtue of the authority we grant them, and compounded by our own prejudices and preconceptions, “attract false beliefs – as fly-paper attracts flies.”<sup>167</sup>

Furthering the existing literature on the visuals of the War on Terror and the War on Terror Narrative, Hoskins and O’Loughlin’s *Television and Terror: Conflicting Times and the Crisis of News Discourse*, details clearly how the televising of terrorism can manipulate and distort the news as much as serving to ground a story. “As we have seen, the 9/11 terrorists pushed television towards this later end of the spectrum (towards entertainment versus informative reporting) and into a new age, not least through the medium’s appropriation or hijacking in what we call the weaponisation of television.”<sup>168</sup> In *Television and Terror*, Hoskins and O’Loughlin analyze multiple events (the 7/7 Bombings, the opening hours of the Iraq War, and a program remembering the Vietnam War) by separating the final broadcasts into three components: the visual product, the spoken discourse, and the text on screen. Only through separating these components that are orchestrated into a seamless broadcast, can media and communications specialists begin to analyze and process the meaning and contexts of each. This necessity to dissect television news before analyzing will be further discussed in the final part of this section, ‘Analyzing visuals and discourse simultaneously requires extensive resources and research materials that are not as manageable by a single researcher project as single medium (discourse) analysis.’ In effect, whatever the visuals may be (still images or video, new or old), they are ultimately free-floating mediums, subject to the contexts assigned to them in the subsequent coverage and packaging by a newscast’s producer.

To end this section, Hoskins and O’Loughlin’s *War and Media* is one of the most detailed analyses on the importance of visuals to the mediation and mediatization of terrorism. This book explains exactly how and where still and video images function to communicate certain aspects

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<sup>167</sup> Mitchell, W. J. T., 2011, p. 135.

<sup>168</sup> Hoskins, A., & O’Loughlin, B., 2007/2009 *Television and Terror: Conflicting Times and the Crisis of News Discourse*, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 23.

of a media narrative, while also alluding to the complexities involved in the analysis and academic processing of the visual components of the media. “It is important to state at the outset that the difficulties and complexities of accessing, analysing and managing image research has undoubtedly skewed an understanding of the historical mediation of war. Some researchers are reduced to analysing only those elements most easily available, code-able and quantifiable, even simply counting images.”<sup>169</sup> *War and Media* is referenced and discussed throughout this thesis because of its range of research on images and media behavior in war. In short, this book critically analyzes the histories, use, misuse and repurposing of images in the media.

### 2.6.2 Visuals are nearly identical across the networks

During events such as the Bali Bombings, which only yielded three or four video segments from the attacks, every American news network was forced to air the same videos as networks of both similar and different political stances in order to have a visual accompaniment to the story. While this situation may become less frequent as the modernization of the media ecology allows for more video recording by more people, speaking to historical events multiple networks have to use the same images or videos due to limited availability. This means that the only variation in the news delivery among networks is how each talks about and describes the images or video. Analyzing the development, differences among networks, and other comparative features of any visual components of the news becomes a moot point in such situations. However, discourse analysis amongst multiple networks retains its analytical value over image analysis in these situations particularly, as well as in situations where the networks are able to use different visuals.

Speaking to the outside influences upon the broadcasts themselves, there are discussions within communication literature concerning how media censorship by governments may

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<sup>169</sup> Hoskins, A., & O’Loughlin, B, 2010, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War*, Polity, p. 20.  
\*Chapter 2 of *War and Media*, ‘Images’ is particularly significant per the understanding of the evolution of the role images play in conflict and the establishment of legitimacy in conflict reporting.

influence what medium is more accurate to the story being told: the image, or the written word. Where in conservative Middle-East governments, the written word is far more censored, an image may be more telling of the truths of a story; conversely, with Western governments' less 'official' censorship, but with a press that self-regulates and censors, the written word is more honest than the overly edited or omitted images.<sup>170</sup>

Beyond the situation where images of a story are identical from one network to the next, there are other visual considerations as to the standardized visual presentation and format of rolling television news that are similar across networks. After 9/11, the news crawlers at the bottom of the screen became standardized across American networks; most networks also display the date and time and perhaps alternating cities' weather forecasts. Financial news broadcasts display live stock crawlers on the bottom of the screen, and the visual 'window' style of the anchors or hosts are relatively similar from one network to the next.<sup>171</sup> Therefore, if one is looking to compare and contrast the networks' coverage, a richer dataset can be extracted from the discourse of the news, than from the visuals.<sup>172</sup>

### 2.6.3 Televised visuals are seldom live

Television stands in relation to our 'clock time' as a regulated device in our everyday lives such that our experience of time is, to a varying extent, inseparable from our experiences of media. How television constructs and plays with time is critical to its capacity to present events and address audiences.<sup>173</sup>

There is an unreliability concerning the use of visuals to describe or contextualize live events. Television is paradoxical in that the final product is considered 'live', yet the individual

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<sup>170</sup> See Hoskins, 2004, *Televising War*, Chapter 4: 'Bodies fallen in time – the bloody resonance of battle' for details on the ways culturally different government/media relationships manifest.

<sup>171</sup> This 'window' style and other visual similarities between networks is detailed in Bolter, D. & Grusin, R., 2000, *Remediation: Understanding new media*, First MIT Press, p. 15.

<sup>172</sup> Even variations between Republican and Democratic video of debate and overall visual appearances are minimal, according to Mutz D. C., 2015, *In-Your-Face-Politics: The Consequences of Uncivil Media*, Princeton University Press, p. 122.

<sup>173</sup> Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B., 2007/2009, p. 17.

components may all be from (or exist in) different temporalities. This topic was first discussed in the section of the Literature Review under 1.6.1.2 Mediation.

Liveness is a phenomenon that has been observed as a property of the medium – as something intrinsic to television itself – making it different from other mediums. The work of McLuhan is central in this respect. He argues that, “The elementary and basic fact about the TV image is that it is a mosaic or a mesh, continuously in a state of formation by the “scanning finger”.”<sup>174</sup>

Still images and video are only representative of the moment they were taken, but is their repurposing and reframing to suit a different story disingenuous to the frame or narrative being presented in a ‘live’ newscast? Stock photos used in newscasts, like obituaries of famous persons, are predominantly from pre-prepared libraries, selected or written and stored on the assumption that they will be used in the future. “Television is relentless in its immediacy, in its delivery of the present and its selective redelivery of the past, but this real-time temporality and apparent flow may function to obscure its impact, unlike the indelible marking associated with the medium of the photograph.”<sup>175</sup> Similar to stock photos and obituaries, video clips that appeared in newscasts during this era between 2001-2013, were predominantly pre-recorded, edited to suit the story at hand, then aired repetitively. Any ‘live feeds’ include the presenter speaking in front of the pre-prepared visuals in an effort to make sense of the compilation through discourse (which is captured in transcripts). Because what is being said during a newscast (about or around visuals from varying dates of production) is live, and can be captured in the transcripts of a newscast, this project's approach is to analyze only the rolling 'live' discourse.

One key work on the concepts and complexities of television and time is Stephanie Marriott's *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*. This work expands on the idea that any visuals employed during a newscast's production only further fractures the ‘live’-ness of a story. “It is the mediation of the event which bestows upon it the spatial and temporal

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<sup>174</sup> Hoskins, A. 2004, p. 50, citing McLuhan 1962, 1987: 286-7

<sup>175</sup> Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B, 2010, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War*, Polity, p. 23.



complexity,” which she goes on to discuss.<sup>176</sup> In essence, the book unpacks how any temporal construction during the communication of a story divides exponentially when the narration and visuals (respectively) are representative of different points in time. Combine this with the temporal proxy of the delivery of a story occurring either live, or as a recorded segment, and you have multiple representations of reality existing in the same televised space, simultaneously.

Concerning this thesis’ methodology, by excluding the analysis of the visual accompaniments of any newscast (beyond what is captured in the transcripts), certain clarifications of the communication are afforded to the framing and narration identifications and analysis. First, in limiting the number of temporal components analyzed, as Marriott has identified (to just the discourse), a more concise picture of what the actual story and message that the thesis aims to identify, track, and analyze, is clearly presented. Second, while text and verbal segments are often repeated throughout a broadcast, one or two images or videos pertaining to the story are repeated far more often. As an example, during the Boston Marathon Bombings’ initial coverage, only four videos were used across all networks, but new information was spoken over these videos as information was released. As such, there may not (and seldom has there ever) been as much visual support for a story as there is spoken information. Furthering on this idea, the spoken word of a newscast (captured in transcripts) often details any imagery of the broadcast. “Characteristically, commentators restrict themselves to talking through what is visibly shared with the audience at home; and they are generally responsive to wherever images turn up on the screen.”<sup>177</sup>

While technological advances may turn every individual into an instant journalist (as detailed by Marriott, 2007), the media ecology has not yet perfected the ‘immediacy’ of information, visual support, accurate reporting, and ‘live’ news. Per the timeframe of this thesis, this immediacy certainly did not exist; as such, the information of any imagery communicated

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<sup>176</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 5

<sup>177</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 86

verbally is far more reliable as a tool for analysis. Even at the most ‘advanced’ stages of this thesis timeline, when the handful of videos of the Boston Marathon Bombings were aired relatively soon after the bombings themselves, the perpetual reshowing of the few videos for the rest of the day divorced the temporal constraints of the bombings, making them appear to be occurring continuously.<sup>178</sup> If it had not been for the live-discourse from these newscasts, then the repetitious reshowing of the bombings would have any viewer perceiving the threat of the damage to be continuous. It is only because of the discourse that the live and up to the minute situation was communicated. The effects of this repetition on the viewer are detailed extensively in *War and Media*. “The media’s treatment of terror is underpinned by transformation in the temporality and spatiality of television. It is the medium’s construction of contiguity both with events being reported and with the audiences that is central to its modulation between the amplification and the containment of terror.”<sup>179</sup>

2.6.4 Analyzing visuals and discourse simultaneously requires extensive resources and research materials that are not as manageable by a single researcher project as single medium (discourse) analysis.

Television is a mixed-media medium of communication; however, its different media components, what is shown and what is said, are difficult to analyze simultaneously. The majority of research focuses either on the discourse, or on the visuals; and, when both are analyzed, it’s done for single event projects, not linear studies. For the lines of enquiry of this thesis, singling out the discourse in order to directly compare what was said across multiple events is the more sound, manageable method of analysis, as is detailed in the beginning of the Methodology chapter of this thesis. Within communications studies, there exists very few agreed upon methodologies which accommodate both the visual and the discursive components of television news for simultaneously analysis. There are multiple reasons for this, chiefly, there are

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<sup>178</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, p. 47.

<sup>179</sup> Hoskins, A., & O’Loughlin, B., 2007/2009, pp. 23-24.

limited (agreed upon) ways to quantitatively compare images and discourse or directly compare images and discourse (within communications studies), because there exists in newscasts far fewer images and video than spoken word for the majority of reporting. This means that as long as the aforementioned premise remains true, and the visuals displayed are identical across the networks, then what is said by the hosts or anchors will continue to provide richer research materials and datasets for comparative, linear, and actually 'live' newscasts analysis. There is always enough spoken word (which is then transcribed for analysis) to fill a news hour (making discourse analysis more evenly quantifiable across networks, years, and topics). However, it will remain debatable for the foreseeable future, how much visual content is used per a story, if the images are compatible across topics, if they are temporarily relative, and how effectively they are contextualized across a news hour.

Does it matter that these two intrinsically different types of media (images and discourse) are not easily comparable? The issue is that television, as a mixed-medium of communications, is not subject for analysis as a single entity as of yet. One can analyze the images, or one can analyze the text, but arguably, one cannot easily analyze television as a whole in a manner that is scientifically viable; or, the same methodology for television cannot be executed against the same materials by different researchers and the different groups be expected to arrive at the same conclusions. Compound this with the complexities of media framing analysis, and narrative identification and analysis, and the necessary research protocol becomes even more complex, let alone easily executed by a single-researcher. Ultimately, as detailed in the Literature Review section, *Media Studies*, each project and researcher must alter its methodology to suit the research questions. Considering this thesis' resources, the best approach (as debated above) is to focus on the more quantifiable and consistent medium of communication available concerning the mixed-media of television news. That would be the discourse captured through transcribing newscasts.

To summarize, this section has discussed the various reasons this thesis has chosen to exclude visual analysis of the rolling news narrative of the War on Terror. First, it touched on the

established books and ideas surrounding the study of the images of the War on Terror, which have been thoroughly researched by other scholars. Second, the ‘live-ness’ of a broadcast was discussed explaining how the fracturing of temporal accounts of even one story can be compounded by multiple realities. This highlights the subjective nature of visuals and news production on the whole. Third, we looked at the dearth of visual variations across networks, concluding that the comparative value of analyzing visuals amongst the networks would yield little new information. The differences among networks are more clearly identifiable through discourse analysis (although this does include some discussion of visual components). Finally, the key point: visuals and discourse are inherently incompatible as a singular research entity. This indicates that research projects must favor one media (visuals or discourse) over the other, and suit research design to the queries of the project. Overall, this project’s design of analyzing transcripts of newscasts achieves the goal of comparing coverage of differing political stances in order to represent a richer understanding of the War on Terror Narrative. It does so by capturing discursive data that can be consistently measured in a more objective manner than image analysis, across multiple case studies, and over time.

## 2.7 The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification: The War on Terror

The entire methodology of this thesis can be visually represented in a matrix chart when all the concepts are consolidated; this matrix may then represent the War on Terror Narrative as observed by this thesis. The case studies are chronologically ordered from top to bottom, and the frames of, *9/11*, *Evil*, *Scope of Threat*, and *al Qaeda*, are represented from left to right. Each cell briefly summarizes the condition of each frame for each case study, showing, in its whole form, this thesis' understanding of the War on Terror Narrative as it presented in rolling American television news between 2001-2013. This visual representation serves to summarize the research findings of this thesis, and assists in demonstrating the methodology's effectiveness at tracking single frames' fluctuations across multiple case studies through side-by-side comparisons. In analyzing pre-selected frames across a diverse case study selection (diverse here pertaining to the mix of international/domestic, successful/failed terror event selection), a clearer identification of the macro-level media narrative can be extracted from the research materials. This matrix method might also serve other research on media frames and narratives (concerning various topics) in discerning of what the enduring narrative actually consists, how it changed over time, and under what circumstances changes to the narrative occurred (though its direct comparisons across multiple cases).

## 2.7.1 The Initial Matrix

| <b>The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification for the War on Terror</b> |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Events</b>   | <i>9/11 Frame</i>  | <i>Evil Frame</i>   | <i>Scope of Threat Frame</i>   | <i>al Qaeda Frame</i>   |
| <b>9/11</b>   | How was 9/11 communicated in the media on 9/11?                        | During the coverage of 9/11, how was evil framed?                         | During 9/11, how was the scope/scale of the War on Terror (WoT) communicated?          | During the coverage of 9/11, how was AQ Framed?                         |
| <b>Shoe Bomber</b>  | How did 9/11 factor into the coverage of the Shoe Bomber?              | During the coverage of the Shoe Bomber, how was evil framed?              | During Shoe Bomber Coverage, how was the scope/scale of the WoT communicated?          | During the coverage of the Shoe Bomber, how was AQ Framed?              |
| <b>Bali Bombings</b>  | How did 9/11 factor into the coverage of the Bali Bombings?            | During the coverage of the Bali Bombings, how was evil framed?            | During Bali Bombings coverage, how was the scope/scale of the WoT communicated?        | During the coverage of the Bali Bombings, how was AQ Framed?            |
| <b>Underpants Bomber</b>  | How did 9/11 factor into the coverage of the Underpants Bomber?        | During the coverage of the Underpants Bomber, how was evil framed?        | During Underpants Bomber coverage, how was the scope/scale of the WOT communicated?    | During the coverage of the Underpants Bomber, how was AQ Framed?        |
| <b>Times Square Bombing</b>   | How did 9/11 factor into the coverage of the Times Square Bombing?     | During the coverage of the Times Square Bombing, how was evil framed?     | During Times Square Bombing coverage, how was the scope/scale of the WoT communicated? | During the coverage of the Times Square Bombing, how was AQ Framed?     |
| <b>Boston Marathon Bombings</b>   | How did 9/11 factor into the coverage of the Boston Marathon Bombings? | During the coverage of the Boston Marathon Bombings, how was evil framed? | During the Boston Marathon Bombings, how was the scope/scale of the WOT communicated?  | During the coverage of the Boston Marathon Bombings, how was AQ Framed? |

## Introduction To Case Studies Chapters

The following case studies represent an equal sampling of domestic and international, successful and failed terror events, spanning a period of 12-years. These events were chosen after preliminary research found enough archive material to substantiate the methodological requirements for each study: four-hours of coverage, for five-days (starting on the date of the event), for three networks. The following six chapters represent original material and new research contributions by this thesis towards a more defined War on Terror Narrative within American network news. Each hour of footage was manually collected and transcribed by this thesis, specifically for this thesis' research purposes.

### Case Study Chapters Outline

The case study chapters, which represent the bulk of this thesis, will be structured as follows:

**Introduction:** A factual examination of the details of each instance of successful or failed terrorism that will include a brief history of those involved, a summary of the context of the events (if significant to the coverage), and the results and or consequences of the event.

**News Coverage:** These sections will consist of observations made from the 60-hours of footage located within the various archives, observed at regular speed (with commercials), transcribed manually by this project, and then cross-assessed with the other networks per each day of coverage. Each day of reporting will be detailed; however, not all hours will be descriptively laid out for the sake of space. These sections will aim to serve as objective write-ups of the research materials.

**Frames:** These sections will consist of the subjective analysis wherein Entman's framing criteria will be applied in order to identify and expand on each of the four frames detailed above as they present within the individual case study. The frames will eventually be summarized within the Matrix in order to observe changes to each frame across the case studies and 12-year timeframe of this thesis.

**Narrative Status:** The condition of the War on Terror Narrative at the time of each event will

be assembled combining the findings from the News Coverage and Frames sections of the cases. As the studies are conducted and assembled a clearer image should emerge as to how the Narrative changes against subsequent acts of terror. This is also the section of each empirical chapter that will make any references to the literature relevant to the findings of the specific case.



## Chapter 3: 9/11 Case Study

September 11, 2001

| <b>The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification for the War on Terror</b> |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| Events  | <i>9/11 Frame</i>   | <i>Evil Frame</i>   | <i>Scope of Threat Frame</i>   | <i>Al Qaeda Frame</i>  |
| <b>9/11</b>   | <b>4: America Under Attack (Day #)</b>                                  | <b>1: Axis Of Evil Speech Moral Evaluation: Attackers = Evil – USA = ‘Good’</b> | <b>2: Dependent On Military/Executive Response – Wherever There’s A Threat</b>         | <b>3: Osama Bin Laden – Non-State Terror = ‘New’ Real Threat /New War</b>                  |
| Shoe Bomber   | 4: Continued Gaps In Airport Security – Skies Still Not Safe Since 9/11 | 3: ‘Hero Passengers’ = ‘Evil Attacker’  | 2: Global Scale – Trans-Atlantic Travel Issues, Terrorist Mobile And Global            | 1: Afghanistan Camps, Tora Bora Caves, OBL Videos, Terror Training Camps Issue             |
| Bali Bombings   | 3: Asia’s 9/11 – Same Motives - Same Goals – Different Location         | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently Established On All Networks-                         | 2: Global Scale – Everywhere Westerners Are = Target - Necessitating A Global Response | 1: Terror Training Camps – Jeemah Islamiyah and AQ Groups Attacking Any And All Westerners |
| Underpants Bomber   | 3: More Aviation Security Issues – Issues With Government Lists’        | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently Established On All Networks-                         | 2: Back To Aviation Based Threats  | 1: (Similar To Shoe) Yemen Connections –AQ Allegiance Vs. Operative - AQAP                 |
| Times Square Bombing  | 4: NYC Still Targeted By The Same People                                | 3: -Weakest Presentation Of Frame In Thesis, But Observed On All Networks-      | 2: Domestic Counter-Terrorism Questioned – NYC’s Post-9/11 Test                        | 1: ‘Homegrown’ And Internet Radicalization – Lone Wolf Terrorism -                         |
| Boston Marathon Bombings  | 1: The Echo Of 9/11 – Flags Flying Again, Hero First Responders/Victims | 2: Clearest Good Vs. Evil Framing + Hero Frame Of Survivors And Law Enforcement | 3: Narrowest Scope: Boston – Northeastern American City (Again)                        | 4: Internet Radicalization – Homegrown Terrorism – <i>Inspire Magazine</i>                 |

Numbering indicates the strength of the individual frame of the four frames within each event.

### 9/11 Case Study Outline:

Introduction

News Coverage

September 11, 2001

Sept 12, 2001

Sept 13, 2001

Sept 14, 2001

Sept 15, 2001

The Frames of the 9/11 Attacks:

9/11

Evil

Scope of Threat

Al Qaeda

Narrative Status

### 3.1 Introduction

The 43rd President of the United States of America, George W. Bush, had been in office eight months when four hijacked commercial airliners were deliberately crashed into civilian and military targets on the east coast of the United States, an act that has become known simply as 9/11. The attacks were executed by 19-men who were selected, funded, and trained by the al

Qaeda organization, headed by Osama Bin Laden. They killed a total of 2,973 people, not including the 19-hijackers themselves. “The victims were in airplanes or in their offices...secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers. Moms and dads. Friends and neighbours. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror.”<sup>180</sup> The event was unparalleled in the new century and was one of the first acts of terrorism in the United States to unfold nearly in its entirety on live television news networks across the nation and the world, all thanks to the media ecology of the time.

Live, rolling news television coverage of the event began at 08:49 Eastern Standard Time, three minutes after American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the North Tower (Tower One) of the World Trade Center (WTC). All footage and coverage was managed entirely by corporate news agencies through TV satellite vans, cell phones that didn't have color-screens, and without wireless Internet connections or Global Positioning Relay Satellite (GPRS) connections. The images of the burning Twin Towers, the smoking Pentagon building, and the distant crash site in the field in Pennsylvania, were singularly under the control of the American media machine of the day. While personal, civilian pictures and videos came forth over the coming days, the lack of mobile Internet and ‘social media’ lent the event’s narrative (and its construction) almost entirely to corporate media and government sources. This media ecology in 2001 controlled how the narrative of the War on Terror would and could be constructed and is evident in the framing and frames generated through the coverage of the first few days from and following September 11, 2001.

| <b>Even the most wired Americans were wedded to the television and the telephone after the attacks</b>         |                      |                                     |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
|  | <i>All Americans</i> | <i>The heaviest Internet users*</i> |
| <b>Main source of information</b>  |                      |                                     |
| Television   | 79%                  | 80%                                 |
| Radio  | 7%                   | 6%                                  |
| Newspaper  | 7%                   | 7%                                  |
| Internet   | 2%                   | 6%                                  |
| Talking with others  | 2%                   | 1%                                  |
| <b>Communication activities: The phone was also used more by Internet users than by the general population</b> |                      |                                     |
| Phone family member about attack   | 63%                  | 75%                                 |
| Email family member  |                      | 38%                                 |
| Phone friend about attack  | 55%                  | 70%                                 |
| Email friend   |                      | 47%                                 |

*\*The heaviest Internet users are those who have more than three years experience online and who log on from home every day. They make up about 20% of all Internet users and about 11% of the whole U.S. adult population.*

*Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Sept. 20-Oct. 1 Survey. All Americans N=1,029 and margin of error is ±3%. Heaviest Internet users N=260 and margin of error is ±7%.*

<sup>180</sup> Bush, G. W., 2001, 20:30 EST Televised Presidential Address, September 11, 2001.

The graph (above) from PEW Center research helps to show what percentages of Americans turned to television screens immediately after learning of the terror attacks on 9/11.

<sup>181</sup> This is central to how the Narrative at the beginning of the War on Terror developed, as the medium of the live and uncut television news had such dominance over any other forms of media on 9/11. “Asked how they first heard of the attacks, about two-thirds of Americans heard from traditional electronic news media sources, TV and radio, and about a third (31%) heard about the assaults in conversation.”<sup>182</sup> While most Americans turned to television for their main source of information on the attacks, most television stations began showing their parent companies’ rolling news station during the attacks (some news rolling live for 72-consecutive hours).<sup>183</sup> Any local affiliates of ABC, CBS, FOX, and NBC tuned into the main news channel, some of the only programming not affected was children’s programming on Public Broadcasting (available in all areas of the US on different channels depending on service providers). “At about 3:15, President Bush met with his principal advisors through a secure video teleconference. Rice said President Bush began the meeting with the words, ‘We’re at war’.”<sup>184</sup> As a namesake, strategic narrative and media headline, the War on Terror, in the majority of its manifestations did not exist before September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. This chapter is devoted strictly to the media’s coverage and processing on the day of the attacks and the four days of reporting immediately following.

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<sup>181</sup> Pew Internet & American Life Project September 20-October 1 Survey Available at [http://www.pewinternet.org/files/old-media//Files/Reports/2001/PIP\\_Tragedy\\_Report.pdf.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/files/old-media//Files/Reports/2001/PIP_Tragedy_Report.pdf.pdf).

<sup>182</sup> Rainie, L., Kalsnes, B., 2001, ‘The Commons of the Tragedy: How the internet was used by millions after the terror attacks’ Pew Research Center – UNDER: Pew Internet and American Life Project p.14.

<sup>183</sup> Carter, B., & Rutenberg, J., 2001, ‘After the Attacks: Television; Viewers Again Return to Traditional Networks’ *The New York Times* Sept 15, 2001.

<sup>184</sup> White House Transcript – Condoleezza Rice interview with Bob Woodward of the *Washington Post*, Oct. 24, 2001, p. 367 In the Interview, Rice also said the President characterized the war as “global in nature.” Ibid.’ Citation from: National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004, *The 9/11 Commission Report*. New York: W. W. Norton. p. 554.

### 3.2 News Coverage

A chronology for the 9/11 terror attacks was constructed by this thesis beginning at 06:45, as per the factual occurrences of the day (these were not covered live by the media, but were integral actions which then lead to the media event). This chronology was developed by manually finding, watching, transcribing, and overlapping the live new coverage of CNN, FOX, MSNBC, and ABC's primary network feeds with selected documentaries and official government reports, as available through databases and video archives both in the public domain and from the individual networks (requested or otherwise obtained). The media's actions in the chronology were recorded on a minute-by-minute basis between 08:48 and 11:00am, and from 19:30-21:30. The reason for the separation of time between the first and second stages of media coverage analysis was to give the media frames time to develop, as well as to clearly surround both the actual terror attacks (in the case of the morning segment of analysis), and the official response to the attacks (that occurred via the 20:30 televised Presidential address to the nation). Time-stamps listed within have been converted to 24-hour time for clarification, colloquialisms, and jargon and are written and recorded as they were expressed on-air for all networks.

Unlike a nightly news report, which is a summary and reflection of daily news after time has passed and may be edited by media production teams to emphasize certain political bias<sup>2</sup>, live news reporting requires an immediate interpretation of a problem by a media group for their audiences. In the case of September 11, 2001, the first media event (or coverage of the terror events) began at 08:46, when American Airlines flight 11, originally departing Boston's Logan airport and bound for Los Angeles' LAX, crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center between the 93<sup>rd</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup> floors, after having been hijacked at 08:13.<sup>185</sup> This will be

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<sup>185</sup> There is no absolute time established for when AA11 was hijacked, the time mentioned in documentaries is based on when certain sequences of events took place on board the aircraft as narrated in Air Traffic Control transcripts which have been cross-checked and are listed below.

**08:09:19:** AA11 hails Boston Center (Tower) – pilot reporting normal (ATC)

**08:13:52:** Boston communication with AA11 fails (ATC)

treated as the first event of 9/11 by this project, as it was the first visible action of the overall attack to appear on live-news television. The first live reporting of 9/11 began three minutes later on CNN. ABC began their coverage two minutes after CNN; FOX began its coverage another two minutes afterwards at 08:53, and MSNBC came in at 08:52.

**08:49:** CNN: Coverage begins: ‘A very disturbing live shot’...‘clearly something relatively devastating happened.’

**08:51:** ABC: Coverage begins with interruption of morning show, ‘Good Moring America’ with Diane Sawyer. ‘We want to tell you what we know as we know it...some sort of explosion at the World Trade Center in New York City...one report said, and we can’t confirm any of this, that a plane may have hit one of the two towers at the World Trade Center...we don’t know anything about what they have concluded may have happened there this morning.’

**8:52:** MSNBC: Coverage begins 08:52 EST as NBC’s main news channel with the anchors being shown still outfitting themselves with microphones and earpieces. The Anchors, Chris Jansing, Gregg Jarrett, and Lester Holt covered the morning of September 11: 2001

**8:53:** FOX: Headline: PLANE CRASHES INTO WORLD TRADE CENTER

Female Reporter: ‘We have a very tragic alert for you right now, and incredible plane crashing into the World Trade Center.’

Male Reporter Right: ‘It is believed a 737 has crashed into the side of the build...Owen (last name inaudible) on the scene...’ Owen: ‘There is a massive gaping hole about 15-stories from the roof... Male Reporter Left: ‘It looks like something out of a movie’

All networks commenced with a live shot of the North Tower from north of the Financial District in New York City looking south. CNN and FOX’s headlines contained the phrase ‘plane crash’ and ‘World Trade Center’ and the expressions (as is the case for ABC and FOX) or tone (in the case of CNN which stopped showing the reporter’s image upon switching to the live shot of the North Tower) of the anchor (or anchors in the case of ABC and FOX)

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**08:20:** AA11 abruptly turns to northwest and NORDO (no radio contact) since 8:14 (Dateline)

**08:21:** Transponder (records/reports altitude and ID) turned off in AA11 (Zero Hour)

were of urgency. The problem identification was not difficult: the problem was expressed via the negative tone of the news anchors and the visual confirmation of a negative contextual aid in the form of a video of the burning building. Terrorism was not the immediate conclusion drawn by any of the three stations for the first few minutes of the on-air coverage of 9/11. In fact, it was not until after the second plane hit the South Tower of the World Trade Center that the terminological emphasis shifted towards terrorism or an intentional sabotage.<sup>186</sup> The first causal interpretation, which is observed by all three stations, is that an accidental deviation from the flight patterns in the area had occurred.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> FOX news was reporting exactly 15 seconds after the second impact: ‘...This has to be deliberate folks...we just saw on live television as a second plane flew into the second tower of the world trade center.’

<sup>187</sup> **08:52:** CNN: ‘This is not a normal flight pattern over New York City to go directly over Manhattan.’

Witness on phone

**08:56:** FOX: Reporter Left: ‘The plane obviously went in on one side and came out of the other, there is debris all over the ground...and as you can see it affects perhaps 10 floors...it is the tallest structure in New York City...it is near the flight path for Newark and Kennedy airports.’

Female Reporter: ‘When those planes are put into rotation as they are waiting for landing they are put into this area which is right near the statue of liberty... It is almost 9 o’clock here on the east coast and lemme tell you folks are in that building early and without a doubt there are many people who were impacted by this.’

Reporter left: ‘This time of morning is when people are going into that building...that building is next to full.’

Reporter Right: ‘This is a huge structure, 10.5 million square feet...we do know there is debris all over...the pavement and crews are...headed to that area. This is horrible.’

Reporter Left: ‘And also when you think about what’s happened to the World Trade Center before with the bombing and the chaos that surrounded it...this is a much different challenge...’

**08:58:** CNN: Phone interview witness: ‘I just saw the entire top part of the World Trade Center explode’ CNN then ask the witness if she was living in New York at the time of the 1993 bombing...Witness: ‘The TV went off, and then it went back on.’

Asks phone interview witness how many people there might be in the area and if the person thought that it was a normal area for air traffic, then asked about emergency access for recoveries.

**09:00:** ABC: ‘All pilots who fly in this area know very well where the World Trade Center is located...all the routes are very far or comfortably far away from the two towers...we emphasize that this is all speculative at this point...we are dealing purely in the realm of speculation at this point.’

**09:00:** New York Center to Unknown: ‘...Heads up man, looks like another one.’ (ATC)

**09:00:** FOX: John to Gross: ‘Can you think of any reason for a pilot to slam into a building of this height on a day like today if it wasn’t intentional?’

These statements and discussions, which occurred before the second impact, attempted to construct a narrative that would explain the horrific scene as an accident brought about by navigational error.<sup>188</sup> In other words, the causal inference is that the flight patterns were too tight, and that if a pilot or flight system were to falter or deviate from their set course and a collision occurred, then this scene and the contextual aids would have made sense. Another attempt to integrate this ‘new’ event of an unknown cause into a logical explanation could be seen in FOX’s discussions recalling how a bomber in World War II accidentally struck the Empire State Building. Through this correlation FOX attempted to ground the audience by relating a past aviation collision of a similar nature into context with the unfolding situation.<sup>189</sup> Similarly, MSNBC referenced the same event, but four-minutes before FOX, at 08:52 by Greg Jarrett, recalling the WWII collision by a twin engine bomber into the Empire State Building, but noting that the accident took place at night so would not have as many causalities as this collision likely would. MSNBC by 09:00 had also gathered and relayed more information regarding the World Trade Centers than the other three stations by that point in the morning’s coverage: Anchors went into statistics about the World Trade Center Site:

09:00 MSNBC: ‘This is a major area of commerce in Lower Manhattan in the Wall Street area, the World Trade Center complex includes ten and a half million square feet of office space, 300,000 square feet of retail...it would have been very active already at this time of the morning...There are 239 elevators, 71 escalators at the complex, this gives you an idea of the enormity of it. More than 40,000 people work there, there are more

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Gross: It depends on the angle of the sun...furthermore you’ve got three major airports in the area and it’s the busiest airport (hub) in the world...he could have been confused...’

<sup>188</sup> This is corroborated in Nacos, B., 2016, *Mass-Mediated Terrorism: Mainstream and Digital Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham Maryland, Chapter 6: Attack on America as Breaking News, subheading, *The Perfect “Breaking News” Production*, p. 119.

<sup>189</sup> **08:58:** FOX: John: ‘Something like this has happened before back in WWII an army bomber lost in the fog slammed into the upper floors of the Empire State Building...but that was an accident, it happened in fog...as you can see this is a clear blue sky day in Manhattan...but if this was an accident it was a needle in the hay accident...’

than 400 firms at the WTC from more than 25 different country's, and on any given day, more than 100,000 business and leisure visitors come to the World Trade Center.'

At this time the general conclusions were still that of an accidental collision by a plane heading to one of the local area hubs. However, the contextual suggestions (of an accident) made by all networks were invalidated when United Airlines flight 175, out of Boston's Logan airport, hit the South Tower of the World Trade Center between the 77<sup>th</sup> and 85<sup>th</sup> floors at 09:03. There was an observable, simultaneous shift from explaining the events in the context of aviation accident towards a context of intentional sabotage and terrorism.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> **09:03: CNN:** 'Perhaps the fuselage was still in the building, that would cause a second explosion such as that...Winston, let me put Winston on hold (Did not have a camera angle which showed airplane on approach)...I just don't want a panic here on the air...one of our producers is saying that perhaps a second plane was involved, let's not even speculate it at this point...'

**ABC:** 'That looks like a second plane...'

'I did not see a plane go in...that just exploded.'

'No, we could see it was another plane...this looks like it is some sort of concerted effort to attack the World Trade Center downtown...obviously it was (the plane) designed to hit the World Trade Center.'

**FOX:** 'There was another one! We just saw, we just saw another one apparently go...another plane just flew into the second tower...this has to be deliberate folks...we just saw on live television as a second plane flew into the second tower of the World Trade Center.'

John: 'Now given what is going on around the world some of the key suspects come to mind. Osama Bin Laden...who knows what...Eric Shaun is with us...'

Shaun: 'I was walking down 5<sup>th</sup> avenue close to our studios...I don't have any reports on what type of plane hit...what we just saw though...raises the spectre of an intentional terrorist attack...'

Headline: '2<sup>ND</sup> PLANE CRASHES INTO WORLD TRADE CENTER'

**MSNBC:** Chopper footage captures second plane flying towards the South Tower while anchors are discussing fire fighter protocols.

'Oh, if you are taking a look now you can see we've just had another explosion...and that is considerably lower, and is that in the other building? Is that what I am witnessing?' (unknown male anchor in background heard saying, 'Oh my Goodness')

'Obviously there are considerable numbers of stories above that explosion that we just saw.'

(Background conversation discussed getting a different angle.)

'It now appears that both buildings are suffering some kind of damage this morning.'

Helicopter correspondent, with audio distortion, heard over the mic saying 'back off', 'they are telling us to back off' possibly to her pilot or director with just accidental technical overlay.

Glen Walker joins the broadcast: 'I would hate to speculate...this building has been the subject of terrorist attacks in the past...and I certainly wouldn't want to speculate at this



After this immediate shift in causal interpretation from ‘accident’ to ‘terrorism’ there was an interesting use of a media template by each network to amend the previous faulty explanation (referring to Kitzinger’s idea of events that become immortalized and perpetuated as a reference point within a society due to repetition and symbolism.<sup>191</sup>) All four groups began referencing the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center almost immediately after the second impact. However, ABC was the first to reference the bombing at 08:53, minutes before the second impact. At 09:07 FOX anchors made a reference to the bombing event (but incorrectly referred to them having occurred in 1989, rather than in 1993 – this error was amended during another discussion of the bombings at 09:26). Peter Jennings on ABC made reference to the bombings again at 09:14 and 09:19. CNN used phone interviews with witnesses in NYC, asking if they remembered the 1993 bombings at 08:58 (five minutes before the second impact). MSNBC was able to get the Lead Investigator from the 1993 bombings, Joe Cantamassa, on the air at 09:20: ‘This is an outrageous crime that will clearly be examined and worked like no other in history’...(asked by Jensing about relevance of State Department AP release)...’Absolutely, I mean, this is such a high level attack at this point, I think only serious resources could have really brought some kind of a criminal act of this type, and the questions that will be asked immediately and the investigation that will follow, will certainly be who knew about it, where was this planned from and what will be the investigative course of action.’ There were also multiple references to the symbolism of the landmarks that had been targeted which was mentioned by multiple anchors; such as, how the World Trade Center (was) a symbol of American financial power, and later upon its respective collapse, addressing the Pentagon as the home of America’s military power.<sup>192</sup>

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time...we have tried to get a hold of the Port Authority which manages the building but we haven’t been able to get an answer.’

<sup>191</sup> Kitzinger, J., 2000, ‘Media templates: patterns of association and the (re)construction of meaning over time’ *Media, Culture & Society* January 2000: 22 pp. 61-84.

<sup>192</sup> **09:44:** FOX: Asmond: ‘We are hearing right now of another explosion that has taken place at

MSNBC during this time drew the conclusion that the event was a continuation of the attempted destruction of the World Trade Center towers from 1993, with Glen Walker remarking: ‘The Twin Towers, of course, the target of previous terrorist attacks – that possibility leaks to the mind.’ Greg Jarrett continues the conversation with details of that attack: ‘A violent explosion ripping through the parking garage on that day in the sub-basement levels of the World Trade Center, immediately is killed 6-people...resulted in a massive fire...’ (MSNBC 09:05 & 09:06) MSNBC, however, did not make any symbolic connections between the World Trade Centers and American ideology as FOX did on more than one occasion in their reporting.

There was a shift in the reporting that can be observed during the 102-minutes that the Twin Towers burned before collapsing, wherein most networks addressed some kind of preparedness or emergency planning which would be in place for such event. There was speculation that some official must have planned for such an attack, and there was a plan as to how to respond which was simply not known to the public. First, on MSNBC at 09:27: James Holt said: ‘Andrew tell us, there has got to be a game plan in the US government for something of this magnitude, what is kicking into the works right now as we speak?’ A listing of the evacuations in Washington, DC, precluded the same conversation topic on ABC at 09:56-09:57 with John Miller talking about cities which were best prepared for disaster: ‘If you look at cities who are prepared to handle an incident like this...(New York) is probably one of the few places that is prepared with the kind of equipment, response, and rescue efforts...Immediately when this happened the entire emergency service unit which comprises hundreds of specially trained

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the Pentagon...we have the heart of the financial district of America being attacked, now we understand that...there has been an explosion in the Pentagon... the heart of the military command center of the United States of America...it can’t get much worse than this...let’s hope.’

**09:45:** FOX: Asmond: ‘A city is under a lockdown... we’ve seen schools under siege...right now we are a nation under siege...there is a terrorists attack at the heart of the financial capital of the world and now at the Pentagon’

First images of Washington, same as CNN and ABC, looking south from the Mall. ‘You are looking at the old executive office building...with the White House to the left...this obviously the most public type of attack...’

cops, was mobilized to the scene. Now a triage center... has been set up just around the corner from the World Trade Center.’

This was followed by ABC’s reporting of the FAA’s complete airspace shutdown which similarly was described and accompanied by the sentiment that the authorities were being proactive. ABC 09:59: ‘You can imagine, what may be happening or what they (the FAA) think might be happening in some part of the country that there is somebody else on some aircraft coming from somewhere or going somewhere with evil in their, with evil intentions – so all aircraft currently in the air over the United States, have been ordered to land at the nearest airport...One of the very first people the President talked to was the Director of the FBI and Pierre Thomas (news correspondent), who covers the Justice Department and the FBI for us (ABC), has been here, um, they may think they prepare for this kind of thing Pierre, but it must have been such a shock...’ This was followed immediately by the collapse of the South Tower.

Beginning after the second collapse of the Twin Towers at 10:28, there was another shift in reporting style. Each network began ‘recapping’ the events of the morning frequently, sometimes less than four minutes apart.<sup>193</sup> Between the four networks however, MSNBC showed numerically the most recaps and re-viewing of the significant events, such as the second collision.<sup>194</sup> All four stations performed this summarizing of 9/11 well into the evening hours with recaps lasting sometimes over two-minutes each, covering both the videos of events as well as recaps of government and official responses and actions. While this process was possibly used to fill air time on a day where four out of five Americans turned to the live news television networks for information on the unfolding crisis, there was blunt realization delivered by each

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<sup>193</sup> Such as the CNN anchor summarizing events by stating the situation in New York, and Washington, at 10:13, 10:19, 10:24 and 10:27.

<sup>194</sup> **10:45:** MSNBC: ‘It is 10:45 right now on the east coast, we need to up date you, especially if you’re just waking up if you’re just tuning in. It’s a day of catastrophe, from Washington to New York and now to Pennsylvania, in what appear to be a series of coordinated terrorist attacks. You are looking at a live picture of Lower Manhattan and no longer can we see the World Trade Centre’s, both hit by airplanes.’ (Followed by video recaps and second tower explosion on loop).

network to their audience that things were exactly as they appeared, that America was under attack.<sup>195</sup> There was also an undertone of anticipation of more actions occurring on the day up until the Presidential speech at 20:30 EST – after the Pentagon collapse the focus turned to the other buildings that comprised the World Trade Center Complex, and the collapse of WTC7 at 17:20 was integrated into the discussion through similar semantics utilized during the collapse of the North Tower.

Finally, the coverage of the crash of United Airlines Flight 93 that occurred at 10:03 near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, began on CNN around 10:37. This event of 9/11 was not immediately reported on many networks as the Pentagon collapse was occurring at the same time, and there were no cameras or news crews near the site of the Shanksville crash. The first mention on CNN of Flight 93 was at 10:37; the next reference to the flight was not made until around 10:50. Around this time there were ‘false’ reportings such as report of a fire on the Mall, a car bomb at or near the State Department, and a white plane circling the White House (which turned out to be a military plane).<sup>196</sup> Of all the channels, MSNBC had the least amount of false or erroneous reporting during this time, and had a quicker response time for news coverage at the Pentagon with their military correspondent Jim Milkaszewski, who was in the Pentagon when it was struck (on the opposite side of the building) and who reported live from 09:39: (Voice of Jim Milkaszewski over a video of the WTC’s burning on air) MSNBC 09:39: ‘A few moments ago like there was an explosion of some kind here at the Pentagon, we are on the E-Ring of the Pentagon we have a window that faces out towards the Potomac toward the Kennedy Center.

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<sup>195</sup> Ruggiero, T. E., & Glascock, J., 2002, ‘Tracking news diffusion and media use following the WTC attack’ *Communication and Terrorism* (Ed. Bradley S. Greenberg) Hampton Press.

<sup>196</sup> **10:37:** CNN: ‘We are getting lots of reports and we want to be careful to tell you when we have confirmed them and not...we have reports that a 747 is down in Pennsylvania...and that remains unconfirmed at this point.’

**10:50:** CNN: Reporter: ‘A large plane crashed this morning north of the Summerset airport...a Boeing 767...don’t know whose airplane it was and we don’t have any details beyond that...we don’t know if this is somehow connected to what is going on in New York and Washington...’

We haven't been able to see or hear anything after the initial blast...I just stepped out of the hallway, security guards were herding people out of the building...construction workers are running as far away from the building as they can right now...' The other three news channels were slower to get audio and video from the Pentagon and none had crews on the scene until well after 10:00. MSNBC continued to air the audio from Milkaszewski periodically as events happened with closer footage of the Pentagon's damage than the other three channels.

Out of all of the individual activities of the morning of 9/11, the coverage of the plane crash in Pennsylvania, was given the least amount of time, and was not delivered as hurriedly by the anchors, but rather in tone of semi-reluctance and speculation, as its timing coincided with many false or erroneous reports of bombs, fires, and Government evacuations. By the time Flight 93 crash reporting began, the majority of the reporting concerned the massive evacuations in Washington, New York, and other major cities and landmarks. The first images of the crash site in Pennsylvania, were not available until afternoon and the coverage was not nearly as persistent as the scenes in New York City, and Washington, DC. CNN at 10:37: 'We are getting lots of reports and we want to be careful to tell you when we have confirmed them and now...we have reports that a 747 is down in Pennsylvania...and that remains unconfirmed at this point.' And, on MSNBC at 10:41: James Holt: 'From the Associated Press Dateline Pittsburgh, 'large plane crashed in Western Pennsylvania', they're citing officials at Somerset county airport who confirm it – again AP reporting and citing the Somerset airport, 'a large plane crashed in Western Pennsylvania', that is all we have.'

Following the collapse of the Pentagon façade, after both WTC Towers had collapsed, and after the coverage from Pennsylvania became a repeat of the same images on all networks, the media as a whole began to establish and interact with the events as a single attack. This bundling of individual events brought the reporting of the networks into a rather strenuous repetition that was transmitted throughout the afternoon. The turning point of the coverage of the channels occurs when the question of a response to the attacks were presented by

governmental agencies, the crux of this discussion being marked by the Presidential speech at 20:30. Accordingly, the second half of the coverage of 9/11 to be conducted by this project will be during the hours that surrounded the President's official televised address to the nation on September 11<sup>th</sup> at 20:30, between 19:30-21:30.

The evening coverage of September 11<sup>th</sup> was similar in the selection of videos, certain scenes, and other content, across the networks, with the repeated airing of the second plane collision, the WTC towers, and the Pentagon collapsing, and the yellow and white clad FBI investigators in the field around Shanksville, Pennsylvania. One difference between the networks was the choice of individuals interviewed (military personnel versus civilian witnesses). CNN used television interviews with civilian persons in New York City, from earlier that recounted what happened, and FOX used considerably more advisors and military experts to explain what happened and what they predicted would happen next. ABC continued to recount the morning rather neutrally with more of an emphasis on the 'heroes' and logistical queries such as the medical/hospital situations being faced in New York, and DC, including an interview with a Dr. Timothy Johnson who acted as the Medical Editor for NBC at the time. MSNBC related more factual information and recaps that showed the second collision of the South Tower and the two collapses more frequently than any other channel.

There were a few headlines covered by all networks such as the collapse of World Trade Center Building 7, a firefight in Kabul, with US forces (which was originally speculated to be a retaliatory strike by the US, but was later denounced by official sources at 19:30), and the structuring of 'Ground Zero', physically in NYC, and in the news. The Pentagon scene and situation in Pennsylvania, were not given as much airtime as New York City, possibly because the military had secured the site at the Pentagon, and the FBI did the same in Pennsylvania, and cameras were not allowed closer than a few hundred yards at either location.<sup>197</sup> Additionally, the

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<sup>197</sup> This distance is estimated from the news footage from both sites, the exact distance or any official exclusion zone is unknown.

lack of civilians and volunteers (free to talk with media personnel) at the sites denied the media the type of interaction and ‘personal’ contact it was allowed in New York City, throughout the night and into the following days. Because of this ease of access, constant live video feeds and new imagery from the public slowly emerged (of new angles of the attacks and new pictures of the chaos as it unfolded earlier in the day). The less ‘secure’ nature of Ground Zero made it a main hub of the media activity on the evening of September 11<sup>th</sup>, and into the days following 9/11.

September 12, 2001

Like September 11<sup>th</sup>, September 12<sup>th</sup> coverage was commercial free and without interruption from non-network activity. The majority of the coverage across the networks was devoted to an inventory type of ‘checking up’ of the government services and branches that were and were not open, and a grander assessment of what had and what had not changed or been affected on the day before, in terms of physical damage to New York City, and Washington, DC. While some academic assessments of this type of closeness between the Government and the Media might be marked as almost a propaganda model of reporting; during a catastrophe or such a major event as 9/11, the purpose of this type of reporting may be purely practical or because the networks were facing disruptions which limited their ability to present more diverse programming.<sup>198</sup> One of the main concerns of reporters and networks was establishing where the government leaders were, what they were saying, and what the immediate plans for recovery and rescue were. September 12<sup>th</sup> saw the rescue and recovery operations at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon very much alive with the hopes of finding persons injured and trapped; however, only nine persons (all rescue workers) were found alive on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Another

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<sup>198</sup> For instance, see Herman, E. S., and Chomsky, N., 1988, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Pantheon Books. However, this thesis would argue that the continuous coverage observed on September 12, 2001 was not a case where “non-routine sources must struggle for access, and may be ignored by the arbitrary decision of the gatekeepers.” (p. 19) But was rather a situation where practicality dictated the format of the day.

component of the news reporting on the day after the 9/11 attacks was the attempt to establish a list of suspects and groups that were capable of such an elaborate attack. The reporting also sought to establish where these groups had been located before the attack, during their planning, recruitment, and training phases. There was still no live coverage from the crash site in Pennsylvania, as the FBI quartered off the scene from eyesight. Similarly, the Pentagon had an area of a few hundred meters wherein no media or non-military personnel were allowed that cameras had to peer into as best as they could from afar.

September 13, 2001

September 13<sup>th</sup> was very much focused on the diplomatic, domestic, and international reactions and on getting the government organized across departments and with other nations. However, a shift emerged among the networks in terms of topic emphasis and reporting focus as opposed to September 12<sup>th</sup>. There was considerable coverage on Colin Powell's press conference around 14:35EST from the State Department. Most networks had a correspondent or reporter at the conference, and it was the first time that a government official went on record directly naming Osama bin Laden for the attacks. The other coverage highlights from the day were the listings and inventories of which companies, universities, and government resources were open and functioning (and to what level), and what airports were doing to try to resume normal commerce. The reports and releases from the government were slower in pace but still were given immediate coverage, as all networks still had no commercial interruptions throughout the day. In place of commercials there were 'recap' segments, which were set to music, segments overlain with various voice clips from witnesses, and an announcer. September 13, also saw the emergence of personal photos of the victims, the playing of final phone calls from the World Trade Center towers, and stories from relatives regarding the actions aboard Flight 93 before it crashed in Pennsylvania.

The political spectrum became more widely represented across the networks on this date. FOX news placed an emphasis on the coverage of the military response, and possible fiscal



needs in any resulting war. CNN emphasised the fiscal needs of the WTC rescue, recovery, and rebuilding process. ABC focused on the retaliatory actions (seconded only to FOX in intensity), highlighting background information on Osama bin Laden. MSNBC didn't mention retaliatory actions other than those mentioned in Colin Powell's speech; however, MSNBC was the only channel to visit the topic of social backlash against Muslim-Americans. All networks covered the lack of mobility of air traffic, and how passengers were dealing with being in airports for days at a time across the nation (with reporters conducting interviews from JFK and Chicago O'Hare). By this time, all networks had employed the 'crawler' or scrolling bar at the bottom of the news screen, the feature first used by FOX on September 11<sup>th</sup>, that reported live updates faster than the news anchor could deliver them. Thereafter, crawlers were employed by news channels around the globe.

September 14, 2001

September 14<sup>th</sup> was the first relatively normal day of news broadcasts in the US, following 9/11. Commercial breaks, 'sponsored by' messages, and some of the regularly scheduled programs such as CNN's 'Talk Back Live' resumed at previously scheduled times. The majority of the news events centered on President Bush's address at the National Cathedral, in Washington, DC, which was attended by four US Presidents. Next, President Bush's visit to Ground Zero in New York City, was met with some appreciation and some reservations as many of the supply routes taking materials needed for the on-going recovery effort were shut down as part of the President's security precautions. This was when President Bush made his bullhorn impromptu speech at Ground Zero. The networks' locations on the political spectrum continued to separate (and resume pre-9/11 stances) as the days after the attack passed. As an example of this ordering of political communication: FOX interviewed more military and government officials than the other networks. ABC focused on Ground Zero rescue efforts, first responder stories, and survivor stories. MSNBC focused on the potential international impact (covering the situation in Afghanistan, and Pakistan, as it pertained to the US at the time). CNN focused

almost exclusively on the rescue efforts, costs, and considerations for ‘normal life’ in New York City. The only form of similar coverage between the channels occurred during the service at the Washington National Cathedral, which was aired live on all networks, as well as some of President Bush’s activities around New York (but not with live coverage by all networks).

September 15, 2001

September 15th saw normal news programming across networks including normal news shows resuming, advertisements becoming more frequent, and reduced coverage of events, including live events or happenings at Ground Zero or the Pentagon. There was a shift to more patriotic overtones in the stories covered by all networks. There were interviews in firehouses and police stations as well as coverage of ‘town hall’ type memorials taking coverage precedence over political speeches (likely as the official speeches on the 15<sup>th</sup>, were not by the upper echelons of the US government, but primarily local officials detailing changes to local protocols – something not typically covered in national media outlets). The fire-fighter funerals and many ‘what comes next’ discussions and similar questions posed by anchors brought the ‘America Under Attack’ phases to a close, opening the space for conversations on military retaliation by the Bush Administration.

This day saw more polarization amongst the networks, but with some interesting exceptions. CNN covered the government activities such as INS immigration delays and the Pentagon’s ‘Operation Noble Eagle’, with more emphasis than they paid to the domestic arena, which was not typical of CNN’s coverage proportions. There were also many discussions speculating what ‘this war’ would look like and how it would impact the US at home and abroad. FOX gave higher proportions of coverage to international effects and international actors’ involvement, covering Hamas’ statements, Iran’s sealing of its border with Afghanistan to prevent Soviet era types of migration, and various clips of Saddam Hussein. ABC covered almost identical topics as FOX (in terms of specific countries’ involvement with the 9/11 response, as well as individuals of interest in the Middle East), but also featured unique considerations of the

attacks, such as how to speak with children about the attacks and explain what terrorism was to a child. MSNBC placed more emphasis than other networks on the airline industry's possible crisis in the wake of the attacks, and began to speak to the situation and actors in the Middle East, and possible US targets overseas. The common ground coverage across the networks was of the first funerals to result from 9/11, specifically the funeral of New York Fire Department Head Chaplain, Father Mychal Judge.

### 3.3 Frames

Introduction: Concerning the specific media frames, the frame of 'Evil' was the strongest media frame observed per this thesis' methodology during network coverage of the events of 9/11. It was supported largely through the Presidential speeches on and around 9/11 that were absorbed into the media along with other official mentions/conversations condemning the 'evil' attackers.<sup>199</sup> This vernacular surrounding 'evil' as a moral assessment of the 9/11 attacks was more frequently observed in the media coverage of FOX than in the other networks analyzed per this case study (ABC, CNN, FOX, and MSNBC). The 'Scope of Threat' frame here was largely comprised of military interviews and press conferences, but in the 5-days of coverage beginning on 9/11, the central characteristic of this frame remained speculative in nature. The frame of 'al Qaeda' did not immediately develop on 9/11, or in the days following; however, this frame carries significance in the following case studies of this project once al Qaeda became known to the media in more defined contexts. 9/11 as a frame is detailed below; however, as its context and significance was yet to be established, its manifestation as a media frame was difficult to establish beyond the attacks themselves. Each of the following frames are identified and detailed as per this thesis' methodology.

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<sup>199</sup> This 'war' discourse commenced on September 11<sup>th</sup>, within the Executive discourse concerning the attacks of 9/11, and continues into President Bush's second term. "I stand before you as a wartime President. I wish I didn't have to say that, but an enemy that attacked us on September the 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 declared war on the United States of America. And war is what we're engaged in." – George W. Bush August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

As a media frame under Entman's qualifications, 9/11 saw the development and relay of a *problem identification* almost immediately in the images of the World Trade Center and Pentagon in flames and ultimately as heaps of rubble and bodies. Initially, (prior to the second plane's impact of Tower 2) all of the news channels (ABC, CNN, FOX, & MSNBC respectively) attributed the scenes to an accident or miscalculation, which, while tragic, was in no way intentional. However, each network's live reaction to the second plane's impact at 09:03 saw a cohesive shift in assumptions to an intentional or orchestrated attack. Almost immediately, FOX news began listing possible culprits, including Osama Bin Laden. On ABC, gasps could be heard coming from the newsroom in real-time followed by a slight stunned silence as well as tones and phrases of disbelief from the anchors slightly off-mic. At the moment of the second collision, MSNBC had some audio interference where their helicopter-based news anchor can be heard saying to the pilot 'they are telling us to back off', then Glen Walker comes in with: 'I would hate to speculate...this building has been the subject of terrorist attacks in the past...and I certainly wouldn't want to speculate at this time...we have tried to get a hold of the Port Authority which manages the building, but we haven't been able to get an answer.'

The *causal interpretation* of the events of 9/11 shifted and adapted quickly, and they did so almost uniformly across both civilian and government sector's communications on the day of the events.<sup>200</sup> On September 11th, both civilian and government outlets were (in a manner) forced for various reasons to react at the same time to nearly the same amount of information. The military, specifically NORAD (the North American Aerospace Defence Command), was running a hijacking/emergency simulation that commenced less than an hour before the hijacking of American Airlines Flight 11, which was then reported by American Airlines to Air

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<sup>200</sup> Example –Many of the 'crawlers', or the text which roll at the bottom of a news screen, were reading such headlines as 'America Under Attack' (Such as on CNN at 10:58), and 'Attack on America' (MSNBC 10:59). But within the minute of 09:03 when the Second Tower was struck, the semantics of most of the news channels shifted and the term 'attack' appears in the conversations on all channels.

Traffic Control.<sup>201</sup> When NORAD learned of the ‘real life’ hijacking there were doubts that it was not in fact the exercise they had been told would occur, thus delaying the response time of intercept-capable aircraft (such as the F-16s which were eventually scrambled from Otis AFB in Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts).<sup>202</sup> For the networks, this delay and haphazard assembly of the available facts and intelligence relating to the events was similarly processed under a state of chaos and immediacy that the government itself was trying to navigate on the morning of September 11th, thus it lead to some less than accurate reporting after the South Tower had been struck and the Pentagon was being reported.<sup>203</sup> In the end, however, after the ‘102 minutes that changed America’ there was a solid interpretation made, and that was that a violent attack upon America had taken place.<sup>204</sup>

The *moral evaluation* similarly shifted exactly at 09:03 from the notion of an accident that would warrant sadness for the loss of life of the pilot and the office workers (these people were the immediate ‘victims’ discussed on the news), to one of blame, anger, and other emotions characteristic of a malicious attack. After all the channels began using rhetoric of ‘intent’ versus

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<sup>201</sup> 8:23:50: Conversation between Rockfield ATC and Athens (regional ATC)

Rockfield re: AA11 no communication (ATC)

American Airlines Emergency Line received call from Raleigh Reservation Desk with call on the line from a flight attendant on AA11 re: everyone has been stabbed. (ATC)

ATC contacted by AAL (ATC)

Recognized by ATC re: to be handled as confirmed hijacking moving air traffic from AA11

<sup>202</sup> 8:33:55: Conversation between Boston Center and Cape Approach: BC: ‘Departed Boston going to LAX, right now he’s out to Albany, like to scramble some fighters to go tail him.’

CA: ‘Well, ok. Well, we’ll talk to Otis here.’ (ATC)

<sup>203</sup> Bad Information – Inaccurate Reporting:

**9:45:** CNN: Headline ‘FIRE ON WASHINGTON MALL’

**9:47:** CNN: ‘There is a fire on the mall in Washington but the cause of the fire. We cannot tell you.’

**10:33:** CNN: ‘We now have reports that a car bomb has exploded at the State Department...we’re working to confirm that.’

**10:45:** CNN: ‘The Associated Press is reporting that federal officials fear that a second hijacked plane or another hijacked plane is headed towards the Pentagon...looking for the time on this.’

<sup>204</sup> **10:02:** ABC: Jennings: ‘The last time the United States was attacked like this was Pearl Harbor.’

‘accidental’ causes for the pictures being aired, the clearest indication of moral judgment and evaluation are apparent in the wide-spread usage of the term ‘evil’. While the first official use of ‘evil’ was made by President Bush during his 20:30 televised speech that evening. The ‘evil’ dialogue and semantics were clearly established first by FOX News, which was also the first network to utilize the phrase ‘Muslim extremism’.

The *treatment recommendation* was the one aspect of the reporting of 9/11, in which the individual networks began with a relatively singular notion, ‘never forget’. This was observed on all networks; however, over the following days this ubiquitous notion diverged in accordance with each network’s political affiliations. FOX was calling for retaliation and aggressive, military response to the incident. Their reporting was that of complete support for President Bush and Donald Rumsfeld’s (then Secretary of Defense) assessment and understanding of the situation – that the attack of 9/11 was an act of war, which merited a military response. This framing of the attacks within a ‘war’ paradigm rather than a criminal paradigm was a communications and linguistic success and was readily disseminated across the networks. The treatment recommendation of the Bush Administration and the major media networks was (much like other wartime and pre-wartime narrative functions between the government and the media machine of a nation) a very cohesive and singularly stern assessment: there must be a War on Terror, because it was the only just response to such an attack.

#### Evil

FOX **9:39**: David Asmond: ‘...all of Manhattan has been sealed off...of course all of this is unprecedented in this dastardly occasion...Manhattan is in a lock down...we’ve heard that term used in school shootings and jail breaks...never like this.’

*Problem Identification*: There are few concepts as simple as ‘good and evil’, and during a time of chaos both in reality and on the media networks’ screens, such a clean and universally recognizable concept as ‘evil’ was perhaps the easiest concept to relay to a viewing audience. Not only would utilizing such a social convention (such as ‘evil’) keep viewers locked in on a

particular network, but the term could guide the audience into accepting other prescriptions offered by the network should they feel their concepts of 'evil' aligned with those of the network. In some ways, any explanation was more acceptable than a complete lack of explanations – particularly during a time of chaos. In the case of 9/11, 'evil' became a discursive explanation, because it was used to describe the motivation of the acts, the nature of the persons behind the acts, and the unifying entity against which America must then fight. This frame was unique as it encompasses all these facets: it is the cause for a problem, the moral evaluation of an entire series of events by all three major news networks, the identifiable nature of those who perpetrated the events, and the unifying enemy of those who were wronged or attacked. However, 'evil' as it applied to Entman's criteria, first serves the 'problem identification' function, as it *was* the problem that manifested in the 9/11 attacks. Simply, the problem was that evil was targeting America, and it had just attacked the innocent (opposite of evil, the good) people.

*Causal Interpretation:* Similarly, 'evil' here was unique in that it was discussed as both the cause of the events as well as the root cause of the 'disease' that then showed the 'symptom' of 9/11. The interpretation most easily accessible and frequently offered by the networks was that the persons responsible were either evil themselves (as FOX termed them), or they had evil in their hearts. Either way, it was utilized to describe the cause of the attacks – this also exempted any American involvement or provocation from the lists of what could have prompted such acts. By locating the root cause of the motivation of the attackers and the attacks themselves into a frame of 'evil', the networks assisted the audience by guiding them into a mind-set that morality and virtue were not only present on such a dark day as 9/11, but that 'we' were on the right side of these moral notions, as clearly, the polar-opposite of good, evil was behind the acts.

*Moral Evaluation:* The moral evaluation of evil was perhaps its strongest attribute of the Evil frame. The terminology of morality and usage of such words as 'evil' are symptomatic of how the American media as well as the American public processed the acts and images to which

they were bluntly exposed on 9/11. While ‘evil’ was the first moral evaluation offered by the networks (as well as in some official governmental releases on 9/11), the use of a term concerning morality, such as ‘evil’, also lead to subsequent assumptions about the location of the discussion amongst other socio-political considerations (such as religious indicators). If the problem, cause, and act are deemed ‘evil’, then solution or response could be deemed ‘good’, so long as the intentions of the response are rooted in the concepts which are opposite on a scale of degrees of morality, to ‘evil’. As such, by nesting the attacks, the perpetrators, and the origin of 9/11 under the umbrella of ‘evil’, the response, no matter how excessive, would be able to function under and within a concept of goodness.

*Treatment Recommendation:* ‘Evil’ here automatically implied a forthcoming fight against evil and a perseverance of the ‘good’.<sup>205</sup> Socially, the notion of combatting evil is acceptable in the United States – as such, the treatment to evil was a fight against it with good. Additionally, any fight against evil would be considered good by the nature of the construction of the term historically. ‘I’ve spoken to the Vice President, the Governor of New York, to the Director of the FBI, and have ordered that the full resources of the federal government go to help the victims and their families and to conduct a full scale investigation to hunt down and to find those folks who committed this act. Terrorism against our nation will not stand.’<sup>206</sup>

#### Scope of Threat

This frame refers to the scope or scale of the United States’ response to 9/11. The frame focuses on the physical breadth of the American response to terrorism, in other words, all actions (well-founded or otherwise), that were taken could be justified by the presence or threat of terrorism following 9/11. This frame was the most evident in official press releases (and press

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<sup>205</sup> FOX 9:54: ‘This bears repeating here: This is a tremendous tragedy, yes, but we are still the most powerful nation on earth. We perhaps will one day find who is responsible and appropriate steps will be taken. They have not struck at America, they have struck at some individual places in America, but this country will go on.’

<sup>206</sup> President Bush, 09:30 Sept 11, 2001, Televised address from Booker Elementary School in Sarasota, Florida.



conferences) of government and law enforcement representatives. As a narrative driven largely by the US government rather than strictly by the media, it was slower to develop than the aforementioned frames of '9/11', and 'evil' on 9/11. The *Problem Identification*, which was most often recited by official sources to the media, was that the culprits of 9/11 were not a singular nation, but more dangerously, a small and convicted group of radicals living all over the globe and backed by a super rich and charismatic leader, Osama bin Laden.<sup>207</sup> Accordingly, the breadth of the response to such a multi-national threat would have to be similarly diffused, complex and at times secretive. This 'problem' was clearly laid out in President Bush's 20:30EST televised address to the nation, as well as the three other components of this frame being suitably addressed and neatly tied together by the end of his speech.

*Causal Interpretation:* both the Bush Administration and the American media made the interpreted cause clear; terrorists (specifically Osama Bin Laden), who had tried to attack America before, had just succeeded. The causal interpretation regarding the location of the source of this terror were left broad and undefined for the most part. However, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran were mentioned frequently as 'hotspots' of activity for persons with anti-American sentiments. The interpretation offered was that the first Gulf War did not solve the 'Middle East problem', and that clearly an American presence, and retaliatory force was justified in the region.

*Moral Evaluation:* Morally, the use of the term 'evil' in reference to the perpetrators of 9/11 (as well as to Osama bin Laden himself) was utilized so frequently that it served to support justifications for retribution in this frame of 'Scope of Threat'. These semantics justified and extended the scale of the retaliatory force to wherever and whatever was deemed 'evil'. The Christian overtones and rhetoric set down by the President in his multiple speeches (such as the Psalm reference in his 20:30 address) frequently reference this dichotomy and ever highlight the

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<sup>207</sup> National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States 2004 'The Foundation of the New Terrorism Section 2.4: Building an organization, Declaring War on the United States.' Chapter 2.

stark contrast between those who are good (American) and those who are evil (terrorists). As such, this moral grounding and structure served to support President Bush's military agenda for a response to the attacks.

*Treatment Recommendation:* The treatment recommendation regarding the scale and scope of the American response to 9/11 was left in the media and by the Presidential Administration at broad strokes and vague descriptions. In leaving the edges of the map of the War on Terror rather undefined, it allowed for a wide response that did not have the restrictions of a pre-scripted or outlined campaign such as 'ousting a dictator' or 'liberating a camp'. There was no definitive agenda, no stern parameters laid upon the conflict's objectives and no information made public which could indicate a protracted scenario that would resolve quickly. The treatment was left 'to be determined', and certain transgressions such as Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD's) or training camps locations became temporary placeholders in the overall justification for military action overseas.

#### al Qaeda

*Problem Identification:* While al Qaeda was a frame that emerged out of the 9/11 events, it was not mentioned in detail or more than once on each news network on 9/11 itself. The name of the group was not well known at the time. Part of the reason for this quiet response was that Osama bin Laden was in hiding at the time, also, later reports, including findings by the *9/11 Commission Report*, gave substantial evidence that bin Laden didn't know about the attack's success until hours after they occurred. Additionally, he did not directly take credit for the attacks for nearly two months after 9/11. Because of this delay in attribution, the frame did not develop as quickly, although the figurehead of the group absolutely did gain prominence and notoriety as the culprit for 9/11, beginning on 9/11 itself.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> CNN **9:55:** John King '...the operating assumption here is terrorism, the initial assumption...was that this had something to do...or has possible connections with Osama Bin Laden...the administration recently released a warning that they thought Osama bin laden might strike out against US targets.' Sept 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

*Causal Interpretation:* As al Qaeda did not immediately take the credit for the 9/11 attacks, the cause and blame that the media (and the United States) were seeking was not clearly or cleanly established on September 11<sup>th</sup>. However, the leader of the group, Osama bin Laden was known and blamed immediately (specifically mentioned by FOX news within minutes of the second tower impact). As an *interpretation*, al Qaeda was simply the name finally connected with the concept that had firmly been established, even in the first moments of the 9/11 attacks: a group of evil people who hated America, took action using planes. Even though al Qaeda's organizational structure dates back to the late 1980's, it wasn't given its American media debut until 9/11. From 9/11 forwards, the cause of other 'evil' or anti-American violence was almost automatically attributed to al Qaeda for the first part of the 2000's (arguably, until the rise of ISIS/ISIL terrorism).

*Moral Evaluation:* A morality of the group that became known as Al Qaeda was certainly established by the American media even before the group had a face or a name attached to it: the people who were behind 9/11 were *evil*, so their moral stance was negative and of an evil or malicious disposition. The 'evil' designation presented by President Bush, as well as the victimization of civilians, absolutely supported this moral judgment in the media, and condensing the hijackers, Osama bin Laden, and radical Muslims under one heading of Al Qaeda made for catchier headlines and a concept which was more easily grasped by viewers, readers, and listeners of the media from 9/11 onward.

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FOX **9:57:** Washington editor Brit Hume: '...as for whether there will be any retaliatory action by the United States obviously that's days away...if not longer...it may be a long time before we know who exactly, or how this was orchestrated...organized... by whom...this is one of these days where we can say that things will not be the same in America...this is the nightmare that experts warned about...this is remarkable.' Sept 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

FOX **10:02:** Former Governor Cromwell: 'The story for the next 24-hours will be how much damage was done. The longer range story is even more terrible...who did it and any...it was a nation it would be easier to deal with...but it's not a nation its individual terrorists.' Sept 11, 2001.

*Treatment Recommendation:* The treatment recommendation of the Al Qaeda frame was the ‘War Against Terror’ which Bush first mentioned and titles in his 20:30 speech on September 11th. The group was framed as an evil organization that embodied all anti-American threats and hatred around the world, and this framing was supported by the global operation and franchise-type structure of the group itself. In this capacity, the group’s global nature and activity became a factor in how the US government chose to respond to the threat: globally and swiftly. The treatment for Al Qaeda’s infiltration onto American soil was a massive crackdown on immigration, Middle-Eastern persons from the same nations as the 19 hijackers were intensely monitored, and, according to critics, American freedoms were sacrificed in the name of prevention. The treatment for Al Qaeda’s global network and connections was a global effort by the US to monitor communications, financial transactions, corporate and private travel, and citizens of other countries (with and without permission from that individual’s nation or authority). The treatment recommendation of the Al Qaeda frame was most easily identifiable many months after 9/11.

### 3.4 Narrative Status

Richard Jackson’s 2005 book, *Writing the War on Terrorism*, aimed to:

Explore the nature of the overarching narrative or story of the ‘war on terrorism’...the language that officials in the Bush Administration have used to explain to the American (and global) public why the war was necessary in the first place, who the enemy is, what kind of threat they pose and why the war will succeed.<sup>209</sup>

Why is this relevant to this thesis, which is looking specifically at the media’s actions and narration? Because in the early days after 9/11, the Government’s narrative, one which has been extensively researched by Jackson, was nearly one in the same as the American Media’s War on Terror Narrative. However, understanding what the media was doing and why the similarity

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<sup>209</sup> Jackson, R., 2005, *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics, and Counter-Terrorism*, Manchester University Press, p. 5.

between the narratives existed during this timeframe requires exploration. On 9/11, there was no script or plan in existence within the media as to how to cover the events occurring between 08:46 when the North Tower was struck by American Airlines flight 11, and 10:28 when the North Tower fell. This rapidly evolving information environment occurred against a blank slate in terms of media management of live terrorism. While war journalism and conflict reporting as discussed by Hoskins in *Televising War*<sup>210</sup>, and Carruthers' *The Media at War*<sup>211</sup>, detail the evolution of the principles of managing reporting overseas conflicts in an increasingly immediate media ecology, on 9/11, there were no guidelines for applying those principles to a domestic attack that could (via the communications technologies of the day, such as satellite trucks) be reported as it happened. This particular issue concerning the functionality and application of a principle for managing terrorism live on television, is addressed by Grusin in his 2010 book, *Premediation*. He details that American media had been bracing for the kind of catastrophes and engaging in the type of premediation exercised on 9/11, since the 1990's.<sup>212</sup> However, his inference is that there is a continuous system of preparing for the next disaster operating at all times, and that this preparation, the pre- (anticipatory) *mediation*, is a protective brace against chaos, for both the media and the American public.<sup>213</sup> However, at the time, in the absence of a clear, strategic method of managing information on the disaster at hand, the media narrative that developed ended up adhering and conforming to the Bush Administration's War on Terror Narrative. This can be seen in the constant coverage and reiteration of official interviews and speeches on and immediately after 9/11. "Editorial writers for America's 10 largest newspapers presented a singular narrative that supported military intervention in the war against terrorism, and they assumed positive outcome."<sup>214</sup> That same cohesive messaging and near automatic referencing to

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<sup>210</sup> Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B., 2009, *Television and Terror: Conflicting Times and the Crisis of News Discourse*, Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>211</sup> Carruthers, S., 2000/2011, (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), *The Media At War*, Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>212</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, *Premediation: Affect and mediality after 9/11*, Palgrave Macmillan. p. 41.

<sup>213</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, *Premediation: Affect and mediality after 9/11*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 38-62.

<sup>214</sup> Ryan, M., 2004 'Framing the War Against Terrorism: US Newspaper Editorials and Military

the 'official' narrative can be seen operating on each network's news environment for each day of this thesis' observations for this case study.

Again, because of this chaos both 'on the ground' and in the newsrooms, the reporting of 9/11 was also similar, if not identical, from one network to the next; even though standard broadcasting behaviour amongst the networks observed typically offers a spectrum of political leanings.<sup>215</sup> Without the time to prepare and contextualize the story for and within their audience's typical political preferences, the news networks were left to produce a more elementary summary of what was happening (available via live news footage), and share what was known about what was happening. That information originated almost exclusively from the American Government and the Bush Administration through briefings, conferences, and the reporters who happened to be at the Pentagon, White House, and The World Trade Center on that morning. This can also be observed on September 12<sup>th</sup>, where the networks' rolling tickers at the bottom of the screens were devoted largely to covering which departments and government branches were open and in what condition.<sup>216</sup> In addition, the networks *all* covered the same conferences and major gatherings/speeches of government leaders for the first five days.<sup>217</sup>

Ultimately, the War on Terror Narrative in the American media during this period of time was nearly identical to the Bush Administration's narrative of the War on Terror. The US Government's role and position as one of the few providers of 'new' information gave the government a level of attention from and influence in the media that had not been as

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Action in Afghanistan' *International Communication Gazette* October 2004 Vol. 66 No. 5 pp. 369.

<sup>215</sup> Such as FOX news coverage concurring most often with the Republican Party's bias.

<sup>216</sup> The rolling news ticker was used before 9/11 for financial news, but on 9/11 became an integral part of the screen's composition of major news networks – FOX was the first network to employ the crawler style news ticker on September 11, 2001.

<sup>217</sup> For example, on the 12<sup>th</sup>, all networks covered the speech by the Congressional Chaplain in DC, and all networks showed excerpts of speeches in their rolling ticker from Secretary of State Colin Powell, President Bush, and Rudolf Giuliani.

pronounced before the morning of 9/11. The coverage of the War on Terror immediately following was predominantly populated with stories and information about what the government was doing and planning. Because of this increased attention towards airing the government's activities, the level of awareness the individual citizen (i.e. viewer) had of what their government was trying to do increased exponentially. Furthermore, the American population liked what they were seeing. As detailed in Nacos 2016, the majority of the media's coverage concerning the government on and around 9/11 was uniformly positive.

Americans experienced a media--from celebrity anchors, hosts, and other stars to the foot soldiers of the fourth estate—that abandoned cynicism, negativism, and attack journalism in favour of reporting, if not participating in, an outburst of civic sprite, unity and patriotism.<sup>218</sup>

A spike of public approval for the President (and the government as a whole) indicated that the public was responding positively to this aspect of the coverage of 9/11, leading the networks to devoting considerable air time during these days to the government's activities.<sup>219</sup> Because of this high level of social cohesion, the Bush Administration's labelling of the terrorist attacks as an act of war was (more readily able to become) a rhetorical success, and met with little questioning by the media. Visual patriotism resounded in the media with all networks using red, white and blue colors on their sets, and using graphics of American Flags waving in the air on and following 9/11, which was observed by this thesis on all networks during this time.

However, any of the positive effects arising from the aftermath of 9/11 were short-lived. The academic literature concerning the media's War on Terror immediately following 9/11 tends to deliberate on either the sheer volume of the repetition of violent images in the aftermath of the attacks, or on the lack of contestation and criticism by the media of the US government

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<sup>218</sup> Nacos, B., 2016, *Mass-Mediated Terrorism: Mainstream and Digital Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham Maryland, Chapter 6, p.131.

<sup>219</sup> Presidential Approval Ratings of 90% were recorded on Sept 20-12, 2001 by the Gallup Polling agency. In the same polling, and unprecedented agreement rating of the President by Republicans, Democrats, and Independents read as 98%, 89%, and 84% respectively.

(which, within weeks of the attack, swiftly staged the largest Cabinet Level restructuring in decades).

Immediately after 9/11, when a series of unspeakable events were reported as they unfolded, and a day or two thereafter, when the enormity of the attacks and their consequences began to sink in, there was simply not enough genuine news to fill twenty-four hours per day. As a result, television networks and stations replayed the scenes of horror repeatedly, revisiting the suffering of people repeatedly, searching for emotions beyond the boundaries of good taste.<sup>220</sup>

In *Television and Terror*, Hoskins and O'Loughlin also note this notion of 'news beyond good taste'.

Immediacy and its corollaries – simultaneity and proximity, the central component of the relationship between television and terror – ensured a prolonged satiation of horror on a cinematic scale. Indeed, for many months the US media could not ease back from their saturation coverage of 9/11 and its aftermath.<sup>221</sup>

Concerning academia's investigation into the media's lack of discursive push-back against new government regulations, sweeping reforms, and other policy-based coverage, this thesis interviewed Professor Richard Jackson, asking specifically about the media's action on and following 9/11 concerning its constitutional functions.

So I don't think that that's controversial at all; to say that the media acted less as a critique than as a mouthpiece for the War on Terror - The media in times of national crisis stops playing its critical role and starts playing a role as a mouthpiece of the government. There are structural reasons for this: the corporatization of the media has meant that the media elite are now connected to the government and military industrial elite. There is a deep connection there and so there is a strong editorial line that is pro-government. - [Also] The 24-hour news cycle means that you have to go with the information that you can get as quickly as you can.

At the same time, governments have become very good at PR, so what they do is they pick a frame and a narrative, and package that they give out to the media. And the

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<sup>220</sup> Nacos, B., 2016, p. 133.

<sup>221</sup> Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B., 2009, *Television and Terror: Conflicting Times and the Crisis of News Discourse*, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 15.



media, because they are on this 24-hour cycle, and they are corporatized, haven't got time to critically investigate all the claims. And if they did, and were critical of the media material that they [were] given, they might then not be allowed access, they might get kept out of these packages (in the future)...So, it's in their interest to then just say, 'this is what the government says', and basically act as the mouthpiece, rather than ring around and investigate.<sup>222</sup>

Jackson's idea that the media was a mouthpiece of the US government was substantiated by this thesis during this first case study. However, this particular dynamic of the War on Terror Narrative between the US Government and US Media is anticipated to change over the course of this thesis' research into future case studies. To conclude this first case study chapter on 9/11, the War on Terror Narrative was effectively a brand new and quickly growing narrative that was led by the US Government more so than by the American media. The features of that narrative most frequently noted in wider scholarship, and in this first case study, predominantly concern the degree of repetition of the limited information available on and following the attacks, and the almost identical composition and content of the US government's War on Terror Narrative, to the narrative operating in American media. However, the influence the American government had over the media's War on Terror Narrative was not absolute; and by the following case study, the Shoe Bomber, on December 22, 2001, a shift in in the individual frames had become more noticeable.

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<sup>222</sup> Jackson, Richard, 2016, Interview by this thesis on March 18, 2016, at the 2016 International Studies Association Annual Conference in Atlanta, GA – Used with Permission

## Chapter 4: Shoe Bomber Case Study

December 22, 2001

| <b>The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification for the War on Terror</b>                |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Events   | <i>9/11 Frame</i>  | <i>Evil Frame</i>  | <i>Scope of Threat Frame</i>   | <i>Al Qaeda Frame</i>   |
| 9/11   | 4: America Under Attack (Day #)  | 1: Axis Of Evil Speech<br>Moral Evaluation:<br>Attackers Evil – USA<br>'Good'            | 2: Dependent On<br>Military/Executive<br>Response – Wherever<br>There's A Threat                   | 3: Osama Bin Laden –<br>Non-State Terror = 'New'<br>Real Threat                                     |
| <b>Shoe Bomber</b>   | <b>4: Continued Gaps In<br/>Airport Security – Skies<br/>Still Not Safe Since 9/11</b> | <b>3: 'Hero Passengers' =<br/>'Evil Attacker'</b>  | <b>2: Global Scale – Trans-<br/>Atlantic Travel Issues,<br/>Terrorist Mobile And<br/>Global</b>    | <b>1: Afghanistan Camps,<br/>Tora Bora Caves, OBL<br/>Videos, Terror Training<br/>Camps Issue</b>   |
| Bali Bombings  | 3: Asia's 9/11 – Same<br>Motives - Same Goals –<br>Different Location                  | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently<br>Established On All<br>Networks-                            | 2: Global Scale –<br>Everywhere Westerners<br>Are = Target -<br>Necessitating A Global<br>Response | 1: Terror Training Camps<br>– Jeemah Islamiyah and<br>AQ Groups Attacking<br>Any And All Westerners |
| Underpants<br>Bomber   | 3: More Aviation Security<br>Issues – Issues With<br>Government Lists'                 | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently<br>Established On All<br>Networks-                            | 2: Back To Aviation Based<br>Threats   | 1: (Similar To Shoe)<br>Yemen Connections –AQ<br>Allegiance Vs. Operative -<br>AQAP                 |
| Times Square<br>Bombing  | 4: NYC Still Targeted By<br>The Same People  | 3: -Weakest Presentation<br>Of Frame In Thesis, But<br>Observed On All<br>Networks-      | 2: Domestic Counter-<br>Terrorism Questioned –<br>NYC's Post-9/11 Test                             | 1: 'Homegrown' And<br>Internet Radicalization –<br>Lone Wolf Terrorism -                            |
| Boston Marathon<br>Bombings  | 1: The Echo Of 9/11 –<br>Flags Flying Again, Hero<br>First Responders/Victims          | 2: Clearest Good Vs. Evil<br>Framing + Hero Frame<br>Of Survivors And Law<br>Enforcement | 3: Narrowest Scope:<br>Boston – Northeastern<br>American City (Again)                              | 4: Internet Radicalization –<br>Homegrown Terrorism –<br><i>Inspire Magazine</i>                    |
| Numbering indicates the strength of the individual frame of the four frames within each event. |  |  |  |   |

### Shoe Bomber Case Study Outline:

Introduction

News Coverage

December 22, 2001

December 23, 2001

December 24, 2001

December 25, 2001

December 26, 2001

The Frames of the Shoe Bomber

9/11

Evil

Scope of Threat

Al Qaeda

Narrative Status

### 4.1 Introduction

Richard Reid, known in the media as 'The Shoe Bomber', attempted to detonate explosives hidden in the sole of his sneakers on American Airlines flight 63, between Paris and Miami, on December 22, 2001. He failed to board his original flight one-day prior due to security screening issues; he was detained for such a long period of time with additional screening

procedures that he missed the final boarding call of the original flight on December 21st. Sentenced to three life terms plus 110 years without parole, he is held in Florence Supermax Prison in Colorado, having pleaded guilty to a host of charges against him including ‘interference with flight crew and attendants’ and ‘attempted destruction of an aircraft’.<sup>223</sup> His attack was ultimately a failure as the delay in Paris allowed for excessive perspiration from his feet, combined with rainy weather outside the airport to dampened the explosives and charges he had hidden in his shoes.<sup>224</sup> Although neither specifically domestic nor internationally based, in their 2000-2001 publication on all domestic and international terrorism, entitled *Terrorism*, the FBI classified the failed attack as the last ‘Significant Event’ of 2001.

The immediate significance of this failed terror event lays in its chronological proximity to 9/11, as well as with the resulting security changes for all flights within and bound for the United States, including the immediately effective additional X-ray scanning of all shoes for years to follow. It was also one of the first cases in the media following 9/11 where terms such as ‘radicalization’ and ‘extremism’ were found operating in an explanatory capacity for an individuals’ decision and motivation to attack Americans and other Western citizens abroad. As Richard Reid is a British citizen, this was also a case where the ‘special relationship’ between the US and UK, a key component of the physical War on Terror that had begun by the time of the Shoe Bomber attempt, can be observed. The UK issued no request for the return of Reid to the United Kingdom during his detainment in the American penal system,<sup>225</sup> possibly because the

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<sup>223</sup> United States District Court - District of Massachusetts Court document in Criminal Case Number: 02-10012-WGY Dated January 16, 2002 available at <http://fas.org/irp/news/2002/01/reidindictment.pdf>.

<sup>224</sup> Forensics found that Richard Reid attempted to use pentaerythritol tetranitrate (PETN), the same explosive used in the attempted Underpants Bombing, in his footwear. He stated during testimony that he learned how to make the explosive at Al Qaeda Training camps in Afghanistan, a statement later corroborated in 2003 by Mohammed Mansour Jabarah, similarly trained under Kahlid Shaikh Mohammed.

<sup>225</sup> This thesis made a ‘Freedom of Information’ request of the Home Office of the United Kingdom in December 2015, and received this reply: “Thank you for your email of 9 December 2015 regarding Richard Reid. In your email you have asked if the UK received an extradition request from the US for Richard Reid and whether there were any other

official UK/US extradition treaty was not formalized until 2003, and became effective in January 2004.

This failed event was interesting to examine as it unfolded in the media in its first day of coverage, as all the information that would become known was available relatively quickly. There was no ‘hunt’ for the culprits as was the case during 9/11, no drawn-out investigation by domestic or internationally based agencies, and Richard Reid’s name and general biographical information was available within the first few hours following the attempted bombing. His longer back-story only took three days to emerge in full, including his test runs on Israel’s El Al airlines in July of 2001, and his contact with high profile extremists during his time in the Feltham Young Offenders Institute. However media attention was focused more on his time in the Brixton Mosque, which also allegedly sheltered the radicalization process of Zacharias Moussaoui (one of the initial planners of the 9/11 attacks), to whom Reid is frequently referenced alongside in subsequent news coverage of terror events into the time of writing.

It is, however, the longer-term referencing of this failed attack that earns its significance within the wider War on Terror Narrative in the American media. The attack, while not covered at any length during its initial coverage (due to lack of material for the media to transmit, as this chapter will detail), serves a rhetorical and linguistic function within the wider War on Terror Narrative as a template for the discussion of terrorism and terrorists in a less stigmatised or fearful manner. As Reid was the first failed terrorist following 9/11, the media moniker ‘Shoe

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requests made to the UK before his final sentencing in the US. As a matter of long standing policy and practice I cannot comment on individual cases because the Government will neither confirm nor deny that it has made or received an extradition request until such time as a person is arrested in relation to the request. Also, I can neither confirm nor deny the existence, content or status of any individual Mutual Legal Assistance request.

However it should be noted that, as Richard Reid was arrested on his arrival in the US, it would not be necessary for the US to request his extradition from any other country, including the UK.” Available publicly: <https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/306464/response/767636/attach/html/3/ResponseT1173%20161%202%20reid%20sb.doc.html>

Bomber' became a media template for discussing terrorism under an assumption of incompetence by a person with more religious zeal than factual knowledge.<sup>226</sup> Almost a decade later, became a means to relay to an audience a chronology or family-tree of failed terror events, using the Shoe Bomber and its assimilated cultural literacy within the War on Terror Narrative to contextualise a failed plot or attack, introduce a component or story of 'heroism' against terrorism (typically by bystanders and not officials), or in showing the technical advancements (or lack thereof) of terror tools and technologies employed in different terror attacks, both successful and failed.

#### 4.2 News Coverage

NOTE: FOX News did not (*at time of writing*, following official requests to the network for the specific days of this case study and searches of various archive), have archived footage for the dates of this case study, December 22, 2001-December 26, 2001. Because of this, this thesis adapted to employ ABC News and CBS News, as their archives were available. The methodology of this thesis was designed to account for a lack of material from official sources across individual or multiple days. At the time of writing, archives for footage on a network by network basis for specific dates prior to 2009, are not entirely complete, or are in the process of being built, made publicly available, indexed, and populated. Some networks simply do not have as extensive record keeping abilities as others, and for this particular period of news, FOX falls into this category of having a lack of video based records publicly accessible (or following multiple requests).

On December 22, 2001, the physical situation which began approximately 90-minutes

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<sup>226</sup> Kitzinger, J., 2000: 75-6 definition, in Hoskins, A. & O'Loughlin, B., 2010 "Kitzinger sees media templates working differently (from icons) and 'defined by their lack of innovation, their status as received wisdom and by their closure.'" In this sense, the Shoe Bomber very much falls into this category of a media template as the *Shoe Bomber* used in terms of a closed case, but one which can serve a function as a template for other failed terrorism events or situations of assumed failure or incompetence by the persons involved.

after American Airlines Flight 63 departed Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport, did not come to the American media's attention until later in the day on the east coast in the United States, around the time most late afternoon or evening news reports were taking place. News crews were on the ground at Boston's Logan Airport (where the flight was diverted; its original destination was Miami) hours before the aircraft landed, which led to some anti-climatic reporting as the situation was initially breaking in the media. The only 'action shot' that came to the media's attention was from a security camera on top of a nearby building which captured two F-15 fighter jets following the landing flight AA63, flying low across the airfield, completing their escort of the flight. That clip was the only live footage taken in the daylight hours of December 22<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>227</sup> The media almost immediately knew Richard Reid's full name, and some of the first assumptions made were that Reid's British Passport, which was issued only three weeks earlier, was bogus or forged.<sup>228</sup> The press-conference held at the airport that day by the Director of Aviation at Boston's Logan Airport, Tom Kinton, detailed that the flight attendants, with the help of passengers, belted and tied Reid to the left hand side of row 29 of the aircraft; and he was sedated three different times during the remainder of the flight by two doctors on-board the plane.

There was no private exit in the airport's International Arrivals hall for the passengers that had been on the plane, and many gave interviews or quick comments to the waiting news crews. The official government response took place 'airside' (an aviation term referring to the parts of the airport 'inside' or past the security lines), and Reid was escorted to the back of a FBI sedan, away from the airport, directly to the Plymouth County Correctional Facility, an hour south of the Boston. Passengers were connected to American Airlines flights for Miami within 48-hours; but only after all passengers had been cleared from detainment in order to give accounts to the FBI agents who met the plane as it arrived.

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<sup>227</sup> Aired on ABC, Dec. 22, 2001 (unknown timestamp) with Ron Claiborne and Justice Department correspondent Pierre Thomas in Washington, D.C.

<sup>228</sup> It was not bogus, but a duplicate he obtained in Belgium.

December 22, 2001

December 22, 2001, began in the media with a heavy focus on Christmas retail sales, a US attack on a convoy of unknown occupants in Afghanistan, and Israeli blockades of certain Palestinian areas preventing holiday worship in the city of Bethlehem. The story about a ‘plane incident’, as it was first headlined in the major news networks, did not occur until the nightly news broadcasts. As mentioned above, the images available were very limited in terms of visual impact. There were no explosions, no flames and no ‘action shots’, leaving the networks with footage of airplanes taxiing around Boston’s Logan Airport, a few shots of passengers walking through the terminal, and the interview with Massachusetts Port Authority Director of Aviation, Thomas Kinton, which was broadcast live on all the major news networks as it occurred.<sup>229</sup>

The networks were made aware of the suspect’s name immediately, and Richard Reid was shown in the backseat of a black sedan driven by federal agents, as part of some of the first video on the story that was not of taxiing aircraft. The other prevalent stories in the media on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, included the US bombing of a convoy in Khost, Afghanistan, as well as the ongoing hunt for Osama bin Laden. However, the reporting of the bombing of a convoy was not entirely clear on this date, as there were ongoing discussions on whether the convoy was populated with Taliban leaders or local tribal leaders. The war reporting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, centered on troops abroad and the anticipated sentiments of separation from their families during the holiday time with Christmas fast approaching. As this was the first Christmas following 9/11, the news networks had alluded to plans to cover various US military camps in Afghanistan live on Christmas.

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<sup>229</sup> ABC: New York Anchor Robin Roberts begins report with ‘Boston Massachusetts Plane Incident’. Boston Correspondent Ron Claiborne: Reporting an incident on a plane in which a man named Richard Reid tried to set fire to his shoes – video in background of Boston Logan Airport – Interview/Press Conference with Port Authority Director of Aviation, Thomas Kinton, who noted that the intervention by passengers and crew, ‘appeared to have prevented something very serious from occurring.’

December 23, 2001

With the dawning of a new day came more information about Richard Reid as well as the types of explosive in his shoes. The media coverage was inundated with interviews with experts in explosives, multiple senators speaking to airport security gaps, and discussions by other officials surrounding the first stages of an international investigation into how a known suspicious person was able to board a US bound aircraft, all of which brought the story into more prevalence the day after the failed attack than on the first day of coverage. Unlike the media coverage of 9/11, the Shoe Bomber case was not presented commercial-free at any point in time on any network, and updates on the other major stories of the day were frequent and diverse. Speaking to the physical changes resulting from the failed attack, new FAA rules concerning the removal of footwear were in full effect by the 23rd, and interviews from the previous day featuring passenger and basketball star, Kwame James, were shown on all channels.<sup>230</sup> The other stories of the day included coverage of the first official day of work for Afghanistan's new government, New York City, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, being named Time

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<sup>230</sup> ABC Dec 23: Anchor Carole Simpson in New York – Top Headlines: ‘Plane Incident’, ‘The Investigation’, ‘Airport Security’, Washington Correspondent, Pierre Thomas speaking on the investigation into the incident on an American Airlines plane where Richard Reid tried to detonate explosive in his shoes, details about the plastic explosive given by Aviation Security Expert, Brian Jenkins – speaking on how even a small explosion on a plane could bring the aircraft down. Sound bites from Senator Richard Shelby and Senator Trent Lott speaking on how terrorists are expected to hit again and keep trying to attack the US. Paris Correspondent, David Wright: speaking about the investigation ongoing in Paris, France, into how Reid passed airport security – details about the state of alert at Paris’ Charles de Gaulle Airport. Interview with International Flight Operations Editor, David Learmount speaking on French security. Boston Correspondent, Ron Claiborne: Looking at scenes from Boston’s Logan Airport after the landing of Flight 63 with flight jet escort flying past. Interviews with Passengers, Thierry Dugoin and Kwame James describing how they subdued Reid. Video bite of National Guard Major, Brian O’Hare stating that shoes were being visually and manually checked. Washington Correspondent, Lisa Stark: issues of airport security – discussions on how the Federal Aviation Administration was likely to increase security measures. Los Angeles Correspondent, Neal Karlinsky – interviewing multiple holiday traveller’s reactions – statistics on airline revenue and speculation on possible profit losses due to the incident.



Magazine's 'Person of the Year', and Israel's continued blockade of Bethlehem in the days before Christmas preventing Palestinian movement around the territory.<sup>231</sup>

December 24, 2001

The day before Christmas in the US media in 2001, included multiple documentaries of the World Trade Center Complex (such as the multi-hour documentary on CNN's NewsNight) and the 'Flight 93 investigations' (wording of Wolf Blitzer's look into one of the aircraft downed on 9/11), as well as coverage of the preparation by troops in Afghanistan, for Christmas celebrations on their first holiday overseas. The evolving stories of Reid's attempt were more informed and more prolific than the first two days of the event. The increased availability of information combined with the interviews from global security officials, airport and transportation officials, and FBI accounts of the situation, made for a far richer discursive environment than the first two days before the 24<sup>th</sup>. As a note, this was the last day of nearly all live-newscasts as a large number of news and televisions stations created large blocks of content for holiday airings in order to give the majority of the staff of a network or station main holidays off work.

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<sup>231</sup> MSNBC Dec 23: Studio Anchor, John Seigenthaler – Top story delivered from Boston  
Correspondent, Virginia Cha - Investigations begin into the incident on American Airlines Flight 63 where Richard Reid tried to set off explosive devices in his sneakers – Passengers, Leandro Bolanos, Nicholas Green describe events.  
New Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) directive to all airlines about security changes (removal of shoes noted)  
London Correspondent, Jim Maceda: Discussion about the investigation in France, concerning how Reid was allowed to board the plane.  
Interview with Aviation Expert, David Learmount & Interview with Terrorism Expert, Mike Yardley, commenting on security procedure and the process Reid went through.  
Miami Correspondent, Fredricka Whitfield: discusses how pro basketball player Kwame James had a role on flight AA63 in subduing the suspect (interview with James on the situation that unfolded midflight).  
Jalalabad Afghanistan Correspondent, Ned Holt: Speaking on the first official day of work for Afghanistan's new government, detailing women's rights and job creation, the model of a central government (as opposed to the former tribal system), and the creation of schools and postal systems.

The majority of the discussions surrounding Richard Reid and the attempted bombing involved criticizing the security gaps, and highlighting failures of international efforts towards safer skies. For example, ABC, in the space of seven minutes had five different experts on a round table panel discussing what *could* have happened and how disastrous the situations *could* have been. This speculation surrounding the most negative outcome was most prolific on the 24<sup>th</sup>, as opposed to the other five days of this case study. The interviews in relation to this accusatory tone that aired on ABC (between 17:31-17:38), included FBI Special Agent, Charles Prouty, Former FBI Chief of Counterterrorism, Steven Pomerantz, American Airlines CEO, Don Carty, Rand Corporations' Brian Jenkins, and Aviation Security Analyst, Larry Johnson all within a single segment on the 'Investigation in Boston'. Similarly, CNN hosted US Attorney, Michael Sullivan on what types of investigation findings the FBI and FAA might deliver as well as speculations into the exact types of explosives in Reid's shoes.

Other stories on this date included MSNBC's Tom Brokaw discussing Pope John Paul II's Christmas Eve Service at the Vatican, and scenes of US soldiers at Camp Rhino preparing for Christmas with makeshift decorations (outside of Kandahar, Afghanistan). There was still some minor coverage of Israeli blockades preventing possible Palestinian leadership from worshipping at Bethlehem, on Christmas day, as well as more information of the newly formed Afghanistan Government and its attempts to bring order to the nation (including newly formed education programs for girls and the revitalization of postal services), with the help of US government assistance. Some of the other news content was to do with advertising Christmas Day programming specials such as CNN's 'History of the World Trade Center Towers', detailed below.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> CNN Dec 24: New York Correspondent, Beth Nissen discussing the contents of the 'History of the World Trade Center Towers' documentary, which included scenes from 1966 construction and excavation of the World Trade Center site, detailing sub-basement construction. Criticisms of the buildings' design by other architects, environmentalist, and nature groups – impromptu eulogy for the Trade Center Complex 'a symbol of American Capitalism'. Goes to New York Studio Anchor, Aaron Brown: Discussions

December 25, 2001

It should be noted that on holidays such as Christmas and New Years' Day, many news channels and television stations in the beginning of the century aired predominantly pre-recorded programming, in order to allow a majority of their staff to take the holiday off from work. Another Christmas tradition amongst broadcasting groups in the US was to show pictures of, and 'thank', all their staff and behind the scenes workers for their efforts during the year. This was typically done with Christmas music playing and family orientated amateur or candid pictures of all of the employees of the network, or of a newsroom for a specific show.

On CNN there was a 12-hour documentary on the main news channel devoted to the United Service Organization (USO) and its history of supporting troops at home and abroad during times of war and in peacetime. This documentary was hosted by CNN's 'NewsNight' and presented in a five-part mini-series. Other topics on CNN included clashes along the Israel-Jordan border, a heightened state of alert for US troops abroad in Afghanistan from possible attacks planned specifically for the holiday, and the US Coast Guard's rescue of plane crash victims from a small aircraft off California's coast.<sup>233</sup> CBS showed pictures of troops celebrating Christmas on Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan, with correspondent Cynthia Bowers. The video included troops singing Christmas carols with their British counterparts, illustrating a

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about the 14.5 hour documentary about New York City post-September 11<sup>th</sup> – goes to interview with film maker Ric Burns about 'New York: A Documentary Film' and the changes made to the ending of the documentary before and after the 9/11 attacks.

<sup>233</sup> USO Presentation on CNN on December 25, 2001:

Part I: Speaking on 'camp shows' during WWII and importance of troop morale during times of war and peace.

Part II: Korean War and troopers lead by Bob Hope – footage of Hollywood stars with troops.

Part III: Vietnam War – discussions on the unpopularity of war, Senator John McCone praising the work of Bob Hope – footage of troops receiving entertainers in the camps.

Part IV: the 1970's & 1980's – Discussion of Bob Hope continues, footage from aircraft carrier – Steve Martin and Billy Joel entertaining sailors and soldiers.

Part V: Role of USO before and after the 9/11 attacks, scenes of comedians and singers performing for troops all over the globe – Wayne Newton commenting on the contemporary 'unknown enemies'.

healthy alliance in Afghanistan. (There was no news coverage available from FOX news for this date. As mentioned in the introduction to this case study, for this date, CBS was chosen to substitute for FOX news, as it had extensive footage from the specific date.) CBS also detailed the tensions in Israel and the West Bank with Jerusalem correspondent David Hawkins speaking about the decline of Christian populations in the Holy Lands (with Holy Land Foundation's Father Peter Vasko stating that the total population percentage of the areas who associated with the Christian faith was down to 3%). With regards to the War on Terror, there was a documentary feature on CBS entitled: 'Eye on America: 2001 – The Year We Changed', a multi-part presentation covering Christmas in New York City before and after 9/11, with interviews of widows, widowers, and victims' families.

Other news channels followed suit with documentary based content and Christmas addresses of 'thanks to the staff' traditions in similar manners – the only other topics on the air were the continued tensions on the Israel-Jordan border, the Queen's 50<sup>th</sup> Christmas Address to the British Nation, the hunt for Osama bin Laden in Yemen, and the threat of war between Pakistan and India over the Kashmir region. The Shoe Bomber discussion had subsided to a small degree on Christmas day itself, but picked back up on the 26<sup>th</sup> with the discovery of new materials and background information on Richard Reid.

December 26, 2001

Despite the fact that the actual event took place four days earlier, the discussions surrounding the Shoe Bomber and his rhetorical location within terrorism discourse at large, were the most heavily reported (in terms of frequency and depth) on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December, versus the other five days of this case study. This was largely due to the (related news topic of the) release of a videotape from Osama bin Laden by the Al Jazeera news network on this date. Despite not knowing where or when the video was recorded, the video was one of the first few tapings of Osama bin Laden that had been released after 9/11, adding to the tape's importance – and speculation on the correlation between Reid and bin Laden-inspired terrorists were observed

on all networks.<sup>234</sup> CNN responded to this new video by interviewing The Middle East Institution's Edward Walker, who addressed bin Laden's loss of support in the Arab world, and subsequent interviews and input from Jalalabad correspondent Nic Robertson, discussing the hunt for bin Laden in the Afghan mountains. CNN also brought on-air Terrorism Analyst, Peter Berger, to talk about the suspiciously anonymous nature of the video being a possible indicator of bin Laden's location in the Afghan mountains. Similarly, ABC's Washington Correspondent, John Cochran hosted and interviewed Sarah Lawrence College of Middle East Studies' Professor, Fawaz Gerges, who discussed in depth the misleading components of the video, expressing doubts as to the authenticity of the video due to the lack of date or location of the filming.

Pertaining to the Shoe Bomber story, more information had come to light overnight about Richard Reid's connections with the Brixton Mosque in London, which immediately brought forth references to 9/11 planner Zacarias Moussaoui, another former attendee of the Mosque. CNN, ABC, and MSNBC, all aired an interview with Brixton Mosque Chairman, Abdul Haqq Baker, who talked about both individuals, with an emphasis on Reid and how his path to radicalization was an individual seeking extremism and not the result of the teachings of the Brixton Mosque. CNN aired an interview with ICTS Security CEO, Lior Zukcer talking about Reid's detainment and questioning in Paris, the day before he was able to board the plane; and

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<sup>234</sup> Referring back to Marriott's breakdown of live-ness (in Marriott, S., 2007, *Live television: Time, space and the broadcast event*, Sage Publications), this day of coverage was interesting. The 'new' tape from Osama bin Laden that was discussed on all the networks was not dated, nor was it shown in its entirety on any observed network. The footage of the scene around the Boston Airport following the attempt was now four days old but video of passengers from that flight disembarking was still aired on networks briefly. There were still holiday-related pre-arranged programming blocks on all networks, and the live interviews with London-based correspondents at the Brixton Mosque were five hours ahead of east-coast time. Finally, recently pre-recorded segments from correspondents such as Nic Robertson in Jalalabad were re-aired multiple times during a given news hour. In the words of Marriot on page 129: "To seize upon some individual instant and attempt to map these communication flows in the manner of a time-and-motion expert charting the movement of individuals around a workplace would be in impossible endeavour."

ABC (substituting FOX for this date) deferred to London Correspondent, Richard Gizbert, who discussed evidence of links between Al Qaeda and Richard Reid, and speculated the possible paths to radicalization available to Reid. MSNBC relied predominantly on London Correspondent, Dawna Friesen, who was on the scene at the Brixton Mosque discussing alleged connections among Reid, Al Qaeda, and Moussaoui, ending the piece with a warning from the interview with Mosque Chairman Baker on the likelihood of other similarly minded individuals still being at large.

Other topics that pertained to the War on Terror and military actions in Afghanistan included CNN's Wolf Blitzer interviewing former NATO Supreme Commander Wesley Clark, wherein discussions of the Tora Bora caves were noted. MSNBC followed suit with Afghanistan correspondent Ned Holt in Jalalabad talking about the search for Al Qaeda leaders and Osama bin Laden himself in the Tora Bora region. CNN also filled a large amount of airtime with opinion pieces such as those by Pentagon Correspondent, Bob Franken talking about 'Rummy Rules', which referred to Rumsfeld's blunt nature that isolated members of his staff; and another opinion piece by David Gergen who talked about President Bush's White House and how Bush was rising to the occasion following 9/11. This included comments from Dick Cheney, John Ashcroft and NYC Mayor Giuliani. In the evening, MSNBC's Brian Williams, furthered the discussion of the War on Terror with mentions of a plan to relocate prisoners of the war in the Middle East to a detainment camp in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. More terror experts began to appear on media coverage, with Steve Emerson speaking on MSNBC about the lack of sighting of bin Laden factoring into the very gray nature of the hunt for the most wanted man on the planet. Other minor stories on all channels included the poor fiscal reports from the holiday shopping season, a firefighter monument originally bound for Missouri being relocated to New York City, and how in Post-Taliban life Afghan children were taking part in activities such as kite flying.

### 4.3 Frames

9/11

The Shoe Bomber event fits into the frame of 9/11 as the incident itself and the media coverage thereof, were both directly linked by the media back to the mentality of group-minded individuals who were behind the 9/11 attacks. The vulnerability of air travel, and security holes that could be exploited by persons coming from overseas, were common threads of discussions on all the news channels during coverage relating to the Shoe Bomber event. In later media discussions, the Shoe Bomber was frequently mentioned following failed or 'lone-wolf' terror events. Richard Reid's social connections were frequently mentioned in the media in such a manner that any possible terrorists who had any connection to Reid could have those relationships used to support accusations that may lead to a suspect's detainment in the Guantanamo Bay Detention Center.<sup>235</sup>

Applying Entman's frame identifiers:

The *problem identification* within the frame of 9/11 under the Shoe Bomber case study was simply that someone tried to exercise the (still viable) opportunity to bomb or attack an aircraft. The physical problem identified also consisted of the security gaps and failures with the new security arrangements post 9/11 at Charles De Gaulle (CDG) Airport in Paris. The fact that an individual could get on a US bound plane with explosives in his footwear was a problem in and of itself, but it was simply a symptom of the long standing issue of updating security procedures across all international airports. This type of attack, the use of an airplane in a terror plot, directly links back to the fears apparent on September 11<sup>th</sup>, with the use of aircraft as missiles against civilian and military targets.

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<sup>235</sup> In a BBC on December 14, 2015, Shaker Aamer discussed with BBC's Victoria Derbyshire claims made by American authorities against him that included knowledge of and familiarity with Richard Reid. This claim is sandwiched between allegations of knowing Zacharias Moussaoui (convicted 9/11 conspirator) and Abu Hamza from time spent helping Bosnians. The discussion clearly locates Reid alongside known 9/11 plotters and religious extremists that continue to pose terror related threats, and it does this both on the day of the failed bombing and over a decade after.

The *causal interpretation* available within the frame of 9/11 was that the same forces that supported and lead to the 9/11 attacks, similarly (if not identically) motivated Richard Reid. The temporal proximity of the Shoe Bomber attempt to the 9/11 attacks, further substantiated the correlation between the two terror events as similarly designed and motivated. A subsequent causal interpretation that was made of the Shoe Bomber incident is that continued security flaws in aviation and civilian transportation systems would be further exposed and exploited by terrorists.

The *moral evaluation* made by the media of the Shoe Bomber incident under the 9/11 frame, was that the threat of terrorism and terrorists of similar backgrounds, ideologies, and motivations of the 9/11 terrorists were still a real threat to the US and its citizens at home and abroad. The 9/11 connection here is that the planner of the 9/11 attacks, Zacharias Moussaoui, attended the same Mosque as Reid; therefore, he harboured similar intentions and ideological leanings that were becoming more understood in the media as the root cause for terrorist action against the United States.

The *treatment recommendation* was the continued improvement and tightening of security measures similar to those implemented after the 9/11 attacks. One such emphasis on security was observed by this thesis on MSNBC, with the interviewing of former FBI Bomb Expert, Robert Quigley, who detailed plastic explosives' uses and un-traceable nature; as well as an interview with Former State Department Official, Larry Johnson, who spoke to the accessibility of plastic explosives domestically and internationally. Each speaker referred directly to 9/11 and what threats had changed and which threats simply had evolved since the 9/11 attacks.

#### Evil

In this case, the harm that Reid intended to cause was, in some news stories and coverage pieces, overshadowed by the 'hero' dynamic located around the flight attendants and passengers on the flight. The concept that he was a 'bad man' was clearly established in the reporting, as Reid was frequently related back to the 9/11 hijackers and Al Qaeda by the fifth day of coverage; but, there was a stronger



tone of 'but evil didn't win' transmitted through the emphasis on how everyone else on the plane 'fought back'. In this instance, 'evil' was evident, as 'good' was needed to prevent terrorism from occurring against 'innocent travellers'. There was not an excessive level of coverage on the event following the initial story line that was focused on Reid, rather, the focus of the story that followed the event's coverage concentrated on security and the need for 'eyes in the sky' to control and prevent potential terrorists from achieving what Reid had not. Many channels referred to the United States (Federal) Air Marshals Service, which had been rapidly expanded after 9/11 (with 500 new hires in one month from an October, 2001, increasing the original population of 33 operating marshals).<sup>236</sup> However, at the time there was still predominantly sporadic Marshal coverage of incoming international flights due to firearms regulations in countries outside of the US.

Applying Entman's frame identifiers:

The *problem identification* was very much located within the ideological landscape of 'Radical Islam' and the impact that extremists' views still (since 9/11) had on persons of similar socio-economic and political backgrounds. The problem identified in the media was that the evil ideology, which supported both Richard Reid and the 9/11 planners and hijackers, was still fully functional and residing within dangerous individuals. Specifically, the anti-American sentiments that could be found in more extreme ideologies were to be considered a growing evil, and an ever-present threat to American interests.

The *causal interpretation* under the *evil* frame of the Shoe Bomber incident was that the *evil* intentions of a young man caused him to behave in an *evil* manner (according to western vantages). The cause of his *evil* intentions was then linked directly to the cause of the *evil* intentions of the 9/11 hijackers, and from there, the understanding that *evil* prospered in these particular types of individuals and would continue to do so was made apparent in the US media. The grand picture, to summarize the news reporting, was that *evil* caused people to engage in terrorism; a sentiment that was not clearly countered in American culture around 2001-2002.

The *moral evaluation* involved in this frame of *evil* was, in and of itself, the judgement by

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<sup>236</sup> *Air Marshals Grounded over 'Security'* BBC, 25 June, 2003 available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/world/americas/3020570.stm>.

the media that there existed *evil* within Reid; but also, that the passengers and crew who fought to subdue him were by their actions inherently good – which demanded a polar comparison (befitting a dichotomous terminological usage of ‘evil’) – the polar opposite of ‘good’ is ‘evil’ – therefore, the attacker was an *evil* entity as he had to be met with ‘good’ to save the lives of all on-board. The actions of the flight crew and passengers, including pro basketball player Kwame James, were unanimously heralded as ‘good’ and ‘brave’ in the media’s coverage, reinforcing the linguistic functions and character analysis (pertaining to Giles & Shaw’s supporting criteria) inherent in a good/evil generalization.

The *treatment recommendation* for *evil* within the Shoe Bomber case study is the aforementioned ‘heroic’ actions by passengers – wherein the treatment for *evil* can only ever be good or goodness. The cure for Reid’s intentions and ideology was not prescribed, the media took a rather unsympathetic response to his nature and actions – making no attempt (by any of the networks observed for this case study) to understand or explore the root of the *evil* intentions or the actions of Reid. The treatment recommendation for this frame was *good*, and the heroic interventions made by passengers and crew were labelled as such.

#### Scope of Threat

The location of the threat that was communicated by the media regarding the Shoe Bomber incident was one of a global nature, particularly one focused on European flights, security measures, passport regulation and background checks, and the apparent lack of uniformity between American and International ports of call in terms of the application of terrorism countermeasures and security protocols. Reid had travelled extensively before his flight, allegedly making practice runs and learning security protocols at various airports and with various airlines through these exercises. There had been numerous opportunities for a prior attack before his failed attempt, as officials (even ones which were allied with US interests,) failed to identify the would-be terrorist. Because Reid slipped through the cracks of the security systems overseas, he posed a direct threat to the US – a fact that became ‘unacceptable’ in the

media's messages of reflection on the event. At times, the media coverage highlighted that the mere fact Reid was thwarted, was not as significant as the fact that he *could* have been successful; this became a focus of reports and follow-up stories.<sup>237</sup> Additionally, the newly uncovered information of exactly how an individual could become radicalized, even if he was born and raised in a western country, remained a point of contention amongst media debaters; opened the question of where else this radicalization process could be taking place.

Applying Entman's frame identifiers:

The *problem identification* as it pertains to the *scope* frame of the Shoe Bomber incident was that the physical boundaries between US citizens (the viewers, pertaining to the reader identification component of Giles & Shaw) and those who wanted to do harm to those citizens, was not a vast distance (as previously perceived), but rather, only a single flight away. The extensive travel logs and exercises by Reid added to this problem of perceiving where, physically, terror and terrorism originated. Following 9/11, the media's discourse surrounded a definitive dichotomous relationship between Americans and their attackers; us/them, here/there, East/West, good/bad. The problem that the Shoe Bomber highlighted was that this was not the case, and that the boundaries between those attempting to harm Americans or American interests were as well travelled and able to exist within American boundaries, as was any legitimate citizen.

The *causal interpretation* for this perceived 'breach' in the invisible boundary between Americans and their enemies following 9/11, was that air traffic and air travel authorities were not fulfilling their mandates. Specifically, the ports call that had direct flights to the United

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<sup>237</sup> While not directly repeating the American Government's statements outside of clips from official press conferences, this attitude, which was observed on all networks, is supportive of government efforts to increase security at airports globally following 9/11. This is an example that supports Professor Jackson's statement: "There are structural reasons for [the media acting as a mouthpiece for the government]; the corporatization of the media has meant that the media elite are now connected to the government and military industrial elite. There is a deep connection there and so there is a strong editorial line that is pro-government." Jackson, Richard, 2016, Interview by this thesis on March 18, 2016, at the 2016 International Studies Association Annual Conference in Atlanta, GA – Used with Permission

States, were arguably as much a risk to the homeland as the terrorists themselves. What is more dangerous than a person who can cause extensive harm, is his ability to travel to the place he intends to target with ease, and without proper security protocols in effect. The cause for this disturbance (according to the media) was the insufficient efforts by the French transit authorities to detain indefinitely, rather than question and release Reid. The French Government shortly thereafter came under scrutiny for not supporting the US's invasion of Iraq in 2003. While immediate relations between France and the US following 9/11 were strong, with the creation of 'Alliance Base' in Paris for the direct use of US counterterrorism forces overseas; the security breach by Reid was one of the first fault lines to impact the transatlantic relationship.

The *moral evaluation* concerning the width and breadth of the Shoe Bomber's impact pertained to the aforementioned dichotomous relationship between the 'West' and its enemies. America's post-9/11 wounds included an extensive examination of the morality of American values, as they appeared to be under direct attack, at least as was proclaimed by the attackers. The *scope* of the Shoe Bomber incident pertained to the boundaries and security of the borders of American values and interests; and asked, where are/should American values being applied? As Reid grew up in a Western nation with whom the United States shared a *special relationship* at the time, concepts surrounding the locality of American values were called into question. This was problematic for the media, who were (at the time of the Shoe Bomber incident) supportive of the US military engagements in Afghanistan. The moral evaluation then became: if American interests and values are inherently good, they should be applied beyond US borders, and all US allies (i.e. the Nations of NATO acting under the 'Collective Defence' Article 5), should share US efforts in defending American values abroad. However, if an attack originated from an individual born of a US ally, and who physically departed airspace of a US ally, then where could the US reasonably expect their values to be protected in the future?

The *treatment recommendation* for the *Scope of Threat* component of the Shoe Bomber incident is not unlike the treatment recommendation for 9/11 as a whole: retaliate against the

attackers – However, the attackers were not on American soil (as the 9/11 hijackers were) when they decided to attack American interests, immediately raising a new question of the treatment recommendation: should there be retaliation beyond the borders to meet the threats at their source? The scope of the American reaction to 9/11 had already been established by the official War on Terror led by the Executive Branch through military intervention in Afghanistan. However, the case with Afghanistan was far more black and white than any case to be made against Americans intervening in the nations of origin for the Shoe Bomber; Great Britain (pertaining to his radicalization) and France (pertaining to his physical origin for the flight he tried to attack). Within the media, the calls for increased security at all international airports with direct flights to the US were made immediately by experts brought onto each network to speak about the failure of French aviation security. However, there were still questions asked in the media regarding how the government was addressing this threat indirectly posed by its allies.

#### al Qaeda

The direct links between Richard Reid and al Qaeda became known within days of his failed attack. He continued to make remarks and comments on terror attacks and attempts during his incarceration, and these remarks were picked up by the media occasionally due to Reid's status as a failed terrorist.<sup>238</sup> In many media timelines or chronologies related to the War on Terror, the Shoe Bomber incident is listed as a factual event (though failed) which has been discursively woven into the fabric of the War on Terror Narrative and which has been referenced frequently when discussing the history of al Qaeda, persons related to al Qaeda, and threats against Americans or the United States by extremist groups. Even with its ultimate failure, the attack still served as proof of active intentions to harm the United States following 9/11.

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<sup>238</sup> Richard Reid's Correspondence with Media, Examples: *Richard Reid, The 'Shoe Bomber' Says Failed Bombing Was Okay Under Islamic Law* Reuters via Huffington Post Feb. 3, 2015 and *Shoe Bomber in Supermax: Richard Reid pictures for first time inside high security Prison*, Lee Morgan, The Daily Mail October 10, 2011.

Richard Reid's affiliation with al Qaeda was solidified after the media learned of his training at an al Qaeda camp in Afghanistan, as well as his attendance at other meetings with extremists and known persons of interest around London in the 1990's. After first joining the Brixton Mosque in Southeast London, Reid later settled with the Finsbury Park Mosque, which was famed in the media as a hot spot for Islamic extremism in the early 2000's. It was perhaps the accessibility to Reid's back-story that drew this frame of 'al Qaeda' out as the more prominent of this event, as it located a known terror group in a western location, London. The places Reid frequented around London and travelled to in Europe were well known to Western audiences, making the story more relatable. There was no enigmatic upbringing in locations that would be incompatible with general western social literacy, nothing that would cleanly locate Reid as one of the 'them' against 'us'. Instead, there was a list of British transportation routes and international travel stops that any western citizen may have experienced across Europe. While his teenage years of petty theft and dishevelled mug shots portrayed someone who would be identifiable as abnormal in some social settings, his background was far more Western than those of any of the 9/11 hijackers. In this way, Reid was as typically Western as most of the media's audience members. Because of this, al Qaeda's perceived reach and influence was brought closer to home than it was before with the media's brief investigation into the radical hijackers whose backgrounds were far more un-relatable and unfamiliar than that of Richard Reid.

Applying Entman's frame identifiers:

The *problem identification* in the US media was simply that al Qaeda's reach was much further than the US or its allies realized prior to the Shoe Bombing incident. To have a person claim he was not only inspired by, but also physically trained by a group who successfully attacked the United States, and was able to grow up undetected in a US ally nation, was a cause for concern for the Bush Administration, as well as the American media. The threat which Reid brought to light (despite his ultimate failure) was that persons who intended to harm the United

States (and Western values) could grow up *within* the very regimes they intended to harm – without that government’s knowledge. This problem is multi-faceted, but a key component singled out by the media became known as the ‘home grown terrorist’ – which was the moniker representative of the idea that terrorism and terrorist ideologies could and were in fact spreading within the very governments and nations fighting terrorism.

The *causal interpretation* that the media then made in the wake of learning of Richard Reid’s personal biography and travel history was that as long as people are free to travel, terror organizations, and their ideologies, can travel as freely as the persons themselves. Not only that, but terror organizations had just proved (in part through Reid’s statements in custody), that the indoctrination process was not limited to the physical areas populated by radical religious groups; that, if the idea resided in a motivated individual, it could be perpetuated and replicated in western nations. As the media’s interviews with the Brixton Mosque Chairman, Abdul Haqq Baker, showed, the physical location of the person who sought radicalization mattered very little compared to his motivations and ideological receptiveness to what was believed to be a worthy cause.

The *moral evaluation* made by the media was that the ideology of al Qaeda was a critical threat to the United States and its interests around the globe. The persons within (or inspired by) al Qaeda became represented as a whole in the media by the defunct individual, who had every intention of killing himself in the process of harming others, showing martyrdom was alive and well. The evaluation of this frame for this case study is in fact an evaluation *of* a morality, specifically, the morality of al Qaeda. The overwhelming conclusion was that the moral code and structures of the group were not only harmful, but a legitimate threat, and that Richard Reid served as evidence of this sentiment.

The *treatment recommendation* then became to look into the characteristics and potential weaknesses of the group – as al Qaeda was the direct culprit behind the 9/11 attacks which heralded the War on Terror response, the treatment for both the war efforts and the group itself

was elimination through force. This concept was found in the media through the weaving in of the story and discussions of Richard Reid with the Brixton Mosque, leading him to Zacarias Moussaoui, who planned 9/11, which was all funded and supported by al Qaeda, which was run by Osama bin Laden himself.

This linear logic was then supported by the release of a video of Osama bin Laden on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December, to the Al Jazeera News Network. In the observed news coverage, no news channel openly stated that the Shoe Bomber attempt and the bin Laden video were a coincidence in their timing, only rough correlations were made by the media between the two individuals. This not only contextualized the motives of Reid within the structures of al Qaeda indoctrination abroad, but it also tied his narrative in with bin Laden's as one to be wary of, and if possible, persecuted.

#### **4.4 Narrative Status**

At this point in time, the 'War on Terror' was standard discussion on US media, and had been integrated into many facets of social and political life in the United States. The Shoe Bomber attempt took place less than a month before Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address, better known as the 'Axis of Evil' speech, and after the invasions of Afghanistan and other areas in the Middle East by Coalition Forces in October of 2001. December 7<sup>th</sup> marked the end of the Taliban's rule of Afghanistan, with the fall of Kandahar. During this week of coverage, Osama bin Laden released a new video tape to the Al Jazeera network. However, the timing of that release occurring so close to the Shoe Bomber attempt still appears to be coincidental, and not an intentional collaboration of terror efforts.

There was a new component at work within this case study in the form of the very 'known' personal history of Richard Reid and his path towards radicalization, in comparison with the enigmatic identities and backgrounds of the 9/11 hijackers. However, this aspect of the Shoe Bomber coverage was the opposite of a 'blank', and was one of the first instances in the War on



Terror's Narrative that provided the media with definitive facts and 'knowns' about terrorists (that was then relayed to the American audience) on the day of the event. There was, in the media, more information about the culprit, than there was information or visual coverage of the actual event – the opposite media landscape observed for the 9/11 case study. In knowing who the culprit was, and how his life lead towards terrorism, there was less of a stigma or 'fearful' air surrounding Reid. Detailed chronologies of Reid's childhood, criminal teenage years, broken home, and eventual religious extremism (phrases used in the media coverage) were provided to the public in a manner wherein the viewer could think of what he was doing year by year when Reid was at certain points in his radicalization process. This level of familiarity and approachability towards a would-be terrorist was a new concept for the American media and for the American public, thus it presented a different mentality and context through which to approach terrorists and terrorism, departing from the previously dominant narrative of terrorism that was populated with fearful unknowns.

However, with the Shoe Bomber case study, the coverage of an event that fitted perfectly into the 'War on Terror' narrative, was not given the rolling coverage or even lead story status of 9/11. From a structural standpoint the 'lack' of an event, lack of damage, and lack of visuals to accompany the news story, was perhaps the Achilles Heel of the story itself, preventing it from becoming more prolific in the media ecology circa December 2001. Media and communications studies literature emphasises that for a media story to carry weight, not only should there be a visual component to the story, but those components need to be engaging. Mirzoeff, reflecting on the surplus of available images (but not of visually engaging content) coming out of the first Gulf War, comments on what happens in a media ecology (specifically, in the American media ecology,) where images are available immediately, and yet the content of those images counteracts the impact of the news story.

What was in retrospect remarkable about this mass of material (during the first Gulf War) was the lack of any truly memorable images. For all the constant circulation of

images, there was still nothing to see. The relative anonymity of the war images must then be understood as a direct consequence of the media saturation. To adapt a phrase from Hannah Arendt, the war marked the emergence of the banality of images.<sup>239</sup>

Similarly to the first Gulf War, the Shoe Bomber case study had very few engaging visuals; despite their physical availability via satellite van-based news crews broadcasting live from Boston's Logan Airport. The live reporting observed in this case study presented the audience with nothing but a reporter standing against a dull airport background talking about a terror attempt with no real visual evidence that it had occurred. "This distance between image and perceived reality is the signature of the irony that has dominated Western mass media imagery for the past decade."<sup>240</sup> If this thesis had relied singularly on visuals to identify and analyze the War on Terror Narrative, then this case study would have had to have been excluded.<sup>241</sup> The substance of the discourse surrounding the event in the media provided any nuance concerning the media narrative that would have otherwise been lost had this thesis' methodology relied on visual content. There simply was not enough footage of Reid available initially, and when the story was discussed later in the media, the image used was a courthouse sketch of Reid (by Connie Pratt), which was featured alongside nondescript stock footage of airplanes taxiing, passengers taking off their shoes to place them on X-ray belts, and other security related scenes.

Another reason for a lack of rolling coverage in this event was its conclusive nature – it was over by the time that news crews were on the scene; indeed, over by the time it was brought to the attention of the media. The news crews did air live 'updates' or go to reporters 'live on the scene', but without additional information or varying imagery beyond one or two clips, the

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<sup>239</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, *Watching Babylon: The War in Iraq and Global Visual Culture*, Routledge, p. 67.

<sup>240</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, p. 69.

<sup>241</sup> The footage which registered as being closest equivalent to a 'damage shot' was a brief video clip (no sound) of flight attendant Christina Jones climbing out of an ambulance in the airside area of Logan Airport to light a cigarette with her hand wrapped from where Reid had bitten her during the scuffle to subdue him on the flight – but the airing of this footage stopped after the first day of news coverage.

reports fell flat. Stephanie Marriott notes this type of media behavior in *Live Television*. “From a phenomenological perspective, replays involve an intricate and elaborate re-ordering of the time-space characteristics of the canonical encounter, the world of co-presence in which we experience events as unfolding *here, now*, and once and for all.”<sup>242</sup> Arguably, the media’s coverage of the Shoe Bomber was simply too re-ordered to be engaging, as though the media was trying to make the story appear more alive and present than could be projected out of the materials on hand. This, combined with the lack of visuals, might be what caused this case study to become such a definitive example of a ‘failed attempt’ of terrorism, just as much as Reid’s failure to detonate his shoes.

Aside from this specific terror event, at the closing of the year that saw the worst terror attacks in United States history, the War on Terror Narrative was predominantly one of resilience and progress. Passengers and flight attendants representative of the average western citizen had thwarted a would-be terrorist; that was positive news, and suggested that perhaps airplanes could no longer be so easily turned into weapons. The narrative surrounding al Qaeda, Islamic extremists, and the process of radicalization, was brought into a new light with Richard Reid’s predominantly western roots. Reid’s path to radicalization, by occurring in a location familiar to many Americans, highlighted that extremism was less enigmatic and omnipotent than previously thought; and perhaps more understandable. Whereas little was ever made known about the radicalization or lifestyles of the 9/11 hijackers, Richard Reid presented a new version of the radicalization story, one which audiences could easily understand and scrutinize without needing extensive historical or political knowledge. All the audience needed to be able to understand more about Reid was a general geographical knowledge of the

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<sup>242</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, *Live television: Time, space and the broadcast event*, Sage Publications, p. 79, referring to Morris and Nydahl, 1985:102; Morse 1983: 49.

Finally, the Shoe Bomber brought a new component to the War on Terror Narrative, both at the time of its occurrence and in conversations held later in media discussions of terrorism: a component of failure. The failure of Reid's attack permitted the public and the media to engage with and discuss terrorism in a less serious or ominous manner than immediately after 9/11. In later media discussions, the Shoe Bomber served as a referencing and contextualizing device for instances of botched terrorism. This permission to discuss a topic that was nearly taboo immediately after 9/11 (with people simply referring to that event as 'the attacks'), aided in humanizing terrorists, making them subject to the flaws and failures that any individual experiences. This was evident in the use of the Shoe Bomber as a media template in later years as a tool to contextualize yet *another failed* attempt to attack western civilization. A reference to the Shoe Bomber in subsequent reporting was typically found with attacks that used the same PETN explosive, attacks that failed, or personal connections with individuals or groups with which Richard Reid may have had ties (before his incarceration). This component of failure is also notable because it begins to separate the Media's War on Terror Narrative, from the US Government's Narrative, in that the Government did not focus on the failure and self-sabotage of Reid nearly as much as the media (as demonstrated in their official press conferences where the potential threat was mentioned more so than Reid's incompetence as a terrorist). This was perhaps because the Government need to justify its financial commitment to new security systems domestically and internationally, and to highlight that terrorists could fail without the US spending money in the name of counterterrorism, would not be wise. The following case study, the Bali Bombings, suffered from even worse communications issues than a lack of impact or destruction. Despite being a successful attack, the media story suffered the same setbacks as the Shoe Bomber: a lack of footage of the attack itself, its physical distance from the United States, the limited and short clips of 'action', and un-engaging stock photos.

# Chapter 5: The Bali Bombings Case Study

October 12, 2002

| The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification for the War on Terror |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Events   | <i>9/11 Frame</i>   | <i>Evil Frame</i>   | <i>Scope of Threat Frame</i>  | <i>Al Qaeda Frame</i>   |
| 9/11   | 4: America Under Attack (Day #)   | 1: Axis Of Evil Speech Moral Evaluation: Attackers Evil – USA ‘Good’            | 2: Dependent On Military/Executive Response – Wherever There’s A Threat                       | 3: Osama Bin Laden – Non-State Terror = ‘New’ Real Threat   |
| Shoe Bomber  | 4: Continued Gaps In Airport Security – Skies Still Not Safe Since 9/11 | 3: ‘Hero Passengers’ = ‘Evil Attacker’  | 2: Global Scale – Trans-Atlantic Travel Issues, Terrorist Mobile And Global                   | 1: Afghanistan Camps, Tora Bora Caves, OBL Videos, Terror Training Camps Issue                    |
| <b>Bali Bombings</b>   | <b>3: Asia’s 9/11 – Same Motives - Same Goals – Different Location</b>  | <b>4: -Frame Not Sufficiently Established On All Networks-</b>                  | <b>2: Global Scale – Everywhere Westerners Are = Target - Necessitating A Global Response</b> | <b>1: Terror Training Camps – Jeemah Islamiyah and AQ Groups Attacking Any And All Westerners</b> |
| Underpants Bomber  | 3: More Aviation Security Issues – Issues With Government Lists’        | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently Established On All Networks-                         | 2: Back To Aviation Based Threats   | 1: (Similar To Shoe) Yemen Connections –AQ Allegiance Vs. Operative - AQAP                        |
| Times Square Bombing   | 4: NYC Still Targeted By The Same People                                | 3: -Weakest Presentation Of Frame In Thesis, But Observed On All Networks-      | 2: Domestic Counter-Terrorism Questioned – NYC’s Post-9/11 Test                               | 1: ‘Homegrown’ And Internet Radicalization – Lone Wolf Terrorism -                                |
| Boston Marathon Bombings   | 1: The Echo Of 9/11 – Flags Flying Again, Hero First Responders/Victims | 2: Clearest Good Vs. Evil Framing + Hero Frame Of Survivors And Law Enforcement | 3: Narrowest Scope: Boston – Northeastern American City (Again)                               | 4: Internet Radicalization – Homegrown Terrorism – <i>Inspire Magazine</i>                        |

Numbering indicates the strength of the individual frame of the four frames within each event.

## Bali Bombing Case Study Outline:

Introduction

News Coverage

October 12, 2002

October 13, 2002

October 14, 2002

October 15, 2002

October 16, 2002

The Frames of the Bali Bombings

9/11

Evil

Scope of Threat

Al Qaeda

Narrative Status

## 5.1 Introduction

On Saturday October 12, 2002, just after 23:05 Central Indonesian Time on the island of Bali, a series of three coordinated bombs killed 202 people in an area frequented by Western tourists in the nightclub district of Kuta. It was the first suicide bombing in Southeast Asia since the Vietnam War. The first of the three bombs to detonate was the smallest bomb used in the attack; 500 grams of TNT packed together with human excrement, and placed outside the

United States' Consulate in Bali. A cell-phone activated device that was dialed by Ali Imron, the 'on the ground' planner of the attacks, detonated the bomb. The next bomb was a suicide vest bomb worn by a man named Iqbal, packed with ten plastic tubes of TNT, and detonated inside of Paddy's Pub (also in the media as: 'Paddy's Irish Bar'). This vest bomb was meant to draw people out of Paddy's Pub and into the streets directly outside the Sari Club, which was next door. Finally, the last and largest bomb was hidden inside a white Mitsubishi van parked outside of the Sari Club, and was detonated about 20-seconds after the bomb in Paddy's Bar by a man known as Jimi. The van had caused traffic issues by blocking the middle of the road, as Jimi had only learned how to drive for the purpose of the attack and could not parallel park. The bomb in the van consisted of 14-filing cabinets filled with over one ton of TNT mixed with aluminum, sulfur, and weed killer; it was controlled with a small detonator in the drivers' seat. Victims who survived the bombings reported that the bomb was strong enough to blow people through the air and create enough debris to crush people not killed by the blast itself.

Investigators did not immediately realize the attacks in Paddy's Pub or outside of the Sari Club were suicide bombings. Witnesses did report a man shouting before the bomb, however, the suicide component was not proven until forensic evidence of the bomber's body was found imbedded in the ceiling of Paddy's Pub, which was then crosschecked against the list of known victims. The surviving culprits later stated that they had intended the attack to be Southeast Asia's equivalent of 9/11 in the United States. The group responsible was a radical Islamic sect known as Jeemah Islamiyah, or JI, founded by cleric Abu Bakar Bashir. The Bali Bombings were not JI's first attack; JI had bombed a Philippine Church on Christmas Eve of 2000, and in 2001, and three members of JI were arrested in Indonesia for trying to buy 22 tons of explosive capable nitrates. For the Bali Bombings, the group used the Al Garubah Mosque as a 'home base' to plan their attack. The organizer of the Bali Bombings was Ali Imron, who ended up driving the van loaded with explosives as close to the club as possible, because the original driver, Jimi, was not skilled enough to avoid crashing the van before it arrived at the Westerner-

frequented nightclub area. The motorcycle used by co-planner Amrozi to evacuate himself and Ali Imron from the scene, was found at the Al Garubah Mosque, and was reported by worshipers to the police within hours. Imam Sumudra was the commander on the ground of the bombings, and had intended it as a message to Americans that their killing of Muslims in Afghanistan and East Timor deserved repayment. However, during Sumudra and Imron's initial surveillance of the area, neither of the men realized that the people they had been observing were Australians and Britons on holiday, and not their intended targets, Americans. Chiefly, they had assumed that a group of Australian Rugby players were American Sailors on shore leave, and never asked about the group's nationality.

The public trial of the conspirators and bomb makers was broadcast on Indonesian television and followed closely by Australian news outlets, as more Australians were killed in the bombing than any other nationality. Imam Samudra was ultimately sentenced to death during the trial, along with co-commander Mukhlas. Ali Imron, who showed repeated remorse for his role in the bombings was given a sentence of prison for life, along with Idris; who only avoided the death penalty due to a legal technicality in his trial. Ultimately, there were no substantiated links between the bombers and al Qaeda other than mutual admiration and attack stylus inspiration, which was later commended by Osama bin Laden.

The Bali Bombings severely impacted Australia and its diplomatic relations in the Southeast Asia region. At the time of the attack Australians were still in 'peacetime', not having committed or sent any troops to Afghanistan following the US and allied response to 9/11. There had been numerous talks with Indonesian officials before the attack as to the nature of the terror threat in the region, but no actions had been taken to increase security despite intelligence warnings. Australia lost a total of 88 citizens in the Bali Bombings, making the attack the worst overseas loss of life for the nation since World War II, and the largest peacetime loss of life since the Flu Epidemic in 1919. Australian news outlets relayed public outrage, sadness, and criticism of Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri's government; the primary grievance was that

the government made no efforts towards addressing the growing number of radical Islamists in Indonesia, despite multiple warnings and JJ's track record of attempts against symbolically Western targets.<sup>243</sup> The Indonesian government did not officially acknowledge the presence of terrorism in the country until the 15<sup>th</sup> of October, three days after the Bali Bombings.

Australian officials, military services, and military doctors flew into Bali within hours of the attack. The Indonesian Health Minister ordered local authorities in Bali and the Kuta district to allow Australian forensic teams to take over the job of formally identifying the dead, as local authorities on Bali had no DNA testing available or records of their own citizens in the area. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of October, Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer made the announcement that a joint Indonesia-Australian partnership utilizing the Australian SAS and Indonesian Kopassus (SAS equivalent) would be investigating the Bali Bombings. The body identification process, as well as departures for aircraft flying between Australia and Indonesia was headquartered out of Denpasar Airport. The process only began to employ DNA testing four days after the attack, and there were still dozens of bodies left to identify by that time. Many Australian families criticized the rescue and identification efforts, saying they had to deal with bureaucracy and excessive paperwork during a time of emotional strain; having to fill out multiple forms to even be able to view possible family member's pictures or remains.<sup>244</sup> The Indonesian government, which retained control over the morgue at Denpasar, caused further bureaucratic confusion for recovery workers, and bodies actually were lost in the process of changing hands between officials, even if the body had been previously identified.

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<sup>243</sup>See the extensive transcripts archive of ABC news in Australia at:  
<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/archive.htm>.

<sup>244</sup>There were reports that families were handed forms recycled from the New York City Police department's identification procedure following 9/11. See 'Specialist begin nightmare task of identifying bodies' reporter Peter Lloyd, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, transcript from October 16, 2002 at  
<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2002/s703438.htm>.



## 5.2 News Coverage

The media coverage of the Bali Bombings by American news networks was not straightforward. The complexities of this case were two-fold: first, the incident occurred overseas and 12-hours ahead of US Eastern Standard Time, and second, the largest news story during this period was not the Bali Bombings, but the Washington, DC, Sniper killings (also known as the DC Sniper or Beltway Sniper). To give some information about the predominant domestic story: the culprits of the DC Sniper Shootings were John Allen Muhammad and his accomplice Lee Boyd Malvo, whose crime spree began in February of 2002, but did not reach the Washington, DC, area (including Virginia and Maryland) until October 2<sup>nd</sup> of that year. Once in the DC area, they would go on to kill ten people in the 'Beltway Attacks', on top of their first seven kills during shootings earlier that year. Their shooting spree lasted until October 24<sup>th</sup> when the shooters were found sleeping at a highway rest stop near Myersville, Maryland, by a traveller who called in their vehicle to police. The story was a top headline and media frenzy for those dates in October while the shooters remained at large, with peak concentration of media coverage occurring at the same time as the Bali Bombings, causing a headline power struggle. Each network allocated relatively similar amount of airtime to the Bali Bombing, as there was very little information available about the situation on the first day of the attack, and all subsequent days' updates consisted largely of pre-recorded reports. Overall, there were only slight deviations among the networks in terms of which story was the 'top' or 'lead' story of individual programming blocks between the Bombings and the DC Sniper stories, with the heaviest reporting day being the day after the Bombings, Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> of October. By the 16<sup>th</sup>, there was very little coverage of the event itself as other headlines gained momentum alongside the DC Sniper story. Some other stories on the air at this time included the Congressional race, and President Bush's recently signed Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) against Iraq, which corresponded with deteriorating relations between the two countries following the re-election of Saddam Hussein.

Speaking to the aforementioned issue of time zone differences between the Bali Bombings and the American media audience: what this issue meant for the 24-hour news cycle was that if new information was released during the day time hours of Indonesia and Australia, the ‘live’ information would be occurring in the middle of the night for the United States. This meant that nearly all of the news stories broadcast on American networks relating to the Bombings (as well as the follow-up stories) were pre-recorded for American audiences, never live.<sup>245</sup> The location of the Bombings half-way across the globe meant that reporters would have needed a considerable amount of time to travel to Indonesia if they were to report with live audio and video on the scene, which no American reporter did until two days after the Bombings (there were live reports via phone with no video on the day of the Bombings on CNN). Because live reports would have been airing in the middle of the night for American audiences, the majority of reports were structured as pre-recorded segments, or conducted by Asian-based correspondents for the American news networks during odd hours of the night in Indonesia, in order to populate the daytime hours of domestic news Stateside. Because of this logistical issue, most of the reporting for American media outlets took the form of audio recordings from foreign correspondents (who had spoken earlier with officials and witnesses via phone, and were therefore providing second-hand accounts), and footage from local reporters in Indonesia or footage from Australian tourists, which took longer to obtain. This created a visual and temporal detachment from the Bali Bombings for American audiences, which was exacerbated by the complete autonomy of the American media over the story’s airing in the US due to the time-delay and pre-recording that were widely used for this event. (This will be detailed in 5.4 ‘Narrative Status’ section.) In the period of observation for this case study

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<sup>245</sup>‘Live’ here referring to and in acknowledgement of the principles set out by Marriott 2007, which proven in this case study to be especially troublesome as the images of the aftermath of the bombs and the reporting of the situation in Bali was 12-hours ahead of American audiences and not transmitted ‘live’ at any point of this thesis observations due to limited communications infrastructure on the island nation. See Marriott, S., 2007, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*, Sage Publications.

between October 12 and October 16, 2002, the DC Sniper killed only one person out of their total 17 people; while, in Bali, seven Americans were killed in a single terrorist attack, 202 overall, yet the story received far less coverage than the DC Sniper during the five days of observation for this case study. Despite the Bali Bombings, by their very nature, embodying the perfect example increased global terrorism, thus highlighting various governments' need to crack down on Islamic Extremism; the Bali Bombings barely served any of these functions within the American media.

October 12, 2002

The Bali Bombings occurred at what would have been around 11:00 on Saturday morning for the United States, and despite this being in the middle of the news day of the US, the story barely broke through the top three headline spots on the major networks for this first day of reporting. On CNN, the top stories of the day were the DC Sniper case (as new police sketches of the suspect's van had been released), a letter from Iraqi leaders to the United Nations confirming weapons inspector agreements, and an attack by US Marines on al Qaeda linked groups in Afghanistan. The first mentions of the Bali Bombings on CNN occurred during Anchor Anderson Cooper's coverage around noon Eastern Standard Time. (All times listed in this chapter will be in Eastern Standard Time unless otherwise indicated – the times are presented on the 24-hour clock for clarification, all dates are from the 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> of October 2002, unless otherwise noted). Cooper introduced the story that lead into coverage by journalist Robert Koster via phone interview; Koster was in Bali at the time and had heard the explosions but not seen them. 'What happened was, actually there were two blasts. First, there was a blast...(poor connection)...and after that blast people came out, and the second blast went off shortly and it was a huge car bomb.' Koster then goes on to describe the scene of the Bombings. During this broadcast there are a few errors in the reporting by Koster and Cooper. Cooper stated that the country was predominantly Muslim, however the island of Bali was over 80% Hindu at the time of the Bali Bombings. Second, Koster reported the time of the bombings at around 22:00, which

was incorrect as the bombing occurred around 23:00 local time. It is possible Koster was operating on a different Indonesian time zone, as there are three time zones covering the island nation. The Bali Bombings are recorded under Central Indonesian Time as occurring around 23:00 on the 12th. Other stories covered in the program block included White House Correspondent, Kelly Wallace covering the push for Congress to support a full war with Iraq, and details of the subsequent lack of French support, with video of anti-war protest in Paris.

FOX had their most Saturday coverage of the Bali Bombings occurring during the evening news show 'FOX WIRE' (20:00) hosted by Rita Cosby and Molly Henneberg, which aired about eleven hours after the bombing itself. Cosby:

'And some breaking news on the FOX WIRE from overseas, a deadly bombing on a resort island, Indonesian island of Bali. Take a look at these pictures. They are incredible, the terrifying scene after a nightclub bombing in Bali. The Associated Press is now reporting, and we just got this in a few moments ago, that at least 110 people are now dead and almost 200 have been injured, and a second bomb also exploded soon after, that one near the tourist island's U.S. Consular Office.'

What is interesting about this report, is that while all major news networks in the United States have access and use of the Associated Press wire, and are, therefore, exposed to the same information at the same time, FOX was the only channel to make a note about the bomb outside the US consulate on this day; however, the chronological ordering of the three bombings was not correct. The conversation immediately turned towards a quick background on the Jemaah Islamiah (JI) group, who the hosts speculated were responsible for the Bombings, as well as directly linking Osama bin Laden to the group (and the explosions), stating that the spiritual leader of JI in Indonesia had received praise from Osama bin Laden in the past. FOX news was the first channel to have a specialist rather than a correspondent on the air to comment on the story, writer Michael Cohen, reporting live via phone from the Philippines. Cohen: 'At this point in time, Indonesian authorities are officially only saying that no one has claimed responsibility for the attacks...the Royal Australian Air Force is sending a plane to pickup their victims.' This was

some of the first mentions of the impact the attacks had on Australians or official activity by the Australian government on any network. The report on the breaking story concluded with anchor Rita Cosby stating:

‘I also think its important to note for our viewers this is the second anniversary of the attack of the USS Cole off the coast of Yemen. It also comes at a time where there was some suspicion that there could be increased attacks by members of al Qaeda and supporters of Osama bin Laden.’

FOX quickly integrates the Bombings into the War on Terror context through this linking of the Bombings to other earlier attacks on Western targets overseas by Osama bin Laden or similarly inspired groups, directly linking the Bali Bombings to al Qaeda and bin Laden before any other network.

MSNBC held the story in the highest ranking of top stories out of all the networks for this day, with the Bombings being discussed second only to the DC Sniper shooting around at 17:50. The report was aired with a grainy videophone connection with network correspondent Ned Colt speaking from Hong Kong via phone with pre-recorded video from an unknown source. The Bali Bombings were not mentioned or addressed by government officials or the Executive Branch on the day the attack occurred. If officials had addressed the attack, it would perhaps have served the story better through introducing a ‘live’ component for American audiences concerning the coverage of the Bombings beyond phone interviews with correspondents on the other side of the globe. The reason this may not have been the case on this day of the attack, was that the connection with al Qaeda had not been verified beyond speculation, which would possibly make officials hesitant to say anything that would later require retraction. This is especially important considering the timing of the Bombings in relation to US talks of war with Iraq – No official or government leader would want to be shown to mistakenly label an attack as an ‘al Qaeda operation’ with the risks of having to correct themselves on the record.

October 13, 2002

October 13<sup>th</sup> saw the first remarks concerning the Bali Bombings by any government officials, as well as the most frequent reporting of the Bombings (per programming block) on American networks, out of the five days of observation. While this day represented a vast increase in attention to the Bali Bombings by the media, the DC Sniper story still took the 'lead headline' in the majority of programming blocks, and the reporting of the Bombings was still not live from the scene. Because of the lack of materials available for American audiences, while the Bombings were mentioned more frequently, they were covered in relatively short segments, allowing the DC Sniper to maintain its dominance as most covered story (by time allocation) on the networks.

An interesting component of the wording during the morning broadcast on CNN's 'Sunday Morning', (07:00) Anchor Renay San Miguel, stated at the opening of the program:

'We want to go back now to the top story that is developing out of Indonesia, the situation in Bali, and the bombings that have happened there...(speculation regarding the) background on possible terrorist links, even though there has been no official confirmation yet or claims of responsibility.'

At the time of the broadcast, it would have been 19:00 in Bali on Sunday evening, and as the bombings were around 23:00 on Saturday night for Bali, this meant that the bombings had occurred 20-hours prior to this CNN report, but was still being referred to as 'developing' on the East Coast of the United States. This is comparatively different from the coverage of 9/11, wherein the jargon on-air 20-hours after the attacks portrayed a completed event, despite considerable unknowns at that point (such as total number of hijackers, victims or other details). This speaks clearly to the fracturing of live-ness in network television as discussed by Marriott.<sup>246</sup> This is likely attributable to the physical distance between Bali and American audiences, as well as the poor communications infrastructure that existed on the Indonesian islands at that time.

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<sup>246</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*, Sage Publications.

An interesting comparative statement was given by Sydney Correspondent, John Vause for CNN:

‘To put this in perspective for viewers in the United States, this would be like a terrorist attack happening in Cancun in Mexico, a place where young people go to celebrate the end of a sporting season or the end of an academic year, a place where they go to party, to let their hair down – and then you have this – you have two blasts, you have a massive death toll by all accounts, one which we will not know for quite some time.’

This use of an analogy was intended to contextualize the significance of the event to Australians for the American audience, thus allowing Americans to emotionally engage with the Australian victims and bring the story into more relatable contexts.

The closest CNN correspondent on Sunday was in the Kuta district of Bali. The reporting was done via phone and was time-delayed in a pre-recorded set up, with live introductions from domestic anchors. Top officials discussing the event included the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, the US Ambassador to Indonesia, Ralph Boyce, and Senator Richard Shelby. However, none of the coverage on this date was live apart from the news anchor introductions to each pre-recorded segment, and the same interviews from Howard, Boyce and Shelby aired on all channels.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>247</sup>CNN: Anchor Anderson Cooper (from Atlanta Headquarters) Top Stories: Bali Bombing, Release of composite image of truck linked to DC Sniper, Death of Palestinian Fatah militant in a phone booth, warnings from State Department to Americans traveling abroad to be on alert for al Qaeda attacks, Scenes from Bali detailing an American casualty.  
Kuta Indonesia Correspondent Atika Shubert (via telephone): Bombing of the nightclub, details of Indonesian officials’ organizational capacity for the beginning investigation – scenes and video shown from site earlier – evacuations of victims to Darwin, Australia.  
Sydney Australia Correspondent, John Vause: Discussing the reaction in Australia to the bombings in Bali, details about the evacuation of non-injured survivors.  
Australian Prime Minister, John Howard address: ‘the incident is a brutal reminder that the world has to fight terrorism’, details on other terrorism actions linked to al Qaeda.  
White House Correspondent, Suzanne Malveaux: US officials considering the bombing as an indicator that al Qaeda is expanding its reach and testing its capabilities.  
US Ambassador to Indonesia, Ralph Boyce, discussing recent indicators of al Qaeda presence in Indonesia.  
Senator Richard Shelby speaking to the event, saying that it is an indication of the growing strength of al Qaeda.

On CNN during the 'Sunday Night' (22:00) show was an interview with James Walsh of Harvard University, who went into extensive detail concerning the security measures the Indonesian government would need to take in the future, as well as possible al Qaeda activity in the region. Cooper: 'I don't want to put you on the spot...but as soon as we (the American public) heard about (the Bali Bombings)...is al Qaeda responsible?' Walsh: 'Well the short answer would be yes; they're certainly a prime suspect, probably the first suspect. You have to keep in mind...that there are a number of Islamists, that is to say Islamic fundamentalist groups that operate in Indonesia, but they (al Qaeda) would have to be at the top of the list, and they would have to be so for a couple of reasons.' Walsh went on to support his theory of al Qaeda involvement by stating three indicators or components, including: intelligence reports from Indonesian officials stating possible al Qaeda threats did exist before the Bombings, some seven other attacks in Indonesia occurring within the last three weeks that were al Qaeda-related or inspired, and finally that the nation was known to have training camps for Islamic Fundamentalists.

For FOX, the Bali Bombings were mentioned before the DC Sniper story for the first time on the morning program, 'FOX News Sunday' (09:00) with Tony Snow and Brit Hume. Hume:

'American officials fear a recent series of terror attacks may signal the beginning of a new offensive in the War on Terror. A car bomb in Bali, Indonesia, destroyed a crowded nightclub Saturday, killing at least 187 people and wounding 300 more. A second bomb exploded near the US consular office, but no one was injured there. No group has claimed responsibility for the attacks, but many experts fear that Indonesia, the most populous Muslim nation, is becoming a haven for terrorists.'

While this report contained the same misleading information relayed by CNN on the day prior regarding the Muslim population of Indonesia versus the Muslim population of Bali, the

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Discussions of the possible political polarization resulting from the event impacting Iraqi war talks on the Hill.



dominant feature in the report is its inferred location within the War on Terror news coverage by the network.<sup>248</sup> Later in the day on 'FOX WIRE' (22:00) with Rita Cosby, Monica Crowley, and Ellis Hennican, there was a clear weaving of the Bali Bombings into the War on Terror narrative through its al Qaeda links. The hosts of FOX WIRE first connected the Bombings to al Qaeda, then to Saddam Hussein, then to Osama bin Laden and back to the military actions of the US in Afghanistan. Cosby: 'But, after what we saw in Bali, are people going to say, "look, we cannot wait, we have to act ahead of time, we cannot wait for another attack like this?"' To which Hennican replies: 'Bush will push that argument, I mean, that is the rational argument.' The Bali Bombings were still second to the DC Sniper in terms of top story and duration of coverage, but as previously mentioned, this was largely due to the lack of materials on the story being available.

MSNBC had no available footage for Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup>, so ABC was chosen as its substitute for this day of media coverage. On the program, 'This Week with George Stephanopoulos', (10:30) the Bali Bombings were presented as a breaking story, interrupting the scheduled coverage of the top story, the DC Sniper. Interestingly, ABC mentioned the same correlations as FOX news on the day before between the timing of the Bombings and the anniversary of the USS Cole attack. Stephanopoulos: 'ABC's Martha Raddatz is at the State Department this morning. And, Martha, this bombing comes two years to the day that the USS Cole was bombed. Are there any signs that this was aimed at Americans or American interests?' Raddatz replies:

'There certainly are a lot of signs that it was aimed at Americans Interests and foreign interests...The government will obviously try to make a link to al Qaeda. There have been several incidents in the last couple of weeks that the government believes are connected to al Qaeda.'

The news show continues with the live broadcasting of a conversation with Senator Richard Shelby and George Stephanopoulos, segments of which were quoted by all other news

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<sup>248</sup> MSNBC was the first network to accurately relay the religious composition of Bali as predominantly Hindu, however this did not occur until Monday the 14<sup>th</sup>.

networks. Overall, while the Bali Bombings did make the top story as often as the DC sniper story, there was considerably more airtime given to the DC Sniper on this date for most networks.

October 14, 2002

October 14<sup>th</sup> saw the first American reporters physically in Bali reporting live, likely because any reporter traveling from the US would have had to be in the air for 24-hours minimum, not including ground travel time to the scene of the Bombings. In Bali, Mike Chinoy of CNN reported via videophone on the local officials initial thoughts concerning the level of sophistication of both the materials and the planning of the Bombings. His report also emphasized the social and political pressures the attack placed on the Indonesian government (and local authorities) to come down harder on known Islamic extremists, as well as developing procedures to respond to possible similar attacks in the future. It is important to note that all of this reporting, while frequently mentioned and including new information was still seconded in every programming block on CNN to the DC Sniper case.<sup>249</sup>

FOX's coverage of the Bali Bombings was rather limited on Monday; however, the story was mentioned at least once for all programing blocks. On the 'Special Report with Brit Hume' (16:00), a roundtable discussion type program with Charles Krauthammer, Michael Barone, and

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<sup>249</sup> CNN: Anchor Aaron Brown: Lead: Breaking coverage of a new shooting in the Washington DC area possibly linked to the recent sniper shootings.

Bali Correspondent Mike Chinoy via videophone – detailing officials' opinions on the level of sophistication of the attack – rise in death toll, pressure on the government and local officials to get tougher on Islamic radicals with suspected links to Al Qaeda – speculation on attackers.

White House Correspondent: John King – President Bush's view that al Qaeda was the culprit behind these and other recent attacks, that there is a pattern of attacks – asking that Indonesian leaders to be firm and deliberate in finding the culprits, confirming the alleged audiotape message from Osama Bin Laden as legitimate, discussing fighting war on two fronts.

Aaron Brown interview with TIME editor-at-large Michael Elliott about terrorist bombing in Bali – Elliot saying that the Bali Bombings looks to be linked to al Qaeda, discusses favor of easy targets and ease of mobility for terrorists in Indonesia – speculating the attack was against Westerners on the whole, not just Australians.

Jeff Birnbaum, the Bombings were only covered in so much as stating the attacks appeared to be al Qaeda-type terrorism. Barone:

‘I think the moral is, there’s no place to hide. I mean, Bali is most famous for its tourism, of course, and a lot of those who are dead were tourists; not as many Americans as there might have been at another time of year. Nonetheless, that means that I think that al Qaeda will be out for foreigners from the enemy countries, no matter where they are, especially when they’re at leisure.’

This is an interesting notion as it broadens the scale of terrorism from the official/military arenas, into to the civilian and leisure fronts – suggesting that al Qaeda always intended to launch a total war against Americans. That news block contained the largest amount of discussion on the Bali Bombings for FOX on Monday. Later, during ‘The Big Story with John Gibson’ (17:00), sit-in host Bob Sellers states: ‘what happened in Bali was certainly a tragedy. But, fortunately, it was a limited tragedy, and it doesn’t seem yet that these groups are really organized into an international capacity that can really do big damage.’ He then states that the typology of the Bombings fell within ‘the spade of small pinprick attacks’. This was a unique manner of summarizing the attacks during this time and indeed a minority opinion of terrorism discourse at large around this time in 2002 especially when referencing Osama bin Laden sponsored or inspired attacks. Other shorter references to the Bombings occurred on ‘Hannity & Colmes’ (21:00), a fast-paced debate style show with guest, Retired Army Colonel, David Hackworth, appearing with hosts Sean Hannity and Alan Colmes.<sup>250</sup> Colmes: ‘I’ve been reading the stuff you (Hackworth) have been writing. It sounds like you and I are in a lot of agreement. And here’s what I don’t get, we find out over the weekend, Kuwait, Yemen, Indonesia – we’ve for these problems going on, so why are we focusing on Iraq when al Qaeda is regrouping? Here we’ve had more and more problems, shouldn’t that be the focus of this administration?’ This question

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<sup>250</sup> As a note, while FOX news is typically supportive of Republican Party values, and was very much inline with the Bush Administrations actions during the Afghanistan war in 2002, this show was considerably more critical of the Bush Administration than other programming on the network.

posed by Colmes is answered by Hackworth saying that the biggest news out of the Pentagon that day was an order placed for 273,000 tubes of sunblock – as opposed to (what he would have chosen to emphasize), a statement regarding the war efforts against al Qaeda.

For MSNBC news on Monday, coverage included considerable levels of coverage given to Executive Branch discourse connecting the Bali Bombings to al Qaeda activity around the globe and the apparent recent surge of activity by the group. Nightly show ‘Hardball’ (21:00) had the Bali Bombing as the top story of the program, host Chris Matthews stating: ‘The Bali Bombing caps a wave of new al Qaeda attacks. Is it the beginning of a major terror offensive?’ The show then went on to cover President Bush’s address from earlier that day: ‘It does look like a pattern of attacks that the enemy, albeit on the run, is trying to once again frighten and kill freedom loving people, and we’ve just got to understand, we are in a long struggle. And I am absolutely determined now, as I was a year ago, to continue to rat out these people, to find them, to use the best intelligence we can and to bring them to justice.’ The show’s guests for the Bombings’ coverage were MSNBC Terrorism Analyst, Steve Emerson, Author, Simon Reeve (in London), ‘bin Laden profiler’ Dr. Jerrold Post, and LA Times Writer, Robin Wright. The discussion ranged from modus operandi of al Qaeda and its sub-groupings, the possible coordination of the attacks within Indonesia, to speculation whether Osama bin Laden had been proven to be alive by the recording released to Al Jazeera news network by Ayman al Zawahiri. MSNBC detailed the materials from Al Jazeera more than the other networks on this day. MSNBC also detailed the anticipated extent of the Bombings’ implications for Australia in terms of its political relations in the region and its citizen’s travel plans in the future.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> Wider MSNBC / NBC-Network topics on the 14<sup>th</sup>:

Pentagon Correspondent Jim Milkaszewski: The Executive’s opinion, Indonesian officials actions around Bali, talks that the nightclub filled with Western tourists which is what made it a target for Jemaah Islamiyah, an Islamic radical group with links to al Qaeda.

Details of a report from Al Jazeera news network who received a letter from Osama Bin Laden’s second in command, al Zawahiri.

ABC coverage on this date has been added to the news coverage of the Bali Bombings because of the slightly different emphasis the network placed on locating the Bombings within wider terrorism discussions, as well as the use of Australian news footage during evening programming on the network. For Peter Jennings coverage in the evening news block for ABC, the DC Sniper story was the top story as there had been changes in the hunt for the culprit, but a greater amount of time was given to the Bali Bombings than the DC Sniper overall in each summary of the top stories. ABC smoothly weaved the Bali Bombings into the al Qaeda and the War on Terror Narrative. The Bombings story were often identified as operating between a ‘Westerners targeted’ macro explanation for recent global events (suggesting how the story would be relevant to American audiences), and comments from the Executive Branch connecting the Bombings to al Qaeda attacks across the globe in a chronological manner, suggesting that these Bombings were a symptom of a common enemy (of all US allies) growing in strength. The reason this was a more eloquent correlation was that the ordering of stories and topics is more logical than other networks at this time, which presented the Bombings between DC Sniper coverage and Iraq talks with no real transition between the topics. ABC balanced the coverage between the top stories more evenly than other three networks during this period. While this was certainly not the first time the Bombings were related back to al Qaeda, but this was the first extensive contextualization effort by a network to locate the Bombings within the wider terrorism discourse of 2002. This coverage was also significant as it included extensive Australian news footage, further detailing the impact the attacks had on Australians.<sup>252</sup>

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Quote from video featuring President Bush: ‘The enemy is trying to frighten and kill freedom-loving people’.

Senator Bob Graham saying he expected more attacks from al Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah against US and Western interests.

Report from Bali that American Jake Young was amongst the missing.

<sup>252</sup> ABC Anchor Peter Jennings – Top Story: DC sniper shootings – Bali Bombings.

First breaking news update was on a man who might have been linked to the DC area sniper shootings. Bali Correspondent, Mark Litke – discussing that the bombing was intended to target western citizens, scenes of the fire, burn victims in hospital, wreckage,

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Overnight, in a Home Depot parking lot, the DC Sniper had shot and killed a woman named Linda Franklin, who happened to be a federal employee – because of this development, the Bali Bombings were only mentioned once per news block on the major networks for the 15<sup>th</sup>. The Bombings were mentioned in brief along with an attempted highjacking of a Saudi jetliner and the unanimous re-election of Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. To demonstrate the extent of coverage allocated to the DC Sniper story, CNN alone had more than eight experts or law enforcement ‘officials’ on-air in 30-minute of news programing.<sup>253</sup> The majority of CNN’s coverage of the Bali Bombings on this date consisted of a pre-recorded story from Bali Correspondent Mike Chinoy (the same report aired intermittently between 05:00-07:00)

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and a memorial vigil on the beach – interview with victim and witnesses.

Speculation on the role of al Qaeda and Abu Bakar Bashir, leader of Jemmah Islamiah.

State Department reporting the confirmed death of 2 Americans, with three more missing.

Taped interview shown of Australian TV Channel 9’s Hugh Riminton discussing Australian’s being targeted and that the Australian PM had US support, predicts state of unease in Australia.

White House Correspondent Terry Moran covering statements from President Bush that al Qaeda was resurfacing and that the murders in Bali remind us that the war against terror continues says the enemy is on the run and that is why it is killing people.

<sup>253</sup> From CNN Oct 15

Fairfax County Virginia Police Chief, Thomas Manger speaking on the prospects of an arrest in the near future.

Montgomery County Police Department Chief, Charles Moose, commenting on new information and the dangers of releasing information too soon.

ATF’s Michael Bouchard and the FBI’s Gary Bald speaking on the accuracy and reliability of eyewitness accounts.

TIME Magazine’s Michael Weisskopf, discussing how the shooting scenes can be recreated using 3D computer imaging, and who spoke to the use of Pentagon satellites in crime detection when military involvement is necessary.

Totalsecurity.us writer Jeff Beatty, talking about sniper shootings in general – says shootings could also be terrorist activity, explained planning involved in shootings such as the DC Sniper.

Former FBI Forensic Behavioral Service President Robert Ressler talking about the mindset of the sniper.

CNN law enforcement analyst and former FBI terrorism task force agent Michael Brooks about the weapon used, showing pictures and diagrams of AR-15’s and their bullets, comments on the ease and convenience of the weapon.

discussing the sense of ‘shock and disbelief’ still present around the city, as well a brief interview with survivor, Steven Cabler. The report focused on the ongoing identification process as well various memorials and gatherings around the blast site. Chinoy: ‘One of the things that is making this whole process of identifying the victims so difficult is that many of those who died were burned beyond recognition, and its been very, very tough to get any positive ID’s.’ Subsequent reports later in the news day included live reporting from Chinoy in the blast area of Bali, details and video coverage of rescue efforts, scenes from lines at the Australian consulate, and the work of Australian forensic teams to identify the victims.

A similar decrease in coverage occurred on FOX, with the movement of Republican nominees in the Congressional race taking the lead story position above the DC Sniper for the network in some afternoon reporting. The Bali Bombings were covered during some news blocks, however were frequently located last during headline summaries. FOX ‘Special Report with Brit Hume’ (18:00) highlighted Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s signing off on a request for the use of US military personnel and equipment for the DC Sniper investigation. The brief discussion of the Bali Bombings in that newscast was limited to host Brit Hume, saying, ‘Colin Powell calls the Bali nightclub massacre, where more than 150 Australians may have died, that country’s 9/11.’ The only follow up to that introduction was by Senior White House Correspondent, Jim Angle, covering a meeting between Secretary of State, Colin Powell, and British Foreign Minister, Jack Straw, who had met earlier to discuss the impending interventions by the allied forces in Iraq, and the next stages of their work to win support from France and Russia for that military engagement. There were also short mentions of the Bombings on ‘Hannity: Tuesdays with Bennett’ (21:00), with host Bennett stating: ‘I suppose many of us here would say better Bali than Baltimore, but there’s a serious force and enemy out there, and we can go after both at the same time and go after this sniper as well.’

MSNBC had the most coverage of the Bali Bombings (on the 15<sup>th</sup>) of all the networks, however the story still followed the lead story of the DC Sniper shooting in various

programming blocks. The network's third top story included extensive coverage and background information on the Saddam regime in Iraq. The longest discussion surrounding the Bali Bombings on MSNBC for that Tuesday included a conversation on 'Hardball' (21:00) with host Chris Matthews and guests, Christopher Whitcomb, Clint Van Zandt, Danny Coulson, Judith Miller, and Shibley Telhami. The show was critical of the Bush Administration's actions in Afghanistan, and the United States 'impending humiliation of Iraq' (verbatim of Chris Matthews). The discussion centered on the dismissal of President Bush's claim that the Bombings, al Qaeda, bin Laden, and Hussein were all neatly connected. Matthews: 'Judith...is there a connection between al Qaeda and what happened in Bali and what happened in Yemen and what happened in Kuwait and what our war is all about with Iraq?' Miller: 'Well I'm afraid Chris, that I just don't see it. I don't think the administration has made a very convincing or compelling case and certainly that one that has even persuaded many people in his (Bush) own CIA...I don't see what the connection between Baghdad and Bali is other than the fact that they both begin with "B".'

October 16, 2002

By Wednesday, the news coverage of the Bali Bombings was as lacking as the initial coverage on the Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup>, with the Bombings not even breaking the opening summaries of most network programming. The DC Sniper story still held the top spot on all networks, though the only new information on that story for this day centered on discussions by various political sources on proposed gun control laws including a possible gun fingerprint database that had been brought into the limelight with White House Press Secretary, Ari Fleischer, saying that President Bush had been exploring registry issues, but did not support gun restrictions.<sup>254</sup> For CNN, Washington, DC, Correspondent, Michel Okwu interviewed Matt Bennett from the group 'Americans for Gun Safety,' saying that there needed to be national laws establishing a

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<sup>254</sup> Rejecting possible gun restriction discussions or legislation is standard for politicians within the Republican party.



fingerprint database for all gun buyers. Opponents to the legislation cited the ease of barrel signature modification as the main reason for avoiding gun restriction policy construction. CNN's coverage of the Bali Bombings by this date had been reduced to discussing the impact the attacks would potentially have on the tourism industry in Bali, showing scenes of 'empty' beaches and interviewing local hospitality workers.

FOX news for this day made an interesting correlation between the Bali Bombings and the DC Sniper on 'Hannity & Colmes' (21:00). During an interview with Howard Miller, Jack Trimarch, and Dr. Cyril Wecht, the discussion leads to speculation that the DC Sniper could be a possible al Qaeda terrorist. Hannity to Miller: 'I want to get back to this possibility, this possible connection, if not a direct link, to al Qaeda or a terrorist organization, sympathy for such an organization. I think – from what I'm hearing, its being dismissed out of hand too lightly for my taste.' Miller:

'Well Sean, I am not going to dismiss al Qaeda's involvement in this activity. The problem is that, granted, it is a very strange behavior for a serial criminal that I'm familiar with. It's a very orderly process. It's almost done without emotion. They've been successful at escaping from the area after they commit the crime. It's just too good. And so I won't dismiss al Qaeda.'

This type of conversation connecting al Qaeda to various events around the world is also found earlier in the day during 'Your World with Neil Cavuto' (16:00) with an interview from Senator Bob Graham (D-FL). Cavuto to Graham:

'You could draw the connection that that group (al Qaeda) has tacit and overt support from Iraq. I mean, those very same studies you refer to say that there's at least a tangible proof of that. So why can't you, then, make the leap that in order to address these terrorist incidents that you've seen...off Yemen, certainly in Bali, and now God knows where else, that there certainly does seem to be a funnel of cash coming through to them, some point in Iraq.'

In this segment, the host tied the Bali Bombings not only to al Qaeda, but also to Iraq, and possible weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

MSNBC similarly lead with the DC Sniper story and some of the same political interviews as CNN. However, the second largest story after the DC Sniper case was deteriorating US-Iraqi relations, including details on the signing of the Authorization for the Use of Military Force by President Bush. This was also the day that multiple lawsuits associated with the ENRON Corporation were coming to light. However, the Bali Bombings were not mentioned in all program blocks on MSNBC. 'Hardball' (21:00) with Chris Matthews and David Shuster, featured an extensive interview with Senator John McCain talking about the AUMF, as did the earlier Buchanan & Press (14:00) that went into more detail concerning AUMF implications. Buchanan & Press discussed at length the DC Sniper hunt and possible illegalities involved with those actions, and covered the labeling of the DC Sniper as 'homegrown terrorism in action'. Buchanan: 'Because there's talk that this guy may be a homegrown terrorist. He's certainly a terrorist. But maybe a foreign-born, we don't know, possibly.'

### 5.3 Frames

9/11

The Bali Bombings were presented as a follow-up or subsequent-type terrorist attack to 9/11 by many networks. The correlations made between the Bombings and 9/11 centered on the culprits: al Qaeda, and its Indonesian counter-part, Jeemah Islamiyah. However, other similarities were emphasized, including the targeting of Westernized non-military locations, and the use of low-tech materials for the attack. Due to the low overall volume of material available for the coverage of the Bali Bombings, official statements made by US and International politicians were heavily echoed in the media. The Executive Branch's statement on the Bali Bombings made the clearest correlation between the two attacks: President Bush: 'The attack in Bali appears to be an al Qaeda type terrorist, definitely a terrorist attack whether it's al Qaeda related or not. I would assume it is, and therefore it does look like a pattern of attacks.'<sup>255</sup> The

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<sup>255</sup> Speech given Monday, October 14, 2002 – Covered on 'FOX Special report with Brit Hume' during the 18:00 programing block.

pattern mentioned here was later elaborated upon to include the bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen two years prior as well as referring to 9/11. Other official comments on the Bombings' link to 9/11 included a statement from Secretary of State Colin Powell linking the two events. Powell: '(The Bali Bombings) show that terrorism can raise its head in many different ways. We're going after those responsible for what happened in Bali, those who are responsible for 9/11, and those regimes that are supporting terrorists and developing weapons of mass destruction.'<sup>256</sup> Following a meeting with British Foreign Minister, Jack Straw, and Colin Powell also directly stated that the Bombings were Australia's equivalent of 9/11.

#### Applying Entman's Identifiers:

Through identifying and labeling the Bali Bombings as a subsequent attack by the same group that perpetrated 9/11, the Executive discourse that was then echoed in the American media clearly states that the *problem which can be identified* is that the culprits of the 9/11 attack were still at large. Within the media, this was evident in the frequent identification and locating of Jeemah Islamiyah (JI) as a splinter group to the wider al Qaeda network, an argument substantiated by the public support of JI from Osama bin Laden and other al Qaeda leaders. There was a suggestion by media outlets that an audio recording from Osama bin Laden on October 7, 2001 concerning the 9/11 attacks may have served as a 'trigger' to the terrorists in Indonesia to commence with an attack. The problem was simply that the perpetrators of 9/11 were still active and committing terrorist acts, this time against non-American, but still 'Western' tourists. The Bali Bombings served as a matter of proof that the problem and root cause of 9/11 was unresolved, and that the culprits were and would continue to be an ongoing threat.

The *Causal Interpretation* was: because both 9/11 and the Bali Bombings were executed by al Qaeda terrorists, that the source of terrorism was still alive and well. This meant that the War on Terror was not successful in its early days, and that the 'West' had not taken care of the root cause of 9/11. The frequent lacing of the two terror attacks into a 'symptom' type interpretation

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<sup>256</sup> Speech given Tuesday, October 15, 2002 – 'FOX Special report with Brit Hume' 18:00.

by the media further solidified this correlation between the two events of 9/11 and the Bali Bombings. Monday the 14<sup>th</sup>, on FOX's 'Special report with Brit Hume' (18:00), guest Major Garrett, a FOX News Correspondent, offered further links between the attacks, suggesting that President Bush had warned the Indonesian government following 9/11 of the possibility of attacks occurring on the island nation. Garrett: 'Bush summoned the Indonesian leader (President Megawati Sukarnoputri) to the White House soon after 9/11. Terrorism officials already knew al Qaeda were operating from there and privately urged Sukarnoputri to move against cells. It didn't happen and Bush offered no public confidence on Monday it would now, even amid all the carnage.'

The *Moral Evaluation* for this frame was that both 9/11 and the Bali Bombings were perpetrated by groups of extremists with similar if not identical moralities, this links this *framing criteria* directly to the *moral evaluation* criteria of the *al Qaeda* frame addressed later in this chapter. The moral conclusion is that the persons who committed 9/11 had struck again, indicating that the same anti-Western sentiment that fueled 9/11 had not disappeared. The evaluation by the media suggests that the moral condition of al Qaeda and its affiliates was a threat in and of itself. As such, the *treatment recommendation* is that the threat needed to be addressed by force. From CNN Daybreak (05:00) on Monday, the 14<sup>th</sup>, with Maria Ressa:

'The Indonesian government is now saying it is also aware of that threat after almost a day of meetings between Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri and her security officials. Indonesia's chief security minister came out and said that Indonesia is aware of terrorist plots to target vital oil and gas installations in the country. They have increased security around those installations. They say that they will take firmer counterterrorism measures, although no details are out as yet.'

Pertaining to that ongoing threat, Tom Ridge, the Director of Homeland Security (DHS) at that time, stated on Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup>:

‘At this time, we are at war, a war that the President has said, and I think America understands, is a war against terrorism that’s going to take a great deal of patience and a relentless pursuit of these terrorists around this country and around the world.’<sup>257</sup>

## Evil

A Result: The frame ‘evil’ did not exist during the Bali Bombings on any network – This was the first time (chronologically) that a frame has not been present during a sampled terror event for this thesis. As such, the absence of this frame is recognized to mark a boundary in the War on Terror Narrative for this period of observation, producing this thesis’ first ‘result’ towards the goal of identifying the borders of the War on Terror Narrative. The word or concept of ‘evil’ was not used in relation to the Bali Bombings or the culprits by the media or the US government (during its coverage in the media) during this period of observation. The phrase was predominantly used in the media to refer to the DC Sniper, and used by the government, to describe Saddam Hussein (specifically by the Executive Branch). A possible reason for this absence of a an ‘evil’ descriptive phrase (and moral evaluation) may be because the term ‘evil’ was already in use at that time to describe the DC Sniper, so news groups did not want to over-use the term. However, another reason might be that by that time, ‘terrorists’, ‘terrorism’, and ‘al Qaeda’ had become so synonymous with ‘evil’ that it was not necessary to describe the group as evil at each mention; it was automatically inferred.

Examples of this ‘inherent evil’ on FOX news: ‘President Bush promising to do everything possible to wipe out the evil scourge of global terrorism. The problem? The rules of warfare, evidently, do not apply. Is it time for a new approach?’<sup>258</sup> This comment referred to the wider War on Terror, but not the specific case of the Bombings in Bali. That interview continued by highlighting the ‘us versus them’ discourse that was identified in the *Evil* frames of

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<sup>257</sup> Aired on Fox Special Report with Brit Hume (18:00) on FOX News, Tuesday October 15, 2002.

<sup>258</sup> ‘The Big Story’ with John Gibson (17:00) on FOX news, Tuesday October 15, 2002 opening topic prompt by host John Gibson.

both 9/11 and Shoe Bomber case study chapters, but again, not quite as clearly used in relation to the Bali Bombings. Ambassador Paul Bremer, Chairman of the National Commission on Terrorism: (responding to a question concerning the leadership of Indonesia)

‘Yes (President Megawati) is, she is going to have to start acting like a strong president, which has not been her style so far. And she’s going to have to decide that she’s either on our side against these terrorists or she’s not, and that’s going to take some very difficult decisions, precisely because, as you pointed out, the Vice President has been sympathetic to this group.’<sup>259</sup>

This is an interesting and new manifestation of ‘us versus them’ discourse at that time because it was being applied to relationships between governments, and not relationships between terrorists and their targets; this intergovernmental antagonizing increased in time with the French protest of the Iraq war. During this period of media coverage, President Bush only used the word ‘evil’ to describe Saddam Hussein, not the terrorists responsible for the Bali Bombings – showing that the American media and the executive branch had both modified their use or over-use of the word by this time.<sup>260</sup> Some media discussions did relate President Bush’s signing of the AUMB back to his January ‘Axis of Evil’ speech; however, that was the extent of the term’s employment.

#### Applying Entman’s Identifiers:

The *Problem Identification* for the frame of ‘evil’ during media coverage following the Bali Bombings was lacking due to the aforementioned inherent conditions between terms/phrases of terrorism and implications of ‘evil’ or ‘bad’ in those groups. It was not that the terms were interchangeable, but, by this point in 2002, it was automatically implied that if someone was a terrorist (or if the discussion was about terrorist groups), that the person (or group), was

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<sup>259</sup> ‘The Big Story’ with John Gibson (17:00) on FOX news, Tuesday October 15, 2002 – guest, Ambassador at Large, Paul Bremer.

<sup>260</sup> CNN ‘Talkback Live’ (15:00) Wednesday October 16, 2002, from Host Arthel Neville: ‘And we just heard President Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who met earlier today at the White House. The president reiterating his stance, saying Saddam Hussein is an evil man and he says, if attacked by Iraq, Israel will respond appropriately.’

assumed to be evil by his or her nature, therefore, it did not have to be separately labeled as evil on each mentioning. There was extensive use of the word 'evil' in the coverage of the DC Sniper, with a high number of uses of the word occurring on 'CNN Live' (Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup>, 22:00) wherein guest Kathleen Koch was commenting on how parents might explain 'this level of evil' (of the DC Sniper) to children.

Concerning the Executive Branch, and other government officials' press conferences during this period of observation, 'evil' is used almost exclusively in relation to Saddam Hussein. British Foreign Minister Jack Straw (live on the air for all networks):

'One of the things I am clear about is that, in the period since President Bush made his historic speech to the United National General Assembly on September 12<sup>th</sup>, there is a much the world, about the evil nature of the Iraqi regime and the paramount need to deal with the Iraqi regime's weapons of mass destruction.'<sup>261</sup>

FOX news similarly found that 'evil' was best used to describe Saddam Hussein or the DC Sniper rather than the Bali Bombings. Government officials speaking as guests, or directly quoted on the network, used the word 'evil' when speaking about Saddam Hussein, and the media directed the use of the word 'evil' towards the DC Sniper. As an example of this labeling of 'evil' against Saddam Hussein, in an interview with Florida Democrat, Senator Bob Graham on FOX: 'I'm not saying that Saddam Hussein is anything other than an evil person who's done a horrific set of things to his own people and thumbed his nose at the world community...'<sup>262</sup> As an example of the media's use of the word 'evil' to describe the DC Sniper: 'it appears to be somebody clever in an evil way, methodical in an evil way. Its going to take, what, just a tip to get (The DC Sniper)?'<sup>263</sup> 'Here's the buzz, Fred. Everybody in Washington is much affected by...the sniper shootings. I just want to say that anyone who kills in the name of God or thinks

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<sup>261</sup> Foreign Secretary and Colin Powell Press Conference aired on CNN, Tuesday October 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:42.

<sup>262</sup> Senator Bob Graham (D-FL) on FOX's 'Your World with Neil Cavuto' 16:00 October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

<sup>263</sup> Host Sean Hannity to guest Pat Brown on Hannity & Colmes 21:00 on FOX Monday 14<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

he is God, as this guy apparently does, is really working for the Evil One.<sup>264</sup> ‘You know people here are more anxious now about the sniper than they were after September 11. But, the same thing is operating. You had it right, evil.’<sup>265</sup> Additionally, ‘evil’ was used to describe a moral environment rather than specific incidents such as the Bali Bombings: ‘You have to acknowledge we’re living in an evil time here.’<sup>266</sup> ‘We are living in an evil time.’<sup>267</sup> Similarly, MSNBC used ‘evil’ in discussions on Iraq and the DC Sniper, but not towards the Bali Bombings.

‘You’re still some kind of liberal Chris, and it seems to me, I want to ask you this, open question: are you a little fearful that this new policy, not towards Iraq, some people say that’s a unique case, its uniquely evil. We have to deal with it.’<sup>268</sup>

Second, while interviewing local officials concerning the DC Sniper: ‘as soon as (the sniper) did this evil act though, the cops has shut down 95, shut down the access roads, and if this guy got out, be barely got out.’<sup>269</sup>

Identifying Entman’s four media frame components was not possible. For this frame, in this case study, there was an absence of the use of ‘evil’ in relation to the Bali Bombings. However, the reason for this absence is the aforementioned inference by the media of its audience’s understanding of terrorism; that persons who commit terrorism are inherently evil. One could assume, therefore, the coverage of terrorism or terrorists did not require the redundant assessment of calling them ‘evil’ once they had been branded terrorists. This merger of the concepts of terror(-ism, -ist, and -ists) and ‘evil’ is interesting, because it happened only ten months after President Bush’s ‘Axis of Evil’ speech, suggesting that there was an oversaturation of the word or label in the media at some point. However, the absence of this frame also is significant to this thesis, because it suggests that the War on Terror Narrative had

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<sup>264</sup> Guest Mort Kondracke to host Fred Barnes on FOX (18:20) October 12, 2002.

<sup>265</sup> Host Fred Barnes to Guest Mort Kondracke on FOX (18:20) October 12, 2002.

<sup>266</sup> Host O’Reilly to guest Schechter, ‘Interview with Harold Schechter’ on FOX’s ‘The O’Reilly Factor’ 20:00 October 15, 2002.

<sup>267</sup> Guest Schechter to Host O’Reilly, ‘Interview with Harold Schechter’ on FOX’s ‘The O’Reilly Factor’ 20:00 October 15, 2002.

<sup>268</sup> Matthews: ‘Hardball’ (21:00) with Chris Matthews, on MSNBC October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

<sup>269</sup> Buchanan: ‘Buchanan & Press’ 14:00 MSNBC on October 14, 2002.



shifted at this point in time, and that 'evil' was assumed to operate during coverage of terror events, and did not need to be independently addressed.

#### Scope of Threat

The bulk of the framing surrounding the conceptualization of parameters (or the lack thereof) of the War on Terror during the Bali Bombings' coverage can be found in official statements from the Bush Administration and other government leaders (such as Colin Powell). The Executive Branch discourse following the Bombings placed emphasis on the still unknown, but likely lengthy duration of the ongoing fight against terrorism. As this discourse was covered extensively in the media (and more so than usual due to the need for viewing materials of the Bali Bombings), it was an important component in the media's projection of the Bombings to the American audience.<sup>270</sup> Here, President Bush alluded to links between the culprits of the Bali Bombings and the culprits of 9/11, and in no fewer words established that the solution to overcoming the root cause behind both attacks would become a drawn out affair. In a nearly identical selection of words, Secretary of State, Colin Powell established the same line of reasoning as President Bush, but then went on to explain that the root or source of the evils in Bali and on 9/11 lay in Iraq, and would be treatable upon further military engagements in the Middle East.<sup>271</sup> In a manner, Powell narrowed down the focus of America's retaliation for 9/11, and his proposed response to the Bali Bombings, to the 'logical' source of both attacks; Iraq.

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<sup>270</sup> President Bush: 'It does look like a pattern of attacks that the enemy, albeit on the run, is trying to once again frighten and kill freedom loving people, and we've just got to understand, we are in for a long struggle. And I am absolutely determined now, as I was a year ago, to continue to rat out these people, to find them, to use the best intelligence we can and to bring them to justice.' (Official Address concerning the Bali Bombings - Aired Monday October 14, 2002, FOX's 'The Big Story with John Gibson' 17:00).

<sup>271</sup> Powell: '(The Bali Bombings) shows us that terrorism can raise its head in many different ways. We're going after those responsible for what happened in Bali, those who are responsible for 9/11, and those regimes that are supporting terrorists and developing weapons of mass destruction...that nexus between developing weapons of mass destruction and supporting terrorist activities is focused in Iraq and that's why I think Iraq is very much a part of this overall campaign.' (Aired Tuesday October 15 2002, FOX Special Report with Brit Hume, 18:00).

However, at the time of the Bali Bombings, the US had not (yet) entered or attacked Iraq, as such, the investigation into enemy forces existing within Iraq would inevitably necessitate the expansion of overseas military operations. Additionally, while not American-based (though covered on all major news networks), the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard's, statement concerning the Bombings was not far detached from the American Executive Branch's discourse following the Bombings.

'The Australian people are very tough. They're very resilient. They will be angry. They will be determined. And they will want every effort taken by their government, in cooperation with the Indonesian government, to find the people who did this and bring them to justice.'<sup>272</sup>

One explanation for this uniform discourse amongst the Western leaders may concern the Australian Prime Minister's response to 9/11, invoking the ANZUS Treaty that was originally a collective security agreement between Australia and New Zealand, and Australia and the United States, first created in 1951. The Prime Minister happened to be in Washington DC on 9/11 and talked with the President on that day about the two countries' alliances and joint interests. This history of support and conviction in the fight against terror by both countries was well established politically and militarily from that point forward, with Australia (after the Bali Bombings,) sending around 2,000 troops to support the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

#### Applying Entman's Identifiers:

The *Problem Identification* was made clear in media reporting: al Qaeda had shown its strength in Indonesia and was capable of successfully attacking Western orientated/symbolic targets. The subsequent problem identified by individual analysts or on-air specialists was that the Indonesian Government under President Megawati Sukarnoputri had received intelligence before the attacks on potential threat that the Jeemah Islamiyah group posed in the region and

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<sup>272</sup> Aired Monday October 14, 2002, on the CNN Paula Zahn morning show 07:00

did not act on the warnings. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup>, there was a notable elevation in the frequency of the reporting of this oversight and failure by the Indonesian Government.

‘I think we can see it in both those veins. Clearly al Qaeda is on the run. It does not have its sanctuary in Afghanistan; a country where it essentially became the government...and it could train thousands of people. It doesn't have that anymore but it is able to operate in countries that have loose control over their territory, and indeed Indonesia is a place where the government does not have as effective a control over the country as might be desirable, and they're exploiting that.’<sup>273</sup>

Typically on the opposite side of the political spectrum from normal FOX Reporting, CNN’s ‘Sunday Night’ show (October 13, 22:00) had guest James Walsh (CNN’s Academic Correspondent) evaluating the situation in a less severe manner, but with a similar line of reasoning as discussions on FOX:

‘Now, can the Indonesians be doing more? Well, the answer is probably yes, but they're in a bit of a tough spot. This is the world's largest Islamic nation, over 210 million people on this large set of islands. The vice president of Indonesia has his support from Islamic parties. And so the president, Megawati is in a difficult position, weighing the army on one hand and Islamic supporters, religious parties on the other.’

So the *problem identified* here was the delicate balancing act for President Megawati to accommodate religious tolerance and freedoms while countering religious extremism. Additionally, the difficult task of managing the border of a nation that consists of over 13,000 islands was presented as an explanation as to how terrorist groups were able to mobilize and operate with little detection in Indonesia.

The *Causal Interpretation* then, was that the scale of terrorism is simply beyond reckoning, and that the threat was everywhere at all times. The location of the Bombings, against Westerners on holiday (and not even a high percentage thereof being Americans), was presented by the media as being indicative of a threat beyond the abilities of non-Western militaries to prevent or tackle. The Bali Bombings vastly broadened the scope of terrorism, and this event

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<sup>273</sup> John Parachini on the FOX ‘Special Report with Brit Hume’, Monday October 14, 18:00.

served the purpose of showcasing the global scale of the War on Terror. Because of this, the line of reasoning then became that any response must operate on the same global scale, and, like the enemy, transcend borders. FOX coverage of Donald Rumsfeld's briefing on Wednesday October 16 caught a brief moment of humor between the reporters and the Secretary of Defense concerning the scale of potential operations under the War on Terror heading:

Question: 'Could you give us an idea of what you were briefing about upstairs?'

Rumsfeld: 'Sure. We were talking about the global war on terrorism, Afghanistan, and other parts of the world where...'

Question: 'Iraq?'

Rumsfeld: 'Where there are terrorist problems. How late can you folks stay here?'

Also from FOX, earlier on Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup> during 'The Big Story with John Gibson' (17:00) were some interesting comments alluding to follow-up reporting on the Bombings.

'And coming up on the Big Story, the bombing of a Bali nightclub. The latest in a string of terror attacks around the world linked to al Qaeda. Do they boost our campaign to push terror supporter Saddam Hussein from power? Plus, rethinking our strategy in the War on Terror in the face of new, more mobile, agile enemy' (commercial break – introduction to story) 'The War on Terror is nothing like we've ever seen before...we'll take a look at how the military is changing its tactics to fit this fight.'

Overall, these types of comments from news reporters and government officials were derivative of similar conceptions pertaining to a shift in the scale of the War on Terror from specific locations, to a broader approach befitting the quicker paced operations of the enemy. This interpretation is continuously one of 'changing' gears, tactics or other imagery indicative of military adaptability and 'new' methods.

The *Moral Evaluation* was rather laden with patriotic undertones from the American media, with suggestions that the Bali Bombings proved the enemy's immoral condition through their willingness to kill non-military persons, especially when the persons were on holiday and were not even American (their expressed target and enemy). This can be seen on CNN Monday, October 14, on 'Live on Location' (13:00) *Interview with Arian Ardie* (American Chamber of

Commerce in Indonesia employee). Speaking on his first-hand experience at the site of the Bombings,

‘It was just unbelievable. It was shock, and I think one of the victims that a friend of mine spoke to indicated, how could this happen in paradise? It really was, and continues to be a shock to everyone...(because of)...the manner by which this could be perpetrated against innocent civilians.’

The evaluation then, was that wherever in the world innocent persons are threatened, or can be threatened, had, by this act, become a justified arena for the War on Terror. Nowhere was this path of reasoning more clearly expressed than through President Bush’s speech on Monday, the 14<sup>th</sup>, from the White House (13:41 airing on all channels)

‘...The murder which took place in Bali reminds us that this War against Terror continues. I’ve constantly told the American people that the struggle against terror is going to be a long and difficult struggle, that we’re dealing with coldblooded killers, that the enemy does not value innocent life like we do, and that we must continue to pursue the enemy *before* they hurt us...We’ve got to continue to work together; those of us who love freedom must work together to do everything we can to disrupt, deny and bring to justice these people who have no soul, no conscience, people that hate freedom.’ Responding to a question from the press pool, President Bush continued: ‘Well, I think that the free world must recognize that no one is safe. That if you embrace freedom you’re not safe from terrorism. And clearly, the attacks in Bali, I think we have to assume its al Qaeda...but clearly, it’s a deliberate attack on citizens who love freedom, citizens from countries which embrace freedom.’

This address from President Bush was aired on all major networks, and the rhetoric clearly identified the enemy as persons who ‘(do) not value innocent life like we do’, and that because of this, ‘no one is safe’. The President went on to emphasize that a multi-nation effort to eradicate terrorism would only be the beginning of any effective measure to counter terrorism. This leads us to the final identifier, the treatment recommendation of the Scope of Threat frame for the Bali Bombings.

The simple *Treatment Recommendations* offered by both the media and the Executive Branch was: expand the War on Terror in order to protect *all* Westerners, not just Americans. The War on Terror then became an entity beyond Americans and American interests, widening to include all US allies and anyone or anyplace that is Western by association. In the same speech on the 14th, President Bush also said: 'I want to make it clear to (Indonesian President Megawati) that we need to work together to find those who murdered all those innocent people and bring them to justice.' This is a clear indication of the intention of the US government to expand their reach and apply pressures on other governments to address the threat of terrorism. This came through in the media in an introductory talking point from Wolf Blitzer during an interview with New York City Mayor, Rudy Giuliani, on CNN's 'Late Edition' Sunday, the 13<sup>th</sup>: 'Mayor Giuliani, the United States may be on the verge once again of going to war, expanding the War on Terrorism, if you will.' Earlier on CNN during the 'Sunday Show' (16:00) from White House Correspondent Suzanne Malveaux: 'Now, officials fear that al Qaeda is becoming a more deadly network, more difficult to actually contain, but the administration is arguing that this latest bombing is simply another piece of evidence that the U.S. should expand its War on Terror.' The treatment plan, simply put, is the expansion of the War on Terror, with no specific boundaries mentioned in the process.

#### al Qaeda

The al Qaeda frame is the clearest media frame present for the Bali Bombings case study. The Bombings were directly linked back to al Qaeda within hours of the attacks, and the resulting social and political fallout was clearly directed towards al Qaeda and al Qaeda inspired Islamic Extremists in Southeast Asia. While never officially claimed by al Qaeda, the Bombings were praised by Osama bin Laden's second in command, Ayman al-Zawahiri, in an audio tape released to the Al Jazeera News Network, and the planners of the Bali Bombings all claimed allegiance with al Qaeda during interviews and in the subsequent public trials. American and

International media located the Jeemah Islamiyah group (founded by Abu Bakar Bashir) under the umbrella of al Qaeda in terms of the groups' relationship with one another.<sup>274</sup>

The correlation between the culprits of the Bali Bombings and al Qaeda was never questioned in the media after Sunday, the 13<sup>th</sup>, the only direction the media's reasoning went was forward towards linking al Qaeda with Saddam Hussein. This is evident in discussions surrounding the possible expansion of the War on Terror, as previously mentioned in the *Scope of Threat* frame. In the coverage of the Bali Bombings by all networks, al Qaeda was presented as the only possible explanation for who could be behind the Bombings. Conveniently, the explanation had already been indoctrinated into mainstream media discourse, and American audiences were already familiar with the al Qaeda group by this point in time.

#### Applying Entman's Identifiers:

For the Bali Bombings, the *Problem Identification* is not only that the Bombings occurred, but that they were evidence of an increase in the global maneuverability of al Qaeda. While conversations in the media did express that the individual culprits were local Islamic Extremists, the explanation for who was ultimately to blame for the Bombings was always presented as 'al Qaeda'. An example of this rhetoric from CNN's Wolf Blitzer (12:00 October 16), came in the form of a question emailed to the show from an audience member: 'Why should there be another war with Iraq – why start another war with Iraq when al Qaeda is still active, dangerous, and poised to destroy us? Shouldn't we find Osama bin Laden before we oust Saddam Hussein?'

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<sup>274</sup> MSNBC's 'Hardball' with Chris Matthews, October 14, 2002 18:00.

Chris Matthews: 'First of all, are they a piece? The people that hit us on September 11<sup>th</sup>, the people that hit Bali this past weekend, are they a piece of the same group?'

Steve Emerson, Terrorism Analyst for MSNBC: 'In the larger umbrella, al Qaeda is a large holding company, maybe three degrees of separation, not necessarily at that very high level of vectoring between each...'

Matthews: 'So its not just like saying this was a mob hit. It means it was a particular syndicate we're talking about here?'

Emerson: 'We're talking about maybe 10 syndicates under the umbrella of al Qaeda and this could be one of them. All they needed was al-Zawahiri tapes saying go ahead, strike a blow, and that would give them the green light.'

The discussion and answer to this prompt then goes on to directly identify al Qaeda as the key problem. Guest Johan Goldberg, Editor of the *National Review Online*:

‘First of all, there are a lot of people after September 11, who said something like this must never happen again. If you take that seriously, then you have to look at all the possible threats out there. So, whether or not al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein are directly linked is say we’ve solved the problem. You get the scorpion nest. You go after all the possible threats so that you can really say that something like this must never happen again.’

Concerning the *Causal Interpretation*: Interestingly, on FOX news, the name ‘al Qaeda’ sometimes occurred more frequently in stories about the DC Sniper than in stories surrounding the Bali Bombings (during the period of observation for this case study). However, one interview explained that al Qaeda was the natural culprit for the Bali Bombings due to the victims’ typography. ‘al Qaeda hates freedom. It hates freedom of religion, freedom of press, equal treatment of women. The Australians stand for all of those things as much as we do, its just that we’re a bigger and stronger country.’ (James Woolsey on *The Big Story with John Gibson*, FOX October 16 17:45) During that same interview, guest James Woolsey said, that due to the timing of the DC Sniper and the Bali Bombings overlapping, ‘If nothing else, (the timing) does raise a suspicion that there could be some link (between both events) to al Qaeda.’ This suggests that al Qaeda may simply have become a buzzword for any unknown terrorist actions at that point in time. However, many networks’ causal interpretations within discussions concerning the perpetrators of the Bali Bombings, became more defined after President Bush’s speech on that Tuesday.

As mentioned in the 9/11 frame’s *qualifiers*, the morality of al Qaeda was presented as the strongest evidence of any *moral evaluation* by the media for the Bali Bombings, especially for the al Qaeda frame itself. The morality of the Jeemah Islamiyah group is argued to be inherently wrong, both by their nature as a supporter of al Qaeda and by the fact that they attacked and killed Western civilians. The moralities of al Qaeda are the same as Jeemah Islamiyah according



to American media outlets, because the groups are either one in the same, or Al Qaeda inspired Jeemah Islamiyah. However, there was a specific mention of what the ‘moral of the story is’ made on ‘Fox’s Special Report’ (18:00) on Monday the 14<sup>th</sup> by guest Jeff Birnbaum: ‘I think the moral is, there’s no place to hide. I mean Bali is most famous for its tourism, of course, and a lot of those who are dead were tourists...that means I think, that al Qaeda will be out for foreigners from the enemy countries, no matter where they are, especially when they’re at leisure.’

Here, the *treatment recommendation* for the problem of al Qaeda was cleanly woven into the suggested solution for the War on Terror as a whole, which around 2002, was primarily managed by the Executive Branch through President Bush’s signing of the Congressional AUMF against Iraq. The treatment solution of Jeemah Islamiyah was assumed to be one in the same as the treatment solution for al Qaeda according to the American media because of the ties between the groups, as the culprits claiming ties to or inspiration from al Qaeda. Statements from Colin Powell clarified that the US official response was based off the concept that the Bombings were by the same persons behind the 9/11 attacks, and that the next step in fighting those persons was a full invasion of Iraq and the dismantling of Saddam Hussein’s regime, who, at the time, was linked to terrorist funding and Osama bin Laden himself.

#### **5.4 Narrative Status**

The Bali Bombings, while a successful terror attack that clearly fit into the War on Terror Narrative, had serious barriers preventing it from breaking into the ‘top story’ spot against the DC Sniper and pending Iraq War stories at the time. The first issue was the physical location of the Bombings: on the opposite side of the globe from American audiences. This meant there were only a few network correspondents available for the early coverage of the Bombings, and many of the correspondents had to report via satellite phone with footage from third party contributors. The second issue was the time difference, The island of Bali is 12-hours ahead of US Eastern Standard Time, meaning any live reports from Bali during daylight hours there

would be airing in the middle of the night in the US; reversed, if a reporter wanted to air during the day in the US, they would have to be reporting in the middle of the night from Bali. As such, the majority of the reports for all the networks were pre-recorded; and the only 'live' component was the news anchors' introductions to the segment. While comments from President Bush, Colin Powell and other government leaders were broadcast live on all networks, those statements were the only domestic-based responses, and indeed, the only 'live' reporting concerning the Bombings that aired in the US.

This directly relates to Stephanie Marriott's notions of time-jumps and spatial disruptions in live broadcasting.<sup>275</sup> The Bali Bombings are an example of severe continuity dysfunction; in that no part of the actual event was broadcast live, and all 'up to the minute' videos concerning the story were pre-recorded. There were fewer than five videos of the aftermath of the bombings, and these were relatively low quality, having been recorded on camcorders by locals or tourists in the area. (Noting that there were no smartphones in 2002.) The only live component of the broadcasts was introductions by news anchors or hosts 12-time zones away, days after the attack; or live introductions by correspondents on location, in different time zones (with a delay) from the broadcasting network, followed by pre-compiled segments. This speaks to Marriott's *patterns of interactivity*; "We can distinguish three distinct nexi which are bound up in the event: the place in which stuff happens, the place from which television speaks the event and the place of reception."<sup>276</sup> Even without analyzing the nexi of audience reception, the issues of understanding the temporalities between the physical event/location where the bombings occurred, and the physical broadcasting of that event on the other side of the globe, in a different time zone (sometimes a day behind), create ample consideration in and of themselves.

In the same topic arena as Marriott, *Television and Terror* by Hoskins and O'Loughlin elucidate this notion of manipulation of time in the media; and press its importance specifically

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<sup>275</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, *Live television: Time, space and the broadcast event*, Sage Publications.

<sup>276</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, *Live television: Time, space and the broadcast event*, Sage Publications. p. 121.

concerning the media's coverage of terrorism, which is pertinent to this thesis. "So, there is an interplay between the technological facilitation of liveness and its appropriation and mimicking by news workers. -- But what are the consequences of these shifts on the nature of terror and, relatedly, the opportunities for terrorists?"<sup>277</sup> The Bali Bombings perhaps answer part of this query through its lack of impact despite being a successful terror attack. The simple answer: any opportunity for terrorists to spread a message (of fear or power) through a televised attack depends *completely* on what visuals the attack produces. Arguably, a lack of substance (specifically visuals and direct access to live reporting on the ground) available for the networks to mediate, precedes immediacy in terms of which factor ultimately determines the effectiveness of a television news story. The media ecology of the Bali Bombings, as in what media recording devices were present that night on the scene, were far less sophisticated than downtown Manhattan, and bore little media-friendly fruit concerning the visual presence of the attacks (unlike the similarly motivated, also successful, 9/11 attacks). The Shoe Bombing case study had no substantial visuals, but it had immediacy and liveness; and even as a failed event, this liveness made it more effective than the Bali Bombings. The Bali Bombings had no substantial visuals and no liveness; and so even as a successful attack, it was less effective as a terror event than a failed attempt. However, because this thesis' methodology relies on discourse, this case study was still viable for analysis thanks to the verbal discussions by the media surrounding the event which were contextualised into the frames and wider narrative

Similarly affecting the media's coverage of the Bali Bombings, the DC Sniper shootings, the top story at the time, dominated headlines on the majority of media programming blocks as well as special reporting segments. The Bali Bombings were only mentioned before the DC Sniper on a handful of occasions and not on the first day of reporting. The first day of reporting, Saturday, October 12, contained no live footage, and the story did not break the top news spot

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<sup>277</sup> Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B., 2009, *Television and Terror: Conflicting Times and the Crisis of News Discourse*, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 25.

for any network. The second day of coverage had the most frequent reporting of the Bombings, but the story could only be presented with pre-recorded material. This material was then explained and contextualized by a correspondent via phone-links. (Further dismantling the cohesive live-ness of the story.) Most often on all the networks, the story's visual accompaniment was pictures from tourists or unknown sources, none of which becoming iconic or visually pronounced as the key visual association for the event. The third day of Bali Bombings coverage had speeches from government officials such as President Bush, Secretary of State, Colin Powell, various Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers, giving the story the most 'live' coverage the Bombings would receive. On the fourth day reporting was very scarce, because the DC Sniper had struck again during early morning hours, resulting in that story taking the headlines and 'top story' spot on all channels. And finally, the last day of observation, Wednesday, the 16<sup>th</sup>, saw as little coverage of the Bombings as they were given on the day they occurred.

Some of the media's discussions concerning the Bali Bombings suggested connections between the Bali Bombings, al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, and Weapons of Mass Destruction, all at once. As though compiling all the topics together elevated the severity or legitimacy of the least impactful of the group.

US Officials also say something else. They point to what President Bush has said...that dealing with Saddam Hussein, disarming the Iraqi leader, they believe is part of the War on Terror. After all, one official saying to me just a short time ago, what if Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction could fall into the hands of any terrorist group such as al Qaeda...now, its unclear if this latest attack in Bali, combined with other attacks that we've seen targeting Westerners, if that will increase any opposition to any possible war with Iraq.<sup>278</sup>

This sentiment is also found in government press conferences, from President Bush:

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<sup>278</sup> White House Correspondent, Kelly Wallace reporting for 'CNN Live' (12:00) with Wolf Blitzer, Monday October 14, 2002.

One of the most dangerous things that can happen in the modern era is for a deceiving dictator who has gassed his own people, who has weapons of mass destruction, to team up with an organization like al Qaeda. And I said, I was a little more diplomatic in my speech, fingerprints behind.<sup>279</sup>

Again, unlike the Shoe Bomber Case Study (where there was ample live reporting on location, but nothing to see in the footage as the ‘event’ had all occurred during a flight); the near complete absence of footage and ‘live-ness’ during the coverage of the Bali Bombings is perhaps the key reason it was the weakest terror event in terms of impact for this thesis. Even as a successful attack, perhaps the distance of the bombings from American audiences, both geographically and temporally, was exacerbated by the lack of engaging materials and imagery.

This period of media coverage yielded an unexpected shift within the War on Terror Narrative concerning the perception of ‘evil’ in relation to terrorism or terrorist activity. This project’s methodology was unable to locate a structured frame of ‘evil’ in the coverage of the Bali Bombings during the designated period of media observation. The media communicated ‘evil’ to be an inherent component of terrorism, not requiring additional explanations. While ‘evil’ was used to describe the both the DC Sniper and Saddam Hussein during this time, the perpetrators of the Bali Bombings, even with their connections to al Qaeda, were not referred to or described as ‘evil’ in the media coverage of the time.

This is interesting, because it established a boundary within the rhetorical construction of the War on Terror Narrative that had not been anticipated by this project. While it was expected that the frames would vary in intensity from one case study to the next, to have the frame not exist at all suggests a boundary or border to the Narrative at a particular period of time. Additionally, for that boundary to exist so soon after 9/11 and the ‘Axis of Evil’ speech by President Bush, suggests that the phrase, idea, and use of ‘evil’ had become so frequently used

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<sup>279</sup> Speech from President Bush aired on FOX’s ‘The Big Story’ (17:30) with John Gibson – Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

that the only way for the phrase to retain its rhetorical integrity in the media was for it to not always be explicitly stated as a component of terrorism, but rather to become implicit to terrorism and terror activity. This is one of the first instances where Richard Jackson's sentiment (mentioned in the interview excerpt in section 3.4) that the media served primarily as a mouthpiece for the US government concerning the War on Terror, was not substantiated within the case study.

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# Chapter 6: The Underpants Bomber Case Study

December 25, 2009

| <b>The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification for the War on Terror</b> |   |  |  |   |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| Events  | <i>9/11 Frame</i>   | <i>Evil Frame</i>  | <i>Scope of Threat Frame</i>   | <i>Al Qaeda Frame</i>   |
| 9/11  | 4: America Under Attack (Day #)   | 1: Axis Of Evil Speech<br>Moral Evaluation:<br>Attackers Evil – USA<br>'Good'            | 2: Dependent On<br>Military/Executive<br>Response – Wherever<br>There's A Threat                   | 3: Osama Bin Laden –<br>Non-State Terror = 'New'<br>Real Threat                                     |
| Shoe Bomber   | 4: Continued Gaps In<br>Airport Security – Skies<br>Still Not Safe Since 9/11   | 3: 'Hero Passengers' =<br>'Evil Attacker'  | 2: Global Scale – Trans-<br>Atlantic Travel Issues,<br>Terrorist Mobile And<br>Global              | 1: Afghanistan Camps,<br>Tora Bora Caves, OBL<br>Videos, Terror Training<br>Camps Issue             |
| Bali Bombings   | 3: Asia's 9/11 – Same<br>Motives - Same Goals –<br>Different Location           | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently<br>Established On All<br>Networks-                            | 2: Global Scale –<br>Everywhere Westerners<br>Are = Target -<br>Necessitating A Global<br>Response | 1: Terror Training Camps<br>– Jeemah Islamiyah and<br>AQ Groups Attacking<br>Any And All Westerners |
| <b>Underpants Bomber</b>  | <b>3: More Aviation<br/>Security Issues – Issues<br/>With Government Lists'</b> | <b>4: -Frame Not<br/>Sufficiently Established<br/>On All Networks-</b>                   | <b>2: Back To Aviation<br/>Based Threats</b>   | <b>1: (Similar To Shoe)<br/>Yemen Connections –<br/>AQ Allegiance Vs.<br/>Operative - AQAP</b>      |
| Times Square Bombing  | 4: NYC Still Targeted By<br>The Same People                                     | 3: -Weakest Presentation<br>Of Frame when Present,<br>But Observed On All<br>Networks-   | 2: Domestic Counter-<br>Terrorism Questioned –<br>NYC's Post-9/11 Test                             | 1: 'Homegrown' And<br>Internet Radicalization –<br>Lone Wolf Terrorism -                            |
| Boston Marathon Bombings  | 1: The Echo Of 9/11 –<br>Flags Flying Again, Hero<br>First Responders/Victims   | 2: Clearest Good Vs. Evil<br>Framing + Hero Frame<br>Of Survivors And Law<br>Enforcement | 3: Narrowest Scope:<br>Boston – Northeastern<br>American City (Again)                              | 4: Internet Radicalization –<br>Homegrown Terrorism –<br><i>Inspire Magazine</i>                    |

Numbering indicates the strength of the individual frame of the four frames within each event.

## Underpants Bomber Case Study Outline:

Introduction

News Coverage

December 25, 2009

December 26, 2009

December 27, 2009

December 28, 2009

December 29, 2009

The Frames of the Underpants Bomber

9/11

Evil

Scope of Threat

Al Qaeda

Narrative Status

### 6.1 Introduction

On Christmas Day 2009, Umar Farouk Abdulmatallab successfully smuggled a makeshift explosive device onto Northwest/Delta Airlines Flight 253 from Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport, bound for Detroit in the United States. The day before, on the 24th, Abdulmatallab had taken two other flights (passing through two other airport security screening processes); the first from

Ghana to Lagos in Nigeria, the second from Lagos to Amsterdam – a trip taking over 11-hours before his boarding of the US bound flight. Forty-minutes before landing, Abdulmatallab went to into the onboard toilets and assembled the various components of a PETN/TATP based explosive, covering himself with a blanket when he returned to his seat.<sup>280</sup> He then attempted to inject an acidic liquid into the PETN/TATP packets (which can cause a rapid temperature spike able to ignite a secondary explosive). However, he failed, and only managed to set fire to his clothing.<sup>281</sup> The cabin reportedly filled with smoke and Abdulmatallab was wrestled to the floor and then restrained into a business class seat by a fellow passenger, where he remained for the short duration of the flight (after he had been soaked in various liquids such as cola and juice to prevent ignition). The flight landed safely in Detroit, and Abdulmatallab was immediately removed from the aircraft; however, the plane was held on the runway during his initial questioning due to concerns of a possible secondary device. A US Federal Court sentenced Abdulmatallab to four life terms plus 50 years without parole. He is held (at time of writing) at the ADX Supermax in Florence, Colorado, alongside the Shoe Bomber, Richard Reid, the 2010 Times Square Bomber, Faisal Shahzad, and other federal prisoners of the United States convicted of terrorism or other violent crimes.

Abdulmatallab, the youngest son of wealthy Nigerian banker, Alhaji Umaru Mutallab, was born in Nigeria and internationally educated. Abdulmatallab studied at University College London, earning a Bachelors Degree in Mechanical Engineering in 2008; he dropped out of a Masters of International Business program at the University of Wollongong in Dubai, in 2009. After Abdulmatallab left university, he sought out Al Qaeda leader Anwar al-Awlaki, who later introduced Abdulmatallab to al Qaeda bomb-maker, Ibrahim al-Asiri. The initial bomb design

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<sup>280</sup> There is no official time for this action; the minute estimate was given from multiple passengers who were interviewed by authorities, with the ‘forty minutes’ estimate ending up in the media.

<sup>281</sup> This process of activating the explosives was later determined by explosives experts and aviation security re-creations of the attempted bombing which aired on the media at various times.



and plan for the attack was undertaken by the Yemen based, al-Asiri, and while Abdulmatallab was allowed to choose the date and flight he would target for his suicide mission in the name of Jihad, al-Awlaki instructed Abdulmatallab to only attack an American bound flight while it was over United States territory. Having worn the bomb sectioned atop an underpants-type garment consistently for nearly two-weeks before the bombing attempt, Abdulmatallab's attack ultimately failed because the detonation materials had become saturated with a combination of sweat and other bodily fluids resulting from poor hygiene. The initial plan was to ignite 200-grams of a combination of PETN and TATP (the same chemical combination used by Richard Reid in 2001) with a syringe injection of a liquid acid that would chemically activate the explosives. The syringe based material failed to set the PETN/TATP alight, and the chemicals caused second-degree burns to Abdulmatallab's lower torso, hands, pelvic region and legs. No other passengers or flight crew were harmed in the process. Abdulmatallab sat in seat 19A, which was above the air-wing fuel tanks and directly against the fuselage of the aircraft. The idea behind this choice of location was that the 200-grams of explosives would bring down the aircraft by blowing a hole in the fuselage, which, under pressure, would cause catastrophic structural failure. However, investigator experiments suggest the aircraft might have retained its structural integrity against the amount of explosives Abdulmatallab had on his person.

The security measures that had been updated globally in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century ultimately failed to prevent Abdulmatallab from boarding flight 253 at Amsterdam's Schiphol airport. By Christmas 2009, there were additional screening measures in place, such that, regardless of the general security measures and screenings conducted for the airport at large, flights to the United States from overseas required additional security lines and screening procedures typically conducted at the departure gate. Abdulmatallab passed through these additional security measures in Amsterdam, including managing to avoid new millimeter wave scanners which were installed in the airport but had not been activated by that time, as no agreement had been made with US authorities as to how the scanners should be used for US bound flights. The National

Targeting Center (NTC) in the United States had received Abdulmatallab's information by the time he boarded flight 253; this was due to another post-9/11 security procedure wherein all airlines were required to submit full passenger manifests to the NTC before takeoff, such that the Center could cross examine the passenger names against the American 'No Fly' list. At the time, Abdulmatallab was in the Terrorist Identities Datamart Environment (TIDE), which was maintained by the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). However, without his name being added to the FBI's separate Terrorist Screening Database list, which was the feeder list of both the Secondary Screening Selectee list as well as the 'No Fly List', Abdulmatallab was not prevented from boarding despite being known to American Authorities for associations with radical Islamic groups. As a result of the attempted attack, US airport security measures increased, however, no government agency or transport authority spoke at the time (during the five-days of media observation) towards the specifics on what measures had or would be implemented. This was done in an effort to keep the security processes as un-predictable as possible for would-be terrorists.<sup>282</sup>

## 6.2 News Coverage

There are numerous similarities between the coverage of the Shoe Bomber attempt in 2001 and the coverage of the Underpants Bomber in 2009 despite the attempts having occurred eight years apart and in different media ecologies. In the coverage of both attempted bombings, all the information about the suspects (Richard Reid and Umar Farouk Abdulmatallab, respectively) including their possible connections to al Qaeda, family backgrounds, and education levels, were known within the first day of news coverage. Additionally, the style of reporting (brief and between pre-programmed segments) during the first two days of reporting (the day of the attempt, Christmas Day, and the 26<sup>th</sup> of December) was also notably similar to the Shoe Bomber case study due to the timing of both attacks having occurred over the

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<sup>282</sup> CNN Sunday 27 09:15 show: 'State of the Union' with Candy Crowley (in for John King) interview with Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano.

Christmas Holiday in the United States. Another similarity between the attempts was the profile of the culprit, a person who was familiar with Western culture, educated in London, radicalized by al Qaeda linked-individuals, attacking US-bound aircraft at Christmas time with concealed explosives, which ultimately caused changes to airport security protocol. It is perhaps because of these similarities that the coverage for the Underpants Bomber was styled in the same manner as the Shoe Bomber's media coverage. A small differences in the coverage of the Underpants Bomber compared to the Shoe Bomber, was the special television features by various news channels devoted to the passenger who tackled Abdulmatallab, Dutch filmmaker, Jasper Schuringa. Where as fellow passengers also subdued the Shoe Bomber, the passengers from that flight in 2001 did not linger to give interviews at length with the media. The second and most important feature of this attempt speaks the to evolution of the media ecology unto 2009, which was the distribution to the media of cell phone pictures from passengers of the arrest of Abdulmatallab onboard the aircraft at Detroit.

Interestingly, unlike the successful terrorist bombings in Bali, Indonesia, the failed terrorist bombing of Abdulmatallab, or 'The Underpants Bomber', held the 'top story' position for all five days of observation for this Case Study. Conversely, in the coverage of the Bali Bombings (a successful terrorist attack by all accounts), only held the 'top story' position for one day out of the five days of observation, with the DC Sniper case taking the top story on almost all network news segments for that Case Study. Similarly, the Shoe Bomber Case Study of this thesis saw that the similarly failed Shoe Bomber attempt held the 'top story' spot (during live news broadcasts, not during pre-arranged Christmas programming) for the five days of observation on all networks. This suggests that the more closely located the terror event is to the United States, (regardless of success of failure), the more attention US network media will give the story. For uniformity, all shows and times listed pertain to the date under which the text is headed: NETWORK – WEEKDAY – WEEKDATE – TIME (Eastern Standard Time, unless other wise stated).

December 25, 2009

Christmas Day, 2009, saw the holiday themed pre-prepared news segments and special-features, common for American media during major US holidays in the first years of the new millennium, consisting of large segments of content that could be arranged and aired by a skeleton crew. CNN's Christmas schedule was presented in hourly programming blocks, for example: 13:00 featured the special, 'Focus on Giving', 14:00: 'CNN Presents: The Two Marys', and 15:00: 'CNN Presents: The Mystery of Jesus. Before each commercial break on many hours of CNN's coverage, there would be a 'videogram' from a member of the armed forces, either on a base away from family or overseas in warzones, wishing their loved ones and the nation 'happy holidays'. There were also segments devoted to remembering the 5-year anniversary of the 2004 Tsunami in Thailand, as well as a story on the winter storm in parts of the Central Plains and Oklahoma that had already killed 18 travellers by Friday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 2009. The only 'new' news coverage of international events (besides the addresses from troops and military families) was about a woman who charged and knocked down Pope Benedict XVI during Christmas Mass at the Vatican; The Pope quickly stood and continued Christmas service without further interruption, and the story was aired on all networks.

At 14:19 the Underpants Bomber story broke on CNN, interrupting the feature 'The Two Marys', with Atlanta Anchor, TJ Holmes, introducing Correspondent, Kate Bolduan, who explained the origin and destination of flight 253, that a passenger had tried 'igniting some firecrackers', and that a Delta Spokesperson had already told CNN that the passenger was subdued, and everyone onboard was safe. After the initial 45-second briefing, the news continued with 30-seconds of coverage on the major snowstorm in the Midwest; then 'The Two Marys' special feature continued with regular commercials for another 20-minutes until the next live-coverage segment on the situation in Detroit. The information during this second coverage run was the same as the initial segment, then the news moved on to cover another aircraft related story on a rough landing in Kingston, Jamaica, where the fuselage of a plane broke apart

in several places. More details about the situation in Detroit, and more regularly presented live programming of the story was observed on CNN with Anchor, Ali Velshi, from Atlanta, introducing the news hour.<sup>283</sup>

Similar to the Shoe Bomber case study, the majority of the facts surrounding the Underwear Bomber incident were quickly and accurately relayed to American audiences on the first day of coverage, with few to no retractions or corrections necessary. The only update to the story following its initial presentation on the 25<sup>th</sup>, was Abdulmatallab's later claims (released in detail on the 26<sup>th</sup>) of specific al Qaeda allegiances and his connections in Yemen.<sup>284</sup> The most evident variation between the networks concerning the coverage of the Underpants Bomber on the 25<sup>th</sup> could be found in each network's different reactions to the Obama Administration's response to the attack. President Obama was vacationing with his family in Hawaii for the Christmas holiday in 2009. The following quote is from the more Democratic-orientated CNN during a conversation between CNN's Honolulu Correspondent, Ed Henry, and Anchor Ali Velshi.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> CNN Friday 25 22:00: 'To our viewers here in America and around the world, we're bringing you continuous breaking news coverage of an alleged terror plot aboard a major commercial airliner. Here's what we know right now. A passenger on a Delta Northwest flight is accused of trying to light some kind of explosive device as the plane approached Detroit from Amsterdam. The jet with nearly 300 people on it was coming in from Amsterdam. Sources tell CNN the suspect, a Nigerian national, ignited a small explosive. Passengers told us they saw a flash, flames and then smoke. The man was restrained by passengers and crew. He also suffered burns to his body. He allegedly says he has ties to a terrorist organization.'

<sup>284</sup> CNN 22:00 programing block, Anchor Ali Velshi: 'Well, the would-be bomber was subdued. He's now in custody, a Nigerian national who apparently flew from Lagos, Nigeria, connected with Flight 253 in Amsterdam. He's reportedly talking and he's claiming ties to an extremist organization saying that he got the device in Yemen, as well as instructions on how and when to use it.'

<sup>285</sup> CNN Friday 25 22:05 Correspondent Ed Henry: 'Senior Officials tell CNN that the President has been briefed throughout this Christmas day and has been told that White House officials believe this was an attempted terror attack. That's why, even though the president is on vacation here in Hawaii, he's been getting these secure briefings, including updates, I'm told, that are coming throughout the night from the White House situation room back in Washington. It started on Christmas morning about 9, 9:30, (Hawaiian Pacific Time) when I'm told the president had a secure conference call with two of his

When the Underpants Bomber story broke on FOX at 15:30, Anchor Jamie Colby stated that several passengers had minor injuries after a passenger tried to set off 'fireworks'. The opening report then went to Washington Correspondent Malini Wilkes, stating that the FBI field office was on the scene in Detroit. Similar to CNN, the Delta Spokeswomen's report was relayed which included details covering the flight path, number of passengers, condition of the suspect, and that authorities were not sure whether or not the suspect had been trying to hijack the plane. After the initial 50-second news segment coverage, FOX continued with the special 'Fox and Friends' show that featured an audience filled with US troops and service personnel, a youth choir singing Christmas carols, and Priests singing gospel songs. The troop addresses on FOX aired more frequently than any news reporting on FOX for Christmas Day, and there were more troop and military 'videograms' on FOX than on CNN or MSNBC. The other news (not holiday-related) segments on FOX included: 'A New Way Forward in Afghanistan', a critique of the Obama Administration's proposal to decrease troop numbers overseas, criticism of proposals to close the Guantanamo Bay Detention Center, a briefing on operations in Kuwait, and a short segment on Obama's first year in office.

FOX Friday 25 18:00 'Special Report' with Anchor Jamie Colby:

A U.S. intelligence official is telling the Associated Press that a passenger on a Delta airlines flight to Detroit was attempting to blow up the jet when he tried to light some sort of substance -- 278 people were onboard and sources are also telling FOX News that the suspect is claiming to be connected to Al Qaeda. This incident took place as the nine-hour flight from Amsterdam was landing at Detroit's metro airport. It's still not clear exactly what that substance was.

MSNBC was the first network to associate or compare the Underpants Bomber to the Shoe Bomber, Richard Reid (during the observed coverage on this date). Anchors Carl Quintanilla (in for Brian Williams), and Peter Alexander, for NBC news (aired on and as

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top aides: John Brennan, his chief homeland security advisor, as well as Dennis McDonough from his National Security Council staff.'

MSNBC) introduced the story at 18:30, making comparisons between Abdulmatallab and Reid, along with presenting Reid's personal details at 18:32. The Underpants Bomber was the top story for multiple programming blocks on the network, and all the details about Abdulmatallab (including his name being on at least one US national security list) were presented along with the same information given to CNN and FOX, from Delta officials. NBC White House Correspondent, Chuck Todd, in Hawaii, covered details of the President's involvement, stating that the President was working hard on Christmas Day due to the event.<sup>286</sup> The second story following the Underpants Bomber (not yet named as such on the first day of reporting) on MSNBC was the bad weather condition in the middle of the nation, the attack on the Pope during Christmas Services, and a feature about a teenager helping to feed the homeless on Christmas. There were some 'videograms' by servicemen and women on the network, but not as many as there were on either CNN or FOX.

December 26, 2009

Much like the Shoe Bomber case study, continuous coverage of the Underpants Bomber did not begin on the day of the attempted attack, but rather in the days following. The media coverage of the Shoe Bomber was heaviest on the third day of reporting; and the coverage of the Underpants Bomber was the heaviest on all networks on the day following the attempt, December 26, 2009. By the day after Christmas, all channels were comparing the Underpants Bomber to the Shoe Bomber by the type of explosives used by the would-be-bombers, their respective links to al Qaeda,<sup>287</sup> and their histories within the city of London.<sup>288</sup> There were

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<sup>286</sup> MSNBC/NBC Friday 25 18:30 Anchor Carl Quintanilla to Chuck Todd: 'News of the flight reached the president shortly after 9am in Hawaii...We know this is the President's and his families' first full vacation weekend, is the fact that this is on the front burner a sign of how seriously they (the Obama's and White House Staffer in Hawaii) are taking this?' Chuck Todd: 'Well it is a skeleton staff that is here, but they've been behind closed doors, taking this very seriously...the president did order that initial increase in airline security measures which will take affect almost immediately.'

<sup>287</sup> See CNN Saturday 26 22:00 'Newsroom' with Paul Cruickshank, Terrorism Analyst: '...But this – but this attack, this attempted attack does have a lot of the hallmarks of al Qaeda. They have an obsession over the years of attacking aviation. We saw in the Operation

frequent references to the Liquids Terror plot of 2006, as well as information given by each network on Abdulmatallab's links in Yemen. While the 'underwear' component of the bombing was known and mentioned, the moniker 'underpants bomber' was not yet in use on this date. On this day, the interview with the Dutch filmmaker and passenger, Jasper Schuringa, who had tackled Abdulmatallab, (a CNN Exclusive interview on this date) aired in full or in isolated statements on all networks (including non-CNN, with credits given).<sup>289</sup>

Other stories in the news on the 26<sup>th</sup>, continued to include coverage of the poor winter weather conditions in the center of the nation, with a death toll increasing to 21 persons by this date. Updates on the Pope's condition after being jumped upon by a woman during Christmas Eve service were on all networks, along with segments on actor Charlie Sheen's recent arrest for domestic violence charges in Colorado. Another media segment-stylus typical of the Christmas

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Bojinka, which is this plot in '95 to attack 12 American airliners over the Pacific. That was a plot linked to al Qaeda, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed. 9/11 obviously, Richard Reid in 2006, in the summer, an airline plot involving liquid explosives.'

<sup>288</sup>See FOX Saturday 26 16:00 News 'Americas News HQ' from 18:00 until the first commercial break at 18:19, then from the resuming of news at 18:21 to the second commercial break at 18:27, then from 18:30-18:40 and the third commercial break, resuming news at 18:42 with four minutes of news coverage given to the conviction of a sex offender, before coverage of the Underpants Bomber resumed at 18:50 with Abdulmatallab's Yemen links, and possible links to the Fort Hood shooter discussed in detail. This means all but 17-minutes of the entire hour (counting commercials) was given to the Underpants Bomber story.

<sup>289</sup> CNN Saturday 26 22:00: Anchor Drew Griffin: 'It all could have ended so badly. After all, security did miss the explosive device brought along on board, but fortunately for Flight 253, one passenger saw what was happening and didn't freeze. He told his story to Fredricka Whitfield earlier today. (Pre-recorded interview tape) (Title:) Jasper Schuringa (Subtitle:) 'Helped Subdue Terror Suspect' --- 'I was on -on the right side of the plane, and the suspect was on the left, so there were quite some - some seats in between. So when I - when I saw that the suspect, he was getting on fire and, you know, I freaked, of course. And without any hesitation, I just jumped over all the seats and I - I just jumped to the suspect, and because I was thinking, \*\*\*\*, you know, like, he's trying to blow up the plane. And so, you know, I was trying to - to search his body for, you know, any - any explosives. And then I - I took some kind of object. There was already some melting and smoking out of him and I tried to - I tried to put out the fire. And then, when I did that, I was also restraining the suspect. And then the fire started beneath his - his seat. So with my hands and everything, you can see it's a little burned up. I - I put out the fire and then other passengers helped me as well. And, of course, I was screaming for water, water, because we really had to, you know, a fire in the plane is not that good, of course.'



and New Years period in American media, were recaps of the year's memorable events. On January 15, 2009, US Airways Flight 1549 made an emergency water landing in the Hudson River with all passenger and crew surviving; the event was dubbed 'Miracle on the Hudson' by New York Governor, David Patterson, and a re-cap of the story was allocated the 18:00-18:15 prime-time spot on CNN on December 26th, with no mentions of the Underpants Bomber story during the HLN's Prime News Special Edition entitled, 'Unforgettable Stories'.

FOX news on this date was the most politically charged in terms of language use and frequent criticisms of President Obama's first year in office. During discussion surrounding the Underpants Bomber, the network tied Obama's leadership to a list of contributing factors (for the Underpants Bomber's near success), including failed security and lack of internal-government agency cooperation.<sup>290</sup> FOX's criticism of the new Presidential Administration might be explained in its Republican-leaning political rhetoric, as well as its founder and owner, Rupert Murdoch, openly supporting the Republican Party and pledging more financial support to Republican candidates than Democratic candidates during election years. While there are laws concerning the media's political biases and opportunities made available to each party's

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<sup>290</sup> FOX Saturday 26 23:00 Editorial Report with Paul Gigot: 'This week on the Journal Editorial Report, at home and abroad it has been a tumultuous year for America and President Obama, from his handling of the economy and his left-hand turn on domestic issues, to his offer of engagement to the world's dictators and his new approach to the war on terror...We begin here at home where a new president faced an economy in crisis. A Democratic Congress is ramming through an unpopular health care bill. And a public is increasingly skeptical of both their public officials and the role of government in general'. Dan Henninger, Columnist & Deputy Editor: 'Well, someone's going to write a book called a crisis is a terrible thing to waste. They most certainly did not. They had an agenda. It's turned out to be a left wing agenda. I think the biggest story of the year, frankly, is the realization by the American people that they've elected a left wing president. Now, people sitting at this table and many of our viewers probably say, so what else is new.'

Gigot: 'We predicted it.'

Henninger: 'We predicted it. Look, Independents were 30 percent of the vote and they gave 52 percent of that vote to Barack Obama. Their support for him has been in a straight decline. It's down to about 39 percent. So they have not wasted the crisis in terms of their agenda. But what they have wasted is Barack Obama's approval rating with the Independents who elected him.'

candidates during elections, FOX is openly more supportive of Republican practices than the other networks observed.

Some commonalities observed on all networks on this date were the use of multiple ‘terrorism experts’ during coverage concerning the Underpants Bomber story. This was not observed for previous case studies in such quantity. CNN hosted Terrorism Analyst, Paul Cruickshank (22:00) and Homeland Security Correspondent, Jeanne Meserve, (11:07). FOX hosted Bob Newman, Senior Fellow of Homeland Security Studies at the Rocky Mountain Foundation (16:30), and Peter King, of the House Homeland Security Committee (18:12). And, MSNBC hosted Terrorism Expert, Roger Cressy, (starting at 09:03 and periodically throughout the day), and Evan Kohlmann (11:00 & 17:30). This was the first time that multiple official, academic-orientated or independent group’s ‘terror experts’ and analysts were used by all networks on the same day, discussing the same story during the media coverage observed but this thesis for a failed event. Other commonalities occurred most frequently between CNN and MSNBC, specifically concerning the use of London-based correspondents discussing Abdulmatallab’s activities in the city and similarities to Richard Reid’s activities and education in the UK.

December 27, 2009

December 27<sup>th</sup> carried the headline ‘Christmas Terror Plot’ and ‘Christmas Flight Terror’ on CNN all day including on Larry King Live, which had a new interview with Jasper Schuringa. The story of the Underpants Bomber was very heavily reported on this third day following the attempt by Abdulmatallab, keeping the top story position on all networks’ regular news hours (not on all specialty shows). On Sunday, the 27<sup>th</sup>, Abdulmatallab had begun the lengthy interrogation process with federal authorities at the University of Michigan Hospital while recovering from third-degree burns. All networks reported his calm demeanor during this process, referred to his English proficiency, and all networks had reporters in London, at Abdulmatallab’s last known address. By coincidence, the same flight, Flight 253, was disrupted

on the 27<sup>th</sup> by suspicious passenger behavior for the second time in three days.<sup>291</sup> While the passenger on the 27<sup>th</sup> was ill and behaving irregularly, the timing of the behavior, coupled with the flight number and route, was enough to prompt the airline to request emergency assistance at Detroit, and was covered on all networks in brief.

Another feature of this day was the extensive comparisons made in the media between the Shoe Bomber and the Underpants Bomber, with special emphasis on the British connections of the men, and the previous failures of airport security to prevent the low-tech attacks.<sup>292</sup> Concerning coverage of the US government's reactions, Homeland Security Secretary, Janet Napolitano, made statements on the Underpants Bomber that did not completely line up with the Obama Administration's earlier comments, causing some discussions and speculation of dissidence in the upper echelons of the government, particularly by FOX news. Janet Napolitano was featured on CNN's State of the Union show at 09:00 (she also appeared on 'Meet the Press' with NBC on the same day,) and was asked by CNN Anchor, Candy Crowley, about anticipating and preventing security gaps, as well as if budget cuts were behind the security failure. The only other major news story of the 27th included coverage of violent protests in Iran between citizens

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<sup>291</sup> CNN Sunday 27 20:00 'Newsroom' hourly opening statement: 'Northwest Airline flight 253 was disrupted again after crews requested an emergency landing because of unruly passenger who turned out to be sick. President Obama's vacation in Honolulu has been disturbed twice in three days due to notifications of the latest in Detroit airport. Airports are taking extra security measures after the two incidents at the Detroit airport involving Northwest Airline flight 253.'

<sup>292</sup> For examples, see CNN Sunday 27 09:15 show: 'State of the Union' with Candy Crowley (in for John King) interview with Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano. Crowley: 'it seems to me when Richard Reid got on a plane and tried to light his shoe with explosive, we all began to take off our shoes. When some British terrorist began to put substances together we got the 3.4. Now we have this man, so an hour before your flight lands everybody has to have everything off their lap...it feels as though we are always a little bit behind there...'. Also see FOX 'Geraldo at Large' 04:55 – Guest: Authur Aidala (FOX Contributor) 'You got to look back at Richard Reid...(picture shown)...You know there were palm prints and hair fibers in the shoes that were not his...the first thing they're going to do it look at the forensic evidence that's at their disposal...and what ever high-tech sources we can use to see if there's someone else here...and then follow the trail...'

and security forces; however, this story was consistently seconded or not included at all in the hourly news segments. The story was covered most on MSNBC.<sup>293</sup>

Many discussions surrounding Abdulmatallab on this date also emphasized the ‘self-radicalization’ that was becoming increasingly common with terror attempts. FOX Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>, 09:00, the Chairman of the Senate and Homeland Security Committee Chair, Joseph Lieberman, said: ‘What we know about this individual leads me to conclude that he was a self-radicalized person, that he reached out to Yemen. He broke ties with his family. We don't know for sure whether he contacted the radical sheik who's now in Yemen, Awlaki, but Awlaki has got to be a subject and a target of our interest.’ Other political figures on FOX on Sunday included Congressman Pete Hoekstra (R-MI), speaking about the anger from Republicans towards the Obama Administration, which was seen by some as being at fault for the security failure. During an interview with Chris Wallace (09:00), Wallace specifically asks Hoekstra: ‘Is it really fair to hold the Obama administration responsible here?’<sup>294</sup> An observation of interest on this date is the complete polarization between Republican-backed FOX and Democratic/Left-orientated CNN and MSNBC (respectively). There was a stark contrast in both the use of individual phrases and the expressions of ideas either blaming or supporting the Obama Administration on matters of national and airline security; as well as in other discussions surrounding the political debates at that time concerning the Guantanamo Detention Center’s proposed closing (as per

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<sup>293</sup> MSNBC Sunday 27 11:30, Coverage for 5-minutes between 11:30-11:35; only coverage during the news hour on MSNBC News Live with Chris Jansing.

<sup>294</sup> FOX Sunday 27 09:00 Congressman Hoekstra: ‘Yeah, I think it really is, because I think the connecting the dots is not necessarily on this particular case. It's connecting the dots that we've seen over the last 11 months, over the last eight years. What do we have here? This is an international movement of radicalization...The Obama administration came in and said, "we're not going to use the word 'terrorism' anymore. We're going to call it 'manmade disasters'" trying to, you know, I think, downplay the threat from terrorism. In reality, it's getting much more complex. Radicalization is alive. It is well. They want to attack the United States. That threat is here in the United States. It is lone wolf individuals. It is people that have become radicalized that have had some contact with Al Qaida. And then it is the threat that comes from Al Qaida central. Homegrown terrorism, the threat to the United States, is real. I think this administration has downplayed it. They need to recognize it, identify it. It is the only way we are going to defeat it.’”

one of Obama's campaign promises). While the majority of FOX's criticism of the Obama Administration was focused on the interviews with Lieberman and Hoekstra, on CNN and MSNBC, it was the anchors and reporters themselves (not politicians) who expressed support for the Obama Administration. Another note on this day of reporting was that MSNBC was the only network to air a correspondents report direct from Nigeria. This report was from Abuja by Erin Burnett, and gave details on Abdulmatallab's family and his father's conversations with US authorities about his son's radicalization.

December 28, 2009

Monday, December 28<sup>th</sup>, saw regular news (as opposed to holiday programming), with the Underpants Bomber story taking the lead story position on all observed network coverage. The major developments and updates of information for the story included a statement from al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) claiming responsibility for Friday's attempted bombing by Abdulmatallab. On CNN at 21:00, the story filled the entire news hour, and was the first story following all six commercial breaks during the news hour. Anchor Erica Hill hosted reports from New York Correspondent Randi Kayne, CNN's Jeanne Meserve, Peter Bergen, and Intel Center CEO, Ben Venske, discussing details of the logistics of the flight as well as backgrounds of other failed suicide attacks against aircraft.

President Obama's management and response to the attempted bombing were still heavily debated in the media on this date. CNN's Candy Crowley, (from Washington), Democratic Analyst, Jamal Simmons, and Representative, Peter King, discussed how Obama 'should' speak to the country sooner than the State of the Union Address (regularly occurring in January), to talk about how the US would respond to the attack and what measures the government would take to prevent such attacks in the future. Finally, and similar to the two previous days coverage, London Correspondent, Nic Robertson, discussed the background of Abdulmatallab and the challenges he faced in using/detonating the complicated explosive substance PETN.

On the opposite side of the political aisle, FOX news continued its critique of the Obama Administration's response to the Underpants Bomber on previous days. On FOX at 22:00 'On the Record with Greta Van Susteren', substitute host Shannon Bream opened the broadcast:

It looks like President Obama has a brand-new headache tonight. It appears the accused terrorist who tried to blow up an airliner-spent time in Yemen. Well, almost half of the 200 detainees being held at Guantanamo Bay are from Yemen, and the administration wants to send many of them back to that Middle East country. In fact, six prisoners were just given back to Yemen this month, and many say that is a really, really bad idea.

That show featured Representative Pete Hoekstra expressing similar criticisms of the Obama Administration to those he had offered on the network the day before.<sup>295</sup>

The topic of national and aviation security was observed to have occurred on all networks during the four hours of coverage observed by this thesis; however, the discussions around aviation security were consistently held through critiques of the Obama Administration. FOX news and its guests were observed to engage in heavy criticism of the Obama Administration; whereas CNN and MSNBC emphasized al Qaeda's capabilities, Abdulmatallab's history, and other broader terrorism concerns during conversations about aviation security. MSNBC emphasized physical airport security changes more than FOX or CNN, and had multiple correspondents reporting from airports, interviews with travelers, and covered reports that pilots had started telling all passengers they had to remain seated with nothing in their laps or around their feet for the final hour of all flights. There was scrutiny of this practice observed on MSNBC by Wall Street Journal Travel Editor, Scott McCartney (holding discussions with Brian Williams at 17:30 (NBC aired as MSNBC) saying that forcing people to stay in their seats is

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<sup>295</sup> FOX Monday 28 22:00 Congressman Hoekstra: 'You know, right now, this administration is setting a very dangerous precedent. They are flying solo on national security. It means they're not involving Congress in the policy decisions or sharing the information that is necessary to form policy positions. It's a dangerous place when the president and the executive branch fly solo on national security. Historically, that's been a bipartisan effort because it's so important to the safety of American citizens.'

not an effective use of time or energies, that if an individual was motivated enough to bomb an aircraft the new measure would be useless. There was coverage on this date of the 'mixed messages' between homeland Security Secretary Napolitano and the Obama Administration, specifically from Honolulu MSNBC Correspondent, Chuck Todd, as aired at 17:40.

Other political controversy on this date focused on the various lists against which passengers were crosschecked when traveling on international flights to the United States. All networks held discussions on the nature of the lists including which government agencies were responsible for which lists, and all networks concluded that there had been some degree of oversight failure in allowing Abdulmatallab to enter the US at all, given his father's warning to the US Embassy in Nigeria, and his name being on the TIDE list. MSNBC hosted former Homeland Security official Stewart Baker, saying that Abdulmatallab's visa (a multi-entry US visa which he had obtained during his studies in London) should have been revoked at the very least. British Interior Minister, Alan Johnson was also on-air discussing the investigation into Abdulmatallab's London activities. Aside from this link to London, the live reporting from outside Abdulmatallab's former residence had subsided by this date on all networks. The other stories on the news for this date, which saw increases in non-Underpants' Bomber related stories overall, included stock market reports following the holiday shopping season, the FBI's announcement that New York City was the safest big city in the United States in 2009, and plans for New Year's Eve events in various cities.

December 29, 2009

By this fifth day of coverage for the Underpants Bomber on Tuesday 29th, there wasn't any new information released from US officials, international governments, or airport/travel security groups related to the Underpants Bomber story or to Abdulmatallab himself. The information repeated on each network on this day was the same information available the day prior. The only variation was the individual networks' lines of reasoning pertaining to which US official or organization should be held responsible for such failures. Other stories on this date

included a new scandal within the Afghan National Army, General Motors Company's discontinuation of an automobile line, the disappearance of sea lions from a San Francisco pier, low housing prices, and the appearance of a Blue Moon on New Years Eve in two-days time. By this date, all networks had begun to use the moniker of the 'Underpants Bomber'. On Tuesday 29, CNN and MSNBC aired as much criticism about national security failures concerning the Underpants Bombers as FOX news for the first time in the five days of coverage observed. On CNN, during the 21:00 news hour hosted by Erica Hill, the Underpants Bomber was the top story and nearly filled the news hour. President Obama made a speech on this date addressing the intelligence community's oversights in not sharing information about suspicious individuals across the agencies' various lists. Obama's speech was covered and re-shown on all networks, and it was the first time that all the networks (during this case study's observed coverage hours) concluded that the Underpants Bomber situation was a security failure. Also, on the 21:00 news hour (in a segment headlined: 'Terror Suspect's Father Met with CIA'), Washington correspondent Jeanna Meserve relayed information about Abdulmatallab's father's warnings, and how the FBI or CIA did not properly manage the information. The discussions turned to the President's speech and his order to review the collection and sharing of information by US government agencies. Pentagon Correspondent Barbara Starr (during the same news hour) relayed facts about recent US airstrikes in Yemen and gave a basic background as to how Yemen had become a 'hotbed' of al Qaeda (AQAP) activity in recent years. This story was tied into the Underpants Bomber headline and reasoned by the hosts to be a part of the problem that allowed Abdulmatallab to proceed as far as he had with his bomb plot. Later in the program, CNN's Frances Townsend stated that the intelligence community would have to answer for their failures in aviation security and that the CIA and the Director of National Intelligence would be the most accountable (this is opposed to FOX news which indicated repeatedly that President Obama was the one who should be solely accountable).



FOX Monday 29<sup>th</sup>, 21:00, 'The Hannity Show' (with substitute anchor Rich Lowry) headlined the Underpants Bomber story with Obama's speech opening the news hour:

Obama: 'When our government has information on known extremist, and that information is not shared and acted upon, as it should have been, so that this extremist boards a plane with dangerous explosives that could have cost nearly 300 lives, a systemic failure has occurred. And I consider that totally unacceptable. The reviews I've ordered will surely tell us more, but what already is apparent is that there was a mix of human and systemic failures that contributed to this potential catastrophic breach of security.'

FOX's coverage that hour continued with a video clip of Congresswoman Shelia Jackson Lee (D-TX) stating that she believed that there needed to be behavioral assessments included in airport screening. (Start Clip) Lee: 'There was no reason for this individual to have a visa that still was in place until 2010 for them to be able to travel. There was no reason for him not to be detected because of his behavior.' (End Video Clip) To which host Rich Lowry responded (to the audience): 'Now, I'm not exactly sure what behavioral assessment is, but it appears to be a liberal code word for profiling. Other members of the Democratic Party, though, have been a little more careless when it comes to airline security.' The conversation turned to comparisons between Republican and Democratic notions of security with input from Republican Strategist Karen Hanretty:

They said, now, what are you going to do that's different from the Bush administration? And boy, let me tell you something, everything was going to be 180 degrees different from the Bush Administration...(continued)...They were going to have intelligence-sharing, not just among agencies, but with other countries. What we had was a complete failure of intelligence-sharing under the Obama administration...I think at the end of the day Obama needs to come out and admit -- maybe he'll do it in his State of the Union address, I doubt it -- that he is not the savior of the world, that if liberals rule America, we will not be 100 percent safe, that there are a lot of problems that need to be solved.

That interview concluded with discussion about the Guantanamo population and possible US intervention in Yemen.

On MSNBC Tuesday 29 21:00, Host Rachel Maddow criticized and spoke directly about FOX news and other Republican-backed media groups condemning their media stylus and coverage of recent events including the Underpants Bomber. The headline, ‘Republicans Blast President Obama For Handling Of Failed Christmas Day Attack’, opened the show, which included multiple video clips of FOX news, of various speeches and Republican-centric news coverage from earlier in the day on the 29<sup>th</sup>, as well as from the four days prior. The criticism was then laced into the Republican (under the Bush Administration’s) handling of the Shoe Bomber incident, which connected the two incidents, not by the similarities in the attacks or attackers, but in the response by the respective governments of the time.

MSNBC Tuesday 29 21:00 Maddow: ‘Through selective editing, Republicans have tried to turn Janet Napolitano’s assessment of the response to the attempted bombing into some sort of excuse for the bombing happening in the first place. President Obama is trying to put an end to that political trickery today by putting Napolitano’s comments back in context.’

(Start Clip) President Obama: ‘Secretary Napolitano has said once the suspect attempted to take down Flight 253, after his attempt, it’s clear that passengers and crew, our homeland security systems and our aviation security, took all appropriate actions.’ (End Clip)

Maddow: ‘Now, we get to see if the media just keeps parroting the Republican attack on Janet Napolitano, or if they will actually report her remarks in context, and the fact that Republicans are attacking her for saying something she never actually said.’<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Continued: (Start Clip) Former Bush Administration Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge (commenting on the Underpants Bomber): ‘I take a look at this individual who’s been charged criminally -- does that mean he’s going to get his Miranda warnings? Does that mean the only kind of information we’re going to get from him is if he volunteers it? He’s not a citizen of this country, he is a terrorist, and I don’t think he deserves the full range of criminal -- protections for our criminal justice system as provided in the Constitution of the United States.’ (End Clip)

Maddow: ‘That was Bush administration’s first homeland security secretary, Tom Ridge, lamenting the fact that the Christmas Day underwear bomber has been indicted and will be tried in a federal court, federal court, a real federal court. Are you kidding? Is there any precedent for doing something so outrageous?’

‘Conveniently, yes. There’s almost an exact parallel to this situation, in the case of convicted shoe bomber Richard Reid...Richard Reid the shoe bomber attempted basically the exact same thing as the underpants guy. On a cold and wintry day in

This type of critique by one news network against another (of a different political stance) is not uncommon in American media. However, it should be noted that the majority of Democratic-orientated networks (such as MSNBC, ABC, CNN, CNBC, and HLN) specifically addressed and critiqued FOX news channel, rather than other Republican-orientated networks by (such as ESPN and CBS). This may speak to an increased politicization of terrorism coverage during this time (around 2009), with an emphasis on political blame for attacks/attempts that have occurred, rather than an emphasis on addressing root causes of terrorism and security standards. This will be addressed in the next section through the identification of the frames of this thesis in order to attempt to identify what political notions were involved in the framing of this failed terror event, and how they might differ from earlier case study and terrorism based coverage.

### 6.3 Frames

The political environment of this period in United States history should be noted as it does factor into the delivery of news from each network observed. At this time, Democratic

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December 2001, Richard Reid was armed with the same kind of explosive. He was also an al Qaeda operative. He was also trying to bring down an American airliner. He was also overtaken by his fellow passengers. That plane also landed safely and he was arrested.'

'And you want to know how the Bush administration prosecuted Richard Reid at the time? Federal judge? Criminal charges? The Bush administration tried Richard Reid in federal court. Just as the Obama administration is going to try the Christmas Day underpants bomber guy in federal court as well. The Bush administration even bragged about the Richard Reid's criminal conviction after it happened.'

(Start Clip) Former US Attorney General John Ashcroft: 'In Boston, Richard Colvin Reid pled guilty to all counts in the indictment for attempting to ignite a bomb on American Airlines Flight 63, and to murder 197 passengers and crew. Today is a victory for justice and for the citizens who are vigilant in the pursuit of justice.' (End Clip)

Maddow: 'Former Bush Attorney General John Ashcroft bragging on the civilian criminal conviction of Richard Reid, the shoe bomber...Who was head of the Homeland Security Department at that time?'

(Start Clip) Ridge: 'Because of the vigilance of some citizens, we certainly got some folks on airplanes -- shoe bombers.' (End Clip)

Maddow: 'Tom Ridge. Richard Reid's prosecution was not a controversial issue. In fact, everyone now, including Mr. Ridge, seems rather happy about the fact that Richard Reid is serving out a life sentence in obscurity at a super max prison in Colorado.'

President Barak Obama had been in office for less than a year, and the upper echelons of government (the Executive Branch, House of Representatives, and the Senate) all held a Democratic majority. (The Republican Party later retook the majority of the House of Representatives in the November 2010 elections). However, the news network most closely associated with the Republican Party, FOX news, as well as some House Republicans interviewed by FOX news, made their unsupportive opinions of the Democratic rule known through statements on the network. This was also the time of the rise of the Tea Party Movement, with protests by the strongly conservative ‘grassroots’ group commencing during the inauguration of President Obama. The language of FOX news was more distinctly Republican-orientated at this point in time than in preceding case studies’ media coverage. It is speculated that in the seven-year gap between the Bali Bombings and the Underpants Bomber attempt, the political discourse in the United States became increasingly polarized, as a stark divide between Republicans and Democrats was evident in network coverage of political topics (with the Democratic CNN and Republican FOX representing the polar ends of the spectrum of political expression in corporate media in the US).<sup>297</sup>

## 9/11

In the network coverage of the Underpants Bomber story, the problem (portrayed by the media and detailed in the following excerpts) was not the individual incident itself (past day two), but rather in the typology of aviation-centric security failures that *should* have been addressed by authorities following 9/11. Starting on the third day of coverage, all networks engaged in various degrees of scrutiny over airport security procedures, highlighting of the near misses of other aviation-based attacks such as the Shoe Bomber and the London Liquids Plot. Whereas the first two days of coverage (Christmas Day and the 26<sup>th</sup>) focused on Abdulmatallab himself and the

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<sup>297</sup> This furthers the partisanship that has increased as the chronological progression of this thesis continues. Unlike the almost identical messages between the government and media outlets observed on 9/11 and discussed in this thesis’ interview with Professor Richard Jackson, for this case study, there were different messages not only between the government and media, but between the media outlets themselves.

averted disaster, once the urgency of the situation passed, network coverage consistently included these references and comparisons to other airplane attacks, with criticisms of the lack of communication between government agencies (regarding the various lists), and calls for amendments to security protocols. When 9/11 was referenced, it was utilized as a ‘starting point’ of when the typology of (airplane based) attacks commenced in the new century (and the War on Terror specifically), and 9/11 was considered by the media’s discussions to be the hallmark of such attacks and their potential devastation.<sup>298</sup>

FOX Sunday 27 09:00 Senate Homeland Security Committee Chairman, Joe Lieberman:

Look, I want to briefly set this in context, because we naturally focus on the specific attempted terrorist attack. We really did go to war with the Islamic extremists who attacked us on 9/11, and that war is not only occurring around the world...And let's be honest. This guy, Abdulmatallab, got through the screening, and this would have been -- could have been an enormous disaster if not for our good fortune, a miracle on Christmas Day that this device did not explode.

The *problem identification* for the 9/11 Frame operating during the Underpants Bomber case study was; Abdulmatallab should not have been able to proceed with his attempted bombing as far as he did *because* the mistakes in airport security that he exploited *should* have been addressed after 9/11 and other aviation-centric terror plots. The *problem* conveyed on all networks for the first two days of coverage was that Abdulmatallab tried to blow up a plane, the *problem* for the last three days of observed coverage was that the airport and transport security measures of the day had failed and nearly cost 300-lives. In essence, the focus of the reporting of the story panned out from the micro problem of Abdulmatallab, to the wider security situation

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<sup>298</sup> Many references to 9/11 were phrased: ‘since 9/11’, or ‘in the eight-years since 9/11’ – Such as on FOX, Sunday 27 09:00, guest Senator Richard Shelby: ‘I believe this is a jolt for us. This is probably more than a wake-up call, noticing what's happened -- what happened at Fort Hood and others. We have come a long way since 9/11, but we've got a long way to go. We've got to -- we've got to believe -- I believe, get better at sharing information between the State Department, people who issue visas, and the law enforcement, homeland security, FBI and so forth, that track these people.’ In this example and in other instances, 9/11 is the point in time from which similar attacks are presumed to have started and are related to.

with international aviation security, and it did this over a five-day period rather evenly across the three networks. This was detailed on Tuesday's coverage (the final day of observation for this thesis).<sup>299</sup> There was clear connection made between 9/11, the Shoe Bomber, and the Underpants Bomber; but, the main problem was consistently represented as the 'near miss', which was the fault of security gaps in airport screening. While CNN and MSNBC attributed the fault of the attempt nearing success to human error, budgetary stresses, and procedure oversight; FOX focused on the political issues involved in increasing security requiring a decrease in privacy, looking ahead to possible changes in airport security with intense scrutiny. FOX also suggested that the underlying problem that allowed the Underpants Bomber to come so close to success lay with the new Democratic Presidential Administration.<sup>300</sup>

MSNBC and CNN countered this type of criticism of the Obama Administration by looking at wider political issues crossing party lines. The other politically charged rift between the Republicans and Democrats during this period of coverage concerned more general concepts of security, with the debate focusing on the increase of security (such as airport pat-downs)

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<sup>299</sup> CNN Tuesday 29 09:00 Host Kiran Chetry: 'Right. And as I understand it, that they are – they have upped that since Christmas Day at many places. We spent \$40 billion since 9/11 trying to get our airports more secure. And clearly, we have a lot of challenges ahead.'- CNN Tuesday 29 12:00 Headlines: 'Passengers Face Tighter Air Travel Security', 'Terror Politics', and 'Tolerance For Tighter Security'. Guest Allan Chernoff: 'After 9/11, the country had a wartime mentality. Near misses like Friday's attempted bombing quickly revived that kind of vigilance and tolerance (for increased security).' - FOX Tuesday 29 18:00 Roundtable Discussion – Guest Wendell Goler: 'Carafano says the similarities between Abdulmutallab and Richard Reid, the Shoe Bomber's attempted attack, show we're not connecting the dots we vowed to connect after 9/11. Of course, we have the technology to spot threats like Abdulmutallab, but the full body scanner is only installed in a handful of airports. It's expensive and intrusive.'

<sup>300</sup> FOX Monday 28 18:40, 'Special Report' with Bret Baier, Guest A.B. Stoddard, Associate Editor of 'The Hill': 'I think the official initial response when we did not hear from President Obama, from his administration was laughable. It was a huge error. The fact that they made those statements and had to walk them back today was a huge mistake, and they knew that. That's why I'm surprised that when President Obama did go to cameras, he wasn't more emphatic about this incident, and all he called for was a thorough investigation. He called it an isolated incident...it is classic Obama style. He is taking a measured response, the American people think his response - this is the first time that Democrats have governed in the age of terrorism post-9/11, this is their test. And they will fail it if the public believes his response is inadequate or insufficient.'

versus the right to privacy. Republicans stressed the individual right to privacy as a Constitutional right, and the Democrats stressed the need for blanket security increases to avoid allegations of discrimination. Both political parties and associated news networks detailed this issue at length on special news programming and evening talk shows (but not as much during regular news hours).<sup>301</sup>

This leads to the second of Entman's qualifiers: the *causal interpretation* offered by the media. The causal interpretation component of this case study was not as easy to identify as it was for the 9/11 frame in previous case studies; this was primarily due to stark differences between FOX and MSNBC/CNN concerning politically biased reporting during the coverage observed. For the last three days of coverage in this case study, FOX's causal interpretation of the Underpants Bomber, specifically as it related to 9/11 and other aviation security issues, was vastly different from the centre-left reporting of MSNBC and CNN, and primarily included pro-Republican rhetoric in its assessments of the situation. As previously mentioned, the reporting observed was more politically charged for this case study than the reporting observed during 9/11, the Shoe Bomber, and the Bali Bombings case studies respectively.<sup>302</sup> FOX news directly

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<sup>301</sup> MSNBC Monday 28 18:00 The Ed Show with Ed Schultz. Guests Evan Kohlmann and Republican Analyst Karen Hanretty discussion: Kohlmann: 'I think one of the problems is, is that we've let down our guard. I think right after 9/11, and for years afterwards, you saw the flights going into Washington, D.C. Everyone was told the last half an hour, you can't get up... There (after 9/11) were sky marshals. You could see them on the planes. Lately, that just doesn't seem to be present.'

Hanretty: 'This is not left-right. The transportation authority in America since 9/11 has been a complete joke. It didn't matter if it was the Bush administration, the Obama administration, or the next upcoming administration. This idea that they don't actually just enforce the laws that are on the books -- they don't look at their own terrorist watch lists. The rest of us -- I guess if you're an innocent traveler, if you're a tourist and you're inconvenienced, bureaucrats seem to think the more inconvenient you are, the safer you feel. This is just about making people feel safe, not actually making people safe.'

<sup>302</sup> FOX Tuesday 29 17:00, Hardball with Chris Matthews & Matt Nesto – Discussion between Kathleen Matthews and Chris Matthews: K. Matthews: 'So terrorism and war. You've been talking about it all week after this foiled bombing on the Northwest flight. Is this the kind of thing that Republicans were waiting for, so that they could say Barack Obama's soft on terrorism?'

C Matthews: 'It would be unfair to get into motive about somebody hoping for the worst. But certainly this is an opportunity for somebody like Dick Cheney or someone to

accused the Democratic rule to be 'soft' and less capable of handling terrorism and security matters than the previous Bush Administration. This was the *moral evaluation* as well as the blame by FOX against the Obama Administration, which was frequently observed during this case study. CNN does mention the Executive Branch's reaction to the Underpants Bomber attempt; however, it was in a more complementary manner than FOX news. The causal interpretation by CNN and MSNBC was that there was a systems failure, but stopped short of echoing FOX's allegations that the responsibility for those failures lay with President Obama. The failures, according to the left-center networks were with the wider system of government and its (lack of) internal-communications, rather than individual Presidential Administrations.<sup>303</sup>

The significance of this case study lies in an unexpected shift in the framing identification concerning the moral evaluation and treatment recommendations by the three networks under the 9/11 frame. On the first two days of coverage, likely due to the pre-programming segments and Christmas holiday, all three networks had very similar *problem identifications, causal interpretations, moral evaluations, and treatment recommendations*; however, from the third day of coverage through to the fifth day, the *moral evaluation and treatment recommendation* for the networks divided along political party lines. FOX consistently offered more politically conservative *moral evaluations and treatment recommendations* than CNN or MSNBC. Because of this, this thesis anticipated that all three networks would differ in *all four* framing attributes (still only speaking to the 9/11 frame as it is the first frame identified for each case study). However, in observing the

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say they've been soft. I think that's the way the game is played. And it is not fair, but it is. Certainly the Democrats didn't jump on George Bush when 9/11 hit, and said it's his fault. But the other side plays it a lot tougher.'

<sup>303</sup> CNN Tuesday 29 23:00 Show: Anderson Cooper (with Guest Anchor Erica Hill): 'Tonight we begin with breaking news: President Obama calling this, a case of both human failure and a failure of the system; failure to stop the alleged Christmas bomber from getting on a plane. Just hours after he says that, CNN learns the who and the how of a breakdown that frankly was never supposed to happen after 9/11...We look at how many people knew about this...We know the dots weren't connected there. But the fact that this guy was still able to get on a plane? When you look at security in a post-9/11 world, are we any safer in the skies or in the airports than we were on September 10th, 2001?'



networks over the five days for the 9/11 frame and its framing identification attributes, it was found that the networks retained similar *problem identification* attributes and *causal interpretations* for the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup>, the *moral evaluations* and *treatment recommendations* for CNN and MSNBC were relatively similar, with FOX providing a completely different set of *moral evaluations* and *treatment recommendations*. Also, on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, FOX's *causal interpretation* varied again, completely converse to CNN and MSNBC's causal interpretations. See the following charts for the visually represented identifications:

9/11 Frame - Problem Identification

| <u>Network</u> | <b>Dec 25</b>                        | <b>Dec 26</b>                        | <b>Dec 27</b>   | <b>Dec 28</b>                                     | <b>Dec 29</b>                                     |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>CNN</b>     | Abdulmatallab akin to 9/11 hijackers | Abdulmatallab akin to 9/11 hijackers | Airport Security should be better since 9/11                  | Airport Security should be better since 9/11      | Airport Security should be better since 9/11      |
| <b>MSNBC</b>   | Abdulmatallab akin to 9/11 hijackers | Abdulmatallab akin to 9/11 hijackers | Airport Security should be better since 9/11                  | Airport Security should be better since 9/11      | Airport Security should be better since 9/11      |
| <b>FOX</b>     | Abdulmatallab akin to 9/11 hijackers | Abdulmatallab akin to 9/11 hijackers | Self-Radicalized persons = new wave of same group behind 9/11 | Obama Administration failure to protect the skies | Obama Administration failure to protect the skies |

9/11 Frame - Causal Interpretation

| <u>Network</u> | <b>Dec 25</b>                                      | <b>Dec 26</b>                                      | <b>Dec 27</b>                                | <b>Dec 28</b>  | <b>Dec 29</b>  |
|----------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>CNN</b>     | al Qaeda still active –targeting planes since 9/11 | al Qaeda still active –targeting planes since 9/11 | Security failure by US government i.e. LISTS | Security failure by US government i.e. LISTS         | Security failure by US government i.e. LISTS         |
| <b>MSNBC</b>   | al Qaeda still active –targeting planes since 9/11 | al Qaeda still active –targeting planes since 9/11 | Security failure by US government i.e. LISTS | Security failure by US government i.e. LISTS         | Security failure by US government i.e. LISTS         |
| <b>FOX</b>     | al Qaeda still active –targeting planes since 9/11 | al Qaeda still active –targeting planes since 9/11 | Security failure by US government i.e. LISTS | Democrats not able to handle post-9/11 terror threat | Democrats not able to handle post-9/11 terror threat |

9/11 Frame - Moral Evaluation

| <u>Network</u> | <b>Dec 25</b>   | <b>Dec 26</b>   | <b>Dec 27</b>                     | <b>Dec 28</b>                     | <b>Dec 29</b>                     |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>CNN</b>     | AQAP new threat | AQAP new threat | AQAP new threat                   | US still at war – but winning     | US still at war – but winning     |
| <b>MSNBC</b>   | AQAP new threat | AQAP new threat | AQAP new threat                   | US still at war – but winning     | US still at war – but winning     |
| <b>FOX</b>     | AQAP new threat | AQAP new threat | Terrorism will always be a threat | Terrorism will always be a threat | Terrorism will always be a threat |

9/11 Frame - Treatment Recommendation

| <u>Network</u> | <b>Dec 25</b>                  | <b>Dec 26</b>                  | <b>Dec 27</b>                  | <b>Dec 28</b>                  | <b>Dec 29</b>                  |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>CNN</b>     | Increase all airport security  | Increase all airport security  | Fix the Lists system           | Fix the Lists system           | Fix the Lists system           |
| <b>MSNBC</b>   | Increase all airport security  | Increase all airport Security  | Fix the Lists system           | Fix the Lists system           | Fix the Lists system           |
| <b>FOX</b>     | More Overseas airport security | More Overseas Airport Security | Bring back Republican Security | Bring back Republican Security | Bring back Republican Security |

While these fractured *causal interpretations* were offered by FOX and CNN/MSNBC, so too were the *moral evaluations* of the 9/11 frame spilt along political party lines. The *moral*

*evaluation* of FOX rested on their suggestion of which persons were directly responsible for Abdulmatallab's near success, and according to FOX, that was the new Democratic Administration. For CNN and MSNBC, the wider government was the focus of scrutiny, specifically the lack of information sharing which was also stated as being one cause behind the success of the 9/11 attacks (which is why it is represented here in the 9/11 frame). On MSNBC, Tuesday 29 17:00 Hardball with Chris Matthews, the discussions on the Underpants Bomber story centered around the challenges of administering security without racially profiling or over-working airport screeners.<sup>304</sup> At the same time as the discussion quoted above aired on MSNBC, on FOX, the conversation on the Underpants Bomber story centered on President Obama's response. Charles Payne (Tuesday 29 17:00) substituted for Glenn Beck, opening the show with the Underpants Bomber story. Guest and fellow FOX News Contributor Jonah Goldberg, speaking to official Executive response:

FOX Tuesday 29 17:00 Goldberg: I would argue that the people in the White House now, starting with Barack Obama, have a rigid ideological view about the terror threat, and their ideological view is that there isn't that much of one. And the problem is that reality keeps biting them in places that we can't talk about on family-oriented television by proving that the Bush administration was actually more real realistic than the Obama administration is.

Five hours later on FOX during similar discussions, guest Karl Rove<sup>305</sup> expanded on the scale of analysis beyond critiques of general airport security:

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<sup>304</sup> MSNBC Tuesday 29 17:00 Matthews: 'The problem, gentlemen, is, can you do it robotically? Can you just get these simple profiling techniques, like traveling with cash, traveling without luggage that you check, and use these robotic sort of indices and know whether a person is dangerous or not? I would say that the fact we're talking about these indices right now is our enemies knows them, and they'll get around them. They'll pay by credit card. They will make sure they've got a whole ton of luggage to put on the plane. They'll do everything we ask them to do. That's what scares me...Doesn't it take somebody above -- not to be sophisticated about too much, but doesn't it take a trained almost a police officer of some kind to smell trouble? I mean, it really comes down to, it seems to me, common sense, experience, and to some extent, intuition to know whether someone is dangerous.'

<sup>305</sup> FOX had already hosted Karl Rove on Monday, and during that interview Rove was speaking

FOX Tuesday 29 22:00, Former Bush Sr. White House Advisor & FOX Contributor Karl Rove: You know, really, if we could step back just a little bit further from this. The biggest problem I have with all of this is this shows the glaring difference between the approach America had in the aftermath of 9/11 and the new approach that it's had since January 20 of 2009, when this administration came in.

On CNN, speaking to the lists' issue, the former Homeland Security Advisor under President Bush weighed in on the 'red flags' that Abdulmatallab's actions should have thrown up for all transportation agents.<sup>306</sup> Finally, concerning the list discussion, MSNBC Monday, Hardball with Chris Matthews, in the opening words of the broadcast:

MSNBC Monday 28 17:00 Chris Matthews: Some Republicans are already pinning the blame on the Obama administration. Janet Napolitano didn't help saying the system worked. What's it like when it doesn't work? Who created the watch lists...(and) the system that we're using right now? Weren't they put into effect during the Bush administration?

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directly about the issue of the various government lists'. From FOX Monday, Karl Rove joined host Sean Hannity: FOX Monday 28 21:00 Rove: 'The Obama administration ought to be asking why that information was not moved up the chain and why it was not reflected in this list. These lists, these systems are in place and have been in place for a number of years but have to be constantly updated, constantly and monitored and constantly checked for weaknesses. The second question that ought to be asked is, why did the administration -- or why did this individual get on an airplane in a foreign country with potentially, it sounds like, some problems with his visa? I mean this guy should have been caught several different ways through here but for the administration, the Obama administration to first and foremost decide it needs to launch a political attack on the previous administration and it's all the fault of the Bush administration is pretty pathetic.'

<sup>306</sup> CNN Tuesday 28 12:00 National Security Contributor Frances Townsend: 'Here's the other thing, Tony. When you look at this particular case of the Christmas Eve bomber -- attempted bomber -- what we know is not only was he was on that initial list, that very big list, but he paid cash for his ticket. It was a one-way ticket. He had no carry-on luggage and his visa had been yanked by the British because they deemed him some sort of threat. And so, all of that taken together should have very easily pushed him through the system and got you on the no-fly list. So the next series of question ought to be, why didn't that happen? Why weren't those dots all connected?... Well, because right now...responsibilities are fractured, if you will. The intelligence community collects information, they go into a database. You've got the National Counterterrorism Center, but they don't get that additional information quickly, timely enough, to be able to push it back out, again, to screeners and to the Department of Homeland Security.'

In all these conversations across the networks, there was a use of the phrase (or analogy) ‘connecting the dots’. This particular phrase was used across the political spectrum on the networks, despite the differing interpretations on why Abdulmatallab came so close to success. On MSNBC, Monday’s Hardball once again, Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) of the Homeland Security Committee speaking to host Matthews and Representative Dan Lungren (R-CA) also on the Homeland Security Committee:

MSNBC Monday 28 17:00 Norton: Chris, Dan is right about the dots. He and I have been on the committee, the Homeland Security Committee, since its inception, and we spent a lot of time during the Bush years trying to connect the dots. And it looks like we still got some dots to be connected.

This suggests that one common component of a proposed *treatment recommendation* by the three networks would be that the aforementioned ‘dots’ being properly connected would prevent not only another Underpants Bomber situation, but, what could also be the next 9/11-level terrorism situation. The competing discourse between Republican-orientated FOX and the center-left CNN and MSNBC does create a fracture in (what has been in other case studies), a typically singular *treatment recommendation* under the 9/11 frame. However, despite the solutions proposed by each network concerning either new Democratic rule or criticizing Republican written policy, the one similarity between the networks is the conclusion that the ultimate failure did rest within the use (or misuse) of the various terror watch lists of the US.

#### Evil

This frame of ‘evil’ was the most difficult to identify and weakest frame overall observed in the media coverage of the Underpants Bomber. While there were issues identifying the *moral evaluation* and *treatment recommendations* of the following *Scope of Threat* frame, the *Evil* frame simply did not exist in a substantial manner during this failed terror event. One reason for this absence of a clear judgment of evil (or any antonym of ‘good’) by the media of Abdulmatallab’s actions, could be that his failure was one in a series of failed airline-centric, al Qaeda-inspired attacks; meaning his actions were seen as redundant by the networks in their own coverage, in addition

to being a failed attempt to successfully attack the United States.<sup>307</sup> Comparisons and remarks on the similar failures between Richard Reid and Abdulmatallab's attacks began on the first day of media coverage, on the 25<sup>th</sup>. However, the comparisons then evolved from similar *problem identifications* and *causal interpretations* of a simple failure (with the semantics falling short of labeling the two individuals 'evil' at this time), to more light-hearted and even humorous explanations of the event. This use of humor meant that there was no problem to identify (concerning the *problem identification* attribute), as there was no problem beyond Abdulmatallab's influence from al Qaeda. While it was expressed that Abdulmatallab's choices were 'bad', and the people with whom he associated in Yemen were 'bad', there were no direct uses of the phrase 'evil' attached to Abdulmatallab in the media (such as there were during the 9/11 case study concerning Osama bin Laden, during the Shoe Bomber attempt, describing Richard Reid, or during the Bali Bombings, talking about global al Qaeda cells and individual radical leaders). The *problem identified* concerning Abdulmatallab as an individual, was that he had all the typically Western-orientated, positive opportunities for a normal life (with his family's wealth and his education in London frequently mentioned); however, he choose to engage with persons who frowned upon and allied

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<sup>307</sup> MSNBC Tuesday 29 21:00 host Rachel Maddow: 'Richard Reid the shoe bomber attempted basically the exact same thing as the underpants guy. On a cold and wintry day in December 2001, Richard Reid was armed with the same kind of explosive. He was also an al Qaeda operative. He was also trying to bring down an American airliner. He was also overtaken by his fellow passengers. That plane also landed safely and he was arrested.'

FOX Monday 28 18:00 Hour, host Bret Baier: 'He reportedly smuggled...a highly explosive powder known as PETN onto the plane hidden in his underpants, which then allegedly started a fire but failed to destroy the plane. This is the same explosive used by unsuccessful shoe bomber Richard Reid back in 2001.'

CNN Saturday 26 14:00 hour – Guest Sajjan Gohel: 'And there is also this very interesting connection to Holland, to the Netherlands. Richard Reid had been making a lot of trips on behalf of Al Qaeda. And he then claimed that he had lost his passport, which he asked the British embassy in Amsterdam to issue him a new one in order to hide the fact of where he had been traveling...attention is that Richard Reid's co-conspirator was person called Saajid Badat, also a British citizen. The day Richard Reid was supposed to blow up a flight leaving from Paris to the U.S., Saajid Badat was supposed to target a plane onboard midair across the Atlantic flying out of Amsterdam. So yet again you are seeing the fact that Al Qaeda's crazed obsession in targeting aviation remains a huge concern, and especially from Europe with trans-Atlantic flights. So this is an ongoing concern, I believe.'

against Western society. The potential factor which held Abdulmatallab back from being labeled as 'evil' in the media might have to do with the humor which could be found in the extensive discussions of his 'underwear' in the American media.

MSNBC Monday 28 21:00 Rachel Maddow: So, what do we know about the explosive that managed to get by the security screeners for the Christmas Day attempted bomb? How did that explosive make it onto that plane? Why didn't it blow up? And will this alleged terrorist have to live out his remaining days with the shameful nickname of the underpants bomber? That is coming up.

The application of humor and mockery by the media detracts from any *causal interpretation* of evil or maliciousness, as it belittles Abdulmatallab and his ambitions to become a successful al Qaeda terrorist. The only *causal interpretations* that fall under this 'evil' frame (during this time) pertain to the rise of al Qaeda terrorism in Yemen. However, the exact phrase 'evil' is not used to describe Abdulmatallab, rather, persons like him are simply 'bad'.<sup>308</sup> As such, without substantial indications from any networks that Abdulmatallab was in fact *evil*, there is no treatment recommendation by any network for the condition of 'evil' during this case study's observed media coverage, meaning that this frame is incomplete and defunct during this particular case study.

#### Scope of Threat

The Scope of Threat frame (which pertains to the scale(s) of the War on Terror Narrative) had become less 'blank' by this point in 2009. The *scope* of the physical sources of conflict was increasingly defined in the media through the detailing of locations of contemporary al Qaeda activity and places where known terrorists such as Abdulmatallab had visited and 'trained'. Whereas in the last case study of the Bali Bombings the boundaries of the War on Terror were ever expanding (as there was no singular 'stronghold' for al Qaeda or 'terrorism' at

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<sup>308</sup> One outlying exception: CNN Tuesday 29 21:00 'Larry King Live' (with substitute hosts) – Guest Ben Stein to Host Candy Crowley: 'It's a war, Candy. It's a war. I'd love to hear the president say, it's a war. Not a war against Muslims. Not a war against any particular country. But a war against evil, sick, warped, crazy, murderous people. And we're going to fight it the way we fought the Nazis.'

large); in this case, the physical locations and geographic locations of terrorist activity were more clearly and cleanly understood and transmitted in the media. In the news coverage of 9/11, the Shoe Bomber, and the Bali Bombings, the ‘enemy’ in the War on Terror was very much portrayed as globally enigmatic and comprised of near-omnipresent terrorists and terror threats. In the seven-year gap between those case studies and the Underpants Bomber, the media began to more narrowly define and discuss al Qaeda’s physical capacity (as well as other terror threats) in a more static manner. However, there was a new ‘unknown’ of an increasingly vast scope, which centered on the use of the Internet by al Qaeda and al Qaeda-inspired individuals.

#### Applying Entman’s Identifiers:

In this case study, the media’s portrayal of the scale and physical location of terrorism hotspots, does not contain as many ‘unknowns’ as in previous case studies. In previous case studies, the *problem identification* concerning the scale of the War on Terror centered on multiple (primarily physical) unknowns: the unknown locations of the enemy, the diversity of the foreseeable threats (threats to infrastructure, civilian and military targets, home grown threats, etc.), and the global nature (and international maneuverability) of al Qaeda. However, during the coverage of the Underpants Bomber, the problem was that persons attempting to harm the United States were being indoctrinated and radicalized in a place over which the US could not exercise control, the Internet. The physical threat of terrorism discussed in the media was more confined and ‘known’ than it was in the previous case studies. This was due to multiple factors: first, the repetitive nature of airline-centric attempts since 9/11 meant it was no longer shocking or new when an attempt was revealed. Second, many of the persons who had attempted to attack the United States shared similar traits and backgrounds, increasing the level of familiarity with the ‘culprits’. Finally, the majority of terror attacks that made headlines were failed attacks – creating a sense of ‘predictability’ and decreased severity in terror activity by 2009.

The *former* problem portrayed in the media was that terrorism at large operated with a vastness and undefined range of physical threats. Thus, it existed as a daunting entity between



9/11 and the Bali Bombings. Then, during the Underpants Bomber case study, this problem no longer existed in the same *physical* manner. While the physical locations, personal traits, and capacities of al Qaeda and other terror groups were becoming more known to the military and the media, the *Scope of Threat* frame of the War on Terror had made its way from the physical realm to the digital. The new arena for terrorism to manifest in an ‘unknown’ or blank manner was online; and the media’s attention to the ‘unknown’ and deep web activities of al Qaeda and al Qaeda-inspired terrorists was expressed on the three networks. By Tuesday 29, all networks had reported Abdulmatallab’s Internet activities and his postings on social media forums:

CNN Tuesday 29 17:00 show: The Situation Room, Suzanne Malveaux: Terror suspect Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab being held in a Federal prison in Michigan now. We're learning more about his mindset before he allegedly tried to blow up a U.S. passenger jet. More than 300 Internet postings are attributed to him under the username Farouk1986. Many of them reflect a growing alienation with his family and a desire for a world wide jihad.

Also discussed on the networks pertaining to the Internet use by terror groups and individuals, AQAP’s statement claiming responsibility for Abdulmatallab’s attempt was released online, and through no other medium. During this period of time, CNN did not hold internet-based sources to the same level of credibility as ‘real’ sources, stating in one discussion on al Qaeda’s online activity: ‘But as always, CNN cannot authenticate these claims, because they are posted on the internet...It is just a statement posted on the internet.’<sup>309</sup> FOX quoted the same posting from the screen name *Farouk1986* on FOX Tuesday 29 18:00 ‘Special Report with Bret Baier’ with a similar caution for quoting Internet sources. ‘Writings on the Internet by Farouk 1986, a combination of his name and birth year, are being reviewed by federal officials, but the authenticity of the writing is not independently verified.’<sup>310</sup> Simply stated, the *problem identified* at this time concerning the *scope* of the War on Terror had to do predominantly with the unknown

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<sup>309</sup> CNN Monday 28 14:20 segment, Correspondent Octavia Nasr speaking to Anchor Richard Quest.

<sup>310</sup> FOX Tuesday 29 18:00 show ‘Special Report with Bret Baier’.

level of online activity by terror groups (who were contributing to the radicalization of persons around the globe).

The *causal interpretation* then became one akin to the earlier 9/11-Bali Bombings period of time, where the media relayed the unknown and global scale of terrorism's physical reach and threat; and, in 2009, that unknown threat was digital in nature. The media's interpretation of the situation was that the Internet was the new frontier not only for radicalization, but also for other terrorism activities (planning, financing, and general communication). At this period of time there was, however, little opinion offered as to the moral goodness or maliciousness of Internet activity at large. As a new medium of communication, the television news networks reported (during the coverage observed) on the increase of American use of Internet resources; however, a comprehensive understanding of the full potential use of the internet was yet unknown in 2009, and this lack of understanding can be observed in network coverage through their lack of clear moral judgments on Internet use.

The *moral evaluation* then became the least substantial identifier for this *Scope of Threat* frame for two reasons. First, the media (and population in general) was still in the early stages of utilizing mobile Internet capabilities in late 2009 (as an example, the first iPhone had only been released in June, 2007). PEW Research, following where Americans got their news and through which mediums, found that in 2009, 34% of people got their news online as opposed to televisions, radios, or newspapers.<sup>311</sup> This is significant compared to previous case studies in this thesis, as Internet news consumption was not measured until 2004, because it was a relatively insignificant news source compared to television, which held 68% (of persons' news source) in 1991 and still 58% in 2009 respectively. What this means for this thesis' observations during the Underpants Bomber case study, is that the Internet had become established enough that people

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<sup>311</sup> PEW Research Center For The People & The Press *Ideological News Sources: Who Watches and Why – Americans Spending More Time Following the News* Released September 12, 2010, extracted August 27, 2016 available at <http://www.people-press.org/2010/09/12/americans-spending-more-time-following-the-news/>.

were using it more regularly (than in 2002, during the Bali Bombings), but still new enough that habits around the use of the Internet (and its news resource capabilities) were still developing. The second reason that *moral evaluations* or judgments are less apparent for this *Scope of Threat* frame, is that when the Internet was referenced or reported on television news during this time, it was a neutral entity in that (in and of itself) it lacked an automatic moral judgment (meaning no networks, during the coverage observed, made direct statements akin to a moral evaluation of the Internet itself). So, when persons such as Abdulmatallab were reported to have used the Internet for ‘bad’ things (such as seeking out al Qaeda leaders in Yemen), the action was not deemed a misuse of the Internet or morally wrong, but rather morally neutral, and it was presented in a relatively unbiased manner.

Significantly for this thesis, the hypothesized effect that communications technology would have some influence the War on Terror Narrative is evident in this *Scope of Threat’s* frame’s weak *moral evaluation* and almost non-existent *treatment recommendation*. (During the coverage observed for this case study, there were no mentions or suggestions by the media to censor Internet use or apply government oversight to Internet activity). Because the observed media coverage did not show any moral judgments on the use of the Internet by terror groups (during this time), and did not provide any type of treatment recommendation towards addressing the *Scope of Threat* issue of vast arenas from which threats could originate (i.e. the Internet), this frame’s shortfalls are interpreted by this research as resulting from a shift in the communications technology landscape (or media ecology). Because the Internet and social media were relatively new in 2009, the media’s understanding of (and discussions on) the new medium was still undefined; there were no expectations of ‘normal’ use of the Internet as this use was still evolving.

#### al Qaeda

During the media coverage observed for this case study, al Qaeda was referenced heavily on all days of reporting, as Abdulmatallab had clearly stated his association with the group upon

his arrest on Christmas Day. Many of the headlines from the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, clearly stated that the ‘Christmas Bomber’, Abdulmatallab, was an ‘al Qaeda terrorist’, or at the least, influenced by al Qaeda. This brought the media’s attention to the group’s (then) contemporary conditions and latest international activities, making *al Qaeda* a strong frame within the Underpants Bomber case study. Unlike in the 9/11 frame, the three networks had largely consistent opinions and semantics in referring to al Qaeda. The only controversy among the three networks involved discussions on the Guantanamo Bay Detention Center. That debate centered on whether or not Guantanamo was effective in deterring terrorism, whether it should remain open, if the US should send its inmates back to their country of origin, or if federal detention centers in the US could serve as a substitute for Guantanamo. During this period of time, the reporting of al Qaeda focused on the group’s branch in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), specifically in Yemen. There were extensive discussions on all networks about the US’s relationship with Yemen, and coverage of the controversy surrounding the return of persons detained in Guantanamo back to Yemen, where they could reassume their positions within AQAP. FOX engaged with this debate, criticizing President Obama’s management of the procedures;<sup>312</sup> CNN emphasized the military response and activity in the region;<sup>313</sup> and MSNBC wove Abdulmatallab and Yemen together with the Fort Hood massacre, the bombing of the USS Cole, and multiple other al Qaeda attacks.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> FOX Monday 28 22:00 – On the Record with Greta Van Susteren – Guest Hosted by Shannon Bream: ‘It looks like President Obama has a brand-new headache tonight. It appears the accused terrorist who tried to blow up an airliner-spent time in Yemen. Well, almost half of the 200 detainees being held at Guantanamo Bay are from Yemen, and the administration wants to send many of them back to that Middle East country. In fact, six prisoners were just given back to Yemen this month, and many say that is a really, really bad idea.’

<sup>313</sup> CNN Sunday 27 20:00 - Newsroom – Interview with David Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Force in Iraq: ‘That’s why al Qaeda and the Arabian peninsula has established its headquarters (in Yemen). This is a concern.’

<sup>314</sup> Rachel Maddow Show, Monday 28 21:00: ‘And as a result of (Abdulmatallab’s) actions, all eyes today turn to, Yemen? Yes. After his failed apparent attempt to blow up Northwest Airlines Flight 253 on Christmas Day, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab was taken into custody. He reportedly told the FBI that he had been trained and supplied with the

### Applying Entman's Identifiers:

The *Problem Identification* within the al Qaeda frame of the Underpants Bomber case study was that: al Qaeda's branch in Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula was actively orchestrating attacks against the United States. Extending from that understanding, and emphasized more heavily on FOX, Yemen had become (within the media coverage) an epicenter of contemporary al Qaeda threats. FOX speculated that if the United States' prisoners in Guantanamo from Yemen were returned to their country of origin, they would be allowed to resume their positions within AQAP.<sup>315</sup> Abdulmatallab's confessions to the FBI and other US authorities concerning his involvement with al Qaeda leaders, as well as AQAP claiming responsibility for the failed attack on Monday, the 28<sup>th</sup>, firmly grounded this frame within the Underpants Bomber story.<sup>316</sup>

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explosives by al Qaeda in Yemen. U.S. officials are telling NBC news they believe Abdulmutallab spent several months in Yemen this year. And the group's typical delusional, grandiose language, al Qaeda in Yemen calls itself al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. It's considered to be linked with al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia.

ABC News reporting tonight that two Guantanamo prisoners who were let out by the Bush administration in 2007 and sent to Saudi Arabia are now leaders of al Qaeda in Yemen.

Do you remember the shooting of two U.S. military recruiters in Arkansas back in June? The man indicted in that case was under investigation at the time of the shooting by the FBI's Joint Terrorist Task Force because he had recently traveled to Yemen.

Major Nidal Hasan, the soldier charged in the Fort Hood massacre last month, is reported to have been in contact with a radical cleric who publicly praised Hasan after the shootings. That cleric? Based in Yemen.

Last September 10 people were killed at a U.S. embassy when it was attacked in a coordinated assault involving car bombs, rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons. That embassy was in the capital city of Yemen.

Of course, the USS Cole attack, which killed 17 U.S. sailors, took place while the Cole was docked at the port city of Aden in Yemen.

Just four months ago, a suicide bomber narrowly missed killing the counterterrorism chief in Saudi Arabia. The bomber crossed into Saudi Arabia with his bomb from, you guessed it, Yemen...So, if you've been paying attention to terrorism and al Qaeda recently, you have likely been paying attention to this poor, largely ungoverned, running out of oil, parched little nation called Yemen.'

<sup>315</sup> FOX Monday 28 16:49 Eric Bolling: 'Here's my concern. You know, we talk about Guantanamo-- Guantanamo Bay detainees. Some 80 some or so are going to be sent back to Yemen. Are we -- are we at risk of those 80 detainees being released into the general population of Yemen and maybe even into an al Qaeda stronghold, and then risking more, yet more terrorist activity around the world?'

<sup>316</sup> MSNBC Monday 28 James Gordon Meek: 'Well, it's still early. I mean, this whole thing is, you

Because of Abdulmatallab's self-professed connections to Al Qaeda, and that information being released to the media within the first hours of the failed bombing attempt, the media coverage observed for this case study did not show signs of the networks doubting or questioning the association (during the observed footage).

The *causal interpretation* was then made on all networks that because Abdulmatallab was associated with al Qaeda, and because he tried to attack the United States, al Qaeda at large was trying to attack the United States.<sup>317</sup> The reasoning by the networks turned to what the US should do about the group's footing in Yemen, and if military power should be directed to that area.<sup>318</sup> Additionally, the discussions (primarily on FOX) about Guantanamo detainees from Yemen *not* being released back to the area, suggested that there was some way for the US to actively combat the problem of AQAP.<sup>319</sup> The *causal interpretations* by the networks did not vary significantly from this line of reasoning across the three networks and five days.

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know, in its infancy in terms of investigation and what they know. But supposedly, according to many people, this guy has -- the suspect who tried to blow up this flight coming from Amsterdam has confessed, you know, perhaps under the duress of the pain of his legs being on fire from trying to light this, allegedly light this bomb, he has confessed that al Qaeda's branch in Yemen gave him the training, if not the bomb.'

CNN Tuesday 29, 21:25: 'Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula issued an Internet statement claiming responsibility for Abdulmatallab's failed attempt to bring down Northwest Airlines Flight 253, calling it retaliation for what it said were U.S. airstrikes on Yemeni soil.'

<sup>318</sup>FOX Monday 28 20:47 video clip from earlier interview with Jo Lieberman: 'Somebody in our government said to me, in Sana'a, capital of Yemen. Iraq was yesterday's war. Afghanistan is today's war. If we don't act preemptively, Yemen will be tomorrow's war. That's the danger we face.' Discussion following: with host Eric Bolling and guest (fmr. CIA agent) Michael Scheuer -- Scheuer: 'Well, we have to -- we have to pay extraordinarily close attention to the Arabian Peninsula because of the oil that's there. We can't possibly let that go. So whether or not Senator Lieberman is right, the Arabian Peninsula, which includes Yemen, is an extraordinarily important geopolitical asset for us, and we have to -- we have to protect it. There's no other way to do it.'

<sup>319</sup>FOX Monday 28 18:30 segment: Host Jim Angle: 'Friday's attempted attack has refueled the debate over whether the United States should close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, a chief goal of the Obama White House. White House correspondent Wendell Goler reports that the problem isn't just where to send prisoners but how to keep them from coming back.'

The morality of al Qaeda was mentioned on all networks to various extents, and their actions against the United States were presented in the media as a negative judgment of their moral code. As for other instances of moral discussions in the coverage of this case study, on occasion FOX critiqued the morals of President Obama in comparison with President Bush. However, this had less to do with the Underpants Bomber, and more to do with the variations in the Republicans' and Democrats' leadership styles.<sup>320</sup> Overall, the *moral evaluation* by the networks was that al Qaeda was morally wrong or 'bad'. As such, the American audience was morally good, specifically supported by the 'heroic' actions by passengers and crew on the aircraft who subdued Abdulmatallab.<sup>321</sup>

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(Start Tape) Wendell Goler: 'Nearly half the detainees still at Guantanamo Bay facility are Yemenis. For years, the U.S. has been sending detainees back to Yemen, a half of dozen sent home just this month. The problem is many seem to return to the fight.'

Stewart Baker: 'I don't think there's anybody we send back to Yemen who is going to stay in jail. No one has.'

Goler: 'All of the people convicted of being involved in the 2000 attack on the USS Cole have been released by Yemeni authorities or managed to escape in a 2008 jailbreak. Some of the detainees sent back in the Bush administration are now leading the group Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which has claimed responsibility for the Christmas Day bombing attempt. Some Republicans feel the president should delay if not change his position to close Gitmo.' (End Tape)

<sup>320</sup> FOX Friday 25 18:50 segment from Mara Liasson: '(Obama) was given the Peace Prize for engagement and not being George Bush, and there he goes to say evil does exist in the world. Sometimes nations have to act alone. He saluted Martin Luther King and Gandhi but said I cannot be guided by their example alone. Sometimes the use of force is morally justified. I mean, yes, this is a president whose worldview and foreign policy, not just his tone, but his actual policy has evolved and changed. He is now a war president. I think he went to Oslo fully embracing that role, and I think this was a huge turning point for him.'

<sup>321</sup> Examples: CNN Saturday 26 22:30 Drew Griffin: 'Well, the incident on Flight 253 could have ended in tragedy, if not for a few passengers and a brave crew. Today, one of those passengers is being hailed as a hero. He spoke exclusively to CNN. You're going to hear what he had to say.'

FOX Monday 29 16:35 Candice Miller: 'And if it had not been for the bravery of the passengers that were there, and the error this terrorist, we would have been talking about several hundred, perhaps several thousand, dead, noncombatants, innocents, that -- as I say, this was an act of war. And what was our response? We took this cowardly terrorist to the University of Michigan Burn Center, which is one of the best burn centers in the entire country, make sure he gets the best medical treatment possible. And apparently his court-appointed, taxpayer-financed attorney...'

The *Treatment Recommendation* in the media for al Qaeda as well as the general terrorist threat, was to increase security, investigate terrorism-related activity overseas of persons on US government lists, and at minimum, investigate how al Qaeda was able to operate in Yemen to the extent that the group was able to launch an attack against the United States. The proposed *treatments* relied on US action (and FOX news specifically highlighted that it was the job of President Obama<sup>322</sup>), and the continuation of the War on Terror for the foreseeable future. While CNN and MSNBC were not as focused on the burden of the response resting on President Obama, the treatment recommendations from the left-center networks did emphasize the need for airport security investigations and evaluations of current security screening processes' levels of effectiveness against al Qaeda operatives.<sup>323</sup> There was no vast difference in the treatment recommendations of the three networks, unlike the treatment recommendations under the 9/11 Frame for this case study.

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MSNBC Monday 28 18:00 Ed Schultz: 'The bottom line here is that the guy got on that plane undetected, and he was in a position to kill civilians. Let`s not use sight of that.' And we should really need to rely on civilian heroes to take these guys? I guess we`re still the front line of security. Are we getting paid for that? We pay a lot of tax dollars to keep this country safe.'

<sup>322</sup> FOX Tuesday 29 20:20: Eric Bolling: 'In the "unresolved problem" segment tonight, Republicans are out in force criticizing the Obama's administration Homeland Security efforts.'

(Start Video) Rep. Pete Hoekstra (MI-R): 'When it comes to terrorism, threats to the homeland, the president has decided to stay silent for 72 hours. He (Obama) needs to explain that, why this is not a priority. It should be his number one priority.'

Sen. Jim Demint (SC-R): 'The soft talk about engagement, closing Gitmo, these things are not going to appease the terrorists. They're going to keep coming after us. And we can't have politics as usual in Washington. And I'm afraid that's what we've got right now with airport security.'

<sup>323</sup> CNN Tuesday 29 19:45 with Bruce Schneider: 'Our current response to terrorism is a form of "magical thinking." It relies on the idea that we can somehow make ourselves safer by protecting against what the terrorists happened to do last time. Unfortunately for politicians, the security measures that work are largely invisible. Such measures include enhancing the intelligence-gathering abilities of the secret services, hiring cultural experts and Arabic translators, building bridges with Islamic communities both nationally and internationally, funding police capabilities. Both investigative arms to prevent terrorist attacks, and emergency communications systems for after attacks occur; and arresting terrorist plotters without media fanfare.'



## 6.4 Narrative Status

Following in the wake of the shift in the War on Terror Narrative during the Bali Bombings coverage (the absence of *evil*), this thesis' methodology was similarly unable to substantiate the *Evil* Frame (beyond *problem identification* and *causal interpretations*) during the media's coverage of the Underpants Bomber. Because the networks made such quick associations between Abdulmatallab and other previous PETN-using airline-centric, failed, Christmas-time, terror attempts, Abdulmatallab was not labeled 'evil' as often as he was simply a 'failed copycat'. A notable difference between this case study and the Bali Bombings was the evolution of the *Scope of Threat* Frame from encompassing *all* potential physical threats posed by terrorism, to having very few physical 'unknowns'. However, new arenas of *virtual* unknowns did emerge within the expansion of Internet technologies. This was the first case study for this thesis to observe discussion in the media about on-line radicalization. The *9/11* and *al Qaeda* Frames were the most substantial and easily observed frames for this case study, maintaining a relatively equal presence as they had for the Bali Bombings.

This period of reporting did show new, more polarized political biases from the three-networks than in the previous three case studies; correlating with the new Democratic Presidential Administration. FOX news repeatedly blamed the newly elected President Obama for not taking a harder stance on counter-terrorism matters in the first days of the Underpants Bomber coverage, whereas centre-left CNN and MSNBC directly attacked FOX for their heavily Republican biases. The predominant topics of contention between the networks in the fallout from the Underpants Bomber centered on the 'security versus privacy' debate, the status of Guantanamo Bay and its detainees, the growing number of al Qaeda operatives in Yemen, and the debacle of the multiple security lists among un-cooperative government agencies. Diana Mutz' *In Your Face Politics* explains this observation of emotional and personal attacks amongst the networks along the left-right political divide during this time frame effectively.

(Television) programs with some partisan leaning in either direction were significantly more likely to involve high levels of incivility. Moreover, they were likely to be the programs with heavy doses of political content rather than the ones that only occasionally dabbled in political topics.<sup>324</sup>

This thesis observed this type of incivility on all networks, but particularly on FOX in their negative and borderline combative referencing to President Obama's policies and responses to terrorism. Carruthers explains this divide between Republican and Democratic leaning reporting as a residual discursive effect of the Executive administrative transitions from Bush to Obama.

When the Bush era ended, the Global War on Terror also came to a precipitate full stop. At any rate, President Barak Obama hastily retired that overburdened phrase, insisting that the preferred term would henceforth be 'overseas contingency operations' (Government Press Releases, 2009). Yet with a downsized US military presence in Iraq set to continue well into the second decade of the twenty-first century and an even less conclusive war in Afghanistan still ongoing, the brevity implied by this euphemism appears misplaced. In many ways, the phenomena constitutive of Bush's war on terror continue unabated – if under new management and nomenclature.<sup>325</sup>

In the Narrative Status Sections of the Shoe Bomber and Bali Bombings case studies, (sections 4.4 and 5.4 respectively), the relationship between liveness and visuals regarding a story's impact was discussed. In the Bali Bombings, without any live coverage of the event, and with very few visual components to the coverage, the story lost its media attention to another story during that period, the DC Sniper killings. This thesis theorized that a lack of visual substance (images and live reporting on the ground) may precede immediacy and liveness in terms of which factor ultimately determines the effectiveness and resonance of a television news

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<sup>324</sup> Mutz D. C., 2015, *In-Your-Face-Politics: The Consequences of Uncivil Media*, Princeton University Press, p. 122.

<sup>325</sup> Carruthers, S., 2000/2011, (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), *The Media At War*, Palgrave Macmillan. p, 204, speaking on the persistent failure of counterinsurgency by the United States into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

story. Unlike the Bali Bombings, the Underpants Bomber had both live coverage (with video of the plane landing in Detroit), and visuals of the actual arrest of Abdulmatallab on the plane (thanks to cell phone video). This is the first clear instance in this thesis of the media ecology evolving in a manner that supported a terror event's media coverage; had there not been cell phones with cameras, there would be no footage of the arrest.

However, as per the discussions by Hoskins and O'Loughlin in *Television and Terror*, the coverage did not create or inspire any 'opportunities for terrorists'.<sup>326</sup> Rather, the cell phone images captured of Abdulmatallab being removed from the plane showed a weakened and disheveled person being half carried and half dragged off of a flight with smiling and cheering passengers in the background. This image would certainly not encourage terrorism, and could arguably dissuade any similar types of attempts, as no individual would wish to be photographed in such a state. Even though it was a failed attempt, the Underpants Bomber received substantially more coverage in the media on the day of the attempt (and in the days following) than both the successful Bali Bombings years before, and the similarly styled Shoe Bomber. In part, this may be because of the additional visual support of cell phone video (which was not available during the Shoe Bomber attempt) and the live video of the plane landing. It is apparent that the media ecology of 2009 lent the story more substance than the previous two case studies of this thesis, despite the event itself being less impactful overall.

Concerning the saturation and flow of the Underpants Bomber story itself; the reporting for the first two days (Christmas Day and the 26<sup>th</sup>) focused on Abdulmatallab and his personal history. From the third through the fifth day, the reporting focused on airline security failures at large, the confusion and miscommunication among government and transportation agencies concerning the various lists of potential terrorists, and the question of what role Yemen played in harboring al Qaeda terrorists. Similar to the Shoe Bomber, all the personal information and

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<sup>326</sup> Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B., 2009, *Television and Terror: Conflicting Times and the Crisis of News Discourse*, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 25.

history of Abdulmatallab's activities were known to the media on the first day of reporting and very few corrections were made in the following days. Also, like the Shoe Bomber, the three networks' Christmas programming blocks prevented the story from obtaining rolling coverage, however the Underpants Bomber held the 'top story' position more often than the Shoe Bomber did during its coverage observations. There were frequent comparisons made by all networks between Abdulmatallab and Richard Reid, with further weaving of the Underpants Bomber story with the London Liquids Plot, and 9/11, due to the airplane-centric nature of the attack. However, Abdulmatallab's attack was the latest failed airline attack in a series of similarly conducted attacks; so, the seriousness and emphasis of the story in its final days of observation did not rest with the Underpants Bomber himself. Rather, the media honed in on the new political administration's approach to counter-terrorism; and, regardless of the political affiliations of each network, changes in various directions were being suggested by the networks as to how the War on Terror should be conducted under President Obama.

## Chapter 7: Times Square Bombing Case Study

May 1, 2010

| The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification for the War on Terror |   |   |  |  |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Events   | <i>9/11 Frame</i>   | <i>Evil Frame</i>   | <i>Scope of Threat Frame</i>   | <i>Al Qaeda Frame</i>  |
| 9/11   | 4: America Under Attack (Day #)   | 1: Axis Of Evil Speech Moral Evaluation: Attackers Evil – USA ‘Good’              | 2: Dependent On Military/Executive Response – Wherever There’s A Threat                | 3: Osama Bin Laden – Non-State Terror = ‘New’ Real Threat                                  |
| Shoe Bomber  | 4: Continued Gaps In Airport Security – Skies Still Not Safe Since 9/11 | 3: ‘Hero Passengers’ = ‘Evil Attacker’  | 2: Global Scale – Trans-Atlantic Travel Issues, Terrorist Mobile And Global            | 1: Afghanistan Camps, Tora Bora Caves, OBL Videos, Terror Training Camps Issue             |
| Bali Bombings  | 3: Asia’s 9/11 – Same Motives - Same Goals – Different Location         | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently Established On All Networks-                           | 2: Global Scale – Everywhere Westerners Are = Target - Necessitating A Global Response | 1: Terror Training Camps – Jeemah Islamiyah and AQ Groups Attacking Any And All Westerners |
| Underpants Bomber  | 3: More Aviation Security Issues – Issues With Government Lists’        | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently Established On All Networks-                           | 2: Back To Aviation Based Threats  | 1: (Similar To Shoe) Yemen Connections –AQ Allegiance Vs. Operative - AQAP                 |
| <b>Times Square Bombing</b>  | <b>4: NYC Still Targeted By The Same People</b>                         | <b>3: -Weakest Presentation Of Frame In Thesis, But Observed On All Networks-</b> | <b>2: Domestic Counter-Terrorism Questioned – NYC’s Post-9/11 Test</b>                 | <b>1: ‘Homegrown’ And Internet Radicalization – Lone Wolf Terrorism -</b>                  |
| Boston Marathon Bombings   | 1: The Echo Of 9/11 – Flags Flying Again, Hero First Responders/Victims | 2: Clearest Good Vs. Evil Framing + Hero Frame Of Survivors And Law Enforcement   | 3: Narrowest Scope: Boston – Northeastern American City (Again)                        | 4: Internet Radicalization – Homegrown Terrorism – <i>Inspire Magazine</i>                 |

Numbering indicates the strength of the individual frame of the four frames within each event.

### Times Square Bombing Case Study Outline:

Introduction

News Coverage

May 1, 2010

May 2, 2010

May 3, 2010

May 4, 2010

May 5, 2010

The Frames of the Times Square Bomb Attempt

9/11

Evil

Scope of Threat

Al Qaeda

Narrative Status

### 7.1 Introduction

On Saturday, May 1, 2010, around 18:30 local time in New York City, Pakistani-born Faisal Shahzad attempted to detonate a combination of urea-fertilizer, fireworks, gasoline, and propane inside a 1993 Nissan Pathfinder parked at the corner of West 45<sup>th</sup> at Broadway in Times Square, New York City. Two street vendors reported firework-type noises emitting from the vehicle to local police, who cleared the area and called in the NYPD bomb squad and the FBI.

Ultimately no one was hurt, and although the vehicle was engulfed in flames, the multiple explosive devices never detonated. Shahzad was detained by officials later on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010, while attempting to flee the United States on Emirates flight 202 from New York's JFK to Dubai.<sup>327</sup> Shahzad was born in Pakistan to a wealthy family, educated in the United States, and became a US Citizen in 2009.<sup>328</sup>

National news networks did not pick up the bombing attempt for roughly three-hours after the initial incident in Times Square. The bomb's location at the center of a major tourist attraction, and one block from the Times Square recording/broadcasting studio for ABC News, caused the NYPD to shut down Times Square for a few hours on that Saturday evening. Then New York City Mayor, Michael Bloomberg and NYC Police Commissioner, Raymond Kelly, who had been at the White House Correspondents Dinner in Washington, DC, at the time of the attempt, returned to NYC and gave a press conference Sunday morning detailing the findings of initial investigations.<sup>329</sup> Shahzad was apprehended at JFK two days later (53-hours specifically), and sentenced to life without the possibility of parole. He is held alongside Richard Reid and Umar Abdulmatallab at the Florence Supermax Prison in Colorado.<sup>330</sup> Similar to Reid and Abdulmatallab, Shahzad was from a financially well-off family, had researched radical religious groups prior to his attempt, and had sought council from radicalized persons in the

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<sup>327</sup> See photo captions of reporting from PBS *Washington Week* broadcast, May 7, 2010 (20:00-20:30EST) available at [http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2010/05/02/nyregion/20100502\\_TIMESSQUARE-12.html](http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2010/05/02/nyregion/20100502_TIMESSQUARE-12.html)

<sup>328</sup> See *New York Times* 'Suspect, Charged, Said to Admit to Role in Plot' May 4, 2010, By Mazzetti, M., Tavernise, S., & Healy, J. Extracted Sept 2015 from [www.nytimes.com/2010/05/05/nyregion/05bomb.html?hp](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/05/nyregion/05bomb.html?hp)

<sup>329</sup> See *New York Times* 'Smoking Car to an Arrest in 53-hours' May 4, 2010 by Rashbaum, W. K., & Baker, A. May 4, 2010 available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/05/nyregion/05tictoc.html>

<sup>330</sup> All prisoners of the United States (sans those at Guantanamo Bay Detention Center in Cuba) can be located through an open-source search engine provided by the Federal Bureau of Prisons at <https://www.bop.gov/inmateloc/>

Middle East.<sup>331</sup> Also similar to Richard Reid and Umar Abdulmatallab, was his failure to successfully detonate an explosive device due to poor construction and planning.<sup>332</sup>

This attempt had the lowest level of media-saturation of the six terror incidents selected by this thesis. It was initially selected because it represented a failed domestic terror attempt in the later period of observation for this thesis. While it obtained the least amount of coverage (by duration of video allocated per news hours observed as per the methodology guidelines), similar rhetoric was observed among this Times Square Bombing attempt, the Shoe Bomber, and the Underpants Bomber case studies; assisting in the clarification of failed terror event narrative management by network news in the United States in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While the War on Terror Narrative thus far has been observed (by this thesis) to shift and develop more with successful terror events than with failed events, the similarities among the media's management of all terror events (successful and failed), highlights the discourse management structures at work beyond the events themselves.

## 7.2 News Coverage

May 1, 2010

May 1<sup>st</sup> saw only casual mentions of the Times Square Bombing attempt on the networks, this was in part because the first reports came in late on a Saturday evening (which is populated by pre-planned, hosted and syndicated shows), but predominantly because it unfolded during the heavy media coverage of the White House Correspondents' Dinner in Washington, DC, hosted by President Obama. That dinner was attended by representatives from all major news outlets, meaning the Times Square bombing occurred when network media was distracted by a celebration of its work that year. The major news story at this time in 2010 (aside from the

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<sup>331</sup> See CNN detailed write-up 'Times Square Suspect Had Explosives Training, Documents Say' May 5, 2010 by the CNN Wire Staff at <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/CRIME/05/04/new.york.car.bomb/index.html?>

<sup>332</sup> See *FOX News* 'Anatomy of a Bomb: An Inexpensive and Deadly Mishmash of Ingredients' May 3, 2010 by Winter, J. at <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2010/05/03/anatomy-bomb.html>

one-off event at the White House) was the explosion, sinking, and resulting oil spill from British Petroleum's Deepwater Horizon oilrig. The critical failure and explosion of the rig had occurred on April 20<sup>th</sup>, with the first traces of the total 210-million (US gallons) of leaked oil beginning to make landfall during this period of media coverage (May 1-May 5, 2010). Also in the news during this time was the Greek financial crisis, as the European Central Bank, European Commission, and the International Monetary Fund had just negotiated a 110-billion euro deal during the week preceding the Times Square Bombing attempt. Finally, there was also media attention given to an immigration reform vote in Arizona, which brought the immigration debate concerning the US's Southwest border back into the lime-light.

On May 1, 2010, CNN started the 16:00 and 17:00 news hours with coverage of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico,<sup>333</sup> followed with stories of global May Day protests of poor working conditions.<sup>334</sup> The 18:00 news hour began with 'Congressman and Sheriff Debate New Arizona Immigration Law';<sup>335</sup> and, at 19:00, Don Lemon and Brian Todd hosted CNN's 'Special Coverage of the White House Correspondents' Dinner'. That coverage continued until the end of Saturday evening's reporting with no interruption by information regarding the events in Times Square. Similarly, FOX news covered the Correspondents' Dinner heavily with no interruption. The major criticisms by FOX during their May 1st coverage was against President Obama, with host Jon Scott opening the 18:30 news segment: 'And criticism in the mainstream media. Is the press focused on the controversy or the context...The media's love affair with the

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<sup>333</sup> CNN May 1 16:00 'The Situation Room' – 'Governor of Louisiana Holds Press Conference on Oil Spill' heading during opening of news program – CNN May 1 17:00 '2,000 People on the Ground Dealing with Oil Spill' heading.

<sup>334</sup> CNN May 1 16:00 'In Russia, more than 2.5 million people participated in traditional May Day celebrations in 900 cities and towns, the country's trade union federation said. The largest gatherings took place in Krasnodar, Yakutsk, Vladivostok, Izhevsk, Moscow, and St. Petersburg. The people spoke out in favor of decent salaries and stable employment.' Reports on the protests occurring in Turkey and Germany were also covered during this news hour.

<sup>335</sup> CNN May 1 18:00 'Congressman and Sheriff Debate New Arizona Immigration Law; RNC Chairman Michael Steele Defends Arizona Immigration Law; Latino Voters Want Promised Immigration Reform; Poland Emerges from Tragedy; Greece Facing Financial Collapse?'



President was alive and strong a year ago. But after 15-months of restricted access and side-stepping the press, where has all the affection gone?’ This sentiment was unique to FOX, and not reflected in the coverage of the White House event by CNN.

Footage for MSNBC was not available after the bombings attempt had occurred (meaning after the 18:00 news hour) – However, four-hours of footage was available for the network on May 1, 2010, in keeping with the methodology of this thesis. The footage observed for MSNBC highlighted the Gulf of Mexico crisis, and included political analysis of how the Obama Administration was handling relations with the oil industry in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.<sup>336</sup> The immigration issue (a new law proposed which would make it illegal to be an undocumented migrant in the state of Arizona), and May Day protests for better working conditions were similarly covered on MSNBC, as they were on CNN and FOX. Finally, the last stories of the news cycle for the first of May, concerned severe weather in Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Kentucky, which prompted emergency rescues.

May 2, 2010

The story of the Times Square Bombing attempt broke on all networks in the early hours of Sunday May 2, 2010. On CNN at 01:20, the screen heading read: ‘Police found propane cylinders, gas cans, inside a parked vehicle in Times Square.’<sup>337</sup> During the overnight hours, immediate comparisons with previous terror attacks and failed attempts were made by CNN Security Correspondent, Tom Fuentes, when speaking with overnight anchor Natalie Allen:

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<sup>336</sup> See MSNBC footage via archive.org for May 1, 2010 (special search for date and network) result

[https://archive.org/details/MSNBC\\_20100501\\_150000\\_MSNBC\\_News\\_Live#start/180/end/240](https://archive.org/details/MSNBC_20100501_150000_MSNBC_News_Live#start/180/end/240)

<sup>337</sup> CNN May 2 01:20 Anchor Natalie Allen: ‘Right now...lets talk again about what has been transpiring in New York City. As we just learned a few hours ago, at about 10:45...there were reports coming in of a car that you can see right there, a Nissan Pathfinder...with smoke coming out of the back...These are reports, as we said, initial reports that came out at 6:45...we are getting word that the first report into CNN (was at) 8:46 pm...a block at Times Square has been shut down after a suspicious car fire at 45<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> avenue.’

Well, this could be similar to the devices that were attempted to be used in London just a couple of years ago. And it ended up being a group of doctors who had placed an incendiary device in the vehicle parked in front of a (disco). And then also related to that case, you recall that they drove the vehicle to the glass windows at Glasgow Airport in Scotland and created an explosion at the airport going through the front doors.<sup>338</sup>

By 08:00, CNN 'Sunday Morning' Host, TJ Holmes, had the full breakdown of police activity during the overnight,<sup>339</sup> and by 14:00 the car's license plate had been traced back to Connecticut, and the information relayed to audiences by all networks.<sup>340</sup>

During the 09:00 new hours on FOX (during the show, 'Sunday Roundtable') host Chris Wallace interviewed Homeland Security Secretary, Janet Napolitano, who commented:

Well, we're certainly considering it right now as if it could be an act of terrorism or was intended to be an act of terrorism. And so, everything in terms of the investigation is being done, all the forensics are being done, all the leads are being pursued. It's the city of New York, it's the FBI, it's the Department of Homeland Security. It's looking at the vehicle, it's tracing fingerprints. It's looking at video, because there are a lot of cameras in the area. A lot of activity today in terms of investigation.

The Times Square Bombing attempt held the top story position on FOX until the early afternoon when the BP oil spill regained control of the opening headlines.

The reporting style for this day was that of informative news transmission of a failed attempt, rather than the more sensationalized style of 'a dangerous near miss' news reporting observed during previous failed attempts such as the Shoe Bomber and Underpants Bomber. The wording of the Times Square incident as 'another attempt', or 'another failed attack' was

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<sup>338</sup> Discussion excerpt from CNN May 2 01:30 Tom Fuentes speaking with host Natalie Allen.

<sup>339</sup> CNN May 2 08:05 Anchor TJ Holmes: 'Last night, the president was updated and pledged federal support to whatever New York police could possibly need, whatever the city could need. Also, shortly before 3:00 a.m. this morning, the New York Police Department, they sent in a robot. The robot then goes in and it breaks the window of that SUV and tries to render whatever is inside harmless. And then, shortly before 6:00 this morning, just about a couple of hours ago, that SUV was towed away from Times Square to a facility in the Bronx where investigation and possibly, since it was the last item down there, possibly New York's Times Square could get back to business as usual.'

<sup>340</sup> CNN May 2 14:00 heading: 'New York law enforcement authorities have traced the vehicle found in Times Square with a malfunctioning bomb device to a junkyard in Connecticut.'

observed on all networks. MSNBC began calling the attempt ‘amateurish’ by mid-day Sunday.<sup>341</sup> The use of in-network experts (not academic or military experts as observed during previous case studies) was observed on MSNBC; with NBC Justice Correspondent, Pete Williams from the Washington, DC, Bureau of NBC (at 13:03) being interviewed on MSNBC, stating ‘would this device actually work?’ and speculating that it wasn’t clear that it was functional due to fuel valves in the gas tanks being in the closed position. MSNBC continued to recap the coverage of the White House Correspondents’ Dinner from the previous evening, and did so at a higher rate of repetition than CNN or FOX.

May 3, 2010

On Monday, May 3, the morning coverage on all networks included details about the Times Square bomb itself, the cash sale of the truck weeks prior, the route and possible planning the suspect did before placing the bomb, and the manhunt for the suspected bomber, whose name would not be released until minutes after his arrest at 24:45 on May 3rd. CNN began its (early) Monday coverage of the Times Square Bombing attempt with information on the manhunt for a person seen on CCTV released by New York Police Department. ‘American Morning’ (CNN May 3 at 06:00, 07:00, and 08:00) headlined the Times Square story before the BP oil spill at the top of every news hour.<sup>342</sup> However, by 14:00, US/Iran relations topped the headlines, followed by the Times Square story, then the BP oil spill coverage retook the top story position on all networks. By 22:00, FOX’s *On the Record* with Greta Van Susteren, opened with: ‘Federal authorities have (named) a person of interest in the hunt for whoever tried to set off a car bomb in a very crowded Times Square in New York City. Authorities say the person of

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<sup>341</sup> MSNBC May 2 13:00 with Norah O’Donnell.

<sup>342</sup> CNN May 3 07:00 Highlights: ‘Authorities are now looking at a surveillance video that may have captured a possible suspect half a block away changing his shirt and described as looking around furtively by the NYPD.’

interest recently returned from Pakistan.<sup>343</sup> MSNBC opened the 17:00 show 'Hardball with Chris Matthews' with the heading 'Times Square Terror'. Matthews:

Leading off tonight, the foreign connection. We dodged another terrorist attack, possibly from a foreign source. Thanks to the keen observation of a New York City street vendor, authorities were able to dismantle that car bomb Saturday night before it exploded in Times Square. But now the FBI and the NYPD are feverishly chasing down the individual(s) behind this failed attempt. According to a *Washington Post* story posted online late today, Obama administration officials have spotted some telltale signs of international involvement.<sup>344</sup>

The Rachel Maddow Show (also on MSNBC – 21:00) similarly opened with details about the suspect, and the international connections made public earlier in the day.

On all networks, May 3<sup>rd</sup> represented the lightest day of news coverage of the failed terror attempt of the five days observed of this case study. The initial increase of coverage from early Sunday morning (the day before) had subsided as no new information about the attack or suspect were released by law enforcement officials. Without new information, the story fell behind in the headlines and fell out of the 'top story' position on all networks in the afternoon of Monday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. While there are debates and insights as to the process of 'life spans' of news stories, this thesis observed that when no new information is released or discovered, the story (speaking to this thesis' case studies alone) leaves the 'top stories' or opening news segments after around 12-hours if the event is a failed attack, or around 2-days if the terror attack was successful (this referring exclusively to television news, not print or other mediums).

May 4, 2010

Tuesday, May 4, 2010 saw the heaviest saturation of coverage of the Times Square Bombing attempt of the five days observed per this thesis' methodology. While the Sunday morning (May 2) reporting was the most frequent (as in occurring more/taking up the most time of any news story within the four hours of observation for each network), the lack of

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<sup>343</sup> FOX May 3 22:00 On the Record with Greta Van Susteren.

<sup>344</sup> MSNBC May 3 17:00 Hardball with Chris Matthews.

material/information available at that time meant that the story did not have the depth of coverage per news hour as was observed on Tuesday Morning (May 4). As the reality of the situation unfolded, at 23:45 on the night of May 3, officials had ordered Emirates flight 202 from New York's JFK destined for Dubai, back to the gate from which it had already departed. While taxiing to the runway, the pilot was given instructions by JFK Tower to return to its original departure gate; this was where Shahzad was taken into custody along with another individual on the same flight. By the morning newscasts on Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup>, details of Shahzad's personal background were discussed on all network programs, and the information was treated as a 'breaking event' by all networks during the morning hours. President Obama spoke about the failed attempt during the first three minutes of a speech he made to the Business Council in Washington DC, at 11:00EST, the statement was covered by all networks.

Going through the day's news, in the first minutes of May 4, and only half an hour after the physical arrest of Shahzad at JFK, the story broke on the networks. CNN at 00:20: Anchor Asieh Namdar: 'We are following breaking news: A major development in the failed car bombing attack in Times Square, word of an arrest. Susan Candiotti joins us with more on the phone.' Susan Candiotti: (CNN National Correspondent)

Seeing not much more than that at this hour because this news is just breaking and just coming in. However, a law enforcement official with direct knowledge of the case confirms to CNN that, in fact, an arrest has been made in that failed attempt to set up a car bomb in New York's Times Square on Saturday. We had been reporting that the buyer of a sport utility vehicle that was used in that failed attempt had been considered a potential suspect in the case. That buyer was described to CNN as a naturalized U.S. citizen from Pakistan. However, investigators have told CNN that they are looking at more than one person in connection with that unsuccessful bombing according to another source.<sup>345</sup>

The name of the suspect was released by 01:00 and covered on all networks in the early hours of Tuesday, the 4<sup>th</sup>. At around 05:00, Attorney General, Eric Holder, held a press

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<sup>345</sup> CNN May 4 12:00 News Hour.

conference confirming the suspect's name and other information released in the early hours to all networks.<sup>346</sup>

By the afternoon of the 4<sup>th</sup>, no additional information had been released for several hours, and the story was being reiterated in all networks without significant variation during anchor lead programming (as opposed to news via host programs or syndicated shows).<sup>347</sup> Aside from the prime-time evening programs (where the Times Square story headlined as the top story), the later news coverage on the 4<sup>th</sup> (after 15:00) saw the BP oil spill covered for a longer duration of news time than the Times Square story. FOX compared the attempt with previous terror attempts during their 21:00 news hour on the 4<sup>th</sup> in a chronological and comprehensive summary.<sup>348</sup> The Hannity show on FOX conducted a telephone/text-in poll for its viewers

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<sup>346</sup> Speech as covered by CNN May 4 'American Morning' 05:00 news hour Holder: 'Earlier this evening, Faisal Shahzad was arrested in connection with the attempted car bombing in New York on Saturday. Mr. Shahzad, an American citizen was into custody at JFK Airport in New York as he attempted to board a flight to Dubai. Since the plot was first uncovered on Saturday night, the FBI, the prosecutors, intelligence lawyers in the National Security Division of the Justice Department, which Mr. Chris heads and United States Attorney's offices in Manhattan and Connecticut, along with the New York Police Department, have worked night and day to find out who was responsible for what would have been a deadly attack had it been successful.'

<sup>347</sup> CNN May 4 14:00 with TJ Holmes in for Ali Veshi: 'To our viewers, we are back here now at the top of the hour, 2:00 (14:00) on the East Coast. We need to reset this whole thing for you, because there have been a lot of developments. Let's tell you what we've got 'On the Rundown,' the new details, the very latest. This stuff is flooding into our newsroom about this attempted car bombing in Times Square over the weekend. We heard from top administration officials just minutes ago, and we are also hearing of new arrests...The bomb was crude, the plot was foiled, the suspect arrested, and at the last possible second he was arrested. Now, from Washington to New York to Islamabad, authorities want to know who else had a hand in the attempted car bombing of Times Square on Saturday night.'

<sup>348</sup> FOX May 4 21:00 Sean Hannity Show: 'Now this weekend's attempted bombing of Times Square is only the latest in a series of terror attacks and attempted terror attacks here in the U.S. Now, over the past year America has been targeted by radical Islamic extremists. Now, first it was the September 2009 attempt to detonate suicide bombs in New York City's subway system plotted by one of al Qaeda's ringleaders. Then in November, Major Nidal Malik Hassan opened fire on the Fort Hood army base in Texas killing 13 and wounding dozens more. Then on Christmas Day disaster was averted when an underwear bomb failed to detonate on board a Northwest Airlines flight bound for Detroit. And now we can add the attempted attack in the heart of New York and that is Times Square to this growing list.'

debating if Shahzad had accomplices. (No other network engaged in this type of audience polling for the Times Square bomber during the observed coverage.) Hannity:

And by the way, it is time for our Tuesday text voting. Now we want to know if you think the Times Square Bombing suspect acted alone, with the Taliban or with al Qaeda. You can text us at 36288. Type H1 for alone, H2 for with the Taliban, H3 for al Qaeda. We will reveal results coming up at the end of the show. We hope you'll stay tuned. Plenty more HANNITY, straight ahead.<sup>349</sup>

At 20:00 on the O'Reilly Factor (also on FOX) comparisons were made between Shahzad and attempted Underwear Bomber, Omar Abdulmatallab. Now, at this point, there are many questions surrounding the case, but it's similar to the Christmas bomber in Detroit. That was a rather clumsy attempt to kill Americans. But a bomb's a bomb. And there's already controversy about who should be questioning Shahzad. Is it legal? We will look into that in a few moments.<sup>350</sup>

To demonstrate the media's politicization of stories, which can be observed specifically during the coverage of (failed or successful) terror attacks, MSNBC took to directly criticizing Republicans and their pro-torture stance of terror suspects during the Ed Show at 18:00.

The Times Square terror suspect is behind bars, and he's talking to investigators, and we're not even torturing him. And that, of course, is making the Republicans go crazy...The Republican Party, they just can't stand the fact that the President of the United States, Barack Obama is keeping America safe. They will never be able to bring themselves to give him any credit whatsoever.<sup>351</sup>

During other media coverage observed for this thesis, FOX consistently engaged in direct criticisms of the Democratic Party and President Obama; however, MSNBC had previously refrained from direct criticisms of one political party or the other for the majority of

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<sup>349</sup> FOX May 4 21:30 Sean Hannity Show.

<sup>350</sup> FOX May 4 20:00 The O'Reilly Factor.

<sup>351</sup> MSNBC May 4 18:00 The Ed Show with Ed Schulz.

the footage previously observed. As a note: MSNBC is politically orientated more left-center and closer to CNN's Democratic stance than to the traditionally Republican-leaning FOX news.

May 5, 2010

By Wednesday, May 5, 2010, the discussions on-air surrounding the Times Square Bomber case were predominantly opinionated and highly politicized among the news hosts and special guests. The facts of the situation were presented, and the story was given similar levels of airtime among the networks. However, once the story was introduced, it was immediately followed by commentary and interpretations that varied from one network to the next. In the overnight and early morning, the BP oil spill had regained its top story position until the prime-morning (06:00-09:00) shows.<sup>352</sup> Later in the afternoon, many networks were emphasizing the Pakistani connection to the Times Square Bombing story.<sup>353</sup> By the 17:00 news hour on CNN, during 'The Situation Room' with Wolf Blitzer, discussions were had with CNN Correspondent, Reza Sayah, about the conflicting accounts circulating in the media of the Times Square Bombing suspect's Taliban connections. Sayah:

Yes, Wolf, very interesting and really conflicting developments here in Pakistan. Of course, for the past couple of days, we've heard a lot about the Pakistani Taliban. Were they behind the attempted bombing in Times Square, New York? Well, today in a phone call to CNN, the spokesperson for the Pakistani Taliban, Azam Tariq, told us that, 'absolutely not, they were not involved in this attempted bombing. Here's what Azam Tariq had to tell CNN. "We appreciate Faisal Shahzad, but he has no link with the Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan. He might have received training from other militant groups, but not the Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan. There are other groups that can provide that type

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<sup>352</sup> CNN May 5 'American Morning' 06:00 headlines in order: 'A Look at the Times Square Bomber's Pakistan Connection; Developments in the Oil Spill Disaster; On the Hunt for Oil: Spill Spells Trouble for Wildlife; Did Feds Miss Oil Spill Warning?; Times Square Bombing Suspect Talking; Google to Sell Digital Books; Corey Haim Autopsy.' 08:00 headlines in order: 'Tracking NYC's Terror Suspect; Times Square Bomb Plot Terror Ties; Oil Gusher in the Gulf; Times Square Suspect Divulging Information to Investigators; Changing Organ Donation to an Opt-Out Option; Back to Their "Roots"'

<sup>353</sup> CNN May 5 17:00 News Hour lead headings: 'Bomb Suspect's Link to Taliban; No-Fly List Crackdown; Could Massive Oil Spill Soon be Stopped?'



of training, too." So, there you have that spokesperson for the Pakistani Taliban saying, we have no links with this young man.<sup>354</sup>

By 23:00, CNN's coverage had returned to the BP Oil Spill, with Anderson Cooper giving the first 15-minutes of '360 Degrees' to the story.<sup>355</sup> The Times Square Bombing was the last story addressed on that news hour.

FOX news coverage observed on this date was aggressive in its anti-terror rhetoric, and some hosts directly attacked other network's coverage, anchors, and guests.<sup>356</sup> Also demonstrated on FOX May 5th were direct comparisons between the Times Square Bomber and other failed terror attempts including the Underpants Bomber. During FOX Special Report with Bret Baier (FOX 18:00 May 5), guest Catherine Herridge: 'On Christmas Day, the bombing of Flight 253 failed when the detonator malfunctioned. On Saturday, in Times Square, a similar scenario

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<sup>354</sup> CNN May 5 17:05 Reza Sayah speaking with Wolf Blitzer.

<sup>355</sup> CNN May 5 'Anderson Cooper's 360 Degrees' 23:00 news hour.

<sup>356</sup> During the 20:00 hour, on The O'Reilly Factor, hosted by Bill O'Reilly, talking with guest Dennis Miller: O'Reilly: 'We've been talking how the media is very sympathetic, it seems, to this times square alleged bomber. Listen to this sound bite. I want you to react to this sound bite. This is a guy named Jim Acosta on CNN. Go.'  
(Video clip start) Jim Acosta, CNN correspondent: it can be confirmed that his house was foreclosed on in recent years. I mean, one would have to imagine that that brought a lot of pressure and a lot of heartache on that family. (video clip end)  
O'Reilly: 'I mean, the house was foreclosed on, so I'm going to blow up as many people as I can.'  
Miller: 'It's not even about ... that's not even about the guy in Times Square. That's about Acosta. A kid who's a product of a feel-good, touchy-feely, morally relativistic upbringing, who feels if he can get in early on this. It's probably 48 hours. The guy attempts to set up a bomb, and it doesn't go off. You can peel back the soft underbelly. That makes Acosta feel like he's special, he's deeper, he's wiser than I. We're in a real world this is the point where ton Maneiro, the old man, leans across the spaghetti bowl and says, "What, are you stupid, for god's sakes?" He would have probably had to wait another 48 hours if the bomb had gone off. But I guarantee you, Acosta and people like him feel that they can carve out a niche that makes them imbued with some special knowledge, if they get in early and look at it through a different prism. But guess what? There is no other prism sometimes.'  
Miller: 'There's bad people in the world.'  
O'Reilly: 'That guy, I don't know him. Wouldn't be sympathetic if it was a tea party person implicated, as I said early on. So it is, they do come at it from a very, very decided political point of view.'

played out.’ And later in the same show, critiques of MSNBC anchor Contessa Brewer by FOX’s Baier:

Baier: Well, MSNBC anchor Contessa Brewer expressed her frustration anger in learning the background of the suspect Faisal Shahzad.

(Video Clip Start) MSNBC anchor Contessa Brewer: There was part of me that was hoping it would not be anybody with ties to any Islamic country because there are a lot of people who want to use intent to justify writing off people who believe in a certain way or come from certain countries, or whose skin color is a certain way. They use it as justification for really outdated bigotry. (Video Clip End)

Baier: News Busters noted that Brewer Didn't explain which ethnicity or religion she had been hoping the bomber would have been affiliated with." Brewer responded on Facebook saying she hoping the suspect would be a particularly nationality, race, or religion, but rather that people wouldn't use the information to justify bigotry.

MSNBC countered the criticisms of FOX during Hardball with Chris Matthews (MSNBC May 5 17:00) stating: ‘And leave it to the right to figure out how to blame President Obama for both the oil leak and the Times Square bomb plot. The radio talkers and right-wing bloggers are working overtime.’ Later, in an interview with National Security Council Chief of Staff, Denis McDonough, speaking directly on the Times Square incident, utilized ‘hero’ framing to highlight the government’s efforts that were effective during the incident. His interview employed the largest volume of hero/pro-police rhetoric observed during the coverage reviewed for this case study.<sup>357</sup> Overall, FOX and MSNBC’s specialty shows (prime time shows with the host’s namesake) contained the most biased content, or that which directly countered another

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<sup>357</sup> MSNBC May 5 17:00 McDonough: ‘So a point of fact is, the heroes over at Customs and Border Patrol and at many of the agencies and offices that are watching our watch list identified a problem here, and they found the person and stopped him from getting away. That’s an important bit of business... So in the first instance, we had a great bit of effort by Customs and Border Patrol. We’re very proud of them for that. And in the second instance, we’re updating the situation and the system to ensure it doesn’t happen again... You know, Chris, I’m not going to get into penalties for the airlines. What I am going to get into is recognizing the good work of the NYPD, 53 hours for them to identify and stop this guy... ... the good work of the heroes -- the good work of the heroes at Customs and Border Patrol, who checked this name against a list, updated with and most recent information and intelligence and stopped him.’

network's coverage of the Times Square Bombing story. CNN showed more generalized critique of far-right coverage, but without using the video clips from other networks' coverage as often as FOX and MSNBC. By this time in early May 2010, well over a year into the Obama Presidency, FOX's critique of the left and pro-left news groups was very transparent. The critiques were sometimes taken out of context (as the full footage of the selected video segments was observed by this thesis), but not consistently. Overall, the coverage of the Times Square Bomber was compatible across the networks in terms of what information was aired, when (and how quickly) new information was released, and what discussions about the event and the suspect took place on which days across the three networks. Quantitatively, this case study observed the least amount of material specifically devoted to the incident itself during the footage observed, with the greatest amount of interruption and coverage observed devoted to other stories such as the BP oil spill, the Greek Recession, the Arizona immigration law, and other national and international events.

### **7.3 Frames**

#### 9/11

During the footage observed for this case study, the 9/11 Frame functioned at the weakest level observed out of all six case studies of this thesis. Despite the terror attempt occurring in New York City, an icon of contemporary terrorism targets following 9/11, there were few comparisons of the Times Square Bombing attempt to the 9/11 attacks within the observed footage. The conversations that mentioned 9/11 were spoken in a broader reference to NYC as a known terror target – but not as a comparison of the attacks themselves to one another. The other manner in which 9/11 was mentioned (as it was for the Underpants Bomber case study), was as a chronological reference point for the start of a typology of terrorism against the United States by religious extremists. Within the discussions that identified 9/11 as a 'starting

point', there were frequent conversations about the progression of terror attacks since 9/11.<sup>358</sup> The lacing of terror events together that can be observed on all networks to various extents, some of which included the criticism that since 9/11, the US had not taken the necessary precautions to prevent the 'waves' of terrorism.<sup>359</sup> In a manner, this is indicative of the broader construction of the War on Terror Narrative – the weaving or story telling process that occurred and was observed during all case studies of this thesis.<sup>360</sup> *Note:* One interview with Former NYC Mayor, Rudolph Giuliani on May 5, contained the most frequent references to September 11<sup>th</sup>, but those remarks were made by an individual during an interview, and not by the anchors or within news coverage itself.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> CNN May 4 04:30 -Breaking News Hour- Sajjan Gohel, Asia Pacific Federation, Director for International Security: 'What worries me is that this is no longer the old type of al Qaeda terrorism where individuals would be imported into the United States to carry out an attack like the 9/11 atrocities. This time the intention is to recruit individuals domestically, to be able to blend into the civilian fabric of society primarily if they can be U.S. citizens. So the Times Square plot just now, also Nidal Hassan, who carried out the Fort Hood massacre and then if possible, bringing individuals that have actually been educated in the west like the Christmas day plotter last year.'

<sup>359</sup> CNN May 3 21:00 Larry King Live, Guest (Former Homeland Security Director) Tom Ridge: 'Well, I think this is also a reminder, Larry, every time an incident like this happens; I mean I think about the Fort Hood incident. I think about what happened on December 25th. I think of this incident. There's still some recommendations, Larry, that Lee Hamilton and Governor Kean and the 9/11 Commission made almost 10 years ago and we still haven't done them.'

<sup>360</sup> CNN May 2 CNN Newsroom 17:00 Host Fredricka Whitfield speaking to guest CNN Deputy Political Director, Paul Steinhauser. CNN Deputy Political Director, Paul Steinhauser: 'Overall, the President has pretty good ratings when you look at the polls. Our most recent numbers suggested a slight majority approved of how he's handling terrorism. But, you know, there have been some criticisms of this White House, of his team. You just go back to Christmas Day, that attempted bombing of a U.S. airliner. There was some criticism of how they handled that. Also, there was some pushback against the administration when they tried to close the detention facility in Guantanamo Bay and tried to try some of those 9/11 suspects in federal rather than military tribunals. But you heard the president today just about an hour ago, Fred, say that he'll see that justice is done in the New York case of that car bombing and he was very clear pointing out that federal authorities, his national security team, dealing with the state and the City of New York City to try to get this done, Fred.' Whitfield: 'So, I wonder how much of a difference it would make for this presidency, whether it was a homegrown terrorist, somebody who has been here for a while, living here, or whether this car bombing would be - whether those people responsible or the person responsible would be - would be from elsewhere?'

<sup>361</sup> As quoted from CNN May 5 21:00 'Larry King Live': Giuliani: 'And it sort of underlines the

### Applying Entman's Identifiers:

The *Problem Identification* (within the 9/11 frame) of the network coverage of the Times Square attempt was focused on the fact that an extremist had obtained American citizenship, had been able to acquire the materials to construct a bomb inside an SUV, and almost escaped on an international flight from JFK. The conversations observed did not correlate the attack itself with 9/11, or suggest that the attacker represented the same caliber of terrorists as previous terror attacks and attempts (in fact, the opposite assessments were observed in some coverage<sup>362</sup>). Rather, loose invocations of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks were made based on the location of the

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point that you made at the beginning, which is that September 11, which I think some people want to forget about is still with us; meaning the same reasons and the same group or groups that wanted to attack and kill us then are still motivating people to do that...(later during same interview)...When I heard about this, like on Christmas morning, when I heard about the almost attack then, it just brings back all the memories of September 11, the tremendous destruction and the loss of life and families that have been affected by it for now almost a decade. And the fact that sometimes I felt, over the last seven or eight years, that as we get further away from it (9/11) we kind of think its, you know, part of our past. And it isn't yet. I mean it will be some day. Someday, it will just be part of our history, like Pearl Harbor is part of our history...(later still, same interview)...Well, my gut tells me that, you know, its more than we would like to think. In fact, what is happening now is what I expected to happen after September 11<sup>th</sup> and what I was told would happen, that they would attempt these car bombings and, this wasn't a suicide bombing, but that they would attempt suicide bombings.'

<sup>362</sup> See conversation on MSNBC May 4 17:00 Hardball with Chris Matthews and guest Roger Cressy: Matthews: 'There seems to be an intuitive tendency on our part, a penchant, to think if it's a well-organized plot, if it's something like 9/11, or even the '93 plot on the World Trade Center, it seems to have a international elements... a lot of thought went into it, a lot of people, a lot of minds, preparation, organization, et cetera. And when it's a real kind of a screw-up like this (the Times Square bombing attempt), when everything seems to be wrong, then you assume it's one person operating as an individual. Is that a fair way to look at it, I mean, the fact that it was such a screw-up, that it may possibly not have been coordinated?'

Cressy: 'Well, you know, we use the term "sophisticated" a lot when we talk about terrorism plots.'

Matthews: 'Yes?'

Cressy: 'And it doesn't...it doesn't have to be sophisticated just because there are multiple pieces of coordination. It can be sophisticated for other reasons. In this case, this wasn't a sophisticated device. It was a crude device that wasn't going to work. So his capability was not that impressive. But his intent was actually (crosstalk)... So part of the good news story here is that even though this was a serious attempt, like the attorney general said, he wasn't that good, and that may be a sign of the type of threat we have to deal with. It doesn't mean the threat's not real, it just means the talent pool used to staff it is not what we're used to.'

attempt alone. At a reach, one *problem* of note was sounded on FOX concerning the process of Mirandizing suspects of terror attacks or attempts. FOX argued that suspects involved in terrorism events should not be Mirandized because in a ‘ticking bomb’ situation, if the suspect does not know they have the right to remain silent, then it would be counterintuitive to inform them otherwise. That interview also contained sentiments reflected in the ‘*Moral Evaluation*’ detailed below; that the suspect represented (and was evaluated to be) a lesser caliber terrorist.<sup>363</sup>

The *causal interpretation* made by CNN on the final day of observation for this case study was that the attack would inevitably become (*just*) another statistic in the overall history of terrorism in the United States. CNN’s Don Lemon reported (CNN May 5 13:05) on a document from the ‘National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism’, on the progression of terror attacks against the US, weaving the Times Square attempt in with other attacks since 1970:

From 1970-2007, New York was hit by – get this - 284 terror attacks, most of which occurred in the 1970’s. Now, remember now these are the attacks I’m showing you, not the victims. Of all the people killed in terror attacks in New York, 98 percent died on September 11, 2001. Now look at this map...We picked out the top five US terrorism targets over the past four decades. Miami is a distant second with 70-attacks. San Francisco had 66, Washington, 59, Los Angeles, 54. Unbelievable. 284 in New York

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<sup>363</sup> FOX May 4 21:00 Hannity Show with guests Dana Perino, Stuart Varney and Mark Levin.

Perino: ‘It’s shocking to me that they announced that initially. That the first thing that they said...this is what they did with the Underwear Bomber as well, is that he was an amateur, that he was all by himself, that there were no connections. And then (government officials) have to correct themselves. I don’t understand why they don’t wait 24 hours and let the investigation play out. Plus, unless they’re up to some sort of ruse so that they can get some intelligence, but if they Mirandize him right after they caught him, they didn’t, they weren’t asking him for any other information.’

Hannity: ‘And in a situation like that where it’s an emergency, Stuart. In other words, we don’t know...we go back to 9/11, remember, one tower hit, another tower hit, the Pentagon hit, a field in Pennsylvania. Oftentimes it’s not one attack but multiple attacks.’

Hannity: ‘So we don’t have the luxury of Mirandizing somebody that we know is involved in a terrorist attack, do we?’

Varney: ‘No, we do not. What’s at stake here is the performance of the Homeland Security Department and Janet Napolitano. How well did they perform? How much on top of this were they? At the moment the answer seems to be that they were somewhat lax in getting on top of it very, very quickly and getting information out of that.’

City!' This is not the only example of the isolation of New York as a target and divorced within the semantics from the United States at large.

This weaving of terror attacks and attempts together was echoed on other networks by anchors, hosts and guests; such as on (MSNBC May 5 17:45) Hardball with Chris Matthews, speaking with guest and Former Governor of New York State, George Pataki, who addressed the attempt and where it lay in relation to other terror attempts in terms of official (specifically Presidential) responses.

This is another case where we are responding after something is attempted. We saw it with the Christmas Day airplane bomber. We saw it in Times Square. We were lucky in both cases. Then we saw it in Ft. Hood, where we were not so lucky, and 13 of our great young heroes who put their lives on the line to defend us were murdered. I think this administration just has got to change its approach.

On FOX (FOX May 4 18:45) guest and syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer, after speaking on the Miranda rights dispute, addressed the pattern of terrorism with: 'What is more important, a verdict two years hence or information today that would prevent another attack in the next year or two?' To which Host Baier responded: 'The Homeland Security Department under Janet Napolitano has been more forthcoming in this investigation during this event. Did they learn, do you think, Steve, after the Christmas Day Bomber? Is there a lesson learned that is in effect now that you are seeing in how this situation has developed?' These conversations, listing terror attempts together, then overlaying that chronology against successful terror attacks, was observed on all networks.

Concerning the *moral evaluation* for the Times Square Bombing attempt within the 9/11 Frame; there simply was not as much of a moral evaluation (in the footage sampled per this thesis' methodology) as there was a more trivial judgment cast down on the would-be-bomber Shahzad. The moral components typically identified in network coverage by terminology, such as evil, bad, wrong, horrible, deplorable, and (their antonyms in reference to the 'correct' persons of the United States), were not seen during this case study beyond one interview on FOX with

Reverend Franklin Graham (FOX May 5 22:00 'On the Record with Greta Van Susteren). An example of the judgment cast down of a failed and inexperienced terrorist is sampled below from MSNBC on 'Countdown' with Keith Olbermann speaking with MSNBC Terrorism Analyst, Evan Kohlmann.<sup>364</sup> The suggestion that made during that interview with Kohlmann, that Shahzad was a 'lesser caliber terrorist', was echoed on CNN and FOX. At some point all networks made comparisons between Shahzad and other failed terrorists, and noted how those terrorists were lesser versions of successful terrorists (such as the 9/11 hijackers, the 7/7 bombers, and others). The *Treatment Recommendation* concerning the 9/11 Frame for this failed terror attempt was that the security measures put in place following the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks needed to be re-visited and expanded upon in light of another terror attempt in New York City. While there was praise that the police and law enforcement agencies cooperated well to apprehend Shahzad,<sup>365</sup> there were as many calls for security (and budgetary) increases by all networks.<sup>366</sup>

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<sup>364</sup> MSNBC May 5 20:00 Olbermann: '...Shahzad and the Christmas bomber both seemed to be less than prepared, less than professional, didn't know what to do, and plan didn't work immediately in their dreams. Are we victims of our own success here? Have we shut down the pros and we're now dealing with the amateurs and what does that mean?' Kohlmann: 'Yes, in some ways that's true. I mean, look at the years following 9/11; al Qaeda fired a bunch of cells at us, people trying to go after our subway systems, elsewhere. We just had a Najibullah Zazi plot here in New York. Each one gets stopped. Any time where you have something complex, something involvement people to a lot of training and communications and whatnot, eventually, that gets stopped.'

<sup>365</sup> MSNBC May 3 17:00 Hardball with Chris Matthews, guest Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY): 'There have been scares, probably one or two a year since 9/11. And New Yorkers, we're a tough breed, and we sort of know that lots happens in our city, mostly good, sometimes bad. And I think New Yorkers live with the idea that we're the target...The New York Police Department's been doing an incredible job. They have a thousand people just on anti-terrorism. And some of the programs that the federal government does that have been very helpful; for instance, this surveillance you see there at Times Square...'

<sup>366</sup> MSNBC May 5 00:00 Special Report with Andrea Mitchell with guest Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY): 'Well, I believe that we need more resources to make sure we can keep New York safe. Some of the money we're looking for is to prevent, for example, a dirty bomb ever being used in New York, because there are detection technologies that are available to prevent that. We want money for more surveillance. You know, we have the capacity for about 3,000 cameras in downtown, but in midtown we only have about a hundred. So we need more money to be able to do better surveillance. We also need



## Evil

This case study observed the fewest mentions of the phrase ‘evil’, or conversations labeling terrorists or radical groups as ‘evil’, out of all case studies for this thesis. Unlike the Bali Bombings’ media coverage, where ‘evil’ was implied, ‘evil’ in this coverage was sparse and not implied by the phrase itself or an inference thereof. Within the footage observed (4-hours, 3-networks, for 5-days: 60-hours total), the phrase ‘evil’ was used less than 20-times, for all networks combined. Within the contexts of those 20-times, the phrase was only used in reference to Shahzad twice, and directed at wider ‘Islamic Terrorism’ six times. The interview that contained the phrase ‘evil’ more often than all the other footage observed was on CNN, with host Campbell Brown interviewing Reverend Franklin Graham (mentioned above). The interview was pre-recorded, and was aired on CNN May 4 20:30 ‘Campbell Brown’. The original reason for the interview was to address the controversy involved in the evangelical Christian leader’s removal from the ‘National Day of Prayer’ function in DC; the cause of which was the resurfacing of statements he had made against Islam in previous years.<sup>367</sup>

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money for the police officers. Ninety-two percent of all the budget we have is used for salaries, and at least 120 of those salaries go to counterterrorism. And that’s the kind of money that the federal government should be providing. So all told, I may be asking for about \$60 million to cover the additional costs.’

Host Andrew Mitchell: ‘It’s extraordinary. One of the facts that’s come out is that New York City has more police officers in New York City alone than the FBI has employees. I mean, we are talking about a huge number of people here who are already dedicated to stopping the bad guys, finding out who’s involved. Look at how well they did. I mean, there were gaps in the system -- the terror watch list, the airline, the FBI losing the suspect on the way to JFK. But the NYPD did its job.’

Gillibrand: ‘The NYPD has done its job time and time again. They are the greatest force in the world. And what they’ve been able to do is we’ve had at least 11 terror attempts on New York City since 9/11. And so our police officers need to be extremely well trained, very vigilant, and have done their job under Commissioner Kelly extremely well. Not only did they handle this case well, but they’ve handled all the previous cases well. So we need those funds to keep our community safe. And because New York City is such a terror target, whether it’s the financial sector or the U.N. or any part of New York that is a target for terror, we need to be able to protect those places, our religious institutions, and the real fabric of New York.’

<sup>367</sup> CNN’s Campbell Brown (CNN May 4 18:30) to Reverend Franklin Graham: ‘What the

The *Problem Identification* involved with this case study under the 'evil' frame was interesting. Some conversations specifically hinted that Shahzad was almost undeserving of the word 'evil', or that he was simply not 'evil' enough as was evidenced by his failure. This was observed in previous case studies in such a manner. See the following interview, CNN May 6 06:00 'American Morning', interview with 'terrorism analyst' and fellow from the Center on Law and Security, Paul Cruickshank.

Host Kiran Chetry: A couple of people said, "Hey, is this a blue print of, you know, this was the dry run that didn't work out?" So, if I'm somebody who has the evil intentions, I know now what to do and what not to do, in terms of, you know, obtaining a vehicle, in terms of what explosives may or may not work or is it more of a deterrent, that, hey, they're going to catch up with you? No matter what you try to do, it's extremely difficult, still to carry out a successful bombing.

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concerns have been is that you have declared Islam to be an evil religion. And I guess the question would be...'

Graham: 'I said that nine years ago, yes.'

Brown: 'But you said something very similar to that. I wish I had the quote in front of me right now. But on my program you said something also very similar to that.'

Graham: 'Well, if you take, Campbell, just the way they treat women, I have a real problem with Islam, I do. The way they treat women, it is horrid. And it is not a peaceful religion that President Bush and President Obama tried to tell the American people it is. It is not that at all...And just take if you treat women only, just women only is the argument.'

Brown: 'To that point then, I guess if you feel that Islam is an evil religion, would it be appropriate? I'm trying to look at this from the Pentagon's perspective. Would it be appropriate for the Army to then invite a speaker who has called Judaism evil or said that Christians are enslaved by their religion? Can you see where the similarities might be here?'

Graham: 'Campbell, Islam is what it is. And I'm not here to try to take on Islam or preach against Islam. But I don't think the military needs to have their head in the sand either and pretend that everything is OK if we cave in to the demands of a couple of people. And that somehow we're going to have peace in the world. We're not going to have peace in the world. It's just that simple.'

Brown: 'I read that you said that if George W. Bush were president, you believe he would have overruled the Pentagon, and that you would be speaking on Thursday. Why do you think that President Obama hasn't done that?'

Graham: 'I don't think this would have happened under Bill Clinton, and I don't think this would have happened under George Bush. I really don't.'

Brown: 'But you do think it would have happened, clearly it has happened, but you don't -- explain your concerns with President Obama and why you think there is a difference.'

Graham: 'No, I don't think President Obama had anything to do with this. Campbell, he -- he's a very nice man.'

Cruikshank: I think those things are right, but also, I don't think it shows that you don't even have to be successful to get a lot of media attention, a lot of people worried, a lot of people scared. So, other people may, in the future, conduct these sorts of terrorist attacks. There's a school of thought that al Qaeda is going to want to carry out, so lowest scale attacks in the future because they realize that they're easy to pull off.

Chetry: They've had to downgrade. I mean, you know, you go from something as heartbreakingly spectacular as being able to knock down the Twin Towers to a failed underwear bomber and this guy in Times Square that couldn't ignite an SUV.

Conversely, FOX aired an interview with the author of *The Culture of Corruption*, Michelle Malkin, who did not blame Shahzad for his attempted 'evil', so much as she blamed American women for their speculative involvement in terrorism.<sup>368</sup> MSNBC had the least instances of the use of 'evil' in reference to the Times Square Bombing, and when the phrase was used (as it was for CNN and FOX) it was used by guests during interviews, and not in regular (un-syndicated) news hours.<sup>369</sup> From MSNBC, guest and New York Times reporter David Rohde, who had been

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<sup>368</sup>FOX May 5 21:00 'Hannity' - Malkin: 'Well, it never ceases to amaze me when you have pundits in the aftermath of these terror plots shaking their heads and wondering how it is that we could possibly have these American citizens in our midst plotting evil against their fellow citizens? Well, the fact is, that this has been a tried and true formula. It's been the modus operandi of jihadists over the last 10, 15, even 20 years to get into this country any way they can, legally or illegally. Walk through the front door, overstay their visas, break our laws and then buy their way towards the path to citizenship as Faisal Shahzad apparently did through marriage. And the green card marriage racket has been used by everyone from El Sayyid Nosair, as you mentioned at the beginning, who is was implicated in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, to every one of the operatives. All eight of them who were implicated in the New York landmarks conspiracy to bomb those landmarks in 1993 as well. Hezbollah has used it for smuggling rings that were based in North Carolina. And there's always been some willing American woman who will take, you know, just a couple of thousand dollars in cash, and then you know, basically aid and abet these evil jihadists. It's got to stop. And unfortunately, Sean, there's been very little attention that's been paid not only to this marriage fraud but also immigration benefits fraud in general.'

<sup>369</sup> For Example: MSNBC May 5 12:00 'Andrea Mitchell' with Guest, former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff: 'Right, I don't know when he acquired the weapons, nor am I, at this point, aware at what point he did anything that would have brought him to the attention of the authorities. You know, everyone would like to believe, Andrea, that there's some perfect way of knowing people who have evil in their hearts. But the fact is, until somebody says something or does something or acts in a way that becomes visible, we can't know what's in people's heads. So, in this case, you have a person who had no record, an American citizen, so they're entitled to buy a weapon, and nothing that apparently came to anybody's attention until the weekend.'

held captive by the Taliban in Pakistan, spoke with Chris Matthews about the mentality of persons like Shahzad based on his knowledge and experience.<sup>370</sup> These various approaches by each network of focusing on either the indoctrination of radicalized persons, the ability for persons to plot within the US to attack US targets, or the concerns about which branch of government was responsible for security holes exploited by attempts and attacks; mean that there was no unified *causal interpretation*, *moral evaluation* or *treatment recommendation* across the networks as a whole (as occurred during the *Problem Identification* for the 9/11 Frame of the Underpants Bomber case study). Within each individual network, the *causal interpretation* depended on the focus of their reports and the persons with whom interviews were selected and aired. The *moral evaluation* is similarly skewed and does not exist for any news reporting or segment beyond the interview with Reverend Franklin Graham. Finally, the *treatment recommendation* for the 'evil' frame of this case study does not exist in a cohesive manner for the same aforementioned reasons.

#### Scope of Threat

This case study observed language that suggested the most narrow scale of the War on Terror for this thesis (to this point in the case study chronology – See Boston Marathon Bombings). The semantics in the media were very clearly orientated around New York City and

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<sup>370</sup> MSNBC May 5 17:30 Host Matthews: 'What`s your gut sense, having had this experience? I know you`re writing the book now. But if you could share with us your sort of the gut feeling of having been their prisoner? Are they evil? Are they very extremist? Where you would put them in terms of just people that you have experienced in life?'  
Rohde: 'They live in this sort of alternate reality. And there`s young boys who really don`t know anything about the world beyond Afghanistan and Pakistan. They believe that they`re fighting an effort by the U.S. to forcibly convert Muslims to Islam in Afghanistan and Pakistan. They think the U.S. is just out to eliminate Islam as a religion and occupy Muslim countries. They don`t believe that 9/11 was carried out by al Qaeda. They think it was a secret American plot create a pretence to invade Muslim countries. And, again, the key thing is that they`re able to run these schools there. They`re able to indoctrinate their young fighters. And the key issue is, when will the Pakistani army move into this area and eliminate this safe haven they have? The 2005 London subway bombings were planned and carried out from there, the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, the recent case of Mr. Zazi, the American Afghan who was arrested for plotting an attack in New York, and now it appears that the Times Square bombing.'

Pakistan (almost exclusively) during the coverage of this failed event. In essence, the 'scale' or scope of the War on Terror at this time was defined to the point of exclusion of other areas of conflict besides Pakistan and NYC. The only time the conversation was broadened to include another location is in the coverage of Shahzad's travels that took him through the airport in Dubai, UAE.<sup>371</sup>

The *Problem Identification* was clearly stated on all networks to be that training camps and safe havens in Pakistan were promoting and producing terrorists that continued to pose a threat to the United States.<sup>372</sup> How this related to the Scope of Threat frame: the scale of the (War on Terror) conflict was most defined during the coverage of the Times Square Bomber out of all case studies for this thesis. From CNN (CNN May 4 14:30) a pre-recorded interview broadcast on Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup>, CNN International Correspondent Reza Sayah:

It's Washington's position, and president Barack Obama has said it over and over again, that Pakistan's tribal region along the Afghan border is the central front of the War on

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<sup>371</sup> CNN May 4 08:00 'American Morning' with Jim Acosta and CNN Homeland Security Correspondent, Jeanne Meserve:

Acosta: 'We're covering this story like no other this morning, from the heart of New York City all the way to Islamabad, Pakistan. Reporters, analysts and experts (standing by) around the world at this hour. Let's start with homeland security correspondent, Jeanne Meserve. She is live in Washington for us this morning.' Jeanne, the big question this morning on a lot of people's minds, who is Faisal Shahzad and how was he captured so quickly?'

Meserve: 'He is a 30-year-old man. He was born in Pakistan, became a naturalized U.S. citizen only in April of 2009. He's married... We are told by law enforcement officials that there was no derogatory information about this individual in any of the government databases prior to Saturday. He had not shown up on anybody's radar whatsoever, despite the fact that he'd taken some kind of interesting travel. Shortly after he became a U.S. citizen, in June of 2009, he boarded a flight to Dubai. He didn't come back from Dubai until February of 2010. So, a stay of eight months overseas. Dubai is a transit point. It probably was not his final destination. Law enforcement says that exactly where he was, we don't know at this point. If law enforcement knows, they aren't telling us. They clearly are looking at that time period to determine where he was, who he was in contact with, if, perhaps, he was getting some kind of training.'

From FOX May 4 22:20 'On the Record with Greta Van Susteren', Host Van Susteren: 'OK, well, let's face it. This is bad, and it does lead to Pakistan. So how do we solve the problem of terrorists being trained in Pakistan? They are coming here. At least, this man did. Ambassador John Bolton is next...(Commencing interview)...' 'So what are we going to do about Pakistan? The Times Square terror suspect says he went to a terror training camp in Pakistan. Is there anything we can do, should do?'

Terror. He's pointed at Pakistan and the tribal region, and he said this is where al Qaeda is and this is where they're plotting the next attack on US soil.

The *Causal Interpretation* however, differed among the networks – with the more right-wing orientated interpretation by FOX news asserting that President Obama was directly responsible for US loosing the War on Terror through mislabeling terrorists and empathizing with radical religious persons. From FOX May 5 16:10 (Your world with Neil Cavuto), guest interview with Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Kathleen McFarland:

McFarland: You know, I have spent all day trying to figure out what is going on here, because you're right. It's (referring to human interest pieces on Shahzad) popping up in all different media, as if this guy (Shahzad) has some sad story and he had no choice but to become a terrorist and try to kill people. I think what it is, when I was in the White House and you started seeing things like this, this is a deliberate leak, and it's the narrative that the administration wants out there, which is, this is not a war on terror. They don't even call it a war on terror, right?

Cavuto: This is a lone troubled nut.

McFarland: Yes...These are man-caused disasters. Terrorist acts are man-caused disasters. Their narrative is that this is a law enforcement issue, that this is not an international war against America, that this is a couple of bad apples.

Cavuto: But he's already...I don't know what to believe...but he's already indicated that he's had associations with some in Pakistan...But some of these headlines seem to show that Shahzad's home was in foreclosure, he hadn't really realized the American dream, so he was bitter.

McFarland: Yes.

Cavuto: Certainly, a poor guy like this would want to kill us. Who wouldn't?

McFarland: Yes. Yes. I mean, isn't this is a little crazy? This is political correctness gone to the ultimate extreme.

There was no clearly identifiable *Moral Evaluation* pertaining to the Scope of Threat frame for the Times Square Bombing. Rather, any moral judgment cast during this case study under the Scope of Threat frame had to do with FOX judging President Obama to be of a lesser moral fiber in his unwillingness to label the attempt as a result of Islamic Terrorism (see quote above),

which has more to do with political biases than with the scale of a conflict until that judgment is then correlated to the scope of the conflict at hand. This was not a *moral evaluation* as Entman's framing via attributed method would recognize. Rather, it is simply the closest judgment of a moral component made in the footage observed.

The *Treatment Recommendation* was consistently that US forces overseas needed to pay more attention to the Taliban in Pakistan, and the avenues which potential terrorists could take towards committing or attempting a terrorist attack needed severing.<sup>373</sup> The focus of this argument was the interruption or elimination of the infamous 'terror training camps' in the region – which were mentioned on every network. This, 'destruction of the camps', is presented as the treatment for destabilizing terror initiatives overseas.<sup>374</sup> The *treatment* proposed for the training camps from CNN May 5 18:30 (The Situation Room) CNN Pentagon Correspondent, Chris Lawrence, speaking with Jeff Dressler from the Institute for the Study of War:

Dressler: A lot of these training camps where they're learning, you know, suicide tactics and bombing and skills are small compounds, small houses apartments.

Lawrence: Look at the red dots on this map of Pakistan. These are the known locations of terrorist camps early last year, but a record number of US drone strikes started hitting the area. Those attacks and Pakistan's military offensive shut some camps down, but where you see the green dots, move them North. Terrorism analyst Jeff Dressler says al Qaeda is not getting local militant groups to join its global fight. Both Lashkar Taiba and Jaish Mohammed had almost exclusively focused their attacks inside Pakistan.<sup>375</sup>

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<sup>373</sup> MSNBC May 5 20:20 Keith Olbermann: 'But one senior counterterrorism official is telling NBC News that it appears more needles are pointing toward the Pakistani Taliban. The group originally having taken responsibility for Saturday's attempted attack, officials having said there was no evidence that that was true. However, a spokesman for the Pakistani Taliban today is telling CNN that the group did not train Shahzad. But the "Reuters" news agency tonight is citing a law enforcement source saying the investigators believe the Pakistani Taliban financed Shahzad's training.'

<sup>374</sup> The *problem* of the training camps demonstrated from CNN May 5 19:30 John King: 'I just want to know have you (speaking to Representative Donna Edwards (D-MD)) been told anything in the classified briefings that you can share with us, not the classified part, but the bullet points of it about what he did in Pakistan. They said they haven't yet been able to corroborate. Did he go to any training camps? Did he associated with known terrorist over there?'

<sup>375</sup> Continuing from that interview, a list of 'terror connections' with Pakistan from Wolf Blister,

From FOX news, a moral fault is laid upon the Presidential Administration for not acting ‘tough enough’ against terrorism; listing the string of terror attempts as evidence of Democrats’ inability to effectively counter or prevent terror threats.<sup>376</sup> This *Scope of Threat* Frame was substantially weaker during this case study than it was in previous cases. However, the weakest frame was the ‘Evil’ frame in the Times Square Bombing attempt, with the Scope of Threat frame presenting as the second weakest frame observed.

#### al Qaeda

The al Qaeda frame of the Times Square Bombing attempt showed signs of awareness by the public, government officials, and the media, of a shift in the typology of terror attacks in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as well as changes in the group(s) allegedly responsible. While Shahzad was not directly connected to al Qaeda (in training, funding or other support), he was laced into the group’s media framing and its history of actions against the United States. On

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CNN May 5 18:40: ‘There are several key terror detainees with links to Pakistan. Khalid Shaikh Mohammed is the professed mastermind of the 9/11 attacks. He was born in Kuwait. He carried a Pakistani passport and was captured in Pakistan seven years ago. He’s being held at Guantanamo Bay. Ramzi Bin al Shibh is the Yemeni suspected of coordinating the 9/11 attack. He was arrested in 2002 in Pakistan. He’s also at Guantanamo Bay right now. Ramzi Yousef was the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. He was arrested in Pakistan two years later, brought to the United States. He was convicted first for an airline bombing and then for the New York attack. He’s serving life without parole.’

<sup>376</sup> FOX News Senior White House Correspondent Major Garrett speaking with Heritage Foundation’s James Carafano- video segment aired during FOX May 4 18:00 ‘Special Report’ with Bret Baier:

Garrett: ‘The Times Square bomb is the third high-profile attempted terror plot, each with direct ties or links to Al Qaeda training or inspiration during Mr. Obama’s presidency. It follows Umar Farouk Abdulmatallab’s Christmas Day attempt to detonate a bomb in his underwear aboard a Detroit-bound jetliner, and also Najibullah Zazi’s foiled plot to bomb subway cars near again New York’s Times Square and Grand Central Station.’

Carafano: ‘This ought to give a lot of pause to people who said, you know, what are we doing in Afghanistan? You know, we’re not fighting the Taliban. The Taliban is not the enemy. Well, that’s just simply not true. The Taliban and Al Qaeda are joined at the hip. They want to attack America.’

Garrett: ‘Federal investigators stopped Zazi’s conspiracy cold, but the Christmas Day and Times Square terror missions failed primarily because the terrorists couldn’t detonate the bombs.’



CNN Tuesday, May 4, Former NYC Police Commissioner, Bill Bratton, wove the Times Square attack seamlessly into other acts of al Qaeda sponsored terrorism, and located the group within contemporary media topics during an interview on the regular morning newscast.<sup>377</sup> This sentiment that the Times Square attempt was a piece of a larger offensive effort by al Qaeda was echoed on FOX news, with the addition of a qualitative assessment by host, Bill O'Reilly and guest, Peter King (NY-R and Former House Homeland Security Committee member).<sup>378</sup> The assessment was that while the group was dangerous, the switch in tactics to homegrown terrorism was a lesser threat due to the smaller number of operatives available. However, this relatively unbiased discussion was not an indication that FOX had abandoned its criticism of the Obama Administration in the later days of coverage of this terror attempt.<sup>379</sup> MSNBC similarly

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<sup>377</sup> CNN May 4 10:00 (Newsroom) Bill Bratton: 'What I would like to point out is that this is now either the 11th or 12th terrorist attack that was targeting New York City since 9/11. When you add those numbers into other acts around the country, the Detroit plane bomber, it is quite clear that the tactics of the terrorists over the last year have changed. The pace of activity is accelerating and rather than seemingly going for a repeat of the 9/11 catastrophe in terms of a huge event, Al Qaeda and its supporters and those that they inspire seem to now be focusing on these lone wolf types of incidents, that they will take what they can get. Whether it's a car bomb in Times Square, a subway bombing, smaller incidents that keep alive the idea that we are under attack, and keeps Al Qaeda very much in the forefront of the news.'

<sup>378</sup> FOX May 4 20:00 (O'Reilly Factor) O'Reilly: 'Okay, so it's the TTP. Now that's different from al Qaeda, Congressman. And on the house intel committee, have you come across this group? Do you know? Is this a growing threat? Again, I mean, the bombing was not carried out well by this clown. But, you know, for the grace of God, he could have taken out a couple of hundred people.'

Peter King: 'The Taliban in Pakistan is a threat. It has not been a threat to our homeland up until now. It's clearly a threat. It is clearly Islamic terrorists. And Bill, what's happening is we have done an excellent job of keeping terrorists out of the country. You know, the 9/11 terrorists had a difficult time coming in. As a result, you have al Qaeda and their allies, including the Taliban, recruiting Americans who live here, people who are legally in the country, so they can be under the radar screen. And it's a lot harder to stop them. The good part of that is they're not as well trained as the former -- you know, the professional al Qaeda types. On the other hand, what makes it more difficult for law enforcement is they're under the radar screen. They don't have a record. And they're not affiliated with terrorists overseas. So, in some ways, it's less dangerous.'

<sup>379</sup> FOX May 3 18:40 (Special report with Bret Baier) NPR Host & Columnist Charles Krauthammer: 'I would bet Guantanamo got an extra year or two of life because of this. The administration will be less quick to want to close it. It knows it will be judged on this. The Bush administration had seven years after 9/11 of no successful attacks in the United States. There has already been one successful attack under the Obama

spoke to this evolution in al Qaeda's nature during an interview by anchor Savannah Guthrie with Former CIA & NSA Director General, Michael Hayden, emphasizing that al Qaeda had learned from previous mistakes that large groups are more easily apprehended and detected, thus the move to smaller, lonewolf operations.<sup>380</sup>

Concerning the *Problem Identification*, the cleanest attribute of the four for this frame in this case study, the problem was that homegrown terrorism (al Qaeda-inspired or not) posed a

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administration with the Fort Hood shooting, a guy because of political correctness, was allowed to be promoted and ended up killing 13 Americans. They got lucky twice. If it happens again, they're going to know the Bush administration, which was attacked, excoriated for the tough interrogation, nonetheless kept us safe. Obama has repeatedly attacked the way that the Bush administration handled terror. Well, he has to be real careful. This could destroy his presidency. He understands that and that's why I think they'll be more scrupulous interrogating the guys if and when they find them.'

Host Shannon Bream: 'Steve, Charles mentioned that high value interrogation unit. We don't know if it's in place yet, but knowing that the task force is involved, do you think the administration will leap ahead, skip the Miranda rights warning, and go to plan 'B'?''

Steve Hayes, Senior Writer 'The Weekly Standard': 'That is altogether unclear. If you remember back after the Christmas day bombing, Eric Holder sent a letter saying Mirandizing the suspect as they did was a matter of course. It was in the FBI manual and so they had to do it. You had Robert Gibbs on Sunday shows defended the reading of the Miranda rights and John Brennan talking about a plea bargain. I think this is the way they are choosing to approach terrorism. They believe fundamentally that the Bush administration overstated the nature of the threat for the better part of seven and a half years and I think they're waking up to the fact that the threat is exactly as it was stated, but they're not acting in accordance.'

<sup>380</sup> MSNBC May 5 09:11 Host Savannah Guthrie (Special Interview with General Michael

Hayden) Host Savannah Guthrie: 'So let me just ask initially your impressions. This is somebody who investigators say really had an unremarkable profile in many ways and yet, appears to have gotten some training in Pakistan. Does this to you bear the hallmarks of somebody who's working for a major terrorist organization?'

Former CIA & NSA Director General, Michael Hayden: 'It does, but in a new model, all right? For the years before and after 9/11, it was al Qaeda main, al Qaeda central, careful planning, complex plots. An awful lot of things going on, always shooting for the spectacular. And frankly, we've become quite good at detecting and dismembering those kinds of plots. This is a learning enemy and this learning enemy is now adjusting to the fact that if he does something very complicated that takes a long period of time, by and large, we'll detect it and disrupt it. So what happened in Times Square this past weekend, what happened on Christmas Day is a new model. Folks, we barely knew because al Qaeda barely knew them. Al Qaeda did not spend a lot of time on their training, on their preparation, on their vetting because al Qaeda now knows if they hug them too close, too long, we'll find out who they are. So what we have here for the new model are less complicated attacks, frankly attacks that would probably be less severe, attacks that are less skilled and therefore, with a lower probability of success. But now here's the very bad part, probably a lot more numerous and that's what we have to be prepared for.'

threat to the American homeland, and the Times Square attempt substantiated that concern despite its failure. On CNN's 'American Morning', on May 5th, David Kelley (Former US Attorney), CNN Anchor John Roberts, and former CIA Officer, Jack Rice, discussed the lineage of al Qaeda terrorism and the 'new' lone wolf type attacks, listing the chronological development of similar individually executed attempts.<sup>381</sup> (See FOX's comparisons in footnotes).<sup>382</sup> The *causal interpretation* during the coverage observed was that al Qaeda had evolved into an even more decentralized structure than previously assumed. Specific reasons for this shift varied between the networks, with CNN emphasizing the military success of the United States,<sup>383</sup> and FOX

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<sup>381</sup> CNN May 5 06:25 American Morning Rice: 'So, if you can match these (attacks/attempts) together independently then you can verify a lot more. And that's critical here because...just because somebody says something doesn't necessarily make it so.'  
Roberts: 'David, let's take all of this together. So, you had the Najibullah Zazi case, you had the case of Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Christmas Day bomber saying there are many more like me who are getting ready to this, you have what happened in Times Square over the weekend, you have Hakimullah Mehsud, the leader of the Pakistani Taliban saying we are about to launch attacks against America. Would you take that all together as greater threats against the U.S. homeland? Or are these desperate things that may seem to be connected?'  
Kelley: 'I think more of the former than the latter. It's really hard to evaluate. I think what al Qaeda has done, or whatever terrorist group may be behind it, is taking people like the person we arrested in Times Square. And, yes, if they are willing to go, we're willing to send them and let's keep throwing them out there and see what kind of sticks up against the wall. And I think that may be what we're seeing. And, obviously, we need to have that tremendous vigilance to prevent anything, anybody else like-minded, to make any sort of efforts like that.'

<sup>382</sup> On FOX (May 4 18:40 'Special Report with Bret Baier) similar correlations were made by NPR News Analyst Juan Williams: Williams: 'I think we've had an evolving terrorist threat to our country. Part of it is on 9/11 we were facing organized terror with Al Qaeda in some command structure sending people in to do the dirty work. Now I think we are in a different situation where you have individuals because the command structure has been destroyed by American military and intelligence, I think it's been dismantled for the most part. But you get the individuals either coming from overseas, less likely, or homegrown who then decide they want training and bring terror to the shores. That is a different kind of thing. I don't think that the administration was anxious to say yes, this is terrorism of the same sort that Al Qaeda when it was organized by Al Qaeda that Al Qaeda was perpetrating.'

<sup>383</sup> An op-ed from CNN dated Wednesday May 5 14:56 'Times Square and the Long War on Terror'

by Philip Mudd: 'Patience, though, and steady resolve also pay dividends for us. An attacker failed on Christmas Day on a plane bound for Detroit. Another attacker failed this week at the crossroads of the world. They failed at attempts that bore no resemblance to the painstaking plot of a decade ago. U.S. military and intelligence

emphasizing the border and customs control issues and the Mirandizing of Shahzad (something FOX emphasized more than CNN or MSNBC).<sup>384</sup> As with the *Scope of Threat* and *Evil* Frame of this case study – there was no discernable *moral evaluation* for this al Qaeda frame. Aside from the interview with Reverend Franklin Graham (CNN May 4 18:30), and the Republican critique of President Obama against his response to the terror attempt (see FOX excerpts), there were no distinguishable moral judgments that fell within the al Qaeda frame. Finally, the *treatment recommendation* under the al Qaeda frame for this case study was identified through a negative highlight of opinion. An anchor, host, or guest would confidently say what the administration or law enforcement *shouldn't do* in such instances, what *should be done* was not featured in the reporting observed.<sup>385</sup>

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operations, coupled with Afghan allies, now deny safe havens to al Qaeda, and tens of thousands of coalition forces continue to enforce that success. Intelligence, law enforcement and foreign security allies have crippled al Qaeda affiliates in Europe, Southeast Asia and the Middle East.'

<sup>384</sup> FOX May 4 22:00 'On the Record with Greta Van Susteren' speaking with Devlin Barrett (Wall Street Journal):

Barrett: 'Oh, he's talking. He's talking quite a bit, in fact, according to officials. He spoke for a while before being given any Miranda rights. And then officials say even after he was given Miranda rights, he continued to tell them what he been up to.'

Van Susteren: 'Which is sort of interesting, this whole discussion about Miranda rights because, you know, if you violate someone's Miranda rights, anything the person says afterwards can't be used against him. But we don't even need to prosecute him that; we've got the SUV, we've got fingerprints, we got car keys, we got a long trail. So you know, as a practical matter with all the discussion about Miranda, it's really not that serious an issue. There's enough there to get him, probably.'

Barrett: 'Exactly. I mean, what the prosecutors will tell you is they have a raft of evidence. And if you read the court document, even just the initial court document, there's a lot of evidence pointing to him. For instance, just one piece of in the car he left running in Times Square were keys to his house. That's not light evidence, that's pretty heavy evidence, in addition to all the other things we've already heard. So definitely, the Miranda issue, on its surface, you don't need that if that becomes an issue to make your case.'

<sup>385</sup> MSNBC May 5 09:11 Host Savannah Guthrie (Special Interview with General Michael Hayden) Guthrie continued from above: 'But as I said at the beginning of our discussion here, investigators describe this man's profile as largely unremarkable. He's an American citizen, he had a decent job, appeared to be living a middle class life, had a wife and two kids. Are there, in retrospect, behavior patterns that officials could detect, should have detected?'

## 7.4 Narrative Status

There were a few noticeable differences between the news coverage of the Times Square Bomber and the coverage of previous terror events. The difference manifested predominantly in the lopsided nature of the media frames as detailed above, with the *problem identification* of the frames dominating news coverage of the terror attempt. Within the footage observed per the methodology, there was an abundance of blame circulating, primarily by FOX against President Obama. Other prevalent topics included hotspot identification (speaking to the hyper-defined scale of the *Scope of Threat* Frame), and criticism of counter-terrorism procedure (by persons arguing that Shahzad should not have been Mirandized). However, on every network there was at least one mention and positive recognition of the efforts by law enforcement during the 53-hours from attempt to apprehension of Shahzad. This was the only similarly positive rhetoric observed across the three networks in this case study's footage. However, contrary to the positive reporting style noted during the coverage of 9/11 (detailed in section 3.4) as discussed by Nacos, this case study observed exactly the "cynicism, negativism, and attack journalism" that 9/11 had managed to avoid.<sup>386</sup>

This case study's coverage observation noted that all networks performed a uniform weaving of terror attempts together into a cohesive chronology of terrorism against the United States at least once on each day of coverage. This story-telling type of narrative construction was identical to that observed during the Underpants Bomber case study. The Times Square Bomber case study was the least disrupting terror event in this thesis in terms of it causing any immediate shifts or changes in the network's presentation style or flow. There were very few updates aside

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Hayden: 'From what I know now, and as you suggested it's what we're all reading in the newspapers and coverage has been intense; boy, there's nothing popping up as a red flag that should suggest to me, no, somebody should have been on this individual and that should be additionally troubling.'

<sup>386</sup> Nacos, B., 2016, *Mass-Mediated Terrorism: Mainstream and Digital Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Lanham Maryland, p. 131

from the arrest itself, and the networks did not change their programming in any discernible manner around the story. This was possibly due to the similarity of the Times Square Bombing (as a failed attempt) to the Shoe and Underpants Bombers, as evidenced by the high number of comparisons and references to the Shoe/Underpants stories within the Times Square Bomber coverage. Because the networks had covered similar stories before, they had experience in managing their airing. At this point in time, in mid 2010, the War on Terror Narrative had seen a series of failed attacks, the emergence of lone-wolf terrorism (observed both in descriptions of the style of attack and labelling of the attackers themselves), and a reassertion of NYC as an active terror target.

Similar to both the Shoe Bomber and Underpants Bomber case studies, there was a lack of rolling or continuous coverage of the attempt. This would indicate that (as did the fifth case study of this thesis) rolling coverage of terror events was limited to September 11<sup>th</sup> itself up to this point in time. Unlike the Shoe and Underpants bombers, which both occurred during Christmas programming blocks, this Times Square attempt occurred during a ‘normal’ media and event landscape, with no special programming preventing the story from reaching ‘rolling news’ status. The ‘breaking news’ tagline was used, however, no programming was interrupted or cut short to accommodate the coverage of this event after the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May.

Concerning the visual component of the coverage, there were a number of videos and still images of the vehicle, the police response, and (because of the location in a prime New York City tourist attraction) ample stock footage and stills of the exact location. The only portion of this event that did not have accompanying video or visual support was the actual arrest, which took place airside at JFK. However, there never came to be an iconic image associated with this event. Much as Mirzoeff’s reflection on the abundance of images coming out of the media’s coverage of the Gulf War, “what was in retrospect remarkable about this mass of material was

the lack of any truly memorable images. For all the constant circulation of images, there was still nothing to see.”<sup>387</sup>

Unlike the Shoe and Underpants Bombers, the personal information about Shahzad was not available on the first day of coverage. In fact, on that first day of the attempt itself, there was almost no coverage on the networks. The first substantial information about the attempt was aired early in the morning on the second day of coverage, Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, but the information available to the press only sustained its top story status until the early afternoon. The third day of coverage, Monday, May 3, 2010, contained the least coverage of the attempt of the five days. On the fourth day, Tuesday, May 4, the overnight arrest of Shahzad at JFK brought the story back to life and showed the heaviest coverage of the attempt out of the five days of observation. It also covered the most details about Shahzad’s private life and background information, including his connections to Pakistan. The fifth day of coverage, Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, saw highly polarized and politicized discussions on the government’s management of both the suspect, and the wider War on Terror, with each network adhering to their political biases in their treatment recommendations. This case was unique in that the heaviest day of reporting for a failed attempt was not the first day of coverage, but rather, the fourth.

A continuing feature in the coverage from the Underpants Bombing case study is the distinctly divided discourse observed among FOX, CNN, and MSNBC. Some network hosts (not anchors) directly attacked opposing hosts’ coverage of the Times Square Bomber story, accentuating the political-divide of 2010 between Republicans and Democrats. This interaction was most notably observed between FOX and MSNBC. (FOX also attacked CNN’s coverage; however, retaliation by CNN was not observed during the coverage observed.) This behavior by the media was a staunch departure from earlier, less polarized reporting observed during the 9/11, Shoe Bomber, and Bali Bombings cases. While observed during the Underpants Bomber

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<sup>387</sup> Mirzoeff, N., 2005, *Watching Babylon: The War in Iraq and Global Visual Culture*, Routledge. p. 67.

case study, the degree of hostility and polarization in the media during the Times Square Bomber was the most extreme to date for this thesis. Within the literature, this divide is noted and explored thoroughly by Diana Mutz.<sup>388</sup> Mutz's deems this hyper-polarized political communication as uncondusive to both participatory and deliberative democracy.

Those who consider themselves liberals or conservatives and those who self-identify as partisans on either end of the spectrum are less likely to be exposed to cross-cutting political communication...In addition, there is a significant asymmetry to the patterns...such that being a strong Republican or a conservative corresponds to a lower level of cross-cutting exposure than being a strong Democrat or a liberal. This finding appears regularly across social network studies. Republicans' networks tend to be more politically homogeneous.<sup>389</sup>

In short, the criticism and combative tone of the media vs-media discourse observed during this case study was observed by Mutz to impact the public's ability to process political topics (such as terror events) neutrally. In choosing to watch the news network that supports their prejudices, American audiences effectively restricted any understandings of terrorism solely to the political view of the network that favored their political beliefs. However, this has only been observed by this thesis during failed terror attempts. The following and final case study, the Boston Marathon Bombings, will ultimately determine if this hyper-polarization occurs during successful terror events, and, for the first time since 9/11, during rolling news coverage.

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<sup>388</sup> Mutz, D. C., 2006, *Hearing The Other Side: Deliberative Versus Participatory Democracy*, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>389</sup> Mutz, D. C., 2006, p. 33.



# Chapter 8: The Boston Marathon Bombings Case Study

April 15, 2013

| <b>The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification for the War on Terror</b>                |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Events   | <i>9/11 Frame</i>  | <i>Evil Frame</i>  | <i>Scope of Threat Frame</i>   | <i>Al Qaeda Frame</i>   |
| 9/11   | 4: America Under Attack (Day #)  | 1: Axis Of Evil Speech<br>Moral Evaluation:<br>Attackers Evil – USA<br>'Good'                      | 2: Dependent On<br>Military/Executive<br>Response – Wherever<br>There's A Threat                   | 3: Osama Bin Laden –<br>Non-State Terror = 'New'<br>Real Threat                                     |
| Shoe Bomber  | 4: Continued Gaps In<br>Airport Security – Skies<br>Still Not Safe Since 9/11              | 3: 'Hero Passengers' =<br>'Evil Attacker'  | 2: Global Scale – Trans-<br>Atlantic Travel Issues,<br>Terrorist Mobile And<br>Global              | 1: Afghanistan Camps,<br>Tora Bora Caves, OBL<br>Videos, Terror Training<br>Camps Issue             |
| Bali Bombings  | 3: Asia's 9/11 – Same<br>Motives - Same Goals –<br>Different Location                      | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently<br>Established On All<br>Networks-                                      | 2: Global Scale –<br>Everywhere Westerners<br>Are = Target -<br>Necessitating A Global<br>Response | 1: Terror Training Camps<br>– Jeemah Islamiyah and<br>AQ Groups Attacking<br>Any And All Westerners |
| Underpants<br>Bomber   | 3: More Aviation Security<br>Issues – Issues With<br>Government Lists'                     | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently<br>Established On All<br>Networks-                                      | 2: Back To Aviation Based<br>Threats   | 1: (Similar To Shoe)<br>Yemen Connections –AQ<br>Allegiance Vs. Operative -<br>AQAP                 |
| Times Square<br>Bombing  | 4: NYC Still Targeted By<br>The Same People  | 3: -Weakest Presentation<br>Of Frame In Thesis, But<br>Observed On All<br>Networks-                | 2: Domestic Counter-<br>Terrorism Questioned –<br>NYC's Post-9/11 Test                             | 1: 'Homegrown' And<br>Internet Radicalization –<br>Lone Wolf Terrorism -                            |
| <b>Boston Marathon<br/>Bombings</b>  | <b>1: The Echo Of 9/11 –<br/>Flags Flying Again,<br/>Hero First<br/>Responders/Victims</b> | <b>2: Clearest Good Vs.<br/>Evil Framing + Hero<br/>Frame Of Survivors And<br/>Law Enforcement</b> | <b>3: Narrowest Scope:<br/>Boston – Northeastern<br/>American City (Again)</b>                     | <b>4: Internet<br/>Radicalization –<br/>Homegrown Terrorism<br/>– <i>Inspire Magazine</i></b>       |
| Numbering indicates the strength of the individual frame of the four frames within each event. |  |  |  |   |

## Boston Marathon Bombings Case Study Outline:

Introduction

News Coverage

April 15, 2013

April 16, 2013

April 17, 2013

April 18, 2013

April 19, 2013

The Frames of the Boston Marathon Bombings

9/11

Evil

Scope of Threat

Al Qaeda

Narrative Status

### 8.1 Introduction

On Patriots Day, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, brothers Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev placed pressure cookers configured into bombs (hidden in backpacks) along the annual Boston Marathon route near the finish line on Boylston Street. The brothers detonated the two devices 13-seconds apart at 14:49EST, killing three civilians and injuring over 176 others. The attack resulted in the largest manhunt of the new century in the United States. In addition to being the

largest scale ('radical Islamic') terrorist attack on US soil since 9/11, the bombing was also the first time since 9/11 that the media captured and aired a live successful terror attack, as there was a heavy network presence broadcasting the Marathon's finish line when the bombs exploded. Boston Police managed the immediate (physical) emergency response, stopping the marathon and diverting the remaining participants and media personnel to nearby city parks. The bombing prompted the first deployment of an interagency task force that had been formulated following 9/11 among the FBI, ATF, Department of Homeland Security, National Guard, and local emergency responders.<sup>390</sup> Local traffic and public transport (including Amtrak trains) were halted, and concerns were so high as to call a full ground stop at Boston's Logan Airport (in an effort to both prohibit further attacks, and to keep any suspects from fleeing internationally). During the 102-hour manhunt for the Tsarnaev brothers, the older brother Tamerlan Tsarnaev was killed by a combination of police fire and his brother running him over with a SUV they had earlier stolen. Later that same day (Friday, the 19<sup>th</sup>) the younger Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was captured alive. Dzhokhar would eventually be incarcerated in Florence Supermax Prison in Colorado, alongside the Shoe, Underpants, and Times Square Bomber. At time of writing, he is awaiting the death penalty issued during the sentencing of his trial.

Officials received a positive identification on a 'person of interest' observed in video footage released on April 16th, when Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was identified (not named) by a runner who had seen him place his backpack on the ground. The image of both brothers in black and white hats respectively was released to the media early on Thursday, the 18<sup>th</sup>, and distributed throughout online outlets. The decision of BPD to share the photo of the suspects was made to both limit false accusations and the harassment of wrongly suspected individuals, and to prompt

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<sup>390</sup> Dahl, J. April 14, 2013 *Boston Marathon Manhunt: Search for bombing suspect is law enforcement's first major test of post-9/11 training* via CBS news available: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/boston-marathon-manhunt-search-for-bombing-suspect-is-law-enforcements-first-major-test-of-post-9-11-training>

the brothers into action in the hopes of movement by the suspects leading to their arrests.<sup>391</sup> Relatives of the brothers called Boston PD on Thursday after recognizing the brothers' image in the media. They positively identified the suspects, detailing personal information and histories. Responding to their identification, early on April 18<sup>th</sup>, the brothers shot and killed a MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) campus guard (bringing their death toll to four persons), in order to obtain his firearm. Then, the brothers hijacked an SUV and attempted to flee Boston, kidnapping the owner of the SUV, identified as 'D.M', in the process. However, the owner was able to escape the vehicle at a gas station in Watertown, where the brothers stopped for supplies. (It was speculated they were going to drive to New York City and place bombs in Times Square; however, this was only discussed in the media and never substantiated by federal authorities). The owner of the SUV then informed police that both the vehicle and his phone (left inside the SUV) had GPS tracking, which was then used by police to trace the vehicle to Watertown, MA. There was a brief confrontation with police early in the morning on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup> following the successful tracking of the vehicle's GPS. During that confrontation Dzhokhar Tsarnaev ran over his brother in the stolen SUV, after being shot several times by police, and fled the scene. Tamerlan Tsarnaev was taken to Beth Israel Hospital in Boston, where he died from his injuries. The manhunt continued in Watertown, for Dzhokhar; with businesses forced to close, public transport grounded, and people told not to leave their houses. During the manhunt, Boston neighborhoods were warned en mass via reverse 911 calls to stay inside, lock doors and windows, and remain vigilant during the manhunt. It wasn't until after dusk on that same Friday that the ordeal ended with Dzhokhar Tsarnaev being discovered by David Hennebury, a civilian in Watertown, who noticed his boat's coverings askew. Upon investigating his boat (on a trailer in his backyard), he found Dzhokhar lying injured inside. Hennebury called the police, and after an intense exchange of stun-grenades and flash bombs, Tsarnaev was taken into SWAT team

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<sup>391</sup> This confusion was most notable on Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup> with rumours and speculation causing enough chaos that it became part of the story on all networks later on Wednesday.

custody and transported to a hospital for injuries sustained in the fire. Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's trial did not begin until March 4, 2015. It concluded on April 8, 2015, with Dzhokhar found guilty on 30-charges ranging from the use of a weapon of mass destruction to homicide. He was sentenced to death on May 15, 2015.

## 8.2 News Coverage

Due to improvements in the information sphere (media ecology) by 2013, the ability for networks to preserve all newscasts (news via anchor and news via host segments) meant that this case study had more research material available than 9/11 (despite the difference in severity of physical damage). While this was hypothesized to be the situation during the planning of this thesis and the methodology's construction, the volume of coverage available (more than four-hours of footage available per day per network), meant the thesis had to apply an additional selection process for which hours of footage would be employed (as there was no means to randomly select footage with the resources available to this thesis). The solution was the selection and use of the same hours of programming for all three networks, when possible, per each day of observation. By happenstance, the entire news hours of six, eight, nine, and ten in the evening were available for each network for each day of observation for this case study (this was a first for this thesis).<sup>392</sup> As such, those four news hours were selected for observation for this case study, speaking to the intentions of the methodology as a whole, to observe the differences and similarities between each network for a particular period of time; in this instance, the exact same times for five consecutive days. While the attack occurred at roughly 14:50EST, and the first segment of footage selected for observation was from three hours afterwards, notes

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<sup>392</sup> For all previous case studies, the footage available was similarly organized then mapped per which hours were available per day of coverage – However, the footage available seldom correlated in and amongst the networks from one day to the next. This 'random' spread of research material was accounted for in the Methodology and design of this thesis by requiring four hours of material per day, but not a specific four hours, nor concurrent hours across the networks and days of observation.

will be made during this case study of when this story ‘broke’ on the networks and how it was managed. Note: Coverage of this terror attack was ‘rolling’ on Monday, April 15, 2013. When this story broke, it disrupted regularly scheduled programming on all networks and was aired commercial-free; a first rolling coverage of a single story observed by this thesis since 9/11. The rolling coverage was also resumed on Friday, 19th during the conclusion of the manhunt in Watertown, for Dzhokhar Tsarnaev.<sup>393</sup>

April 15, 2013

Without solid leads, and amidst rumors and speculation both on-air and from social media sites, the reporting out of Boston, in the hours following the bombings, was chaotic and repetitive. There were three major press conferences aired by all networks; however, there was no confirmation of an official count by authorities of fatalities or injuries on the first day of reporting.<sup>394</sup> There were no suspect leads reported on Monday that culminated in arrests. There were, however, two reports of ‘persons of interests’; one concerning a BOLO for a black male in a dark hoodie (who had tried to gain access to a restricted area following the bombings) that was later retracted, and a report that a Saudi national was in the hospital with injuries consistent with having been near an explosive-device when it detonated. Reporting on both incidents dissolved by the end of Monday’s coverage.

There was a heavy re-showing of cell phone, corporate media, and independently sourced footage and stills, which was replayed constantly (in slow motion, regular speed, and with annotations) throughout the commercial-free coverage observed Monday evening. Footage of the explosions and immediate damage was shown continuously, airing as the primary video even during telephone interviews with witnesses and first responders. The only time that

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<sup>393</sup> On FOX, Monday, April 15, 2013, ‘The Five’ normally airing at 17:00 was cancelled, and some anchors remained on air past their regularly scheduled hours.

<sup>394</sup> The official press conferences observed on all networks: 18:10 Presidential Address on the Bombings, 20:30 Boston Authorities combined Press Conference (Lead by Mass. Governor Deval Patrick, detailing that the FBI, not DHS, would be heading up the investigation), 22:00 Press Conference from Mass General Hospital.

video/images from the bombings were not on-air was during official press conferences, when anchors were introducing the hour or another anchor/expert, and when maps of the race or impacted area were shown. As an example, between 18:00-19:00 on CNN, there were only nine minutes of airtime out of 60-minutes of footage where images of the explosion or aftermath were *not* being aired. This was roughly the same ratio observed on FOX and MSNBC.

CNN's reporting for Monday included a heavy use of experts, Boston-based correspondents from multiple media outlets (including the Boston Globe and Patriot Ledger), and telephone interviews with numerous witnesses and officials.<sup>395</sup> The majority of reporting included the repetition of the few facts available (primarily concerning locations of the bombs, staging areas for law enforcement, and transportation links which were affected), and interviews with 'experts' (and the aforementioned press conferences) included intermittently. At 18:00, Wolf Blitzer began: 'Two people are dead and more than 100 reportedly injured in what is clearly a terrorist attack at a sporting event followed around the world.' Three hours after the bombings all networks had concluded the bombings to be terrorism (as it was classified by the FBI by that time), as opposed to an accident or utilities malfunction (as was speculated earlier). 'Experts' featured: CNN National Security Contributor, Fran Townsend; former Assistant FBI Director & CNN Contributor, Tom Fuentes; CNN Senior Political Analyst, Gloria Borger; CNN Medical Correspondent, Dr. Sanjay Gupta (speaking on the types of injuries and what type of device would cause such damages); Boston University Instructor, Tom Shamshak; Senior Reporter from radaronline.com, Alexis Tereszczuk; Evidence Photographer, Keith Rosenthal, and Clinical Psychologist, Patricia Saunders. Phone interviews: House Homeland Security Committee Member, Congressman William Keating (D-MA), *Patriot Ledger* reporter Jack Encarnacao, and

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<sup>395</sup> When the story broke, outside of the hours of observation for this case study, the initial coverage was a phone interview which did not commence until 15:07EST, without live shots until three minutes later. While CNN did have an affiliated camera on the finish line, it was not broadcasting live when the explosions occurred; however, by 15:20 the images of the explosion had been organized and were on the air. Note: CNN ceased commercial breaks immediately following the breaking of the story.

multiple marathon runners. While other correspondents were interviewed or simply brought on to discuss alternative opinions of what ‘could have happened’, the aforementioned were presented specifically as security experts. Other correspondents on air: CNN Chief National Correspondent, John King, CNN Correspondent, Tom Foreman, and CNN Correspondent, Liam Martin.

FOX similarly aired the three major press conferences that occurred during this period of coverage, repeatedly showed videos of the bombings from the finish line, interviewed runners via phone, and hosted ‘in-network’ experts.<sup>396</sup> However, faced with similar lack of information or new materials to cover, FOX also aired the numerous images and videos of the bombing repeatedly, sometimes as the primary video feed during telephone interviews, as well as during interviews that were occurring in the studio. Something observed frequently on all networks, most clearly demonstrated on FOX, was the reporting by the networks on other media networks’ (and various outlet’s) reporting and coverage of the attack. (This was possibly due to a lack of ‘new’ material). 18:45, Anchor Bret Baier: ‘The ‘New York Post’ has been doing some great reporting on the early stages of this investigation and there is something interesting back and forth about whether persons of interest are being guarded.’ The end of that news hour media personnel were hosted speaking on air about interpretations of the event from the perspective of their experience as journalists.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>396</sup> Fox broke the story at 15:06EST with live shots from the marathon airing immediately. Three minutes later, 30-seconds of raw audio and video footage in Boston without anchor Shepard Smith annotating the scene; and again at 13:20, another 30-seconds of un-annotated airtime – in total over three minutes of dead air accompanied with live, unedited footage. This ‘dead air’ was unique to FOX, possibly in order for the newsroom producers to collect information to organize into the teleprompter. The first images of the actual explosion aired on FOX were directly from SKY News (owned by the same company as FOX) with a British announcer [unknown], then the on-air feed jumped around to multiple other news feeds from different groups and stations. This was followed by ‘fair use’ and legal talks by Shepard Smith on what images they could and could not use, (again, unique to FOX). Note: FOX halted all commercial interruption immediately upon the breaking of this story – it was not noted when commercials resumed.

<sup>397</sup> An example of this type of media-to-media engagement is the extract below from a discussion

By the end of the evening, 'On the Record' with Greta Van Susteren hosted four fellow FOX correspondents, one writer from another news agency, a forensic pathologist, and multiple marathon participants.<sup>398</sup> The terrorism 'experts' or persons referred to as experts on-air for FOX on Monday: 21:00 'Hannity', FOX News Contributor, Mark Fuhrman (speaking on bomb making), Former Homeland Security Secretary, Tom Ridge (speaking on the history of terrorism and counter-terrorism efforts); Former Secret Service Agent, Dan Bongino; (speaking on the placement of the bombs versus standard security sweeps); Dr. Marc Siegel (speaking about the training of medical and first responders to the scene); and Former NY State Homeland Security Czar, Michael Balboni (speaking on the processes involved in a security investigation). The 20:00 news hour ('The O'Reilly Factor') hosted one terrorism/security expert, House Homeland Security Committee member, Representative Peter King (R-NY), who immediately referenced the Times Square Bombing attempt and spoke on the 'Inspire' magazine of al Qaeda and its possible connection with the bombings. The 18:00 hour hosted House Homeland Security Committee Chairman, Representative Mike McCaul (R-TX) (speaking on the coordination between federal and local agencies in managing the response to the bombings); Former Chief of Bombing Prevention for the Department of Homeland Security, Charles Payne (similarly

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between Senior Writer for 'The Weekly Standard', Juan Williams, 'The Hill' columnist Charles Krauthammer, and FOX host Bret Baier: Krauthammer: 'What strikes me is part of the reason for the psychological shock is that if you think about it, Bret, this is the first successful bombing, terror explosion, since 9/11. We've had some that were attempted, like the one in Times Square that never succeeded...I think that's what gives this the sort of psychological resonance, people running in the street of a big city, the smoke. Of course, its nowhere near the scale of 9/11, but it's the first time. And I think that is sort of a historical echo that we're feeling, and it reminds us of how vulnerable we felt at the beginning of this whole decade of terror. Even though we thought we had largely escaped. Its still out there.'

Hayes: 'This certainly has all the hallmarks of a terrorist attack. Ball bearings or some kind of projectiles included in (the explosives) obviously designed for maximum exposure, there were television cameras, there were lots of media there at the site that this took place. So I think its clear at this point that it was terrorism.'

<sup>398</sup>Those interviews included: 'America's Newsroom' host Bill Hemmer, FOX Senior Correspondent, Rick Leventhal, FOX Correspondent Catherine Herridge, Wall Street Journal Reporter, Colleen McCain Nelson, Forensic Pathologist, Dt. Michael Baden, and FOX Correspondent Griff Jenkins.



discussing both known and hypothetical response procedures); and finally, Former Massachusetts Senator, Scott Brown (speaking on the race prep and other Boston targets and vulnerabilities).

Finally on MSNBC, a similar compilation of co-MSNBC/NBC correspondents and anchors, multiple witnesses via phone interviews, and a few security/terrorism experts was observed during the four hours of coverage on Monday, April 15.<sup>399</sup> MSNBC hosted the fewest number of security/terrorism experts out of the three networks for this date of coverage. From 18:00 ('Politics Nation' hosted by Reverend Al Sharpton) featured Former Boston Police Commissioner, Bill Bratton, and Former FBI Profiler, Clint Van Zandt. 'All In' with Chris Hayes (20:00) interviewed only Former FBI Agent, Don Borelli. There were also five interviews with other journalism/media professionals during that news hour. At 21:00, on the Rachel Maddow Show, two experts appeared, Homeland Security Committee Chair, Representative William Keating (D-MA), and the Former Director of NCTC (MSNBC National Security Analyst), Mike Leiter. Finally, at 22:00 (The Last word with Lawrence O'Donnell), no experts were interviewed, but five co-MSNBC/NBC persons were brought on-air for discussions about the bombings.<sup>400</sup> MSNBC's coverage was less 'urgent' than both FOX and CNN, with fewer 'alert' or 'breaking' titles on the screen. Also, MSNBC aired the bombings and aftermath footage the least amount

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<sup>399</sup> MSNBC broke the story at 15:08 with a shot of the skyline of Boston, and reports from MSNBC correspondent Janet Wu who was a block away from the finish line, and live feeds on the scene from 15:11. The first images of the explosions aired at 15:22. The first speculation offered by [unknown] anchor was of electrical issues or utilities problems.

<sup>400</sup>MSNBC/NBC and other journalist interviewed during the four hours of footage from MSNBC on Monday April 15th: NBC White House Correspondent, Kristen Welker, NBC Justice Correspondent, Pete Williams (x2 shows), MSNBC Contributor, Mike Barnacle (x2 shows), New England Cable News Reporter, Jackie Bruno, MSNBC Anchor, Steve Kronacki (interviewed, not acting as anchor), Boston Globe Writer David Abel (x2 shows), Contributor, Mike Barnicle, NBC News Correspondent, Kerry Sanders, NBC News Correspondent, Katy Tur, NBC Chief White House Correspondent, Chuck Todd, NBC News Correspondent, Ron Allen, Esquire Magazine Reporter, Charles Pierce, WBAR Reporter, Kurt Nickisch, Universal Sports Writer, Dean Walker, and NBC Senior Executive Producer, Richard Esposito.

of times, and showed all interviews in full on screen (unlike showing images of the bombings during interviews which were voice-only).

Overall, this first day of reporting was hectic, but each network made use of the numerous videos, still-images, and witnesses available to interview. Most of those witness interviews were done via phone or recorded immediately after the explosions while the news crews and marathon participants were still allowed in the general area of the explosions (areas which were cleared shortly after by law enforcement officials). The phone interviews were predominantly voice-only with images of the explosions/aftermath playing on repeat. Actual video(s) of the explosions were played dozens of times per news hour on all networks. This was likely due to law enforcement clearing the area immediately after the bombings, meaning no additional footage could be taken in the area.

April 16, 2013

On Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, the names of two of the persons killed in the bombings were released; 8-year old Martin Richard, and 29-year old Krystle Campbell. (It was known that three people had died; however, the name of the third victim, Boston University Grad Student, Lu Lingzi, had not yet been released at the request of her family). Pictures of both the victims taken before the bombings were widely distributed, notably a picture of Martin Richard from a peace march at his elementary school a year prior, wherein he held a sign that read: 'No More Hurting People' with a peace sign drawn on it. The 'human interest' side of the bombings was the most predominant angle observed on all networks on Tuesday, with stories of the injured, and especially persons who had needed amputations, leading news hours at least once on each network. There were still no suspect leads or any information what would manifest to implicate the Tsarnaev brothers. There was new footage of the explosions from persons who had been running the race shown on all networks, in addition to new press releases and statements by law enforcement and President Obama. Audio from emergency responders had also been released and was aired, with footage from the bombings, on all networks. Last, there was a statement

released by Boston FBI field office officials concerning the specifics of the bombs. Weighing roughly 20-pounds each, both consisted of pressure cookers loaded with projectiles but not high-grade explosives.

On Monday, video of the bombs was almost continuous; by Tuesday, the human interest side had taken over and more videos of vigils, persons donating blood, medical personnel working, and other individual stories of persons impacted or hurt were given priority. The notable style difference in the news coverage on this day was that persons who were witness to the bombings or aftermath were brought on-air and given full coverage, not interrupted by video of the bombings. There were also patriotic tones observed on each network. This was highlighted most through an interview with former NYC Major, Rudolph Giuliani, who made direct comparisons between Boston at that time, and New York City following 9/11.<sup>401</sup> CNN's coverage for this day was primarily composed of human interests pieces and individual stories from the race, of families or individuals impacted, telling what had brought them out to the race in the first place. There was ample coverage of what other cities across the country were doing in response to the attacks, such as the New York Yankees playing the Boston Red Sox song 'Sweet Caroline' and displaying 'United We Stand' on the stadium screen with the logos of both baseball teams joined.<sup>402</sup> The discussions with fellow CNN anchors and syndicated hosts continued as it was on Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, but without the use of fellow anchors and hosts as 'experts' speaking

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<sup>401</sup> Giuliani was on both CNN Anderson Cooper Tuesday 15 22:20 and FOX Hannity Tuesday 21:00. From the CNN Interview: Cooper: 'I also feel sort of a sense of defiance among people here that I think we've really learned from 9/11, a sense of kind of fighting back. And I think we saw that in the heroism of the first responders and also citizens who, you know, just rolled up their sleeves and ran toward the blast to help those in need.'

Giuliani: 'Wow, that was terrific. Wasn't it? I said that to Mayor Menino tonight, it reminded me of my firefighters and police officers and citizens on September 11. As soon as I got out of the building we were trapped in (on 9/11) the first thing I looked for was how were they acting, how were they reacting, and the way they were reacting was very brave, very calm, helping each other. Firefighters and police officers going in trying to take people out. When you look at that film footage, you see those firefighters and police officers jumping over the fence, it looks like, and then some of the runners jumping over the fence, headed right for the flames. And, boy, that gives you a sense that these people in Boston are pretty darn tough, just like the people in New York.'

<sup>402</sup> As covered by Anderson Cooper, CNN April, 16 22:30.

on the implications of the bombings. Career military/counterterrorism experts were used for this purpose, (such as Former Assistant Secretary for Homeland Security, Juliette Kayyem, and Former FBI Assistant Director, Tom Fuentes.)<sup>403</sup> There were frequent video clips from official's part of the investigation in Boston during all hours observed, as well as clips from President Obama's speech at 11:30EST.

FOX similarly covered the human-interest perspective, with extensive biographies of both victims and heroes from the Boston Marathon Bombings. Each new hour observed opened with video of the Bombings from the day before, compiled against music. Within FOX's coverage there was a higher level of labeling the attacks as cowardly than on the other channels, which was the same labeling President Obama gave the attacks, a rare convergence for FOX with the Democratic Administration's rhetoric.<sup>404</sup> This was possibly an extension of the patriotic tones observed on all networks for this day. FOX continued to rely on both in-network and official experts: In-network experts included Catherine Herridge (billed as FOX News Chief Intelligence Correspondent), and Dr. Marc Siegel (FOX News Medical 'A-Team'), who were interviewed by multiple hosts. Official experts included Rick Hahn, Former FBI agent and Bomb Expert speaking to Fox's Hannity, and Danny Coulson, Former FBI Deputy Assistant Director (both FOX, April 16 22:00). There were frequent video compilations shown of the reactions of politicians in Washington, and local authorities around Boston with anchor or correspondent voice-over. The coverage was not rolling; there were commercial interruptions and there were other stories from across the globe such as North Koreans celebrating the birthday of their first leader, and a letter containing resin sent to a Senator in DC. FOX was also noted to reference 9/11 more often than CNN or MSNBC for this date, and to critique

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<sup>403</sup> Both observed during 22:00 hour on CNN.

<sup>404</sup> FOX April 16 18:00 'Special Report' correspondent Rick Leventhal reporting from Boston, interviewing Massachusetts District Attorney, Daniel Conley: 'What occurred yesterday in Boston was an act of cowardice. Make no mistake, an act of cowardice and of this severity cannot be justified or explained. It can only be answered.' Earlier on Tuesday, President Obama: 'This was a heinous and cowardly act...We will find whoever harmed our citizens and we will bring them to justice.'

President Obama's lack of labeling the event 'terrorism' immediately (he only first referred to it as such during his speech on Tuesday morning).

MSNBC started its 18:00 hour with then news anchor Reverend Al Sharpton covering the human interest pieces of the victims identified to date as well as a speech from President Obama. This news hour hosted two in-network experts, National Investigative Correspondent for NBC, Michel Isikoff and NBC News Terrorism Expert, Michael Leiter (former Director of the NCTC, also contributing as a guest during the Rachel Maddow show at 21:30), along with one external expert, Former FBI Profiler, Clint Van Zandt. The news hour was predominantly composed of human-interest stories of the two known fatalities. Finally, for MSNBC, during an interview with Boston Globe Columnist, Kevin Cullen:

Well Al, I think you just used the right word. It's a resilient city. Its also a tough city. I think you know that. We in Boston, we will take two punches to land one. And whoever did this to us, they didn't just do it to us. They did it to everybody. But its going to take a lot more than that...And I will guarantee you, next year the Boston Marathon will have a record field. People will come from all over the world as they do every year, but more people will come. And we will show the people who did this what they bit off. Because they can't chew it.

Other outside experts on MSNBC included Forensic Video Analyst, Grant Fredericks (20:30); Former ATF Special Agent, James Cavanaugh (20:30); Security Technologist, Bruce Schneider (20:45); Former FBI Agent, Don Borelli (21:30); Director of the Division of Sports Medicine at Boston's Children's Hospital, Dr. Lyle Micheli (22:30); and Nurse Meghan McDonald from Massachusetts General Hospital (22:40). Also similar to CNN and FOX, references to 9/11 were made, most frequently by Congressman Ed Markey (D-MA) speaking with Lawrence O'Donnell (MSNBC April 16 22:00):

We want every single thing done to bring them to justice. And we share that emotion with a sadness, but we do want justice and we feel, post-9/11, the countries rallied behind us...the same thing is happening now, but we want for all these families

to...know we will remember them as we will remember what happened to their family member, and we will make sure that these people are apprehended.

April 17, 2013

On Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, there had been no (solid) new information released about possible suspects or the progress of the investigation to the general public. There was notable confusion across media outlets concerning rumors of arrests, suspects in custody, and (ultimately incorrect) pictures of persons of interest. However, before those rumors could be addressed, the courthouse in Boston, where the press conferences by the inter-agency group investigating the bombings was to be held, was evacuated after a prank bomb-call. A press conference from that group (lead by the FBI) originally scheduled for the afternoon of the 17<sup>th</sup> was delayed and then cancelled amidst rumors and speculation about possible security footage from department store, Lord and Taylor, capturing images of one or two suspects placing dark backpacks where the explosions detonated. These photos were not released to the general public, and on CNN, Anderson Cooper (22:00) specifically stated: ‘You (speaking to guest Susan Candiotti) have seen (both images of the suspects). They’re in the possession of CNN, but we are not releasing them. We are not showing them on our air because we don’t want to do anything that would affect the investigation in any way.’ In step with CNN, FOX’s Rich Leventhal (FOX Wednesday April 17 18:30 ‘Special Report with Bret Baier’):

I can confirm through a federal law enforcement source that photos are being distributed of two men who are considered persons of interest in this case. These men have apparently not been identified by name, but authorities are definitely looking for them. They want to talk to these men. They may have been involved in this bombings. But we are not showing you the photo for fear of jeopardizing the investigation.

Without new information or leads, the story lost some momentum and even lost its majority hold as top story on the networks. The lack of new information from authorities was similarly noted on FOX, with correspondent Bill Hemmer, speaking to Sean Hannity (FOX Wednesday April 17 21:00), noting:

Look it's been 24 hours. Not a single member of an investigating body on this story, after a major terrorist attack in a major American city. Not a single member of the investigating body, be it the police or the FBI, have come out to brief the public or the media. I'm not suggesting that's right or wrong or good or bad. What I am suggesting, though, that there is something moving behind the scenes tonight, Sean. It is quite likely that those men and women working this story, and working this investigation, they do not want to tipoff anyone right now based on the evidence that they have. But it's been a full 24 hours now and we are still waiting for more information.

Without fresh information, other stories took up most of the news hours on the networks, ending the evening with a breaking story out of Texas, of an explosion at a fertilizer plant. The second major headline: the failure to pass a proposed amendment to expand background checks on persons purchasing guns. In an abnormal convergence of opinions, both CNN and FOX labeled the failure of the reform as 'poor politics.'<sup>405</sup> The other stories covered on all networks: There was an arrest made in the case of ricin-tainted letters sent to both President Obama and Mississippi Republican Senator, Roger Wicker; the suspect, Kenneth Curtis, had signed his initials on the letters and was in federal custody at the time of reporting. The letters were received on Tuesday, April 17, but for security reasons not reported until Wednesday evening. The Rachel Maddow Show (MSNBC April 17 21:00) cohesively assessed the news day:

And thanks to you at home for joining us this hour on a day when honestly any one in about five different big, national, lead-the-news stories would have every network newscast to itself were it not for all the other big national lead-the-news stories that are

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<sup>405</sup> FOX Wednesday April 17 18:40 – Host Bret Baier: 'A big loss for President Obama and a big loss for those families from Newtown who travelled to Washington to lobby lawmakers. They lost big on the amendment that was agreed to...to expand background checks...' guest Juan Williams: 'I think it was a really sad day. It is like a tragedy. We are talking about what happened in Boston and terror and deaths of three people and you think about what happened in Newtown and the daily carnage in the Streets of America, and the US Senate can't take a simple action on background checks that overwhelmingly the American people say...is a good idea. From CNN Wednesday April 17 22:30 Anderson Cooper: 'Also ahead tonight, President Obama spent part of the afternoon consoling Newtown families after the Senate blocked tougher gun laws. Why he calls it a shameful day for Washington.'

also breaking today, that are also vying for that top of the news position. The national Republican Party today abandoned Mark Sanford, who used to be the Governor of South Carolina, and was a presidential hopeful at one point. Today, his party abandoned his effort to get back into office in Congress. Now, on a typical news today, that kind of politics story might very well lead the national news, but not on a day like today.

Finally, with the increase in 'other stories' to cover on air, the use of experts on all networks was drastically reduced, with the most number of terrorism experts per news hour for Wednesday appearing on MSNBC (Wednesday April 17 18:00) on 'Politics Nation' with host Reverend Al Sharpton; two experts, Former ATC Special Agent, James Cavanaugh, and former FBI Profiler, Clint Van Zandt, both whom had appeared on the program in the days prior.

April 18, 2013

Thursday April 18<sup>th</sup> saw the release of pictures (but not names or positive identifications) of Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev on all networks. The FBI officially labeled the brothers as 'suspects' (not the lesser 'persons of interest') and released official 'Wanted' posters to the public. That press conference was headed by FBI Special Agent in Charge, Richard Deslauriers, and was re-shown at least once per news hour for all hours observed on all networks for Thursday. The still images released by the FBI were from security cameras and pictures extracted from (larger) photographs before and after the bombings. The images were released later in the day, and headlined after each commercial break and took the top story position on all networks during the 18:00 news hour on Thursday. However, earlier in the day before those specific images were released, another point of confusion in the media's (networks and other mediums) reporting of the Bombing; two (bystanders) were put onto the front page of the New York Post with the heading: 'Bag Men: Feds seek these two pictured at Boston marathon'. The Post retracted that story and the two men pictured successfully sued the tabloid for damages. The story of the misprint was aired on all networks, in another instance of the media reporting on the media observed during this case study.



The other news related to the bombings on this date was the inter-faith service wherein President Obama addressed the community of Boston, (and the world through global broadcasts) along with Boston Mayor Menino, and Massachusetts Governor, Deval Patrick. The service was broadcast live and clips/highlights were reshown on the evening news on all networks. The other major news story from Thursday (continued from late Wednesday evening) was the explosion at a fertilizer plant outside of Waco, in West, Texas; what had started as a fire resulted in a large explosion ultimately killing 15-people, injuring 160. As was also observed during the coverage specifically concerning the Boston Marathon Bombings at this time, there was extensive praise for first responders and emergency officials during the coverage of the factory explosion.

On Thursday, with the release of new information on the suspects, the number of ‘experts’ and specialists on air increased on all networks – with some of the same experts seen on Monday and Tuesday reappearing, and some new experts speaking on manhunts; FBI tracking specifically. As an example, on CNN at 21:00, experts included former Boston Police Commissioner, Bill Bratton; Former Secretary of Homeland Security, Tom Ridge; Former Assistant Director of the FBI, Chris Swecker; Retired FBI Special Agent Bomb Tech, Jim Maxwell; and Former CIA Operative, Robert Baer. All spoke alongside in-house experts such as CNN National Security Contributor, Frances Townsend, and CNN Chief Medial Correspondent, Dr. Sanjay Gupta. By the end of the evening, while the Bombings still took the lead story, the explosion in West, Texas was given more coverage as the initial attentions following the FBI wanted posters’ release had faded. On FOX, the FBI’s press conference lead all news hours, and even by the end of the evening the conference (in its entirety with Q&A footage) started off the 22:00 hour with Greta Van Susteren. That hour only allotted 10-minutes to the explosion in Texas, and the rest of the 50-miuntes (including commercials) was devoted to the Boston Bombings. Experts were used more frequently following that conference, on FOX 22:00, Former FBI Agent, Jeff Lanza, spoke on the process of interacting with the public on

matters such as the ‘manhunt’ which was developing. Forensics Expert, Skip Palenick, spoke on the investigation of particles found on the detonated bag and how they would be traced. Former Special Agent and Bomb Tech, Kevin Miles, spoke on the circuit board found amongst the bomb remains, which had been discussed by the FBI in the press conference earlier.

The false reporting of both media and social media outlets was discussed on CNN and MSNBC (not as much on FOX per this date in the coverage). Specifically, the pictures that had been widely disseminated around the internet of the wrong suspects, which was then printed on the front page of *The New York Post*, were covered within the first ten minutes of the 20:00 hour on MSNBC. Host Chris Hayes made note of his own experience with the phenomenon before discussing the bombings with Experts’ Dwane Stanton, (Retired Homicide Detective), and Susan Crawford, (Cardozo School of Law), before returning to the Internet activity and processes of the Reddit website culture with web-expert, Adrian Chen, Senior Writer for Gawker.<sup>406</sup> Overall, MSNBC used more experts on this day than CNN or MSNBC. However, as was the case on *Politics Nation* (MSNBC April 18 18:00) the experts hosted had already been on air earlier in the week (speaking of Former FBI Special Agent, Don Clark; Former ATF Special Agent, James Cavanaugh; and Former FBI Profiler, Clint Van Zandt.)

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<sup>406</sup> MSNBC April 18 20:00 Chris Hayes: ‘And to be clear, the impossibly poor judgment of the editors of *The New York Post* was not the only reason this kid’s picture was in the world associated with the bombing. In fact, when I saw the front page of *The Post* this morning, it was actually not the first time I’ve seen this particular picture. And the reason I saw it before was because the other night, I fell down a rabbit hole at my laptop at 11:00, browsing a Reddit sub thread and a 4chan page in which Internet users had come together to do the vigilante work of sifting through the publicly available images from the marathon. And it struck me as I sat there in the cold light of my laptop in the middle of the night that we have just spent three day celebrating how awesome it is that we have so many images of this event everyone was turning over to authorities and that would be our salvation. And it apparently was, or at least provisionally was.’ This social media occurrence was more actively conducted on Twitter and social media platforms which are not within the breath of this thesis – however, as the social media component was brought into network coverage it was important to note the instance.

April 19, 2013

At 18:00 on Friday April 19, the active manhunt in Watertown, MA, was live on all networks with limited commercial interruption until 18:30, when the coverage went commercial free on all networks.<sup>407</sup> Tamerlan Tsarnaev had been killed during a shoot-out with police around midnight (cell phone video was shown on all networks), and was pronounced dead at 01:35. The majority of the reporting for this date concerned the manhunt for Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, noted by police in all coverage to be armed and dangerous. There was a press conference at 18:05EST lead by Gov. Deval Patrick and local authorities (aired on all networks) regarding the shooting earlier in the morning wherein Tamerlan was killed; and extensive talks on the state of the manhunt for Dzhokhar in and around Watertown, MA. Officials noted at that time that Dzhokhar had run over and killed his brother with an SUV, which, compounded with police-inflicted injuries, resulted in the death of ‘Suspect #1’. In the coverage during this news hour, Tamerlan’s YouTube playlists containing terrorism-training videos were discussed as well as his possible radicalization during travels in Russia and Dagestan in 2012. Following that press conference, and within the last minutes of the 18:00 hour, came multiple reports of shots fired in Watertown, reported live on all networks. The timing of the ‘shots fired’ came shortly after police lifted the ‘stay inside’ mandate for the area. It was with this freedom to move outside that Dzhokhar was discovered by a resident hiding in a boat with the tarp askew. No other news stories were covered during the four hours of footage observed for all networks. Following the reports of shots fired in Watertown after the Press Conference, all networks went commercial-free due to the unknown developing situation. While the 19:00 news hour was not originally included in the coverage selection for this case study, the hour was included for all networks due to rolling coverage of the standoff between police and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev in Watertown, which

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<sup>407</sup> MSNBC had no commercials for the first 30-minutes of the 18:00 hour, a similar timestamp was noted for CNN and FOX accordingly, as all three networks had crews live in Boston, reporting on the unfolding situation. The media were given time to amass resources following the death of Tamerlan Tsarnaev in the overnight of Friday morning (shoot out occurring around 00:20).

was aired with no commercial interruptions on all networks. By 19:22 media correspondents were reporting a ‘body in a boat’ (which was Dzhokhar Tsarnaev), however there were no updates following that information as to the condition of the body. There was speculation by the media of possible hidden bombs (as were used during the overnight shoot-out with police wherein Tamerlan was killed) or suicide-vests being involved, this threat never materialized. It was not until the final five minutes of the 19:00 news hour that there was positive confirmation that the body inside the boat was indeed Dzhokhar Tsarnaev.

By 20:00 the situation in Watertown was still rolling commercial-free on all networks. The coverage included video of police vehicles, scenes of street corners in Watertown, MA, Google/Bing images of the house where the boat was located, and the few pictures/headshots of Dzhokhar available to the media. All three network’s coverage included frequent phone interviews with civilians and witnesses in Watertown, switching feeds between studio-anchors and reporters on the ground. The footage from the scene and aired on all networks captured images of military and police units, K-9 units, and the movement of city busses that had been designated ‘police only’ for personnel transport. By 20:47 the headlines (MSNBC) read ‘suspect in custody’.

By 21:00 the manhunt for Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was over. The scene of the area surrounding the boat in which Dzhokhar had barricaded himself was broadcast live on all networks along with footage from the police helicopter later in the hour. At the opening of the 21:00 news hour, Dzhokhar was in the back of an ambulance, with live coverage of the scene showing a large police presence and residents of Watertown, MA, cheering loudly in the streets. There was footage on all networks of residents cheering and shouting ‘thank you’ to law enforcement officials, and police, as they exited the Watertown area with Dzhokhar in an ambulance in a parade like-fashion.<sup>408</sup>

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<sup>408</sup> Cleanest shot of this ‘celebration’ on MSNBC during the 21:00 Rachel Maddow Show, available:

The first 32-minutes of the Rachel Maddow show on MSNBC consisted of this celebratory footage of the citizens around Watertown, cheering-on police and officials as they left the area following the capture of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. Another police press conference was held at 21:32, lead by Col. Timothy Alben of Boston PD, thanking all law enforcement and citizens for their work and cooperation leading to the arrest of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. Gov. Deval Patrick, US Attorney Carmen Ortiz and other officials all made note of the officer lost, MIT Policeman, Sean Collier, and the victims of the bombings themselves. They also thanked the citizens who were housebound all day on Friday, for their patience and cooperation. That press conference lasted until 21:54, at which time cameras turned to the White House awaiting statements from President Obama on the live apprehension of the Boston Marathon Bomber.

The three networks' coverage remained rolling commercial free, until 22:30, with recaps and live footage from reporters (such as Anderson Cooper at 22:00) in Boston. President Obama began his press conference on the situation at 22:05. It was aired on all networks until its finish at 22:11. On all networks, the twitter activity of Boston Police was shown in screen-caps and crawlers at the bottom of the screen. During this news hour, the use of in-network and outside experts was the heaviest of this day of coverage on all networks. On CNN during this hour following the President's speech (CNN Friday April 19 22:13, during 'Anderson Cooper 360) a virtual-roundtable between former NYC Mayor, Rudolph Giuliani; CNN National Security Analyst, Fran Townsend; Senior Legal Analyst, Jeffery Toobin; Security Consultant, Jeff Beatty; Former Security Adviser, Julia Heim; and CNN National Correspondent, John King. During the conversation amongst the guests, video continued of various live feeds including a shot at 22:18 of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev inside an ambulance receiving treatment. For FOX, following the President's speech, the coverage emphasized discussions of the evening's events through correspondents and reporters still on the scene in Watertown, a long interview with

witness/local resident, Al Wilson, and then recaps of the events of the day. There were no ‘expert’ interjections or discussions of the case against Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, which was discussed on both CNN and MSNBC. FOX, CNN, and MSNBC resumed commercials after 22:30, with the emergency situation in Watertown subsiding.

### 8.3 Frames

#### 9/11

During this case study, the 9/11 Frame operated at its strongest level since the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks.<sup>409</sup> References and comparisons with 9/11 occurred immediately following the bombings on Monday, April 15, 2013, and continued through to the resolution of the manhunt on Friday evening, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013. These comparisons between the Boston Marathon Bombings and 9/11 were observed on all networks, most frequently on first day of coverage.<sup>410</sup> As the coverage observed for this case study was limited to the hours of 18:00,

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<sup>409</sup> Per this thesis’ methodology, the transcripts of all news shows (taken manually) for the hours selected per day, per case study, were collected into (separate) documents, organized chronologically, and then cross checked (in their entirety – particularly when quotes or excerpts are selected for use in this thesis, to cross-check punctuation) such that phrases were ‘searchable’ within the document. For each day, the phrase ‘9/11’, ‘9-11’, and ‘September 11’ was observed: Monday: 45 times, Tuesday: 46, Wednesday: 22, Thursday: 6, Friday: 26.

<sup>410</sup> CNN Monday April 15 18:30: CNN National Security Contributor Fran Townsend (to host Wolf Blitzer): ‘Lets remember you know, the memory of 9/11, September 11<sup>th</sup>, is not so far away, and when Americans hear a terror attack, there’s implied in that, in many respects, that it’s a foreign sort of, foreign-driven event.’

MSNBC Monday April 15 18:00: Former Boston Police Commissioner Bill Bratton speaking to host Reverend Al Sharpton: ‘We have subvert preventive capabilities that, unfortunately, instances such as this it’s always a matter of not if but a matter of when, but also after one of these (terror) events occur that there is almost always the capability to identify those responsible and almost always the ability to, no matter how long it takes, to get them and bring them to justice. We have certainly the event of the past year with the killing of Osama bin Laden some ten years after the event (9/11), we will eventually get them.’

FOX Monday April 15 18:10 (speaking to Bret Baier) House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Representative Mike McCaul (R-TX): ‘D.C. and New York are on a...heightened state of alert right now as we should be as is the White House and so is The Capitol. Remember 9/11, the two targets were unfinished were the White House and the Capitol. So, we’re always very mindful of that as is the fact that New York City is

20:00, 21:00, and 22:00 only, the first footage analyzed was from three hours after the bombings, giving the semantics on all networks time to organize and establish how they would speak on the bombings after the 'shock' of the immediate attack. This meant that at the top of the first news hour observed on the three networks, comparisons to 9/11 were more clearly observed than they were in the immediate aftermath coverage (which was observed by this thesis, but not analyzed for the four media frames). As an example of the volume of comparisons between 18:00-23:00 (minus the 19:00 news hour), 9/11 was mentioned by name 16-times on FOX.

From CNN and quoted below, is a conversation about 9/11 and contemporary terrorism discourse at large (by the Executive Branch in particular) at 18:00. This is one of many examples of discussions on air about how terrorism was managed or talked about by both the media and government officials, and in a more self-reflective manner, by the networks. (Discussion between CNN Correspondent, John King, CNN Senior Political Analyst, Gloria Borger, and Wolf Blitzer).

King: 'The political and cultural definition of terrorism changed a lot since 9/11. There will be a lot of people saying why didn't the President (Obama during an earlier address on the Bombings) use that term (terrorism)? If you look at the Webster's Dictionary and, Tom (Fuentes) knows the law enforcement dictionary, you have an event with a huge crowd. Bombings like this clearly designed to terrorize people, clearly designed to hurt people and, in this case, kill at least two people. So it meets the definition of terrorism without a doubt. I think, to Jessica Yellin's point earlier, post-9/11, when you hear the word "terrorism," people in the United States, many people automatically think al Qaeda or some foreign plot.'

Borger: 'Under attack.'

Blitzer: 'There was a terrorist incident in Oklahoma City, done by U.S. citizens.'

King: 'Right. I think that's an important point of context. Post 9/11, I think people immediately think al Qaeda or some foreign terrorist group. The president was reflecting caution, just till we get more information.'

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always the number one targets. The fact that Boston was hit here just opens it up to a whole new city. And it's very, very tragic.'

### Applying Entman's Identifiers:

The *Problem Identification* is exemplified comprehensively in a discussion on 'Hannity' (FOX Monday April 15 21:05) during a conversation with FOX News Contributor, Mark Fuhrman:

Hannity: Every time we have a terror incident, as we watch this, and in a number of locations, I'll go back to 9/11 as an example, one tower is hit, another tower hit, a plane is hit, the Pentagon. We have these two explosive devices go off right in an area there was a high concentration of people and then these other devices are found. Is it over, or are we on high alert and for how long?' To which Fuhrman replied: 'Well, Sean, you know I will echo the voice of the terrorists. It's never over. This is a forever war that they started upon us and they are never going to end. Whether it's today, tomorrow, next week or next month, they are learning.

While the Boston Marathon Bombings were not on the same scale of destruction as the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, they were committed based on the same ideological foundations (according to the media's coverage). This was the primary *problem identified* with the bombings within the 9/11 Frame. This was not unlike the failed case studies (Shoe, Underpants, Times Square), wherein the problem identified (despite the lack of physical damage or 'success') was the fact that persons within the United States could be inspired by the same ideologies as the perpetrators of 9/11. The success of the Boston Bombings magnified this discussion as the Bombings themselves served as proof that the aforementioned ideological pillars were not only active in certain circles, but now (with a death toll), validated as a contributing factor of terrorism against Americans within the United States.

The *Causal Interpretation* for the 9/11 Frame was that this event was one of many in a chronological series of terror attacks that started with 9/11, and carried into the Boston Marathon Bombings. This type of stringing together of terror attempts was also observed during the Times Square Bombing case study. Whereas the Times Square Bomber was a failed bomber (thus more frequently compared to other failed attacks,) the Boston Marathon Bombings, as a successful terror attack, was more often compared to other successful attacks, specifically 9/11.



The comparison of the Boston Bombings to other terror attacks extended even further back to the Atlanta Olympic Bombings in 1996 (a first for this thesis' observations).<sup>411</sup> Examples of this 'stringing' of attacks from MSNBC April 17, Wednesday 18:00 'Politics Nation' with Reverend Al Sharpton:

Authorities continue to investigate the bombings in Boston, they will be looking to history to solve the case and unfortunately they have a lot to go on. In the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, six people were killed. In the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, 168 lost their lives. The Unabomber, Ted Kaczynski, killed three people in a series of bombs. One person was killed in the 1996 bombing at the Atlanta Olympics.

From CNN, relating the 7/7 bombings in London: CNN Friday, April 19 18:00 from CNN Analyst, Juliette Kayyem: 'So, while everything seems abnormal today there are actually normal protocols that go on when this happens in any country. This happened for example after the July 7th attacks in London.' One final reference to Atlanta made (CNN Monday, April 15 22:00) with Piers Morgan: 'Until today, the worst terror attack at a sporting event in America was at the Atlanta Summer Olympics in 1996. Two people were killed. More than 100 were hurt. It led to major changes in security at sporting events.'

The *Moral Evaluation* was a clear vilification of the Tsarnaev brothers akin to that projected onto the 9/11 hijackers; this was observed on all networks. The manhunt for the brothers was cast as a clear battle between the 'good people of Boston' and 'virtuous law

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<sup>411</sup> CNN Tuesday April 16 Piers Morgan 21:00, Representative Adam Schiff: 'I will say this, Piers I'm optimistic that this won't be the kind of investigation that will linger for years like Atlanta. There is so much video footage, there's so much technological information to put together here.' (The Atlanta Bombings were named nine-times on Tuesday alone for all the networks combined.) MSNBC Tuesday April 16 20:00 'All in with Chris Hayes: 'I want to bring into the conversation, former ATF special agent in charge, James Cavanaugh. He retired in 2010 after more than 30 years in the bureau. He was the ATF's lead investigator on the 1996 Atlanta Olympic bombings. I want to talk to him because the last time there was a bombing whose basic facts -- not perpetrator, I should be very clear -- but basic facts compared to the Boston attack was the Centennial Park bombing at the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. It was a high security, outdoor sporting event with a huge public presence.'

enforcement agents' against 'evil', 'corrupt' and 'bad' men. This case study's *Evil* frame will elaborate on this concept; however, the word 'evil' was used to describe the brothers frequently as compared to the same 'evil' as the perpetrators of 9/11. The rhetoric in the news in the final two hours following the capture of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, observed on all networks, was that 'good had overcome evil'. That set of semantics was also used by law enforcement, specifically the Boston Police's Twitter concerning the incident: 'CAPTURED!!! The hunt is over. The search is done. The terror is over. And justice has won. Suspect in custody.' (01:58 April 20 2013). This was the clearest of Entman's attributes for this frame as the same rhetorical functions were observed on all networks and in official statements.

The *Treatment Recommendation* for this frame was resilience, defiance, and patriotism. In the final hours of footage observed for this case study, the parades of people thanking law enforcement, staging impromptu celebrations in the streets of Boston was not only aired on all networks, but also absorbed into the rhetoric of the newscasters and host themselves. This was unique to this case study in that patriotism was not only a treatment for terrorism, but also the 'call to action' against terrorism at large.<sup>412</sup>

From CNN: Anderson Cooper 08:00pm Tuesday CNN:

Boston has been battered, but it is by no means broken, not now, not ever. We've learned from 9/11 and perhaps what we've learned most is that in the face of horror and in the face of hate, we must all stand tall and stand proud and stand together. And never let anyone with a bomb in a backpack stop us from moving forward. Never let anyone with a bomb in a backpack stop us from finishing the race. We do have a lot to cover in

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<sup>412</sup> From MSNBC April 18 Thursday 'The Last Word' with Lawrence O'Donnell: Kevin Cullen (Boston Globe journalist): 'But it just shows what those guys, whoever they are...that what they did failed miserably. They didn't tear us apart. They brought us together. As Governor Patrick put it so well, we don't turn on each other. We turn to each other. And they're doing it in Chicago, and they're doing it in New York, they're doing it in Philly, they're doing it in Atlanta, they're doing it in Detroit. I've heard from people all over this country. I'm hearing from people from Britain, people in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Romania. Hey, guys, guess what? You messed up. You didn't beat us. You made us stronger. Congratulations.'

the hour ahead. Let's get a quick start -- just to quickly update you on where things stand right now.

The only skeptical view expressed was FOX April 16 Tuesday 19:30 Special Report With Bret Baier, interview with *Wall Street Journal* Writer, Jason Riley:

And not just here in the US cities around the world are on edge. Paris, Rome, London, where they have a marathon coming up in a few days. It's not just affecting us here in the United States. And it has a very post 9/11 feel, everything happening proximity. Is there a connection? We don't know. We are a little uncertain. We will be overcompensating for a few days. We're going to be a little anxious for the weeks and months ahead. It has a very post 9/11 feel. It will be interesting how it affects our policy debate. There's another Patriot Act legislation coming down the line. I wouldn't be entirely surprised at that.

#### Evil

The *Evil* Frame of the Boston Marathon Bombings was the clearest cut, dichotomous rhetoric observed in the media for this case study. Both the word 'evil' and (an) implied 'evil' occurred at the highest frequency since the 9/11 case study for this frame, followed in frequency by the Shoe and Underpants Bombers case studies. Each network labeled the culprits as 'evil' before their names were released on Wednesday, April 17, 2013. This labeling was accompanied and supported by the subsequent labeling of those impacted as 'innocent victims'; a phrasing that can only retain validity through a juxtaposed malicious force. If there is a victim it's because there is a villain; if there is evil it must have attacked 'good'. This type of 'story telling' was observed to various extents in the preceding case studies; however, with this successful terror event the terminological functions were exacerbated to their most pronounced levels since 9/11 itself. Following the capture of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, this rhetoric continued in a more concentrated manner, directly labeling both Tsarnaev brothers as 'evil' throughout their manhunt and during follow up articles about the Bombings and Dzhokhar's trial. FOX employed the exact word 'evil' more than CNN or MSNBC, and did so most frequently on Friday, April 19.<sup>413</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> FOX Friday April 19 22:00 'On the Record' with Greta Van Susteren: 'Do you wonder how

### Applying Entman's Identifiers:

The *Problem Identified* here, as it was for the previous case study (Times Square), was that *evil* was allowed to fester within the United States (as Faisal Shahzad had also become naturalized), made worse when presenting in an American citizen with a longer period of life spent in the US. Whereas, the culprits for 9/11, the Bali Bombings, Shoe Bomber, and Underpants Bomber were all non-citizens, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was a legal American citizen who lead a typical American–teenager life (according to the media's interpretations) before his brother allegedly radicalized him in 2012-2013. While Tamerlan had VISA issues and was not naturalized despite being older, the fact that the apprehended bombing suspect held an American Passport was a new aspect of terrorist profiling in network media. This was arguably the *problem* within this case study: that someone who was 'evil' was able to obtain citizenship to a country he would later attack. Evidence of the 'problem' was the intensive discussions on citizenship tests and immigration procedures observed on the networks Friday (and in subsequent coverage outside this thesis' period of observation).<sup>414</sup>

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can they be so evil? They are young men. The one who is in custody tonight was granted asylum here in the United States. Then he became a citizen last September 11th, and you think of all the outreach to Americans to give people asylum like that, and then he does something like this. At least for me it's difficult for me to understand how people can be that cruel, but I guess there is that, isn't there? Correspondent Al Wilson: 'There is. There certainly is. There is a lot of cruelty in the world. The thing that strikes me right now is that no matter the darkest moments is there are people that rush in there to help, people to help others when they are struggling. We saw that. You saw it in the video at the end of the marathon, those first responders and the police there. They were at the second blast. They were rushing towards those victims...'

Shepard Smith (FOX Anchor): And don't forget of all the lives that are changed because they've lost limbs or their loved ones have been hurt. I mean, this -- it's extraordinary, you know, how -- how bad this is, how evil this is, and the wrath that he's just imposed on so many people. But we're going to have here a lot more about him later.'

Van Susteren: 'But of course, for many people, the nightmare has only begun. They're family members are dead, and they have to re-learn how to walk for those who've lost limbs. It's a horrible tragedy that's happened...in this city, a lot of evil. But...at least tonight (following the capture of D.T.) the nightmare now feels like it's over.'

<sup>414</sup> CNN Friday April 19 22:55: CNN Analyst, Juliette Kayyem: 'As we finish up a long week, it's not over for the city, obviously. We have a lot of healing. But also there are a lot of lessons learned. There's going to be a lot more politics in this, as John said, about the

The *causal interpretation* of the *Evil* Frame for the Boston Bombings was populated with discussions concerning the radicalization of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev by his brother Tamerlan. While ‘radicalization’ was not a new topic within media discussions in 2013, this case served to further support the speculation that on-line radicalization pathways were fully capable of indoctrinating Americans into radical or extreme religious beliefs. Additionally, as Tamerlan was the older brother (typically associated with a more protective, responsible role) his ‘abuse’ of his brother, Dzhokhar, which led to their bombing and detention, was also considered *evil*. While this process was speculated in the media to have been instigated by Tamerlan following a trip he had taken overseas in 2012 (where he allegedly met with Islamic extremists), Dzhokhar Tsarnaev’s apprehension and status as the only ‘living’ terrorists of the Boston Marathon meant that he was ‘stuck with the check’ in terms of who was guilty of the outcome of the ‘evil’ indoctrination and radicalization.<sup>415</sup>

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case, a lot of questions about immigration and immigration reform. But what's important to remember is there will be a learning process also on the response. How did this happen, did the -- how did the police perform and how can they perform better the next time. Unfortunately, we live in a time when there's a lot of people who do a lot of really bad things. And we have to anticipate that that will be the case. And so, that lesson will continue, as well as the investigation and case go into the future.’

<sup>415</sup> FOX Friday 22:00: Former LAPD Homicide Detective, Mark Fuhrman: ‘Certainly, Greta, I would like to know exactly how he was recruited. It seems like his brother radicalized him. He seemed to be on path to be a productive citizen in this country. But there has got to be a mentor. There has to be a trainer. There has to be a contact in this country or with the brother going back to Russia. There has got to be a contact. There has got to be a link. This is not domestic terrorism. This is international terrorism. It is jihadist extremists and it comes from Russia and it comes from the Middle East.’

CNN Friday 18:00 Jim Acosta (Speaking with Wolf Blitzer): ‘Wolf, the profile that's emerging of this suspect, a young man who is sort of a mystery. He's been described by his classmates, even some relatives, as a friendly student athlete, but one relative, and even the suspect's activities on social media suggest he may have become more radical leading up to the bombing.’

MSNBC Friday 18:00: Tom Joscelyn (Foundation for Defense of Democracies): ‘Well, that is clearly sticks out as the number one suspicious red flag in what we are hearing about the brothers' biographies. One of the common things we see in successful terror plots in the west is to successfully travel abroad and receive training. You think about the 7/7 bombers and some of the other successful that we've seen over time, this is common pattern, more often than not, but not every occasion, we see the necessity to go abroad,

In this sense, the *Moral Evaluation* was tied to the inherent juxtaposition of good and evil in the network's storytelling rhetoric. The moral judgment was simply that the brothers were evil, or at least conducted malicious acts that were inspired by evil at some point (see 'radicalization' explanation above). As evil (detailed in previous case studies) implies an inherent morality, there is no need to further explain the moral evaluation of this frame for this case study. The *Treatment Recommendation* did not have sufficient time to develop within the media's coverage pertaining to the evil of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev due to the limitations of this thesis' period of observation. Because Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, was apprehended in the final three hours of observed footage there was no readily available *treatment*, as the culprit had only just been detained. There were broader calls for more government oversight concerning on-line radicalization following the release of Tamerlan Tsarnaev's YouTube playlist; however, a treatment for the bombings themselves was not detailed. Much like the treatment for the 9/11 frame detailed above, the treatment of 'evil' or anti-American sentiments could be argued to be a showing of patriotism which was substantially represented on all networks on Friday, the 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### Scope of Threat

The Boston Marathon Bombings represented the most concentrated scale of the War on Terror observed by this thesis out of all the case studies, followed by the Times Square Bomber (which was narrowed down to NYC and Pakistan respectively). The entire physical arena of the bombings, manhunt and apprehension of the Tsarnaev Brothers occurred within a single city. This was further embodied by the media's behavior with the physical presence of national

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receive the training and come back and execute a plot, and then come back and execute it.'

Host Bret Baier: 'What about the radicalization within families and how this younger Dzhokhar may have been, well, I guess recruited, for a better word, by his older brother?'  
Joscelyn: 'The family link is important throughout the jihadist world, including Al Qaeda and related terrorist groups. I found in my dataset when I have explored family connections about 15 percent to 20 percent of time joint family members will also join the same terrorist organizations or recruited to jihad by fellow family members.'

anchors and news show hosts actually traveling to, and broadcasting live, from Boston on Monday evening and during the conclusive events on Friday April 19<sup>th</sup>. This was the first time in this thesis' observations since 9/11 for which the networks were physically present to cover a successful terror attack.

#### Applying Entman's Identifiers:

The *Problem Identified* was that Boston, a historic American city, was attacked during an annual marathon that draws international crowds.<sup>416</sup> The attack was also on Patriots Day, which is a local holiday in Boston associated with American Patriotism (specifically, the American Revolution), and is symbolically significant for that reason. The attack was concentrated against civilians, bypassing security precautions and patrols in place. The level of security anticipated by authorities was compromised in a manner akin to a war-zone.<sup>417</sup> Because of the significance of this target selection, victimology, date of attack, and event-type targeted, the *scope* was pulled away from any military or international connections, and unfolded within the realm of citizens and local emergency responders in an urban environment.<sup>418</sup>

The *Causal Interpretation* in the media became one of accepting that the marathon was a soft target for terrorism, but that the persons who took advantage of that (softness of target) were cowardly because they selected such a target.<sup>419</sup> This was indicative of the *moral evaluation* for

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FOX Monday April 15 19:00, Representative Peter King (R-NY) Member of House Homeland Security Committee: And this is both, the Boston marathon on Patriots Day is the -- almost the ultimate as far as an iconic, athletic all-American event. And also mass -- mass killing of civilians.'

<sup>417</sup> FOX Tuesday April 16 22:00, FOX News Terror Analyst, Walid Phares: 'This operation with the device with two explosions with a targeting of civilians only, this wasn't a federal building or military base. Every extremist domestic and foreign could have done this. If you take the extremists, if you take a Unabomber, mono-bomber, he can do it. But if you take home-grown jihadists and international ones, they can do it.'

FOX Monday April 15 22:00, Greta Van Susteren: It's just incredible to see this in downtown Boston. My colleague, Rick Leventhal, joins us. Rick, who has covered war, and I'm sure you all watched him when he was covering the war in the march up to Baghdad in the Iraq war. Rick, these bombings are unbelievable. Your thoughts tonight here in Boston?'

<sup>419</sup> CNN Monday April 15 20:00 Speech within Press Conference with Boston Police

this frame. Another interpretation made concerning the scale of the response was that Boston would succeed in part due to its budget increase for emergency responders in northeastern cities following 9/11.<sup>420</sup> This causal inference of preparedness as a result of 9/11, was observed on all networks. As such, this preparedness was rolled into the *Treatment Recommendation* for the *Scope of Threat* Frame through the networks' assessment that despite Boston being a domestic metropolis, it was, as a result of the War on Terror, prepared to manage the response to a terrorist attack. This was suggested in a lesser capacity during the Times Square Bombing attempt in 2010 (specifically as the research tools, funding and allocation thereof, were a direct result of 9/11; and, the investigation for that terror attempt was conducted by the same local authorities who responded to 9/11, nine years prior). Unlike the Times Square Bombing case study, there were no major disparities among the networks concerning what local or national officials should do during the investigation or response to the bombings. This uniformity in response was particularly visible on Friday, during the coverage of the apprehension of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. All networks' coverage was uninterrupted from Boston, with similar video feeds of persons

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Commissioner Ed Davis: 'Thank you, United States Attorney. On behalf of Mayor Menino, I would like to offer my sympathies to the victims and the families of this horrendous event. This cowardly act will not be taken in stride. We will turn every rock over to find the people who are responsible for this.'

FOX Monday April 15 21:00 Hannity – Former Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown: 'The bottom line is this is something that, quite frankly is cowardly. And the folks, the person or people that did this, need to be held fully accountable. You know...initially...I was horrified...now I am mad. I'm mad because this type of this on Patriots Day, iconic race,...killing hundreds and we need to do a top-to-bottom review to make sure this never happens again.'...Hannity (Same show, 23 minutes later): 'They are cowards. As this was unfolding this afternoon, Senator, one of the things I was most concerned about, because there was one and 14 seconds later there was another explosion and then we found out there were other explosive devices, it seems to fit the pattern of some terrorists. Using your knowledge and background in the Senate, I'm not asking you to jump to conclusions, does it fit, at least in your mind, maybe the pattern of Madrid, London, 9/11, anything come to mind?'

420 FOX Monday April 15 18:00 Former Homeland Security Official, Charles Payne: 'Today, Unfortunately, is a day that a lot of us knew was on the way for a long time. Much like the race where the devices were placed, it's been a marathon for a lot of state and local first responders since 9/11. They've done a lot of training, they've done a lot of preparation, and all the law enforcement folks have been preparing for this for unfortunately, too long.'



celebrating in the streets with a network correspondent reporting on the police activity live from the Watertown area. For this case study, the *treatment recommendation* was, for the first time, local celebrations.

### al Qaeda

On Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, there was ample speculation on all networks that the Boston Marathon Bombings were al Qaeda terrorism (or at least al Qaeda-inspired). However, without any claims of responsibility for the attack, the speculation was short-lived.<sup>421</sup> By Tuesday, April 16, any reporting of al Qaeda connections to the Boston Bombings was dismissed or actively challenged.<sup>422</sup> By the end of reporting on Friday, the only reference to al Qaeda concerned the magazine *Inspire* and Tamerlan's YouTube playlist, which contained some al Qaeda propaganda materials.<sup>423</sup> Despite the frequency of the use of 'al Qaeda' or discussions

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<sup>421</sup> CNN Monday 21:00 CNN Contributor Paul Cruikshank: 'We just don't know who was responsible for this, Piers. We don't know if it was Islamist terrorism, some form of right-wing terrorism, another form of terrorism. We still need answers to all of that. But the investigation will proceed. They will look at the forensics at some of these recovered devices, and they may be able to sort of see the signature of the explosives. Are they similar to the type of bombs used by, say, al Qaeda or other groups. That may start to provide some answers, Piers.'

<sup>422</sup> CNN Tuesday 21:00 Fran Townsend: 'Sometimes (al Qaeda will) wait. They'll release what they call a martyr's video. That is someone who is responsible or killed in the attack, pre-taped the video that they released much later. Or it's more difficult for them to communicate, so Ayman al Zawahiri, the head of al Qaeda, might release a video many months later when he can get it out, claiming responsibility....Typically if it's al Qaeda related, you'd see a claim of responsibility. But to your point, it may take some time.'

FOX Tuesday 21:00 (Hannity) Fmr. Mayor, Rudolf Giuliani: 'I don't think this is orchestrated by al Qaeda or any of their off-shoots in Africa or places from there. I think if it was we would have picked it up because it would have to have been communicated internationally and the coverage now is immense. It sounds to me like this was more homegrown, like the attack in Britain '05. I was in Britain a half a block away from the Liverpool Station when that went off. Those were home-grown people, which is why they eluded the British intelligence service, which is the best in the world, because they were looking at people who came from overseas. They weren't looking at their own citizens. This is my hunch. I could be absolutely wrong. But if I were investigating this, that's the hunch I would be working on.'

<sup>423</sup> FOX Friday 18:00 Baier: 'We should point out this does not mean that they are Al Qaeda. It does not mean that anyone outside the country is giving them direction. They could be two lone wolves, if you will, working together. But we have seen some radicalization towards of the ideology where they think they are going after a -- the ultimate goal of jihad against America before.'

there of, the framing of the attacks as al Qaeda terrorism (by the media) did not apply to this case study in the same manner or with the same intensity as did the Shoe Bomber or Underpants Bomber case studies. Additionally, where as the *al Qaeda* Frame was strongest in this thesis during the coverage of the Bali Bombings, with this case study, the use of 'al Qaeda' was as a reference for past terror events and their perpetrators, rather than a label fixed to the Bombings themselves. al Qaeda did not function as a frame in the same manner observed in previous case studies; as such, it was the weakest frame for the Boston Marathon Bombings.

#### Applying Entman's Identifiers:

The *Problem Identification* that did manifest was that the ideological foundations of al Qaeda were proven to be active through the actions of the Tsarnaev brothers. However, without the media having substantial evidence of the direct correlations (at least not this during the period of observation for this thesis), this attribute of the *al Qaeda* frame is not as substantial as the *problem identified* in instances such as the Shoe and Underpants Bombers, where the culprits clearly claimed allegiances to and training from al Qaeda. The *Causal Interpretation* was then expressed as the brothers having been 'inspired' by al Qaeda in some manner. However, this was a completely subjective conclusion by the media even with declarations by the suspects of their allegiances, so in the instance where (during the period of observation), Dzhokhar Tsarnaev had not yet conveyed any allegiances with or against al Qaeda, this interpretation was left unsubstantiated. The *Moral Evaluation* for any semblance of the al Qaeda frame ventured entirely

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Foundation for Defense of Democracies' Rom Joscelyn: 'That's right. It's actually right. This is just one part of the story. You really have to piece together a number of other dots we have put together and connect before we can tell the full story. This is just subjective at least on some occasions the brothers were sympathetic to the same underlying ideology spread around the globe. As you say, it doesn't necessary mean they are Al Qaeda or connected to an Al Qaeda group, but it certainly is suggestive of the type of ideology that they shared.'...' It's going to take time to piece together the full story there are still facts out there we don't know, including their travels abroad. A key window into their ideology comes from the social media web pages. And, in particular, the older brother on his YouTube page had a number of jihadist videos, some of which are very similar to the type of propaganda that Al Qaeda puts out.'

into the *Evil* frame's Moral Evaluation, as the brothers were inherently 'evil' in the media's coverage due only in part to their debated al Qaeda connection. Simply, the *Treatment Recommendation* was resolved on Friday with the killing of Tamerlan and the apprehension of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. The al Qaeda component of the story did not endure as a complete frame past the second day of reporting for this case study.

#### 8.4 Narrative Status

The Boston Marathon Bombings were the most heavily covered terror attack in the American media since 9/11. Because of advances in media coverage preservation and digitization, it was also the strongest event in the War on Terror Narrative of this thesis' case studies. The frames *9/11*, *evil*, and *Scope of Threat* operated in their highest capacities since 9/11; with only the *Al Qaeda* Frame functioning at a weaker level than the other case studies of this thesis. Because this was a successful domestic event, which had immediate network coverage during the terror event itself (with live updates on the investigation and continuing situation in Boston), the videos and images from the Bombings were the most visually akin to 9/11 out of all the other case studies. This visual similarity was further substantiated by the physical setting of the Bombings in a similar to NYC-looking northeastern American city, a number of first responders appearing in the images in the same manner as the responders on 9/11 (running, shouting, covered in dust), and because network hosts were reporting live from the city (as they did on 9/11) following the events (both the bombings and the manhunt). The manner in which the networks managed the reporting of the Boston Marathon Bombings similarly did not go without undertones of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. On Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, there was rolling coverage of the fall-out in the same manner that 9/11 was covered, commercial-free and without interruptions from the networks themselves. This was replicated on Friday, during the capture of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev in Watertown, MA. These were both the first instances of 'rolling' coverage observed by this thesis since 9/11.

Overall, the War on Terror Narrative was the strongest for this case study since its inception on 9/11, in terms of its cohesiveness across the networks. During the reporting of the Shoe Bomber and Times Square Bomber, FOX deviated in its causal interpretations, moral evaluations, and treatment recommendations from CNN and MSNBC, whereas, during the Boston Marathon Bombings reporting, the networks demonstrated cohesive and relatively similar opinions and interpretations of the events. This was also observed on Friday, during the capture of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev where all three networks went commercial-free at the same time for similar durations of time, and all three were airing visually similar video of the procession of police and federal authorities leaving the Watertown area with applause and jubilation from members of the public. This network reporting uniformity was observed only during the Boston Bombings and 9/11. As an event within the wider 'War on Terror', the terminology observed (on the networks) incorporated and integrated the Boston Marathon Bombings into the War on Terror Narrative; but, the difference between this case study and 9/11, was that the discourse surrounding the War on Terror was established to the point of social literacy by 2013. During 9/11, words and phrases such as 'al Qaeda', 'homegrown', 'lonewolf', and 'al Qaeda-inspired terrorism' did not exist. By this point of time in 2013, the reporting of the War on Terror had become standard, with practices such as the use of in-network terror experts and official counter-terrorism correspondents being immediately employed from the first hours of coverage following the Marathon Bombings on all networks.

Interestingly, this final case study also saw a component of coverage concerning the discussions of Richard Jackson around the media's behaviour on 9/11 (see Section 3.4) but operating in an entirely different capacity. Professor Jackson stated in his interview with this thesis that: 'the media, in times of national crisis, stops playing its critical role and starts playing a role as a mouthpiece of the government.'<sup>424</sup> However, the means through which the government

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<sup>424</sup> Jackson, Richard, 2016, Interview by this thesis on March 18, 2016, at the 2016 International Studies Association Annual Conference in Atlanta, GA – Used with Permission.

communicated with the media had transformed significantly since 2001 thanks to advances in the media ecology. Instead of press conferences and exclusively government-to-media lines of communication concerning the situation in Boston, the government had begun to communicate through social media; which was then re-broadcasted by the mainstream media. However, because of how Twitter and Facebook operate, the flow of information was no longer exclusive to the media; but rather, was available instantly to the public. Meaning, the public did not need to engage with network news in order to have access to the government's up-to-the-minute information about the attacks or subsequent manhunt. For more information on how this change in the flow of information during crisis functions is detailed in Hoskins and O'Loughlin's *Arrested War: The Third Phase of Mediatization*.<sup>425</sup>

Concerning the flow of media coverage during the Boston Marathon Bombings: Monday saw the chaos of rolling coverage, re-playing the few damage shots and videos of the explosions continually throughout phone interviews and other audio-overlay. In-network experts were used as well as the few experts and retired persons the network could call in or interview at satellite broadcasting stations. Tuesday's coverage focused on the human-interest side of the bombings with stories on Martin Richard and Krystle Campbell on all networks, as well as some information on Lu Lingzi and other injured or hospitalized persons. Tuesday saw one of the higher numbers of experts used (second only to Monday's coverage), with bomb analytics and medical correspondents discussing the specifics of what (possibly) occurred during the Bombings. Wednesday was the slowest news day for this case study with a cancelled press conference from Boston PD and the rumor of pictures having been released to the media. The media, however, refused to broadcast the pictures for fear of exacerbating the confusion surrounding the investigation. Thursday was a self-reflective day for the networks with segments on every hour (on each network) concerning the false reporting by The New York Post and

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<sup>425</sup> Hoskins, A. & O'Loughlin, B., 2015, 'Arrested War: The Third Phase of Mediatization', *Information, Communication & Society*, Volume 18, 2015- Issue 11 – Streets to Screens: Mediating Conflict through Digital Networks, from Taylor and Francis. Pp. 1320-1338.

other media outlets concerning possible suspects. The FBI released the official ‘Wanted Posters’ on this day, which brought focus back to the media’s coverage of the investigation and the human-interest component, this time aimed at the Tsarnaev brothers. Friday was the second most saturated day of coverage for this case study following Monday’s bombings. As previously mentioned, it was also the second time since 9/11 that the network’s coverage of a terror attack was truly rolling (within this thesis’ observations). The conclusive nature that accompanied the capture of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev brought this terror event a resolution typically observed during failed terror attempts, such as those resulting in the capture of Richard Reid, Omar Abdulmatallab, and Faisal Shahzad.

Within the literature, the Boston Marathon case study showed extensive proof that Grusin’s notion of premediation was fully-functional within American newsrooms by 2013. “Premediation works to prevent citizens of the global mediasphere from experiencing again that kind of systemic or traumatic shock produced by the events of 9/11.”<sup>426</sup> While Grusin clarifies that premediation is not the same as prediction, the core theme of *Premediation* is how the media industry’s behavior in pre-empting terrorism and disaster serve the purpose of perpetually preparing the newsroom and its audiences for shock. This is so that when shock occurs (such as it did on 9/11 and during the Boston Marathon Bombings) the audience is prepared, because they are constantly ‘at the ready’, always anticipating a fearful event. However, it is not all about the audience, and one of the major concepts of premediation is how the media self-censors, self-edits, and self-fulfills its own predictions towards how the ‘next big event’ will unfold and to what degree of shock and awe. The Boston Marathon Bombings highlighted this type of mediation in its frequent references to 9/11 both by name and in the style of the reporting (rolling coverage, praise of first responders, patriotic messages and symbolism, and reporting live from the event).

The Boston Marathon Bombings’ coverage also highlighted the stark contrasts in the media ecology between 9/11 and 2013, speaking directly to one component of Hoskins and

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<sup>426</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, *Premediation: Affect and mediality after 9/11*, Palgrave Macmillan, p. 2.

O'Loughlin's second phase of mediatization, as detailed in *War and Media*. "Now, with potentially infinite archives and unpredictable emergence of images, challenges loom for both Big Media and audiences about which information and news are authoritative and credible, and even about what authority and credibility actually mean."<sup>427</sup> The Boston Bombings saw this component of the new media ecology in action on a few occasions. Hoskins and O'Loughlin detail how such images can be used to intentionally unsettle narratives; however, in this instance, the unsettling was simply dysfunctional information processing, the cause of which pertains to the technical environment (as discussed in *War and Media*). The first instance was a failure of credibility, and concerned the initial persons of interest who were caught on security cameras (footage which was sold to the media by private groups) and speculated by the media on April 15 to be involved. These two people (a man in a dark hoodie trying to access restricted areas around the marathon, and a person with burns, assumed to be a foreign national, who was admitted to hospital following the bombings) were later dropped from the media's coverage without further explanation. The second instance was a failure by the media, and concerned the bystanders who were put onto the front page of the New York Post with the heading: 'Bag Men: Feds seek these two pictured at Boston marathon'. The Post had to retract the story, and the two men implicated by the media outlet successfully sued for damages. (The story of the misprint was aired on all networks.)

A successful example of how advances in the media ecology actually assisted the media, the public, and local authorities, was in the media's coverage of the Boston Police Department's Twitter Page. Up to the minute Tweets were shown at some point during the manhunt for the Tsarnaev Brother on all news networks. Other government social media sites were also aired on all networks, advising the public on transit closures and disruptions, and eventually to assist in informing citizens to remain indoors around the Watertown area on Friday, the 19th. This media

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<sup>427</sup> Hoskins, A., & O'Loughlin, B., 2010, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War*, Polity Press. P. 10.

behavior had not been observed previously by this thesis: network news, showing social media accounts of authorities, in an effort to protect citizens from being negatively impacted by the story being reported. This particular evolution of the media/government relationship is clearly evolved from 9/11, wherein the media relied almost exclusively on press-releases and slower, official communications from the government for any information. Meaning that the audience would have to refer to the media for any and all breaking information from the government during times of crisis. This speaks to the beginnings of Hoskins and O'Loughlin's third phase of mediatization, because strictly speaking, that same information relayed by the government during the Boston Marathon Bombings from the twitter accounts of the police and federal agencies, was accessible by all citizens as much as network news.<sup>428</sup> In effect, the Boston Marathon Bombing was the first case study of this thesis' sample wherein the government could speak directly to the population about the ongoing situation or imminent threats, without having to hold a press release, or engage the media at all, for that matter. However, where people get their news about breaking stories ultimately determined which medium is the most effective. What this means for future terror events, and the condition of the War on Terror Narrative in particular, requires continued research and study.

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<sup>428</sup> Following the evolving phases of mediatization discussed in *War and Media*, see Hoskins, A. & O'Loughlin, B., 2015, *Arrested War: The Third Phase of Mediatization*, in 'Information, Communication & Society', Volume 18, 2015- Issue 11 – Streets to Screens: Mediating Conflict through Digital Networks, from Taylor and Francis. Pp. 1320-1338.



## Chapter 9: Conclusion

This chapter consists of five sections that will summarize and clarify the concepts and points of this thesis, contextualize its original contributions, and identify future research potential for the War on Terror Narrative. First, a section addressing this thesis' first-hand observations of any changes in the media's behavior during the period of this thesis will be detailed in 'Media Behavior Findings'. Second, in 'Matrix Methodology', the manner in which the boundaries and definitions of the War on Terror Narrative were further established through this thesis Matrix Methodology will be presented, along with observations concerning the frames selected by this thesis. Third, a section revisiting the four hypotheses of this thesis will explain how this thesis' findings either substantiated or disproved the hypothesis across the case studies as a whole, and relate those findings back to the surrounding literature. Fourth, the areas where the research method may be improved for future research will be identified and elucidated in 'Limitations'. Fifth, in 'Original Contributions', the original findings and location of those findings within existing literature will be summarized, and potential areas for future research will be identified.

### 9.1 Media Behavior Findings

The following section will detail the original findings of this thesis concerning the media's behaviour. These actions by the media were noted by this thesis as they were observed first-hand during the research process, and tracked in any subsequent case studies. This does not mean that the findings are not substantiated by the surrounding literature, however the observation of the following behaviour by this thesis develops and supports other literature's work concerning the following observations. This thesis observed an increase on all networks and across the entire time frame of this thesis in three overarching characteristics: self-populated content, media-on-media reporting, and 24-hour cycle strain. First, the media networks made

increasing use of in-house experts (as opposed to citing or airing externally sourced material or airing interviews with non-network-affiliated experts). Second, the media was observed to refer increasingly to other media networks' coverage of terror events as opposed to the network's broadcasting style during 9/11, which saw no network referencing of other networks' coverage. Third, the structure of the 24-hour news cycle (as well as the actual programming of rolling television news) impacted the War on Terror Narrative more than anticipated at the outset of this thesis, with more repetition of content occurring towards the end of the thesis' time frame than at the beginning. This was observed on all networks for all case studies. This behavior concerning the three findings was not actively hypothesized to occur and was only observed in the later stages of the project. As such, these findings are considered new information, directly resulting from the methodological approach of this thesis' selecting case studies across a span of time.

**9.1.1** The first media behavior of note, the increase over time of self-populated, in-house produced content, was detected when the transcripts of the Underpants Bomber case study revealed a considerable division in the discussions surrounding 'security versus privacy' in the fallout of the failed terror attempt on December 22, 2009. The division was noted when the 9/11 Frame, the strongest and most consistent Frame of this thesis, diverged amongst the networks, requiring additional analysis (through the combined framing identification processes) before it could be soundly established on all networks and all days. The issue centered on the *moral evaluation* and *treatment recommendation* phases of Entman's identifiers of the 9/11 Frame, and the divergence amongst the networks occurred most prominently on the third through fifth days of observation. In short, CNN and MSNBC hosted predominantly in-house experts during this case study, speaking on the importance of constitutional rules of privacy, whereas FOX hosted (again, nearly exclusively) in-house experts speaking to the importance of hard security and increased security measures at airports around the globe (regardless of American jurisdiction or

any rights to privacy of international travelers). Specifically, CNN hosted Fran Townsend numerous times, but introduced her as a ‘CNN National Security Contributor’ (eventually, and an ‘in-house’ CNN Special Security Correspondent), rather than stating that she was a key Homeland Security Advisor to President George W. Bush. (A ‘Contributor’ may or may not be fiscally compensated for their opinions on air. However, a ‘correspondent’, or a ‘-Network Name- Analyst’, is employed by the network, thus subject to network-bias influence.) This behavior continued to increase after 2009, during the Times Square Bombing and Boston Marathon Bombings cases respectively, with each network showing an increase in their use of network-based terror experts over time. This is significant because in limiting the number of externally sourced commentary, the networks filter and narrow down the opinions shared on their broadcasts over time. While internal commentary may favor the same political opinions as the network, to have more internal, therefore, network-paid persons on-air, means more control by the network of what is said on air overall.

**9.1.2** Second, there was a notable increase in media-to-media referencing during the reporting of the observed terror events between 2001 and 2013. During the Boston Bombings, for example, FOX made frequent references to the reporting of other news networks and media outlets. This was not observed on any network during the coverage of 9/11, at the beginning of this thesis’ time frame. This ‘news reporting on the news’ was only observed after 2009, and it was first observed in the cross-network commentating on of President Obama’s counter-terrorism approaches, specifically between FOX and CNN during the Underpants Bomber Case Study. It expanded, however, during the Times Square Bombing and Boston Marathon Bombings, to include all networks critiquing the coverage or political biases of the other networks observed. It is not known precisely when this inter-network awareness and coverage of other networks began, as there was the gap in this thesis’ case studies between 2002 and 2009 (noting that this gap was consciously chosen by this project to allow for the comparison of two

time periods and the development of the War on Terror Narrative). It is only because of this gap, however, that the behavior was noticeably different between the two periods of coverage. It should be noted that this behavior was observed to occur more frequently during evening programming on syndicated ‘news via host’ coverage than during daytime ‘news via anchor’ coverage. Please see the Boston Marathon Case Study section, ‘April 15, 2013’ for specific examples. This is possibly due to the entertainment value of one network’s news hosts criticizing another network’s host, causing more dramatic or sensational friction between the networks beyond what divergence in political opinions may entail. However, should this ‘attack factor’ alter the delivery of news and facts (which was not researched by this thesis) it might become a liability against responsible news management, even if it promotes viewership.

**9.1.3** Finally, the 24-hour news cycle directly impacted the management of terror narratives in comparison to other forms of media (such as periodic news updates that do not necessitate reformatting production models for continuous broadcast content). The necessity of a constant supply of material for broadcasting influences the selection and emphasis of news stories, both in relation to one another, and over a period of time. Additionally, the timings of the Shoe and Underpants Bombers (around Christmas) meant the terror attempts received less coverage than they would have if they had not occurred on a holiday. This is because rolling-news networks pre-program holiday content into large, pre-recorded blocks in order to run a skeleton-crew. If either of those attempts had been successful, then its coverage likely would have been impacted. But, their coverage demonstrated the inherent control that the media’s corporate structure had on the management of the news as a whole, as the holiday-content, pre-packaging was not altered for the breaking news.

As the media ecology exists at the outset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the artificial and arbitrary constraints of broadcasting inherently influence the media narratives of the day. Arbitrary, in that the ‘newshour’ always restarts at the top of the hour, regardless of when the news occurs, simply

because it is sensible for programming and televisions schedules to run in certain patterns. Also, ordering of stories is determined by the director of a news show and changes depending on the program running at any given time. This thesis was unable, however, to more narrowly define the impact of the 24-hour cycle, as it was not observed methodically against non-terror periods of coverage, which would highlight normal media patterns as compared to periods of intense, terror-centric coverage.

The 24-hour news cycle demands constant content that sometimes results in profuse repetition of limited materials. This is most notable during the ‘breaking’ of a story, wherein a high level of repetition of limited information was observed on all networks for all case studies. ‘Limited information’ refers to the initial facts made available and transmitted by the media, which may not provide a full explanation to the audience of the extent of the damage caused or danger involved with an unfolding event. When the media reports a terror event without any parameters of where the threat is, where it is limited to, when the threat began and when the threat ended, it creates a heightened state of emergency disproportionate to the physical or ‘real’ threat.<sup>429</sup> As an example of this disruption to the transmission of where and when a threat is actually present, during the Times Square Bomber event, which had the least media saturation of the case studies, the threat or sense of urgency surrounding the coverage of the event was heaviest on Sunday morning, May 2, 2010. This meant that the media’s coverage of the event portrayed to the audience that danger was present over 12 hours after authorities had eliminated the threat. The coverage of the Boston Bombings was observed to have the most prolonged sense of threat or danger conveyed in the media (in this thesis) as a result of the manhunt around Boston for the Tsarnaev brothers. The ‘threat’ conveyed lasted at a semi-constant level of danger for five days, wherein the media communicated that the culprits represented a sustained danger to the entire American audience, beyond Boston itself. The Bali Bombings reporting conveyed a

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<sup>429</sup>This is the quintessential concept discussed by Hoskins, A., & O’Loughlin, B., 2010, called ‘effects without causes’.

lesser sense of prolonged threat. This can be attributed primarily to the time-zone and location separation between the area impacted and the American audience. During the failed attempts of the Shoe Bomber and Underpants Bomber, the threat was more immediately consolidated within the network coverage, possibly as the events experienced a natural conclusion in the would-be-bombers' immediate arrests. The significance of this finding is that it highlights the near complete control of the media over the perceptions of threat during crisis.

Overall, the shifts in the media's behavior were made obvious due to the strategic gap in this thesis between the first three case studies of this thesis ending in 2002, and the second three beginning in 2009. To summarize this section, across the time period of this thesis, the media became more self-sufficient in its increased use of in-house experts, more self-aware in its reporting on the happenings of other media organizations in unfolding terror event coverage, and the 24-hour news cycle was observed to impact and influence how news was managed during terror events. A more narrow observation of how these specific behaviors changed between 2001 and 2013 would be an area of future research that may enrich the academic understanding of the War on Terror Narrative, and its evolution against the media ecology of a selected period of time. It would also be useful to more critically examine the use of internal versus external 'experts' against the degree of political bias in news coverage of terrorism and non-terrorism events on a wider scale (e.g. more networks or different types of media outlets) as a means to observe and track how networks may have increasingly become 'producers' of news, versus just conveyors of news.

## 9.2 Matrix Methodology

| <b>The Matrix Methodology of Narrative Identification for the War on Terror</b>                |   |  |  |   |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Events   | <i>9/11 Frame</i>   | <i>Evil Frame</i>  | <i>Scope of Threat Frame</i>   | <i>Al Qaeda Frame</i>   |
| 9/11   | 4: America Under Attack<br>(Day #)  | 1: Axis Of Evil Speech<br>Moral Evaluation:<br>Attackers Evil – USA<br>‘Good’            | 2: Dependent On<br>Military/Executive<br>Response – Wherever<br>There’s A Threat                   | 3: Osama Bin Laden –<br>Non-State Terror = ‘New’<br>Real Threat                                     |
| Shoe Bomber  | 4: Continued Gaps In<br>Airport Security – Skies<br>Still Not Safe Since 9/11 | 3: ‘Hero Passengers’ =<br>‘Evil Attacker’  | 2: Global Scale – Trans-<br>Atlantic Travel Issues,<br>Terrorist Mobile And<br>Global              | 1: Afghanistan Camps,<br>Tora Bora Caves, OBL<br>Videos, Terror Training<br>Camps Issue             |
| Bali Bombings  | 3: Asia’s 9/11 – Same<br>Motives - Same Goals –<br>Different Location         | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently<br>Established On All<br>Networks-                            | 2: Global Scale –<br>Everywhere Westerners<br>Are = Target -<br>Necessitating A Global<br>Response | 1: Terror Training Camps<br>– Jeemah Islamiyah and<br>AQ Groups Attacking<br>Any And All Westerners |
| Underpants<br>Bomber   | 3: More Aviation Security<br>Issues – Issues With<br>Government Lists’        | 4: -Frame Not Sufficiently<br>Established On All<br>Networks-                            | 2: Back To Aviation Based<br>Threats   | 1: (Similar To Shoe)<br>Yemen Connections –AQ<br>Allegiance Vs. Operative -<br>AQAP                 |
| Times Square<br>Bombing  | 4: NYC Still Targeted By<br>The Same People                                   | 3: -Weakest Presentation<br>Of Frame In Thesis, But<br>Observed On All<br>Networks-      | 2: Domestic Counter-<br>Terrorism Questioned –<br>NYC’s Post-9/11 Test                             | 1: ‘Homegrown’ And<br>Internet Radicalization –<br>Lone Wolf Terrorism -                            |
| Boston Marathon<br>Bombings  | 1: The Echo Of 9/11 –<br>Flags Flying Again, Hero<br>First Responders/Victims | 2: Clearest Good Vs. Evil<br>Framing + Hero Frame<br>Of Survivors And Law<br>Enforcement | 3: Narrowest Scope:<br>Boston – Northeastern<br>American City (Again)                              | 4: Internet Radicalization –<br>Homegrown Terrorism –<br><i>Inspire Magazine</i>                    |
| Numbering indicates the strength of the individual frame of the four frames within each event. |   |  |  |   |

At the start of this thesis, the media frames of 9/11, Evil, Scope of Threat, and al Qaeda, were selected for their preliminary presence in samples from archive materials for each case study. However, the frames did not maintain consistent strength or representation throughout this thesis, and indeed could not be established during some case studies for one or more of the networks. There are debates concerning communications and media studies’ efforts to form a cohesive narrative and frame identification process that can be used across multiple forms of media (print, TV, radio, etc.).<sup>430</sup> One problem with this type of qualitative communications

<sup>430</sup> As detailed in the Literature Review through D’Angelo, P., 2002, News Framing as a multi-paradigmatic research program: A response to Entman, in the *Journal of Communication*, 52(4), pp. 870-888.

research is that the project or research direction typically shapes the research methodology in profound ways, contributing to the lack of uniformity across research projects that fall within the same discipline. In committing to observe four media frames across 12 years of media coverage, this project did not allow for the consideration or observation of new frames, nor the dismissal of defunct frames. This was done to see if this method of narrative identification was viable, as it had never been conducted previously. This also allows one to see how the Narrative changed and shifted over the 12-years, which was the central goal of the thesis.

A degree of numerical representation is possible when looking at ranking of the strength of each frame across the case studies. In using the Matrix format to visually represent the War on Terror Narrative, a ranking (one [1] out of six [6] based on comparative intensity of the frame, based on repetition of semantics, frequency of references, or other identifiers) of frame presence per case study can be established, as charted below. Through this visual representation of frame strengths, one can observe that the Underpants Bomber case study had the weakest representation for three out of four media frames, and that 9/11 and the Boston Marathon Bombings had the strongest representations for the majority of frames. Again, the one-to-six ranking is based on comparing the frames' representational intensity from one case study to another, not one frame against the others or by any other numerical equation beyond rhetorical intensity of the individual frame.

| <b>Frame Strength in Ranking Across the Case Studies (1-Strongest Presence, 6-Weakest)</b> |                   |                   |                              |                       |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Event</b>   | <i>9/11 Frame</i> | <i>Evil Frame</i> | <i>Scope of Threat Frame</i> | <i>al Qaeda Frame</i> |
| 9/11   | 2                 | 1                 | 1                            | 1                     |
| Shoe Bomber  | 5                 | 3                 | 5                            | 2                     |
| Bali Bombings  | 4                 | 5                 | 3                            | 3                     |
| Underpants Bomber  | 6                 | 6                 | 6                            | 5                     |
| Times Square Bombing   | 3                 | 4                 | 4                            | 6                     |
| Boston Marathon Bombings   | 1                 | 2                 | 2                            | 4                     |

This thesis found that the 9/11 Frame was the strongest and most present of all four frames, in all case studies, as the media used 9/11 to ground the audience in an explanation for



both failed and successful terror events. This makes 9/11 the strongest frame of the War on Terror Narrative in American rolling television news for the time between 2001-2013. The strongest presence of the frame was observed on all networks during the Boston Marathon Bombings. References to 9/11 depended largely on the location of the attacks (domestic events observed a higher frequency of references to 9/11 than internationally-based events), more so than the success of the attack or attempt. As an example, the Times Square Bombing, a failed attempt, was still observed as the third strongest presence (by ranking) of the 9/11 Frame of the six case studies, because of its location in New York City (substantiated by the frequent referencing in the coverage of the similarities among the attacks). As a note, despite the similarities in the use of civilian aircraft as weapons, the Underpants and Shoe Bomber case studies did not evoke as strong a referencing to 9/11 as the other six case studies.

The Evil Frame was the strongest during the 9/11 attacks on all networks for all four of Entman's qualifiers (supported with MFA's attributes). There was no pattern observed in the use of 'Evil' terminology across the timeline of this thesis, nor was there a significantly higher use of the 'Evil' designation during successful versus failed events. The only consistent component of the Evil Frame's use observed by this thesis was that it was used more heavily during FOX's coverage of both successful and failed events, than it was on the other networks, across all six case studies. During the Underpants and Times Square Bombing case studies the Evil Frame could not be established as active on all networks, and it did not substantially present during the Underpants Case study for any network. However, the Evil Frame was also problematic during the Bali Bombings, when the attack occurred on the opposite side of the world from American audiences. This indicates that an attack or attempt needs to be closer to causing harm to the American homeland before it can be considered 'evil' by all networks.

The Scope of Threat Frame was consistently stronger during successful terror attacks than failed terror attempts on all networks, across the six case studies. The frame also functioned in accordance with the severity of the attack, meaning that it was strongest during the most

damaging attacks, and weakest during attempts with less physical impact. The Scope of Threat Frame, designed to encompass all references to the location of the War on Terror (as depicted in the media) or threat of terrorism, functioned the most fluidly of all the frames of this thesis. This was because its identification was the least restrictive from a definitional standpoint; the location given by a network concerning the War on Terror could be real, or more unbound geographically— as long as a location was mentioned. The frame was found to be at its strongest in saturation across networks on 9/11 (meaning the scale of the War on Terror was referenced and discussed most during this case study). However, the scale of the War on Terror (the Scope of Threat Frame) was most narrowly defined during the Boston Marathon Bombings. Accordingly, ‘scope’ of the Frame’s rhetoric became increasingly concentrated over time between 2001 and 2013, with each subsequent event. This is possibly due to the locations of various terror groups and their operations coming to light; but, between 2001 and 2013, the ‘location’ of terror very much depended on the location of a successful attack. On 9/11 the scope of the War on Terror was everywhere and anywhere that the threat of terror could be seen to exist, but by 2013, the scope was singularly Boston, where the attack occurred and the culprits lived.

The al Qaeda Frame changed the most of all four media frames over the 12-years of this thesis’ observation. As the organization became better known following the 9/11 attacks, coverage of the group grew and was more strongly represented in the earlier case studies of this thesis. However, as the timeline progressed, Osama bin Laden killed May 2, 2011, and new terror groups and *modus operandi* became more familiar within media coverage. Eventually, al Qaeda lost its ‘center stage’ status as *the* terror group behind any ‘War on Terror’ event. The emergence of ‘lone wolf’ and ‘homegrown’ terrorism discussions in the media eventually came to occupy the rhetorical territory of the al Qaeda frame (as the phases did not exist at the outset of the War on Terror Narrative). This was substantiated in the media coverage of later case studies, specifically, the Boston Bombings. While al Qaeda retained its media significance (specifically observed by

this thesis) between 2001-2003, like many terror groups before it, its lifespan was not able to keep pace with terror competition both on the ground (speaking to the emergence of ISIL/ISIS) and in the media (speaking to the surge in 'lone wolf' discourse). Eventually, during the Boston Marathon Bombings, al Qaeda was only mentioned as a grandfathered concept of terror sources and inspiration, a root cause to the (by then) old problem of terrorism. However, the semantics of 'lone wolf', 'home grown', 'self-radicalized' and 'inspired' terrorism all occurred more frequently on all networks than the name al Qaeda itself by the final case studies of this thesis, suggesting that 'al Qaeda' would eventually become a non-existent frame.

The media frames tracked by this thesis' methodology were observed to ebb and flow from one terror event to the next for multiple reasons. So, was the use of four frames tracked and analyzed across six case studies a useful method for identifying the War on Terror Narrative? First, the saturation or intensity of the coverage that a terror event received was largely influenced by the proximity of the event to the east coast of the United States. Second, the political affiliation of each network became more pronounced after 2009, and this impacted the ability of this thesis to consistently locate the chosen media frame during each terror event. For the first three case studies, the frames could be identified across the three networks in semi-uniformity and simultaneously. For the final three cases, the frames were too varied amongst the three networks for a single analysis or frame identification, and each frame required an individual analysis per network from the Underpants Bomber case study forward because of the increasingly political positioning of the networks. However, the absence of a frame on a certain network or during a specific event was not a failure of the methodology, but rather an indicator of the boundaries of the Narrative within the networks' coverage. While this thesis limited itself to four media frames and did not accommodate the appearance or disappearance of other media frames, the consistent tracking of certain frames allowed for direct comparisons to be made amongst the frames in each network's coverage. This in turn allowed the thesis to uncover firm boundaries to the frames, and thereby the Narrative, on a network-by-network basis.

### 9.3 Revisiting the Hypotheses

9.3.1 Hypothesis 1: Clustering, comparing, then analyzing terror events through historical comparison can reveal significant nuances and shifts in the ‘War on Terror’ Narrative as a defining catalyst for the early twenty-first century US television news.

*It is hypothesized by this thesis that through observing the resonance of pre-selected, individual media frames within the wider War on Terror Narrative during multiple terror attacks and attempts over 12 years, changes to the War on Terror Narrative can be observed and more clearly defined. The events are clustered (three) at the beginning of the War on Terror, then again seven-years later. The case studies also represent an equal number of successful and failed terror events, such that the resonance of the pre-selected frames can be tested in the extremes of terrorism reporting (where major events did unfold, and where ultimately there was little to report due to a lack of a definitive event). By purposely allowing for a time-gap between the first and second group of three cases, it is hypothesized that changes to the Narrative will be more noticeable between the first and second halves of the thesis’ case studies.*

In this thesis the tracking of the resonance of four individual media frames across a 12-year period did highlight changes to the War on Terror Narrative and served to mark shifts in the Narrative, albeit in unexpected ways. On 9/11, the War on Terror Narrative of the American media was almost the same as the Narrative cast by the Bush Administration.<sup>431</sup> The media-based Narrative changed throughout this project, diverging amongst the networks along political party lines, most significantly during President Obama’s first term, in 2009. The War on Terror Narrative in the American media functioned primarily as a contextual aid of the news networks, working to ground the audience in a threat-based mindset before presenting unfolding events that were terror-related. The War on Terror Narrative was the discursive milieu through which all terror attacks and attempts (regardless of their success) were presented, in order to clearly communicate to the audience that the events were not specifically criminal nor militaristic in nature, but rather, a new form of violence. The Narrative was observed by this thesis to operate

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<sup>431</sup> This is similarly observed by Jackson, R., 2005, *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counter-terrorism* Manchester University Press. Introduction.

as a catalyst for a typology of news. As such, when one story concludes, a way to introduce the next story, and ground the audience would be to say, ‘now for the latest on the War on Terror.’

The individual media frames selected by this project; 9/11, Evil, Scope of Threat, and al Qaeda, assisted in identifying the function of the War on Terror Narrative through their representations and use in the media coverage across the 12-years of this thesis’ observations. 9/11 was almost always the strongest frame used in all terror events, successful and failed, and served as a ‘backbone’ of the War on Terror Narrative throughout the time frame of this thesis. All networks and coverage conveyed an inherent correlation between 9/11 and the War on Terror, as the two concepts emerged on September 11, 2001, and both served as precursors to any other terror events in the early 2000’s.

It’s the puzzle that animated my entire work on the discourses of terrorism: How can something that barely exists lead to two major wars, hundreds of people being rendered, thousands being tortured, changes in our way of life, and our legal principles, enhanced security at airports, mass surveillance. All of that because we imagine there’s this network of terrorists out there ready to attack us at anytime. That is just a fantasy, but the material results of it have been tremendous...Three trillion dollars has been spent fighting something that is mostly a phantom.<sup>432</sup>

If there was a 9/11 Frame that could be established in the media, then the War on Terror Narrative was functioning during that coverage. However, the Evil Frame did a better job of identifying the boundaries of the War on Terror Narrative than any of the other frames due to its weakness or even absence in some case studies. As mentioned in the previous section, the absence of the frame during certain case studies suggested that a terror event needed to be closer to American soil before the action of the individual or group was to be considered truly ‘evil’. Specifically, the event would need to be on the east coast of the United States, which is where the headquarters for all three networks is located, and which houses the first chronological time-

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<sup>432</sup> Statement from Professor Richard Jackson, Interviewed by this author in Atlanta, Georgia, March 18, 2016, used with permission.

zone of the continental United States. (The time zone is important as the business and news day starts earlier on the east coast than the west coast of the US. There should, however, be further academic investigations into the perception of threat conveyed in the media as compared to the location of the communicating media entity.) Overall, this finding suggests that the moral judgment of 'evil' versus 'good' is dependent on the physical threat posed (to the American audience) during a terror event, thus representing new information concerning the overall War on Terror Narrative and its rhetorical boundaries in American media.

Similarly, the Scope of Threat Frame functioned unexpectedly in its consistent narrowing over time in terms of the location of any perceived terror threat over the duration of this thesis. With each event, and finally by the time of the Boston Marathon Bombings, the location of 'terror' had become concentrated, with the physical locations of the War on Terror becoming limited to the sole location of the attacks, Boston. This was not an anticipated media behavior. The Scope of Threat Frame was initially anticipated to be ever increasing, keeping the audience in a perpetual state of suspended fear. Much like the Gulf War coverage noted by Andrew Hoskins, this thesis suspected that a constant anticipation of the next action shot would have motivated the media to portray the scope of the threat of terrorism to be as wide and dangerous as possible.<sup>433</sup> However, there may have been intent within the media to pre-empt and brace itself against being surprised as it was on 9/11, by pre-mediating any future terror event. Referring back to Grusin, "Premediation works to prevent citizens of the global mediasphere from experiencing again that kind of systemic or traumatic shock produced by the events of 9/11."<sup>434</sup> Perhaps, then, the shrinking of the Scope of Threat Frame was in fact an effort by networks to prevent a massive shock to the audience by only discussing the present threats and actual areas of danger.

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<sup>433</sup> Such as the media's shot of the, 'empty desert' full of anticipation of the war to come at the end of the programme'. From Hoskins, A., 2004, *Televising War: From Vietnam to Iraq*, Continuum. p. 27.

<sup>434</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, p. 2.

Finally, the al Qaeda Frame also indicated shifts in the War on Terror Narrative through its consistent weakening over time. This reduction paralleled the group's gradual decline in infamy in the media, with other types of terrorism such as 'lone wolf' and 'homegrown' occupying the same rhetorical space that the al Qaeda Frame had occupied previously in the coverage by the end of this thesis. As the resonance of the al Qaeda Frame diminished, it can be argued that the wider War on Terror Narrative had expanded to include non-al Qaeda terrorism and terror groups and individuals. So, as the scale or scope of the War on Terror Narrative became more concentrated over time, the perpetrators (terrorists and their backgrounds/motivations/training) became more diverse and diffused.

### 9.3.2 Hypothesis 2: Media Framing Analysis can benefit from longitudinal tracking

*Speaking to media framing, at the time of this writing there exists no common academically accepted framing identification and longitudinal tracking method across the disciplines of this thesis (communications, terrorism, politics, and strategic narratives). It is hypothesized that this thesis' methodology, which includes the pre-selection of multiple media frames, followed by a linear, consistent analysis of those frames' conditions during multiple case studies, will yield a useful method of identifying any shifts in topics or discussions related to a wider media narrative. While frames change, appear and may not even show up in certain events, their presence (or lack thereof) is significant nonetheless.*

This thesis' method of consistently using four pre-selected frames to identify shifts in the topics and discussions surrounding the War on Terror Narrative, was ultimately effective. However, it yielded some interesting side effects. Giles and Shaw originally conceived of Media Framing Analysis (MFA) as a tool to analyze more completely, the framing of a single event, not a group of frames nor a series of events.<sup>435</sup> In using their methodology consistently for multiple frames and across multiple terror events, this thesis has developed their conceptualization for framing identification via identifiers, as they tested the method against a single frame for a single case study in their work. However, this thesis found that MFA was best used as a quantitative supporting feature of a broader framing identification method, Entman's Framing via

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<sup>435</sup> Giles, D., Shaw, R., 2009, 'The Psychology of News Influence and the Development of Media Framing Analysis', *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 3/4, pp. 375-393. p. 376.

Attributes.<sup>436</sup> In identifying a frame first by using Entman's Attributes, and then supporting each attribute with two of MFA's identifiers, the frames were ultimately less subjective, more substantial, and therefore the analysis more precise across the case studies.

The only way that both Giles and Shaw, and Entman's framing concepts, in their combined form, could have been further expanded and developed would be through applying them to more case studies or to additional frames. Simply, shifts in the Narrative may have occurred outside the observation periods of the thesis or beyond the pre-selected frames of this thesis. While the methodology developed herein was useful in identifying shifts in topics and discussions in the War on Terror Narrative from one case study to the next, it may have been able to measure more of the War on Terror Narrative had either additional frames or additional cases been analyzed. A project employing additional frames, accounting for the disappearance and emergence of frames, and a wider selection of case studies would be able to establish a richer discursive environment. However, for a single-researcher project, this method was effective in beginning to identify what macro-shifts in the narrative occurred, laying a foundation for future research using similar methods, just with a broader dataset.

9.3.3 Hypothesis 3: All terror events are incorporated into the War on Terror Narrative by the media.

*The success or failure of a terror event will not necessarily influence whether or not the event is incorporated into the wider War on Terror Narrative. It is hypothesized that a terror event (attempt or attack) will be incorporated into the War on Terror Narrative regardless of its physical impact, success, or failure. While a certain degree of categorization and 'sorting' of news topics is not uncommon, the manner of this lacing is anticipated to be that all terror attempts will be headed under the War on Terror Narrative.*

This hypothesis was shown to be correct, as all terror events observed by this thesis were incorporated into the War on Terror Narrative regardless of the event's success or failure, or the proximity of that event to the United States. For all case studies, each terror event was referred

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<sup>436</sup> Entman, R. M., 1993, 'Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm', *Journal of Communication*, 43: pp. 51–58 doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x.



to as being a part of the War on Terror by each network to some degree for all days of coverage observed. Thus, the War on Terror Narrative can be argued to act as an umbrella term under which all terror-related events or topics may be located during this time frame. This speaks to the narrative management process of news media as a whole. Further research into what type of event would be required to alter this model represents post-doc research opportunities.

This finding arguably develops the existing literature concerning the mediation of the War on Terror Narrative and the media's management of violent narratives post-9/11. Specifically, this rolling of both successful and failed terror events into a single typology of sensational coverage in the media can be said to be evidence of Grusin's concept of *Premediation*, wherein the media braces for violence by anticipating it with every story.

To think of premediation as characterizing the media regime of post-9/11 America is therefore to be concerned not with the truth or falsity of specific future scenarios but with the widespread proliferation of pre-mediated futures. Premediation entails the generation of possible future scenarios or possibilities which may come true or which may not, but which work in any event to guide action (or shape public sentiment) in the present.<sup>437</sup>

In effect, by covering any story that can be argued as terrorism-related under the umbrella of the War on Terror Narrative, the media is able to brace itself and the audience for both the worst case scenario (another 9/11) or a lesser scaled incident, dismissing that possibility with speculation as to 'how bad it could have been if...'. Ultimately this substantiated hypothesis does directly develop Grusin's premise of the manifestations of premediation in American rolling television, a positive result for the thesis, and a positive indication of the effectiveness of consistent analysis of the 9/11 Frame specifically.

#### 9.3.4 Hypothesis 4: A network's political affiliation impacts War on Terror coverage.

*It is hypothesized that the American media's War on Terror Narrative is subject to the political bias of the network operators. Historically, CNN and MSNBC have carried content that is more favorable to the Democratic Party, and FOX has been more supportive of Republican politics and politicians. Because this thesis'*

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<sup>437</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, *Premediation: Affect and mediality after 9/11*, Palgrave Macmillan. P. 47.

*time frame encompasses two Presidential administrations of both the Republican and Democratic parties, and looks at coverage of the conflict at the start of the 'war' and then again 12-years on, the comparisons between these periods of time should allow for some insight into how political power and control may influence the Narrative overall.*

The selection of networks for this thesis was justified for two reasons. First, the three networks represented the majority viewership of all American rolling television news for the 12-year period of time in the United States. Second, the three networks represent the political spectrum of the United States between Republican and Democratic stances (both concepts detailed in the Methodology Chapter under 'Why CNN, FOX, and MSNBC?'). However, over time (from 2001-2013) each network's adherence to its initial political disposition was not uniformly maintained. Between the Bali Bombings and the Underpants Bomber case studies, there was a notable increase in divergence between CNN and FOX in terms of political jargon and orientation. FOX became increasingly Republican-orientated (as evidenced by its airing of openly Republican party-supporting hosts and anchors). This right-wing-centric view was observed during its 'news via host' content hours from (what appears to be) the 2009 inauguration of the Democratic President, Barack Obama. However, this thesis's investigations into the shifts and changes in political leanings of the three networks were limited to the six case studies and the coverage observed during those cases.

Speaking to the concerns of the hypothesis that the content of the coverage was subjective based on political leanings; yes, the political bias of the networks absolutely influenced the network's individual transmissions and management of the War on Terror Narrative. This manifested in such ways as FOX blaming any terror event post-2009 on Democrats' 'soft' policies, and CNN blaming the rise of terror groups 'retribution' claims on Bush's creation of Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp. Any line of inquiry concerning the extent of that influence on the Narrative as a whole and over time, however, would require further research on the American Media's management of all political narratives (not just the War on Terror). This thesis observed a single Narrative, and cannot (and did not) compare the media's management of that

Narrative to other Narratives, so cannot say if the management of the Narrative was abnormally politically charged in relation to other Narratives, or if it was justly representative of the network's political bias' or affiliations.

This question of political affiliation, polarization, and increased hostility among the networks when reporting the same Narrative, is within the topics and discussions covered in Diana Mutz', *In-Your-Face-Politics*.<sup>438</sup> Specifically, this thesis observed a noted increase in what Mutz' calls 'incivility', when comparing the first three cases' discourse, with the later three cases; particularly when comparing CNN and FOX during host-based programming. This means, as Mutz suggests, that party lines are where the most stark behavioral differences concerning civility on television can be drawn. "Ultimately, I argue that television poses unique problems as a political medium because, more so than other media, people respond to it in fundamentally social ways."<sup>439</sup> Meaning not only does television more effectively transmit political hostility, but according to Mutz research, people respond to the hostility they see on the screens as though the tensions were in the room. While Mutz emphasizes in her work where this connection impacts perceived legitimacy of individual politicians, the divisions along party lines have been found both by this thesis and in her continued works to be the frontline of political hostilities within the media.

## 9.4 Thesis Limitations

**9.4.1** This thesis' methodology was an experiment in the rhetorical understandings of a single media narrative (The War on Terror) as it functioned in one medium of communication, corporate network television. The physical and procedural structure of corporate media operations, however, was less understood than this project anticipated, specifically pertaining to syndicated news 'shows' and how they relate to the network's 'rolling news' functions, narratives,

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<sup>438</sup> Mutz D. C., 2015, *In-Your-Face-Politics: The Consequences of Uncivil Media*, Princeton University Press.

<sup>439</sup> Mutz D. C., 2015, p. 15.

and semantics. While the methodology was designed to select four hours of footage per five days of three (sometimes four) networks, the networks themselves and the archives which hosted the footage seemingly placed more value on the preservation of syndicated television shows with a news 'host' than on the rolling-news hours with a news anchor. This did influence the thesis in its use, and perhaps overuse, of syndicated shows as opposed to 'news via anchor' news hours in its observations and research materials. This might not be a weakness in the methodology, but rather a result that demonstrates the preference for preserving **'news via host'** content. This content is more opinionated, features celebrities and high-profile figures, and is more entertainment orientated in its delivery and style than the daily and more perfunctory **'news via anchor'** content. Additionally, the use of 'news via host' material was not entirely unaligned with the political biases of each network; rather, it was observed to be a more exaggerated depiction of the network's biases. Finally, the reason this preferential treatment of preservation towards host based content (over anchor relayed news), was not immediately detected, is that the proportion of the 24-hour news cycle devoted to 'news via anchor' material in 2001, was not comparable with that proportion in 2013. There was an increase in 'infotainment' and syndicated news shows along the time frame of this thesis, with the highest percentage of 'news via host' material occurring at the end of the thesis' observations in 2013. Relatively few such programs were observed in 2001, partially because of the programming interruption resulting from 9/11. By 2013, the programs were more frequent and represented a larger proportion of archive material. **It is the recommendation of this thesis that should this methodology be used on other forms of communication (radio, newspaper, social media) or for other rolling news analysis, that a clear distinction be made between news via anchor and news via host content. Additionally, the two types of news delivery (host vs. anchor) should be managed separately, and not treated as compatible or exchangeable sources of material for 'rolling news' or '24-hour news cycle' type research.**

**9.4.2** It is recommended if news discourse is the focus of a research project, that quotes and discussions with guests, experts, or specialists be identified and analyzed separately, or not used at all. While the input and discussions technically are part of a broadcast, therefore part of the overall rhetoric and narrative, the use of semantics from ‘guests’ does not always represent the biases of a network as acutely as news via anchor material might. This is because the guests have an inherent independence to voice individual opinions and concerns, and are often encouraged to bring opposing views to an interview to counter or challenge the anchor/host views, therefore challenge the networks’ narrative or reinforce it depending on how the Director wishes the show to proceed. Regardless of the guests’ prompts and direction from a show’s producers, anchors or hosts, to be more controversial, the researcher must consider when and where guest commentary should be included, or if interviews should be included full stop (under an all-excluded or all-included blanket rule).

For this thesis, interviews (imbedded in news coverage) were included from the outset of the footage collection and observation processes (and, in the note-taking periods of each case study). This was partly due to an underestimation of the allotment of time given to guest interviews in both news via anchor and news via host footage. However, there was something of interest to be found in the evolution of interviews with a ‘terrorism specialist’ or ‘terrorologist’ between 2001 and 2013, which can only be observed when guest interviews are included in the research material (footage and time counts for observation periods). The networks shifted from using mostly ‘witnesses’ in the coverage of 9/11, the Bali Bombings, and the Shoe Bomber, to almost exclusively using specialists or in-network experts during the Underpants Bombing, Times Square Bombing, and Boston Marathon Bombings case studies. It was observed that the networks used ‘experts’ with increasing frequency from the start to the end of this thesis period of observation, with the Boston Marathon Bombings case study experiencing the most frequent use of ‘experts’ of all the case studies. Additionally, in 2001, there were no ‘in-network’ terror specialists observed in the coverage of 9/11. Conversely, for the Boston Marathon Bombings

the use of in-networks or network correspondents as terror-experts was considerable, suggesting a modified method of news production and content selection between 2001 and 2013. **Continued research into the evolution of guest selection for thematic story coverage in network news is encouraged, as (at the time of writing) this consideration represents a knowledge gap.**

It should be noted that this thesis inquired into the actual process of guest selection by network news, and for each network (according to interviews conducted with CNN employees conducted in 2014), the process was superficial in most instances. The process was based upon who (from a loosely kept list) replied to calls or emails first, to be interviewed on air (via telephone, video call, in-studio, or from a satellite studio) during coverage of events that the guest could speak on as an ‘expert’, or in an ‘advisory’ capacity. There are instances in which the ‘foremost expert’ would not be available, so supplemental ‘experts’ would be used without disclosure on air as to their ranking within the contingency of persons able to serve as specialists on a topic. This was done in order to expedite the process of obtaining materials for broadcasting purposes.

**9.4.3** The networks selected for observation should not have been observed in the same order for each case study. This means that if CNN is observed first for one case study, then for the next case study, FOX should have been observed first, or MSNBC. The reason for this is that the act of observing footage predisposes the researcher towards ‘norms’ and other expectations, which are then superimposed on the other network’s coverage. If at all possible during this type of research comparing media groups or networks, **a random component of research processing (for this thesis, the observation of footage) should be considered.** Or, more than one researcher should be used for processing the raw data in addition to varying which networks are observed first.

**9.4.4** A KWIC (Key Word in Context) processor such as Antconc would have sped up the analysis of the Evil Frame. However, because this thesis made its own transcripts from the coverage datasets, a familiarity with the materials and the words in context was extracted and could be sufficiently referenced using a command+find function within Microsoft Word. Because of the type of framing identification and analysis used for this thesis (looking at Entman's identification via attributes, compounded with Media Framing Analysis), a word or phrase-isolating program would not have assisted with the thesis' task. Within this thesis research, the discourse analysis was conducted on a qualitative basis, (not quantitative) after manual transcriptions were made by the same researcher who then observed the frames. Because each frame was identified by a series of questions asked of the context of the idea, not a single word (except in the case of the Evil Frame), a KWIC processor was not needed. However, if this thesis' methodology was expanded to include more frames, or aimed to target the specific use of certain words across additional case studies, then a KWIC processor should be used.

## **9.5 Original Contributions of this thesis to War on Terror Narrative Research**

As previously mentioned in *9.1 Media Behavior Findings*, This thesis' definitively identified a concerning trend towards less neutral, less informative, and more internally produced materials by media networks in the United States in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>. This thesis also found an increase (comparing content from 2001 to content in 2013) in politically biased reporting of both successful and failed terror events by all networks. Finally, differences were also observed in the reporting of a single event depending on the political affiliation of the network, rather than the possession by the network of new or different information than other networks. Overall, this thesis observed that the coverage of terror events on all networks was increasingly sensationalized over time, with the imagery of the Boston Marathon Bombings being aired on a loop for hours of non-commercially interrupted airtime. That type of broadcasting may lead audiences to perceive the threat as lasting or persisting for an inordinate amount of time past the

period of actual danger. Finally, the increase of media-on-media coverage suggests that the media is populating airtime with the media's and entertainment industries' own happenings and reporting (as in covering topics and stories of and within the media industry itself), rather than reporting other, possibly more diverse materials or stories.

This trend suggests that the media's constitutional watchdog functions are set aside to make room for more entertainment-style programming. This behavior is not an issue until the selection of news content begins to distort the happenings of the world in such a manner as to sensationalize issues disproportionately to the actual threat posed, thus influencing public opinion negatively; i.e. fear mongering. The implications of this thesis' findings are in line with and further develop Andrew Hoskins and Ben O'Loughlin's Diffused War Theory, wherein the perception of terror and violence existing everywhere (thus causing fear), are perpetuated by the media.<sup>440</sup> This thesis, similar to Hoskins and O'Loughlin, attributes the demands of the 24-hours news cycle and the management of news content by the media networks, with the bulk of the credit for the public's potentially erratic perception of danger and threats.

This thesis' methodology was successful in discovering where major changes to the War on Terror Narrative occurred. Examples include the lack of referencing terrorism as 'evil' beginning as early as 2002 (an unexpected finding), the fraying of networks' reporting along party lines in 2009 (expected to an extent, but not for this time specifically), and the narrowing of the location of the War on Terror from a global scale, down to the sole location of the attack. This ultimately was unanticipated, but was explored within the Scope of Threat Frame's functions. Speaking specifically to partisanship in the media (which became prevalent during the 2009 Times Square Bombing attempt); the behaviour of the media of directly attacking other network's hosts and anchors went from non-existent between 2001-2002, to systemic by the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombings. In 2009, and more definitive by 2013, the political

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<sup>440</sup> Hoskins, A., O'Loughlin, B, 2010, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused Warfare*, Polity, p. 3 for definition.



environment in the United States reflected in the American media was considerably more polarized than it had been at the start of the century. The evolution of this polarization and its impact on contemporary politics would prove to be a rich research opportunity for further investigations.

The methodology also proved through its unique approach of pre-selecting media frames for consistent analysis (versus the traditional media studies method of identifying all frames present but only for a single case study at a time) that linear analysis of pre-selected frames is a useful method of narrative identification. This means, as a method of measuring the changes in the narrative over a long period of time, that this thesis has developed and expanded upon both Giles and Shaw, and Entman's framing identification techniques successfully. The methodology's core concept was proven effective, and by selecting media frames first and using the frame's resonance against multiple case studies to gauge shifts in the wider media narrative, a media narrative such as the War on Terror can be better defined than if the researcher operated in reverse (selecting cases and then identifying all operational frames). Even if a frame did not present strongly during certain case studies, the lack of a frame still illustrated a change in the narrative in its exclusion of certain rhetorical territory. This in itself is a defining nature of a media narrative.

This methodology also presents post-doctoral research potential. First, the methodology can be tested against other types of media outlets, such as print, radio, or social media outlets. Media narratives function across all media ecologies, so the method of tracking frame resonance is not limited to television media. Second, the methodology may be tested against other types of media narratives occurring in similar media ecologies, such as medical news, space technology, and political movements. The principles and utility of frame tracking through this thesis' combination of Entman's attributes, supported through applying MFA's considerations, would not be confined to terrorism research, and could provide a more scientific manner through which to investigate various media narratives or different mediums of communications. This

methodology can expand through post-doctoral research by including other factors such as additional media outlets, additional frames, more case studies, or looking into other nations' news sources. It would enrich the understanding of the War on Terror Narrative to include the years between 2002 and 2009 that this thesis isolated from its research for the purpose of seeing the Narrative's development in higher contrast. If all instances of terrorism, failed and successful, between 2001 and the present were to be examined under the microscope of this thesis's methodology, perhaps more information about the Narrative could be discovered.

As it pertains to existing literature on mediation and mediality, this thesis' findings independently observed that, as Grusin states, "humans have historically co-evolved with technology, distributing their cognitive and other functions across an increasingly complex network of technical artifacts."<sup>441</sup> If television as a communications technology did not exist, then the War on Terror as we know it would not exist either. The War on Terror Narrative and the physical acts of terror that have taken place in this century are unique because of the medium of communication by which they are portrayed, but the actions themselves are not new or innovative if one observes human history as a whole. This thesis did not delve into the complexities of the effects of 'digital memory'; however, the physical process of this thesis in transcribing archived footage did raise some concerns (and findings) concerning how media networks and corporations preserve their content.<sup>442</sup> At the time of writing, the main networks, CNN, FOX, and MSNBC are undergoing a mass digitization process, slowly cataloging all available past-footage into online databases. But it must be noted that much of their rolling coverage and broadcasted materials from before 2005 were not digitally preserved. Only syndicated, 'news via host' content was preserved. This is a concern, as future research on this

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<sup>441</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, *Premediation: Affect and mediality after 9/11*, Palgrave Macmillan. As quoted in Hoskins, A., O'Loughlin, B., 2010, p. 27.

<sup>442</sup> Digital Memory referring to Russell, J., A., and Ty, E., 2013, *The Memory Effect: The Remediation of Memory in Literature and Film*, Wilfred Laurier University Press, Introduction, P. 22.

period of television history might have an inherent, but unintended, bias towards these programs, rather than the more complete picture of whole days of content on record.

Continuing with Grusin's work concerning premediation, this thesis observed through its use of framing identification and tracking that the 9/11 Frame did act as a premeditator of terror events during this thesis' period of observation.

To think of premediation as characterizing the media regime of post-9/11 America is therefore to be concerned not with the truth or falsity of specific future scenarios but with the widespread proliferation of pre-mediated futures. Premediation entails the generation of possible future scenarios or possibilities which may come true or may not, but which work in any event to guide action (or shape public sentiment) in the present.<sup>443</sup>

In this sense, the 9/11 Frame was an act of premediation observed on all networks across the period of this thesis, because it pre-framed any successful or failed terror event under the 9/11 Frame, and subsequently under the War on Terror Narrative. As the third hypothesis of this thesis anticipated, all terror-related events observed were automatically clustered under the War on Terror heading, regardless of their success or failure.

Just as the US government multiplies and extends its own networks of political, investigative, and juridical practices to prevent the occurrence of another 9/11, so the media multiply or proliferate their own premeditations of potential terror attacks, as a way to try to prevent the occurrence of another media 9/11.<sup>444</sup>

Grusin's entire concept and ideology behind pre-mediation is perhaps the most closely related philosophical approach with which this thesis would identify regarding the media's behavior and mannerisms during the time frame of this research.

Concerning what the findings of this thesis imply regarding the media-on-media reporting as it relates back to the literature on mediation and mediatization, this thesis did encounter and expand upon concepts of the type of 'live-ness' as discussed by Stephanie

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<sup>443</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, p. 47.

<sup>444</sup> Grusin, R., 2010, p. 15.

Marriott.<sup>445</sup> The most ‘live’ part of some coverage did not concern the story or event that was the ‘lead’ story, but rather, the live and up to the minute discussion concerned a host attacking another network host, or discussing the people who were discussing the story, rather than the covering the stories themselves. Where Marriott breaks down the ethos of the mediatization and mediation processes, this thesis observed a shift between its first and second time periods that elucidated a slight paradox concerning contemporary media production. As the media’s technological ecology advanced chronologically such that more live content and up-to-the-minute material *could* be produced, no additional live content was observed compared to earlier cases during the thesis’ observation. This means, that the media networks themselves were not embracing contemporary technologies nor their ability to improve the ‘live-ness’ of reporting. Rather, the networks retained an outdated format, and resorted to using new technologies (like live video conferencing) to attack hosts of competing networks, or engage in hostile manners with guests, rather than engage with the ‘live’ story in other ways.

Overall, this thesis set out to determine whether a new combination of media framing methods using multiple case studies would help to identify a well known, but poorly defined, media narrative. This methodology succeeded broadly in locating the differences between two time periods of the Narratives’ lifespan (between 2001-2002, and 2009-2013) and in noting changes to the individual frames across that time, from one case study to the next. The methodology found that: ‘evil’ was not as used as originally anticipated in describing terror events or terrorists themselves; 9/11 was included in almost all terrorism coverage, successful or failed, as a grounding device for audiences; the scope of the threat transmitted by the media was directly related to the distance the attack or attempt occurred from the east coast of the United States; and the al Qaeda Group’s fame quickly faded with the rise of lone wolf terrorism. The approach of selecting frames first, rather than identifying all functioning frames, was useful for a single researcher project and kept the project at a manageable size for the materials, questions,

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<sup>445</sup> Marriott, S., 2007, *Live television: Time, space and the broadcast event*, Sage Publications.

and resources available. While media frames and media narratives are still muddied concepts both within communications studies and in real world practice, any attempt to more scientifically analyze and track their development is of value in order to provide a better understanding of how a society communicates information. We must first understand how global, 24-hour news affects the communication of violence before we can begin to change how we communicate amongst ourselves a more productive solution to that violence.

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### 10.3 Speeches and Interviews

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Bush, G. W., 2001, 20:30 EST Televised Presidential Address, September 11, 2001, from the White House in Washington, D.C.

Jackson, Richard, 2016, Interview by this thesis on March 18, 2016, at the 2016 International Studies Association Annual Conference in Atlanta, GA – Used with Permission.

C.W., A CNN Executive Producer, Interviewed by this thesis in Sept 2014 at the CNN World Headquarters in Atlanta. Subject wished to be identified by initials only.

#### 10.4 Archives and Websites

CNN, Cable News Network, Turner Broadcasting Systems, Inc. Available at [cnn.com](http://cnn.com)

FOX, FOX News Network, LLC. Available at [fox.com](http://fox.com)

MSNBC, NBC Universal Media, LLC, Available at [msnbc.com](http://msnbc.com)

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## 10.5 9/11 Case Study Annex

Notes September 12, 2001

Media topics found on all networks:

- Survivors, family members, memorial services
  - Six fire-fighters and three police officers rescued at 10:00
  - 'Is there a figure FEMA is asking for? – 'funds for emergency services will come out of the President's emergency fund.' (FOX 11:46EST)
  - Senator George Allen: "We first have to comfort those who have lost loved ones. Two, we need to find who the culprits are, and obviously they ought to be punished for it, but in our efforts to punish those culprits, these cowardly conspirators who've committed this terrorist vial act; we need to remember what makes America unique and great and it is an understanding that we have God Given rights, and the government protects them. This should not be a cause to abdicate our civil liberties: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, peaceable assemble, the right of habeas corpus. Let's stay strong and resolved and still the beacon for the freedom loving people of the world." (FOX 12:00)
- Finding the Individual stories and interviews with relatives who were called from the flights – persons waiting for survivors at the Pentagon, persons calling into centres in New York looking for relatives.
- Airing the speech by the Congressional Chaplain, and recognition of Australian PM in Congress (meeting postponed) the House of Representatives coverage intermittent
- Government Quotes:
  - Secretary of State Colin Powell on 9/11: "This was an assault not just on America, but on civilization."
  - "This is an enemy that preys on innocent and unsuspecting people and then runs for cover. But it won't be able to run for cover forever." Bush 9/12 am
  - "There is no question we are going to rebuild." – Mayor Rudolf Giuliani 10:04 in congruence with Governor George Pataki
- Government Activities:
  - Arrest/Detainment in Boston and Florida, car parked in Logan airport with Arabic materials
  - SWAT team at Westin Copley in Boston, covered in hopes of a connection – nothing came of the coverage
  - MSNBC Coverage linked the Boston activity with registrations records matching passenger manifest names.

- MSNBC: Pete Williams: “The FBI is conducting searches or is preparing to conduct searches in 5-states...as authorities find themselves with a very large number of leads...in this rapidly expanding, world wide investigation.”
- News Group / Reporters
  - News reporters start talking about their individual connections to persons in NYC or persons who were present.
  - ‘We are hearing that New York City south of 14<sup>th</sup> street has basically been shut down.’
  - ‘US terrorists targets: the day after’ – lead in on FOX
  - Reporters on the ground in NYC, rather far from the Pentagon, no reporter in Pennsylvania.
- Flowers at fire stations and rescue houses around NYC
- Resolve – the American Flags
  - On the Pentagon
  - Hanging from the cranes – famous photos
  - Positive things – donating blood, cheering on the rescue workers, and restaurants in the Financial District not charging rescue workers for food
- Airport Security
  - FBI Press conference at Boston Logan Airport: “...We also involved a mass command post at Logan Airport. We will continue to man these command posts at the airport and continue our joint investigations around the clock until all these investigations are completed. We are coordinating our investigations with the FBI headquarters and with other federal agencies...for this case we are using the internet fraud complaints website...because it is an existing site designed to receive information from the public...at this time the White House is coordinating all information at the national level...I can assure you that absolutely everything will be done to identify and bring the perpetrators to justice.” –person identified only as an FBI Special Agent, press conference at Boston Logan, coverage on FOX 5 (DC local) at 11:48
  - FAA versus NORAD for blame
  - Getting the Air Marshals for the FAA Security Directive causing delay, delay in finalizing security measures by the FAA – keeping airports closed for the 12th
  - Military versus civilian demands for security versus ease of business/access
  - Questioning duration of ‘No-Fly’ for airports – many reporters at the airports with very little to report on
    - Pilot of helicopters used for assistance, medical and evacuations at Pentagon: ‘Normally the procedure to contact Reagan Tower, however they weren’t in operation, so we coordinated with the Air force and Park Police.’ (FOX5 11:56)
  - Discussions surrounding the training level and possible background of the pilots and hijackers.
    - ABC John Miller 10:21 ‘A man who is living in that location and living at the airport...Embry Flight School...in Florida’
    - Flight schools in Boston and Florida investigates – CNN 13:02
    - Peter Jennings: ‘ABC news has also learned that two of the hijackers – dash-terrorists were on the INS watch list.’ (ABC10:25)
    - Discussions about the security of the US/Canadian border
- ‘Ground Zero’ Situation
  - ‘Missing’ flyers – centred around the New York Armoury and churches around Manhattan

- Brooks Brothers Building danger zone
  - Millennium Hilton Building danger zone
  - Gas leak concerns and utility failure in the financial district
  - Possible leak in 'bath tub' – structural details of the buildings and surrounding area
  - 20,000 people death toll<sup>446</sup> - from the Port Authority of New York
  - Health concerns for workers - MSNBC
  - Global Context
    - NATO article 5 discussions
    - Increasing funding to American embassies abroad
    - Reactions from NATO allies and various world leaders
    - UK connections and nationalities beginning to emerge of the lost or missing
- Notes September 13, 2001

#### CNN

- Al Qaeda network gets major coverage as the prime suspected organization
- AUMF discussions
- Resolution on finances: coverage of congressional leaders (speaker and senate leader), speaking of \$20 billion request for 2001 budget (Emergency Supplemental Bill to cover early investigations, combat air patrol over major American cities, and recovery efforts)
- Resolution asking every American to fly the flag for the next 30-days
- Sampling of reactions around the nation - covering the public feedback outside the northeast – long interview with politics class at Marquette University talking about possible 'next' actions
- Pentagon Briefing: Presidential request for the \$20B supplemental emergency fund for 2001, with Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defence
- Senior White House Correspondent John King (12:34) speaking on the President's actions, calls to the Mayor and Governor of New York, and speaking about how this is a 'new kind of war'
- Airports beginning to reopen – speaking about first Delta craft leaving from Washington Dulles (empty) to head to Atlanta for a re-positioning of the fleet
- Agents clearing out and 'feeling that things are beginning to get back to normal'
- Attorney General John Ashcroft in a press conference discussing officers' benefits and family grievances collection procedure were clear
- Note: names of missing scrolling across the bottom of the screen, heading: America Under Attack
- Discussing increased airport security when the airports eventually reopen
- Department of Defense and Treasury deploying hundreds of US Marshals, US border control and others

#### ABC:

- Talks primarily about rescue operations at Ground Zero with John Miller (14:10)
- Peter Jennings still reporting on President Bush's activities and other government officials' locations and activities
- Washington Correspondent Claire Shipman, relaying the President's phone calls with New York leaders, public appearances and emotional displays
  - Talking about FBI phone calls and leads

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<sup>446</sup> Fox 5 Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 21:00



- **Journal Articles:**

- Black Box search for aircrafts – ones from New York most difficult to retrieve, but that the Pennsylvania Flight 93 black box should be the least complicated
- Peter Jennings discussing the final count of suspects as 18 hijackers on the four aircraft. Two aircraft, American and United out of Boston, had 5 each, and the one in Pennsylvania, and American 77 had 4 hijackers each (ABC 14:16)
- Note: No commercials still, just reporting on the government operations, recovery efforts, what is known about the status of air travel and other domestic concerns
- Washington Correspondent Pierre Thomas, reporting that the 18-hijackers names and photographs will be released in the next few days, but that initial reports were that all the hijackers were from the same group
  - “Osama bin Laden is a prime suspect...but they (the government) want to be clear on the details before taking action.”
- Peter Jennings “We are pretty certain that Osama bin Laden is currently in Afghanistan.” (ABC14:23)
- Note: Colin Powell, the first military official to say on record that Osama bin Laden was behind the attacks in his speech covered extensively on the news in the afternoon on all channels
  - “There is a lot of that feeling (of immediate retaliation) in the Pentagon and a lot of that feeling in the State Department...but they are saying this will be a measured response...this sort of campaign can go on for months and months.”  
Martha Raddatz, Correspondent at the State Department reporting on briefing earlier in the morning with Sec. Powell

FOX:

- Reporting on how travellers are managing around the country
- Correspondent Daniel Snyder – Redskin Park announcing all NFL and MLB events cancelled and most teams establishing funds for the families impacted on 9/11
- Reader bar listing which universities and state level departments open/closed or delayed
- Authorities sending out warning about a person or persons soliciting people on the phone asking for money for the 9/11 victims (scam)
- ‘Search and Rescue’ efforts at the Pentagon being renamed ‘Search and Recovery’
- Discussions and confirmations that New York City airports still shut down completely and new security measures being implemented
  - Among the lost: details on victims in planes and around New York – some companies releasing details about lost employees to the news and messages of mourning
- Giuliani press conference around 18:45: started by condemning persons who have been making bomb threats and exacerbating the situation and chaos
- Many reporters at airports interviewing people at Dulles and New York airports – travellers at Dulles saying that they feel safe (and that it’s the safest day ever to fly) and just want to get home
- Security actually increasing around Pentagon and reporters unable to get interviews or near the site
- Colin Powell Interview at US Department of State
  - Reader: ‘Acts of War have been made against the United States’
  - ‘We haven’t singled out any country to go after yet’

MSNBC:

- Coverage beginning at 17:30 EST with Tom Brokaw in the New York City Studio discussing the aftermath of the ‘attack on America’. Detailing plans for a national day of mourning
  - Discussions on their figure of 4,763 persons missing from the World Trade Center site
  - Live scenes of what is then titled ‘Ground Zero’
- Washington Correspondent, Robert Hager speaks about the grounding of all planes and New York, and the arrest of four men attempting to board planes at JFK
  - Flight data recorder found from plane down in Pennsylvania
  - Reports of three fire-fighters recovered from Ground Zero
  - Fears of the remains of the South Tower collapsing on the rescue workers
- White House Correspondent, Campbell Brown relaying President Bush’s declaration of a national day of prayer
  - Details about Air Force One having been a terrorist target
  - Details on the previous day’s evacuations of congressmen and the Vice President to Camp David
- Miami Correspondent Kerry Sanders covering details about two suspected hijackers having received their flight training in Florida with interview with Henry George (Flight Instructor) and pilot Alex Garmandia speaking about how simulators function
- Pete Williams, Correspondent from the Justice Department, speaking about how the FBI claimed all hijackers had been identified
  - Details on the hijackers including a Yemen-born American in Hamburg, Germany
- New York Correspondent, Ann Thompson: vigil and candles and family coverage – victim details and stories
- New York Correspondent, Pat Dawson – efforts of employers of the former World Trade Center towers trying to account for all their employees – one company having lost a reported 700 people (Cantor Fitzgerald, CEO of Howard Lutnick)
- Tom Brokaw with estimated death toll of 5,155 listed
- New York Correspondent Jim Avila: Search efforts examined, stories about dead and missing, speaks with multiple persons looking for loved ones about their stories
  - Efforts of Flight 93 passengers becoming known – Washington Correspondent, Bob Faw, photos of the passengers from family members shown, wife of victim Dina Burnett recounts a call from her husband, talking about a plan to get the hijackers out of the cockpit
- Pentagon Correspondent, Jim Miklaszewski (who was in the Pentagon on 9/11 and was the first reporter of all selected networks to report on the Pentagon Crash) speaking about the plans for sustained military retaliation against terrorism sponsor Osama bin Laden – shows highlights and clips from Sec. Colin Powell speech
- Washington Correspondent, Andrea Mitchell – official statements that the US can win a war against terrorists, but it will be a long war (more Colin Powell speech clips)
  - Senator Richard Shelby: the US must eradicate the idea of training people for terrorism
- Washington Correspondent, Fred Francis speaking on terrorist cells and operations already in the US – covering New York Times’, Judith Miller, detailing how terrorist can look and seem like ordinary citizens – expert James Phillips, ‘most of the people in the cells do not know the entire plan’ and details the tactics of terror attack planning
  - Senator Chuck Hagel: who would war be declared (on)

- Washington Correspondent, Tim Russert speaking on the rise in support and opinions poll results in favor of President Bush
- Denver Correspondent, Roger O'Neil speaking on the impact of Arab-Americans and Islamic mosques (attacks upon already by American citizens) – some confusion between who is in Arab, who is a Muslim, and who is Islamic in the terminologies used
  - Speaks to the rewriting of seven Hollywood movies in production to eliminate (not) sensitive topics or images
- London Correspondent Dana Lewis speaking on the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner at Buckingham Palace
  - Comments from Former British PM Margaret Thatcher
- New York Correspondent Robert Bazell speaking on the psychological effects of a terror attack, talks on how there is no one way for people to respond or grieve.
  - Program ends with a final phone call from Melissa Hughes who died in the World Trade Center collapse.

Notes September 14, 2001

#### CNN:

- Headlines: America's New War
- Discussions on:
  - Reporting errors or panic on 9/11
  - Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism
  - Search and Recovery hindered by rain in New York City
  - Reservists (50,000) called up
  - Congress approved \$40 Billion for assistance and search for AQ
- Cockpit voice and data recorder from Pentagon plane recovered
- Terrorism funding: use of cyber-crime /ID theft to be more self-sustaining
- Bush visiting to New York
  - Security around the President
  - Footage of hoard of people surrounding the President, most with masks, pictures of Hillary Clinton with Mayor Giuliani (talk of 'high marks' given to Giuliani for his management of the situation)
- Live shots of smoking and grey scene in New York City – no or minimal footage of Pentagon or Pennsylvania
- 'Split Manhattan' with upper Manhattan back to business but lower Manhattan still at a stand still
- Reporters at the Armory in lower Manhattan interviewing people looking for survivors
- 2.5 billion bailout to airline industry (part of 40 billion cleared by Congress)
- Kate Snow: CNN Congressional Correspondent:
  - Talking about what the President is authorised to do
  - AUMF in civilian terms
  - Senate passing reforms going to the House in the afternoon
- Bobby Batista – Talk Back Live – first time that regular scheduled programming returned to CNN
- President Bush tour of Ground Zero (covered by Wolf Blitzer)
  - Problem with equipment routes not able to go through due to Presidential interruption
  - Discussion of morale around site and how rescue workers are positive, but because of perimeter security not many people able to actually receive messages from the President

- Talk about the infrastructure around Lower Manhattan
  - Wall Street aiming to reopen on the following Monday and the need for the phone lines and communications wires that went through the WTC or telecom routes that were laced through the antenna of WTC Tower 1 all trying to be re-directed through Wall Street directly.
- Headlines:
  - ‘4,000+ people treated at NYC area hospitals’
  - ‘Giuliani: Staten Island Ferry to Re-open Monday’
  - ‘CDC: bodies no threat to public health’
  - ‘184 confirmed dead; 35 bodies identified’
  - ‘No survivors found today’
  - ‘CONGRESS REQUESTS MASS FLYING OF U.S. FLAGS FOR 30 DAYS’
  - ‘Companies offer unused office space for displaced firms’
- Americans unified – New Yorkers trying to get life back to normal
- Wolf Blitzer to Brian Nelson in lower Manhattan, asked to relay the ‘mood’
  - Talking about cops and fire-fighters anger at the situation, but solidarity overall
- Roller: ‘The Justice Department has released the identities of the 19 suspected hijackers thought to be involved in Tuesday’s terror attacks. Law enforcement officials tell CNN all 19 are linked directly or indirectly to Osama bin Laden. Anyone with any information about the suspects is asked to contact an FBI field office or call the toll-free hotline at 1-866-483-5137’

#### FOX:

Commercials reinstated – first sequence of advertisements included: Senior Corps, Black Alliance for Educational Choice, 1-800-Dentist, Kia (automotive)

- Headline:
  - ‘Attack on America: The Aftermath’ (American flag graphic flying in background, split screen with Pentagon and WTC shots, then interviewee and reporters in second frame)
  - ‘America United’
  - ‘A Nation Mourns’
- Roller:
  - ‘Anti-American sentiment growing among radical Islamism...militant groups threatening any government that helps the US fund Osama Bin Laden...’
- Guests:
  - USO operations around the US
  - National Guardsmen
  - Reza Pahlavi: Son of late Shah of Iran
    - Started by speaking on attempted candlelight vigil that was interrupted in Iran
    - Religious leaders in Iran: Supreme leader of Iran did not condemn act and hasn’t offered support to Bush
    - Taking on 22-years of change since revolution
- Live shots:
  - Pentagon
  - Reporter from Dulles airport
    - Discussions surrounding numbers of US Marshals present on planes and in airports
    - Suitcases being searched at random
- St Paul’s Cathedral service in London covered

- Extensive coverage of memorials and candlelight vigils
- Lincoln Memorial vigil an ‘internet suggestion’ that spread (something new and different at the time)
- “Now let’s turn our attention to President Bush, the Commander-in-Chief of America’s War effort against worldwide terrorism.”
- Brit Hume – Washington Managing Editor – Anchor 18:00 broadcast
  - Summary of day’s activities by President Bush at National Cathedral and tour at World Trade Center, ‘fighting terrorism’ across the world, talking about countries who have and have not signed up to ‘fight’ with the US
- Pentagon scene given more screen time than WTC site in videos and ‘live footage’

#### ABC:

Anchors Diane Sawyer and Charlie Gibson

- Interviews with Hillary Clinton, victims’ families and others affected
- Talk of rain at the WTC site – new pictures from inside the rescue areas
- Special Report on Hook & Ladder Co. #5 which lost 8 fire-fighters
- Discussions on the history of memorial services at the National Cathedral (TWA 800)

Peter Jennings Nightly Broadcast

- Headline: ‘America Attacked: Day 4’
- Summary of Bush activities at National Cathedral
- Bush’s visit to Ground Zero extensively covered
  - Casualty figures in NYC updates
  - Disappointment of not finding survivors
  - Discussion about managing information in the chaotic environment, where too many people want to help and how that impacts rescue efforts
- Interviews of passengers waiting at airports regarding whether they thought pilots should be armed
- Pentagon crash site: cockpit voice recorder found
- Talks about where the Shanksville plane was intended to go: Rick Santorum interviewed by Peter Jennings – thought plane must have been heading for the Capitol building

Correspondent Dan Harris reporting from Ground Zero

- Giuliani segment talking about how the weather is affecting rescue efforts
- Fireman interviewed, talking extensively about the brotherhood of all the NYPD and NYFD – tragedy of bringing fellow fire-fighters out in body bags

Other Coverage:

- Interviews with National Security Members talking on security versus liberties and smooth civilian operations at airports
- Air travellers interviewed (‘do you feel safe?’)
- Coverage of moments of silence around the world
- Summaries of day’s activities by President, around Washington, and Ground Zero
- Piece on the Windows on the World restaurant, talking about victims and surviving staff

MSNBC

- Tom Brokaw in New York City Studio covering Bush’s declaration of national emergency, names of the 19 hijackers, scenes in New York City at Ground Zero
- New York Correspondent Davis Bloom: Covering Bush’s visit to Ground Zero, scene with Bush and firemen

- White House Correspondent, Campbell Brown covering the memorial service at the Washington National Cathedral, with images of Billy Graham and presidential procession
- Pentagon Correspondent, Jim Miklaszewski: covering early stages of ‘war preparations’, reservist called into active duty and interview with Secretary of Defense Deputy Assistant, Craig Duehring insisting people would respond to the call to military service in the wake of 9/11
- Denver Correspondent, Pete Williams discussing worldwide investigation into the attacks, saying that Atlanta may have been another target of the attacks which was avoided with the aircraft grounding – information and details about federal leads with clips and video statements from Attorney General John Ashcroft and FBI Director Robert Mueller
- Correspondent in Florida, following up on leads that the hijackers sought out flight training
- Correspondent in Washington, discussing terrorism sponsor Osama bin Laden, hosting terrorism expert Steven Emerson discussing Osama Bin Laden forces and servicemen – Former general saying Afghanistan is a likely hiding place
- Talks from multiple correspondents and unknown voice overs about airport security and changes upon reopening of airports
  - Discussions on Capitol Hill about possible airline bailout packages
- Islamabad Pakistan Correspondent, Ron Allen covering Afghanistan leaders statements that they would seek revenge if the US attacked Afghanistan – officials emphasising that the Taliban leaders would not hand over Osama bin Laden to the US under any circumstances
- Washington Correspondent, Robert Hager: Pentagon crash black box found, details given about condition of the device
- Discussions around how easy a suicide attack would be from Reagan International Airport against federal/state landmarks in Washington  
Notes September 15, 2001

#### CNN:

- Headlines
  - ‘America’s New War’
  - ‘The Spirit of America’
- Chaplain administering last rites to a fellow fire fighter killed by falling debris, Father Mychal Judge, funeral covered in depth with picture montage of fire fighters on 9/11 shown
- Search and Rescue: 2<sup>nd</sup> Material Witness arrested in New York
- Pentagon Declared: ‘Operation Noble Eagle’
- INS immigration ‘holds’ questioned by security advisors
- Bush: “The United States is at war” / “We face a hidden enemy on a battlefield without borders”
- NYC begins to bury its dead – fire-fighter funerals covered by press
- Interview author Yossed Bodasky, author of ‘Bin Laden’ talking about the details with Osama Bin Laden’s location, security measures, family, history, and ideologies
  - ‘Believes that the Muslim world can become the leading political ideology’
  - Talked about post-Gulf War and Communist fight history
- Confirmed death toll so far at 159, at least 4,979 missing in New York...
- 500 state police and 22 state agencies helping with relief efforts in Tri State area.
- Pentagon announced the first confirmed death in Tuesday’s terrorist attack at Pentagon

- Rescue site coverage: putting out of the fire truck that now rests in the 9/11 memorial museum
- Iran says it's closing border with Afghanistan, anticipating refugees similar to when Soviet occupation began in 1980's
- Youth Reaction: talking about the bridging of generations through patriotism
- CNN covered MTV's coverage on 9/11 and talks about how the network didn't play any music on September 11<sup>th</sup> but instead covered the news and how the youth reacted
- Congress talking about how to bolster consumer confidence and keep US financial markets from tumbling when the NYSE reopens on Monday
- Jeff Greenfield, CNN senior analyst: 'are we up to it' – looking at what comes next – interview with Arizona Senator John McCain – with Richard Reeves ('Richard Nixon, Alone in the White House) and Andrei Cherney (former White House speechwriter)
- Talking about how 'this' generation has had it easy – and how they will respond to this test
  - Talking about generational differences and what this attack will do for the sense of uniformity through patriotism for the new generations
  - WWII & Pearl Harbour versus 9/11 and the Generation X & 'Gen ADD'
  - 'FDR lead and developed this nation, we need leaders who will inspire'

#### FOX:

- Flight recorders for UA93 (Pennsylvania crash) found, sent to Seattle manufacturers for data recovery
- Officials asking family members of missing persons to give toothbrushes for DNA to help ID remains for Pennsylvania crash victims
- Pentagon unaccounted persons number adjusted to 188
- Manhunt in Mexico, for persons who offered support to Muslim clerics and possible hijackers
- Giuliani press conference at 15:00 EST praising firemen
- Hamas outright denying involvement with attacks
- Iran sealing border with Afghanistan to stop refugees
- NYSE clears up their telecommunications routes, successful test announced – to open Monday
- Ari Fleischer – White House Press Secretary discusses possible ground troops in retaliation
- Group 'Islamic Jihad' says that 'while the attacks please us, yet we are not responsible for it'
- So far, 19,147 tons of material have been removed from WTC site
- Saddam Hussein urges the US to avoid military action

#### ABC:

- Reporters from Camp David summarizing and speculating what types of military backlash and activities might be seen over the coming days, weeks, years
  - Clips of Bush: the conflict will not be short
  - Colin Powell excerpt: 'we will go after the whole curse of terrorism'
- Peter Jennings covering support from Pakistan, with talk about how to strike against the Taliban in Afghanistan who were harboring bin Laden
- Clips used of the '98 terror camp strikes by the US
- Talk about Soviet and British mistakes in not taking care of the Afghanistan, problem in full

- Extensive talks about the flight schools and training received by Habib Moussaoui
- Talks on political support for the President and congressional/federal support for airlines and other economic matters
- Air travel resuming with different security risks and delays
- Ground Zero scene covered through images of people removing rubble by hand and via the 'bucket brigades'- much less smoke than previous days.
- Peter Jennings rebroadcast of 'Answering Children's Questions' segment
- First funeral for New York Fire-fighters killed on 9/11 including Chaplain Father Mychal Judge

#### MSNBC:

- Headline: 'Attack on America' Day 5 Investigation
- Tom Brokaw giving the nightly newscast with pictures from inside the Pentagon as well as comparing images from space of the World Trade Center site before and after that Tuesday's attacks.
- Bush statement 'we will find those who did it and get 'em' – warns public that the conflict will not be short
- Colin Powell statement: 'we will go after the whole curse of terrorism'
- Pentagon Correspondent, Jim Miklaszewski: details military planning and outlining for 'a war on terrorism'.
  - Speaks on Pakistan supporting a US attack on Afghanistan and possible ground invasions or need for troops
- Pakistan Correspondent, Ron Allen: Pressures being placed on Pakistan from the US to take out Taliban leadership in Afghanistan. (Suggestions that Taliban leadership considering war with US)
- Washington Correspondent Andrea Mitchell – links of hijackers to bombing of USS Cole in Yemen, arrest by the FBI in New Jersey, trying to piece together Bin Laden's financial support of 9/11
  - Interview with terrorism expert Steven Emerson (same as previous day) on what the hijacking tell us in terms of where the weaknesses in security are and what we can learn from the method about terrorist
- Anchor Tom Brokaw in Washington, discussing possible airline industry crisis, and current conditions of chaos and long lines at US airports with the provisional reopening of travel routes.
- Coverage of funeral for Fire Department Head Chaplain, Father Mychal Judge



## How Entman's identifiers can be used to analyze President Bush' 08:30 address on 9/11

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| <p><b>Presidential Address (Selections):</b></p> <p>'Good Evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts...Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature, and we responded with the best of America, with the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could...'</p> <p>Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans...'</p> <p>Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured and to take every precaution to</p> <p>Protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks...'</p> <p>The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources for our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbour them...America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world and we stand together to win the war against terrorism...'</p> <p>This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time...None of us will ever forget this day, yet we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world...'</p> <p>Thank you. Good night and God bless America.'<sup>447</sup></p> | <p><b>Entman's Frame Identification:</b></p> <p><b>Problem Identification:</b></p> <p>'Our very freedom came under attack'</p> <p>'The victims were in airplanes or in their offices -- secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers. Moms and dads. Friends and neighbours.'</p> <p>Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror.'</p> <p>The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness and a quiet, unyielding anger.'</p> <p><b>Causal Interpretation:</b></p> <p>'Evil' did this.'</p> <p>'America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time.'</p> <p>'Our military is powerful, and it's prepared.'</p> <p><b>Moral Evaluation:</b></p> <p>'These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed. Our <i>country is strong</i>. A <i>great</i> people has been moved to defend a great nation.'</p> <p><b>Treatment Recommendation:</b></p> <p>'The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts'</p> <p>'We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbour them'</p> <p>'We stand together to win the war against terrorism'</p> <p>'We go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.'</p> |
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<sup>447</sup> President Bush, September 11, 2001 20:30 EST Televised Address complete transcripts.