

Student Work

---

7-1-2004

# 9/11 and the International Media: A Cross-Cultural Analysis

Rodrigo Rodrigues

*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork>

---

## Recommended Citation

Rodrigues, Rodrigo, "9/11 and the International Media: A Cross-Cultural Analysis" (2004). *Student Work*. 2032.  
<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork/2032>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Work by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact [unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu](mailto:unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu).



9/11 and the International Media:  
A Cross-cultural Analysis

A Thesis

Presented to the

School of Communication

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Rodrigo Rodrigues

July, 2004

UMI Number: EP73672

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI EP73672

Published by ProQuest LLC (2015). Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.

Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code

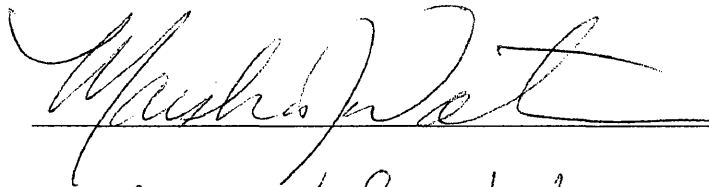


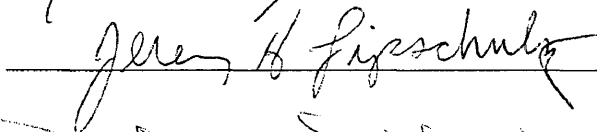
ProQuest LLC.  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

THESIS ACCEPTANCE


Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,  
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree Master of Arts,  
University of Nebraska at Omaha.

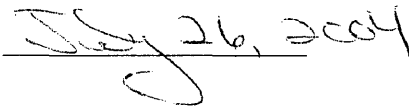
Committee







Chairperson 

Date 

9/11 AND THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA:  
A CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS

**Rodrigo Rodrigues, MA**

University of Nebraska, 2004

Advisor: Deborah Smith-Howell, Ph.D.

The purpose of this study was to find how socio-political and cultural aspects influenced international media re-presentation of the September 11 terrorist attacks to the United States. The study compared the results of textual analysis of newspaper editorials from five different countries. Using Worthington (2001) protocol of political activism framing by print media, it was found that the September 11 terrorist attacks were represented distinctively by each of the five newspapers investigated.

The underpinning of the theoretical framework for this study is Stuart Hall's encoding and decoding communication model. Stuart Hall (1979, 1980a, 1980c, 1993) postulates that in the communication process, the moments of encoding and decoding of a message are influenced by ideology. Ideology, as defined by Luis Althusser (1971), is a representation of the imaginary relationships of individuals and reality, therefore encapsulating cultural and socio-political aspects. The results of the qualitative textual analysis undertaken showed that issues such as identity, contextual information, visual aspects and sourcing were utilized distinctively by the editorials

of the five newspapers to frame the discussions regarding the September 11 terrorist attacks.

The September 11 terrorist attacks to New York and Washington D.C. were a timely event where one has to discuss history before and after it. The historical importance of the attacks is a reflex of its international reach, which was only attainable due to the international media coverage. The media centric nature of the September 11 events calls for a detailed examination of the relationship between media, terrorism, culture and politics in contemporary society. This study found that politics and culture are prominent influences in the way international media encoded the events of September 11.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Scholarly research is never a solo endeavor and always comes with the collaboration of many individuals. The author is indebted to all those who provided essential assistance in the preparation of this thesis. The library staff of the University of Nebraska at Omaha was continually courteous and helpful. The author is likewise indebted to the members of Conceito and S.L.B. for their philosophical insights which were germane to the conceptualization of this study.

The author wishes to express appreciation to Dr. Joamar Carvalho, Dr. Marsha Watson, Dr. Jeremy Lipschultz, and Dr. Robert Carlson for their encouragement to pursue an academic career and for their valuable suggestions to this study. I am particularly thankful to Dr. Deborah Smith-Howell, for her careful reading of this thesis, helpful suggestions and encouragement to engage in further research.

I am grateful to Diana Irene Acuña who has been a source of inspiration and energy to my life. I am thankful to my dear family - Gisele, Tiago, Ana, Iracema and Jadel Rodrigues - who have always supported me in every step I take. I am especially grateful to my mother Ana, whose positive energy and prayer have protected and guided me throughout my life.

I dedicate this thesis to my Grandmother Olivia Alexandrini Garcia, R.I.P., who first encouraged me to acquire knowledge and pursue an education. I continuously feel her blessings in everything I do.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Chapter 1</b>	
INTRODUCTION	1
RATIONALE	5
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
LITERATURE REVIEW	8
A History of Media Studies	8
Mass Media, Ideology and the Audience	12
Media Messages: A Semiotic Approach	15
Signs	15
From Closed Messages to Textual Polysemy	18
A Semiotic Approach to News	21
Terrorism as Political Communication	26
Terrorism and Media	30
Media's Re-presentation of Terrorism	33
9/11 Timeline	36
Encoding 9/11: Television's Role	39
Special Effects	39
Temporal and Narrative Effects	42
Encoding 9/11: Sourcing	44
Encoding 9/11: Media Framing	48
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE	51
<b>Chapter 3</b>	
METHODOLOGY	54
Instrument	56



Sample	59
Procedures	62
<b>Chapter 4</b>	
<b>FINDINGS</b>	66
Research Question # 1	68
Research Question # 2	82
Research Question # 3	89
Research Question # 4	93
Research Question # 5	99
Table 1: Themes	105
Table 2: Frames	115
<b>Chapter 5</b>	
<b>DISCUSSION</b>	119
Aspects of Identity	119
Contextual Information	122
Visual Descriptions	124
Sourcing	125
Themes and Frames	128
Implications	133
<b>LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH</b>	136
<b>APPENDIX</b>	
Presidential Speeches	142
Protocol	147
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	149

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

“The September 11, 2001 event is timely, offering a multifaceted lens by which to examine a variety of phenomena – including the construction of collective memory about a ‘critical incident’ unrivaled in history” (Pompper, 2002, p. 153).

The terrorist strategy for getting their message through to the vast global audience is reliant on the media-synchronized society (Debatin, 2002). The apocalyptic events of September 11 seemed to have brought a sudden stop to the flow of time, a disruption of the temporal structure of our media synchronized society (Debatin, 2002, Baudrillard, 2001). The live broadcasting and intensive news coverage of the terrorist attacks and their aftermath are the epitome of the reach and influence of contemporary global media (Baudrillard, 2001). The re-presentation and framing of these terrorist attacks influenced the way in which individuals understood the event itself. This study probed international media framing of the September 11 terrorist attacks from the prism of the encoding/decoding communication model within the theoretical framework of media cultural studies.

Terrorism as it exists today is an expression of the terrorists' acknowledgement of mass media's role in political communication in contemporary society (Carruthers, 2000). As a result of careful planning by the terrorists, the September 11 attacks unfolded as repetitious acts spaced in time, which granted the attacks long-term exclusivity on the television newscasts (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). According to James Bell, “terrorists “are in fact, producers constructing a package so spectacular, so violent, so compelling that the networks, acting as

executives, supplying the cameramen and the audience, cannot refuse the offer” (Bell, 1978, p. 50).

Considering the media-centric nature of the September 11 terrorist attacks, three main goals were set for this study. The first goal was to better understand the events of September 11 by looking at media’s role in the re-presentation of reality. The second goal was to better understand the functioning of media communication theory by applying it to the context of the September 11 events. Acknowledging the international reach of this event, the third and main goal of this study was to understand the implications of a cross-cultural media encoding of the terrorist attacks. Moreover, the focus of this study was on how cultural and political aspects influenced media’s re-presentation and consequently individuals’ understanding of the September 11 events. To fulfill these goals, an extensive review of literature was undertaken in three main areas.

The first body of literature reviewed was related to Stuart Hall (1974, 1978, 1979, 1980a, 1980b, 1980c, 1993, 1996) encoding and decoding communication model and the media cultural studies theoretical framework in which it was conceptualized. For that a review of literature encompassing the early history of media studies until the conceptualizing of the encoding and decoding communication model was undertaken.

The literature review covered an ongoing discussion on the body of literature concerning media messages and audience as well as a historical perspective on how academia developed from its early studies on mass media and audience to research projects such as media effects, the Frankfurt School and cultural studies (McLeod,

Kosicki & Pan, 1991; Perez, 1996). The literature review addressed how these different "research projects" influenced, both theoretically and empirically, the constitution and the precepts of the British cultural studies research project: the theoretical framework from which, the encoding/decoding model of communication used in this study is drawn (McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991; Agger, 1992; Perez, 1996).

Cultural studies theoretical framework is heavily influenced by structuralism's concerns with language, ideology and culture as constituting and transforming factors in social interaction (Hall, 1980a; Perez, 1996). It is based on ideology, culture and language that the encoding/decoding communication model was developed (Condit, 1989; McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991; Perez, 1996). This study had the intent of analyzing mass mediated communication from the prism of the "encoding and decoding" model, first presented by the scholar Stuart Hall (1979, 1980b), within the cross-cultural context of the international media coverage of the September 11 events (Hall, 1979; 1980b). For that, a review of the literature on Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model was undertaken as well as its implication for the manufacturing of news stories (Hall, 1993).

The second main body of literature reviewed concerned the nature of terrorism and its relationship with media (e.g. Bell, 1978, 1991; Gerbner, 1990, 1991; Dobkin, 1992; Herman, 1993; Livingston, 1993; Carruthers, 2000; Wilkinson, 2001; Nacos, 2002; and Scheter, 2003). Since the focus of this study was the media coverage of the terrorist strikes of September 11 2001, it was found relevant to understand the nature of terrorism, its particularities and the role played by media in

these events of political violence (Dobkin, 1992; Nacos, 2002). For that, a close review of the existing relevant literature on the nature of terrorism and the encoding of media news stories of terrorist attacks was undertaken, as well as media professionals' ideological and contextual implications on the encoding and subsequent decoding moments. The contrasting definitions on terrorism exposed the different political perspectives from which scholars understand and analyze this form of political communication (Dobkin, 1992; Nacos, 2002; Chomsky, 2003).

The third area of literature reviewed, regarded specific studies about the September 11 events and its media coverage (e.g. Baudrillard, 2001; Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Cottle, 2002; Debatin, 2002; Greenberg 2002; Karim, 2002; Kellner, 2002; Nacos, 2002; Pompper, 2002; Semati, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Chomsky, 2003; Jenkins, 2003; and Louw, 2003). It was probed the importance of television in these events as well as aspects of sourcing, time and media framing of terrorist attacks.

To fully understand all the theoretical precepts in the literature review, and answer the research questions proposed, a qualitative textual analysis was undertaken. A sample of editorial pieces discussing the September 11 events and their aftermath was gathered from five international newspapers: *New York Times*, Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, Brazilian daily *Folha de Sao Paulo*, French daily *Le Monde*, and Spanish daily *El Pais*. Then, a textual analysis of the editorials was conducted. The results of this study illustrated that cultural and political aspects influenced encoders' interpretations of the same event: the September 11 terrorist assault in the United States.

## RATIONALE

Globalization is not only a technological and socio-economical process, but a cultural one as well. Societies are now influenced by and interconnected with foreign cultures in a way they have never been before. Mass media play a determining role in this complex process (Davis, 1997). The works of George Gerbner reveal that mass (media) communication has a basic importance in an individual's representation of the world. Audience members gain their knowledge of different international events and issues through media. They establish a set of values as a result of the messages they receive from the mass media, which interacts with the values they already have, according to their cultural background (Gerbner, 1971). Furthermore, due to the fact that few people have personal knowledge of foreign events, the agenda-setting effect of foreign news is stronger than that of domestic news (Wu, 1998).

Better understanding of how media professionals' cultural differences can influence their interpretations and understanding of events and the way they are reported is fundamentally important to understand reality itself in the global world we live in (Morley & Silverstone, 1990). Communication scholar Maurice Berger goes further in attributing to the media a more central role in the meaning-making process the audience undertakes to understand a terrorism event and its context. He argues that the public does not witness the actual violent act, but rather has contact with the happenings through a media "re-presentation" (Berger, 1993).

This study was related to and was concerned with cross cultural international mass communication and its implications in the process of encoding and decoding messages. Its main objective is to find to which extent diverse cultural and political

backgrounds affect the encoding and consequently the decoding of mass mediated messages. It is important to understand the way media operates, so as to evaluate the complex process through which audience's reality is constructed by the contact with media's messages (Perez, 1996). The events of September 11 changed the international scenario and these events and their unfolding are considered a historical moment (Baudrillard, 2001; Chomsky, 2003). The literature review covered the various issues that influenced media encoding and decoding of the September 11 terrorist assault, which ultimately influenced the way audiences across the world interpreted the event itself.

The field of media studies in general has been characterized by the lack of agreement among its scholars and researchers towards the extent of media influence on audience, and cultural studies research on media is found in the same ongoing theoretical discussion (Condit, 1989). There is a growing need to elaborate a unified theoretical approach to media studies, a concern already expressed by different scholars in the field (Condit, 1989; McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991; Agger, 1992; Perez, 1996). The application of these theories to practical cases is a way to prove or disprove them, therefore generating data on the actual viability of the respective theoretical propositions (Severin & Tankard, 2000). A case study to assert the viability of the contrasting traditions of critical studies and reception studies will add evidence to an ongoing theoretical discussion. This study had the goal of understanding the international media coverage of the September 11 events through the prism of Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding communication model. The findings were further contextualized with public opinion and the two theoretical traditions

within cultural studies, which advocate different views on the polysemic nature of mass media's messages: a critical perspective and reception studies (Perez, 1996).

The terrorist attacks of September 11 were broadcast live to the whole world through network and cable television and this audio-visual message was the main source for people's acknowledging and understanding of the happenings on that day (Kanihan & Gale, 2003). There is no doubt that the events were not only disseminated by media, but also shaped by them. According to Brigitte Nacos, "...it is likely that the terrorist assaults on New York and Washington and their aftermath were the most watched made-for-television production ever" (Nacos, 2002; p. 38). The magnitude of the events and its effects have already marked September 11 as a historic day, where one has to think about reality before the terrorist attacks and after them (Cottle, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Greenberg, 2002; Nacos, 2002; Kearney, 2003).

Understanding media's role in the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon is essential to understanding the events of September 11 themselves (Baudrillard, 2001; Kearney, 2002). Moreover, only with a media analysis of this media-centric event is it possible to understand to the fullest the symbolic meaning within the global audience that watched its broadcasting (Debatin, 2002). Furthermore, the analysis of media's encoding and decoding of the "raw events" of September 11 has the aim of exposing institutional guidelines and political interests, which influence the news manufacturing along with ideological and cultural issues that influence an audience's collective memory (Pompper, 2002; Debatin, 2002; Kellner, 2002; Kearney, 2003).



## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **A History of Media Studies**

The first studies of mass mediated messages and audiences date back to the early twentieth century. Theorists such as Max Weber (1910), Walter Lippmann (1922) and John Dewey (1927) were the first to raise concerns on the role of media in society (McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991). Contemporary to the former, and operating on a different theoretical framework, a series of empirical research was also conducted and became later known as the “media effects project” (Perez, 1996; McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991). The media effects research was conducted under an American social science standpoint and mainly addressed behavioral concerns and issues (McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991).

In the American media effects tradition, one of the most notable projects is Paul Lazarsfeld's Bureau (1940s), which undertook studies on election campaigns and voting behavior. The Payne Fund (1930s), which carried out research on the effects of films on children, also produced some of the most influential results within the media effects tradition, together with others such as Cantril (1940), Hovland (1949) and Katz (1955) (Lowery & DeFleur, 1988).

Coined as "Milestones" of mass communication research by Shearon Lowery and Melvin DeFleur (1988), the former studies, together with others were notably important in shaping the way mass media research was done in the subsequent years and even at the present time (Lowery & DeFleur, 1988; McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991). Addressing the debate between mass communication and society, the media

effects project seems still to be the dominant paradigm in mass media research in the United States (McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991). Although the media effects project and the Frankfurt School probe similar issues, the first diverges from Theodore Adorno and Marx Horkheimer's research approach in terms of ideological and methodological aspects (Hall, 1980a).

The Frankfurt School research on mass media differs from American media effects studies in ideological terms principally due to the fact that German scholars such as Theodor Adorno and Marx Horkheimer were strongly influenced by Marxist theory, therefore they addressed such concerns as class struggle and hegemony, which were absent in the American media effects project paradigm (Hall, 1980b). In an attempt to describe American media effects tradition, Paul Lazarsfeld (1941), probably one of the most prominent scholars within this tradition, coined the expression "administrative research" to point out some of the issues regarding American scholars' ideological positioning (Lazarsfeld, 1941; Lowery & DeFleur, 1988; McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991). According to Paul Lazarsfeld, research on media was "administrative" because it was devoted to the financial gain of media institutions and to maintaining governmental policy status quo. Lazarsfeld also questioned the linkage between studies results and the goal of the research sponsors, often times military or government agencies (Lazarsfeld, 1941; McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991).

On the other hand, the Frankfurt School body of work was very critical of mass communication political and economical structures, and presented the "culture industry" (a term first used in the book *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in reference to the

mass communication apparatus) as a dominant force with a hidden agenda (Bernstein, 2001). The main precept for the Frankfurt scholars was embedded in the idea that the culture industry transforms art as a spontaneous popular form into a commodity on sale to masses, therefore compromising its aesthetic value. Through this viewpoint, the media not only is the main providing agent of popular culture, but it conveys through its content political and economical interests as well as managing to maintain the status-quo that supports its establishment and prosperous functioning (Bernstein, 2001; Hardt, 1996).

The Frankfurt scholars saw the media as highly persuasive and as an advocate of the status quo. Moreover, Theodore Adorno and his colleagues regarded the masses (audience) as consumers of the culture industry's messages and extremely vulnerable to its ideological content (Bernstein, 2001; Hall 1980a). By viewing media as inflictor of powerful ideological effects on its audience, the Frankfurt scholars drew a path which contrasted with the one followed by American media effects scholars. Most American studies showed evidence of a considerable amount of audience activity in the reception process of media messages. Moreover, the Frankfurt school relied on a philosophical and critical approach of theory building, as opposed to the quantitative, empirically driven paradigm of the American media effects project (Bernstein, 2001; Hardt, 1996; Perez, 1996).

In an attempt to search for an alternative focus of analysis and at the same time profit from the already existing communication theory and research, a new project for the study of media was established in the seventies (Hall, 1980a). The Centre for Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham established in 1964 by

Richard Hoggart had the aim of inaugurating research in the area of contemporary culture and society. In the seventies under the direction of Stuart Hall, a group of media studies was created within the Centre of Cultural Studies and with it the beginning of a new project in the theorizing and researching of media. The research practice at the Centre of Contemporary Culture Studies challenged the dominant paradigms and concerns of both the Frankfurt School and the media effects traditions (Hall, 1980a).

The Birmingham Centre media group's break with the former traditions and the later embracing of media research within the culture studies framework developed in four steps. First, media studies moved away from the behaviorist stimulus-response model of American media effects tradition towards a more ideological role of the media (Hall, 1980a, 1980b). According to Stuart Hall this approach:

Defined the media as a major cultural and ideological force, standing in a dominant position with respect to the way in which social relations and political problems were defined and the production and transformation of popular ideologies addressed. This concern with the media and ideologies is the most significant and consistent thread of the Centre media work (Hall, 1980a; p. 117).

Second, the traditional approach of quantitative content analysis was replaced by an analysis of the linguistic and ideological structures (Hall, 1980a). Both linguistic and ideological structures of the media forms, the heritage of semiotic theory, are the basis for media research in the Centre, and will be addressed in depth later on in this essay. Third, there was a break with the passive conception of audience, as observed by Stuart Hall; this practice is an influence of public opinion

survey needed by broadcasters and advertising agencies. Instead of the former conceptions, there was an implementation of the concepts of "reading" and the moments "encoding" and "decoding" within the communication process (Hall, 1980c, 1993). The incorporation of these considerations brings the concept of audience and reception to such a level of complexity, that the Frankfurt School idea of the quasi-narcotic media effects becomes inappropriate in the cultural studies structuralism framework (Agger, 1992). Fourth, there was a return to the research agenda of the role media play in the maintenance of the status quo and its dominant ideological representations and definitions (Hall, 1980a, 1980b).

The latter changes in the media research practice introduced by the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Culture Studies are a result of its formative theoretical influences. Scholars from the Centre were influenced by the works of structuralism and Marxist theorists, such Gramsci, Levi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco and Althusserian textual analysis scholars (Agger, 1992; Hall, 1980a; Perez, 1996; McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991). The most evident structuralism heritage within the works from the Centre is that "thought does not reflect reality, but works upon and appropriates it" (Curran, Gurevitch, & Woollacott, 1982; p. 28). This calls for a media communication theory and research practice that assesses media's ideological role in the construction of public consciousness and popular consent (Agger, 1992; Curran, Gurevitch, & Woollacott, 1982).

### **Mass Media, Ideology and the Audience**

Ideology, as defined by the structuralist theorist Luis Althusser, is "a 'representation' of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of

existence” (Althusser, 1971; p.153). In this sense ideology would represent a main force within communication, due to the fact that mainly through communication, individuals relate with society and with the surrounding context to create an imaginary representation of their living reality. However, embedded in the character of the “imaginary,” are the distortions of this relationship (Heck, 1980). The imaginary does not correspond to the reality; it only poses as an “interpretation” or singular perspective of the actual reality (Althusser, 1971).

The scholar Enid Veron, building on Althusser’s concept of ideology, takes it a step farther towards an understanding of its importance to the process of communication in particular and to the symbolic process of meaning making as a whole:

If ideologies are structures in the sense structuralism uses this expression, then they are not "images" or "concepts" (we can say they are not contents) but are sets of rules, which determine an organization, and the functioning of images and concepts (Veron, 1969; p. 53).

Within the structuralism logic, ideology becomes a system that regulates receivers’ input and output of information by presenting a meaning making structure that allows the individual to recognize and make sense out of messages (Heck, 1980).

Enid Veron’s concept of ideology is very close to the idea of Umberto Eco’s, where ideology is the entirety of knowledge of the individual, and moreover, of the group to which this individual belongs. Consequently, this system of knowledge has to become a system of signs, so communication can occur (Veron, 1969; Heck, 1980;

Eco, 1990). Therefore ideology becomes a code (a system of signs) through socialization:

Ideology is not a particular type of message, or a class of social discourses, but it is one of the many levels of organization of the messages, from the point of view of its semantic properties. Ideology is therefore a level of signification, which can be present in any type of message, even in scientific discourse. Any material of social communication is susceptible to an ideological reading (Veron, 1969, p.53).

For one to make an ideological reading of a message, one would have to undergo a careful analysis of the obscure organization of the message (Heck, 1980). During the production moment of the message the encoder inputs consciously as well as unconsciously her/his own meanings according to her/his ideological structure. That will most likely not be perceptible through a superficial analysis of the message (Hall, 1979; 1980b, 1993). In the case of mass mediated communication, when analyzing the "conscious meanings" input by the encoder, it would be relevant to understand social class struggles and the political economy of the culture industry, as is proposed in the literature of the Frankfurt School and among Marxist scholars (Hardt, 1996; Hall, 1996). On the other hand, to understand the encoders' "unconscious meanings," an intrinsically ideological analysis of the message would be fundamental (Hall, 1979, 1996).

According to the works of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Culture Studies (heavily influenced by structuralism), ideology works as an unconscious coding system as proposed earlier, or a system of signs (Hall, 1980a; Heck, 1980).

Therefore to be able to understand a message in terms of its ideological imprinting, one would have to understand the code in which it operates, its semantic rules and the signs that constitute this code (Hall, 1993; Fiske, 1987). Scholars from the cultural studies tradition, by assuming the complexities of the communication process, have relied on the body of work of semiotics as a main resource for studying communication and media communication under the broader scope of language, culture, meaning making and symbolic relationships (McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991).

### **Media Messages: A Semiotic Approach**

Hall (1975) based his studies of the encoding and decoding of messages in semiotics, by that time a newborn science (this will be thoroughly discussed later on this essay) (Hall, 1979). Simply defined, semiotics or semiology (as used by some theoreticians) is the science of signs, the way they work, their relationships and how we use them. The first studies, which originated this science, are attributed to the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the American poet Charles Peirce (Greimas, 1987). There are two main concerns of semiotics: the relationship between a sign and its meaning; and the way signs are combined into codes (Hall, 1980c, 1993).

Semiotics as a science first had its concerns centered in language, however, later on, it was applied for different kinds of communication and mass communication and it became a very useful tool in the study of media's processes and content (Severin & Tankard, 2001; Greimas, 1987; Fiske, 1987). According to Werner Severin and James Tankard, semiotics "has a number of applications for the practitioner of mass media." They argue that semiotics can help "in expressing meaning in symbols or codes," and it is useful in analyzing journalism objectivity,



besides sorting and exposing “information and misinformation” (Severin & Tankard, 2001, p. 105).

## Signs

The three basic concepts embedded in semiotics are sign, signifier and signified. De Saussure elaborated the three partite concept: signifier + signified = sign. Briefly, the *signifier* has a physical existence and represents meaning (Greimas, 1987). For instance, an object, an animal, a word, a photograph, and an image are signifiers. The *signified* is the meaning or the concept of the signifier that we have in our minds. The *sign* is the sum of both the signifier and the signified; it is, as defined by John Fiske, “a signifying construct.” (Fiske, 1987, p. 71). These three structures do not exist apart from each other. Breaking a sign into signifier and signified structures is done only for analytical purposes (Greimas, 1987; Fiske, 1987).

As for the signs, there are two types: iconic and arbitrary. In the arbitrary signs, the signifier is linked or related to the correspondent signified simply by normative means. In other words, the signifier does not motivate the meaning (signified). Some sort of law, norm or convention is established among users. As clear-cut examples of arbitrary signs, we have words (Fiske, 1987). Words have no similarities or relations with their meaning. The word chair (signifier) has no relationship with the actual concept of the object chair (signified) that we have in our minds. On the other hand, in an iconic sign or icon, the signifier resembles the signified, which it represents. A photograph of a horse (visual representation) is a signifier that is linked and related to the meaning or our mind concept of an actual

horse; it resembles the animal. In other words, the signifier (photograph) motivates the connection with the concept that we have in our minds of a horse (the signified).

In Pierce's (1958) terminology, a sign is iconic because it "possesses some of the properties of the thing represented." (Pierce, 1958, p.95, in Fiske, 1987, p.63). Television, for instance, is a combination of visual and audio discourses. Just as a photograph, television is an iconic sign or in a more accurate manner, iconic signs constitute television's content. Newspapers and magazines are mainly arbitrary (text), but also iconic (photographs). Even though in iconic signs the signifier is not arbitrary, and thus relates to the signified, the signified itself is somehow arbitrary (Greimas, 1987). The way a certain signifier is interpreted will depend on the message's recipient culture and background (Hall, 1980c, 1993). For instance, an image of a military official shown on the first page of a newspaper signifies discipline, order and courage in a certain culture; however it can also signify oppression, cruelty and fear in another cultural context (Fiske, 1986, 1987).

The associated use of both a set of signs and a syntagma dimension (a set of agreed rules) constitute a code (Greimas, 1987). Both the group of signs and the rules for combining them must be agreed upon by the members of a certain culture, so the code can be recognizable and understandable for the source and the recipient in a given communication process (Fiske, 1986; Greimas, 1987). The process of establishing norms and rules to organize signs is called codification or "encoding." The codification process is the basis of messages and communication and there is no communication unless there is a common code (Greimas, 1987; Hall, 1980c, 1993).

A "raw" historical event cannot be transmitted by, for example, a television newscast, radio show or newspaper editorial. Events can only be signified within the codes of media discourse (Hall, 1979; 1980c, 1993). A particular event will first be arranged so as to fit media code. In this encoding process, some signs are chosen rather than others and particularly combined into syntagmas for different purposes in a media production context (Fiske, 1986; Condit, 1989; Hall, 1980c, 1993; Perez, 1996). According to Stuart Hall, the message form in which a given event is encoded is the necessary "form of appearance" of the event in its passage from source to receiver. The message form encoded by the source is a determinate moment that limits and directs the decoding process within the receiver (Hall, 1993, p. 92).

### **From Closed Messages to Textual Polysemy**

The process of production and reception of messages or according to Stuart Hall's terminology, the process of "encoding" and "decoding", can be a very complex one (Hall, 1980c, 1993). As stated by Stuart Hall, "the codes of encoding and decoding may not be perfectly symmetrical" (p. 93). One of the main concepts in Hall's studies is that some "misunderstandings" and "distortions" can occur due to the "lack of equivalence" among the source, the message and the receiver (Hall, 1993; p. 94). His studies influenced subsequent research throughout the years; however different researchers assume different levels of distortion in the message (Condit, 1989; Grossberg, 1993).

Messages delivered by media can be received, understood or decoded differently by individuals. This might lead to misunderstanding of the encoders' "preferred reading" (Hall, 1980c, 1993; Schroeder, 2000). Preferred reading is a

concept first introduced by Stuart Hall in a 1975 study as the ability of the encoder to convey a meaning in his message according to his/her interests or ideology (Hall, 1980c, 1993; Schroeder, 2000). The concept of the preferred reading is based on an assumption that one of the ways the dominant social class maintains itself in power is by controlling the mass media and conveying through the media its hegemonic ideology (Steiner, 1988).

In a mass media message, such as a television show or event coverage, a radio program, a magazine report, or a newspaper editorial, among others, the interpretations made by the audiences can vary. The characteristic of a mass media message of allowing different interpretations or meanings by its audience is known as polysemy (Fiske, 1986). Polysemic texts allow receivers to construct a wide variety of decodings, preventing them from the simple domination of audience's meaning making process by the messages' encoded "preferred reading" (Condit, 1989).

Therefore contemporary critics clearly distinguish two different approaches for understanding media texts in cultural studies (Steiner, 1988; Condit, 1989). A critical approach, which understands the text as a vehicle for conveying the dominant ideology to the "masses," and a reception approach. The reception approach considers the highly polysemic nature of texts as a factor that enables the "live audience" to construct their own meaning of the message according to their cultural background and social context, therefore leaving out the ideological implications from the encoding moment (Perez, 1996). Mass media is considered a cultural resource for the live audience (reception) researchers, as opposed to being a tool for ideological domination, as considered by the critical approach scholars (Condit, 1989).

Within a critical perspective, many scholars see media messages as vehicles that convey the dominant ideology of the encoders or cultural industry to the audience (Perez, 1996). These scholars are based on the Frankfurt school and Althusserian textual analysis theoretical framework. According to this theoretical framework, texts always and irresistibly tell us how to understand them. These authors consider polysemy to be a minor factor in the meaning making process of the audience (Steiner, 1988, Perez, 1996).

Researchers from the reception theory tradition see mass media messages as polysemic texts that allow an active audience to read texts independently, according to their cultural background, identity, and past experiences or social relevance (Fiske, 1986; Perez, 1996). The approach of texts as highly polysemic is based on a semiotic or post-structuralist theoretical framework, which enables audiences to move beyond the preferred meaning conceptualized by Stuart Hall (Jensen, 1990).

The media coverage of the terrorist attacks of September 11 illustrates the different factors influencing the encoding of an event by the media and the audiences' decoding, as it will be discussed later in this essay (Hall, 1980c, 1993; Nacos, 2002; Debatin, 2002). The news media encoding of the terrorist attacks to the Twin Towers and Pentagon is to be thoroughly presented by the analysis of different scholars who considered a variety of implications on terrorism news manufacturing in general and the specific case of the events of September 11 (Jenkins, 2003). However, to better understand both the encoding and decoding of this historic event, it is necessary to probe the nature of terrorism as political communication and the role of media, politics and ideology in this process (Nacos, 1994; Chomsky, 2003).

## **A Semiotic Approach to News**

News stories are organized according to standard production formulas and on professional and intuitive assumptions of news journalists and producers. These characteristics of news production help determine the telling of the news stories and the frame within which the audience will interpret them (Louw, 2003; Dobkin, 1992). Moreover, to make sense of the world in a seemingly objective manner, journalists must organize unexpected events, such as terrorist assaults, according to the audience and the news media industry's institutional requirements. For that, journalists rely on what scholars call frames or categories of perception (Dobkin, 1992; Louw, 2003).

Semiotic analysis of the news often begins with a discussion of encoding, or transforming event into story. For the event to become a story it must be signified within the rules of verbal and visual language, and moreover, translated into frames and categories of perception by journalists (Dobkin, 1992). According to Stuart Hall "the event must become a story before it can become a communicative event" (Hall, 1980c, p. 129). A large area for research of news coverage of terrorism acts relies on the assumption of the encoding as a form of translating facts into a form intelligible for the audience (Hall, 1980c; 1993). This area of research explores the semantic dimension of terrorism to observe how media discourse reproduces dominant meanings embedded in society and its defining institutions (Dobkin, 1992; Hall, 1980a).

The encoding of an event into story places constraints on the types of interpretations audiences are likely to make about them. The preferred meaning of the encoders (journalists and news organizations) is drawn from their frames or

categories of perception and the latter do not strictly correspond to the event itself (Hall, 1980c, 1993; Schroder, 2000). However that does not mean that the audience will automatically take that interpretation as true when assessing the theoretical implications of the moment of decoding (Fiske, 1987; Hall, 1979, 1980b; Dobkin, 1992; Schroder, 2000). In this manner, events are transformed into stories based on the common images of a culture, and as those images are appropriated, they also shape the range of understanding about the event (Dobkin, 1992; Hall, 1979, 1980b).

Patterns of presentation emerge due to the institutional and ideological restraints of the environment in which the journalist operates, as mentioned earlier (Hall, 1974). These patterns of presentation will provide boundary conditions or limits of interpretation that support the idea that news provide ideological closure and that the audience use or interpretation of media messages is therefore constrained by these boundaries (Dobkin, 1992; Hall, 1974, 1980a; Morley, 1992).

The story format in which news is presented in the mass media takes the form of a literary scheme or a narrative where the drama of terrorism is told within the narrative of the news theme, a unifying concept that will likely frame definitions of news events (Dobkin, 1992). The news theme inside this literary format allows journalists to present a specific event or series of events as an example of some broader concept. Narrative contexts for individual news stories provide a particular history that gives a news item or part of that item meaning. The relationship of the news story as a narrative to the production of the meaning is usually approached as an evaluation of the correspondence of the story to some external reality; however there are few researchers who still support the idea that there is a transparent

correspondence between actual events and news reports (Dobkin, 1992). Rather, news stories reorder events and provide the means by which the moral significance of an event can be judged. News stories are framed within a certain ideological paradigm (Dobkin, 1992; Hall, 1980a).

Several literary features of the news narrative contribute to the creation of the drama characteristic of terrorism news coverage (Dobkin, 1992; Sperry, 1981). James Sperry outlines the common plot for the news narrative of terrorist attack media coverage:

The world at peace is disrupted by some event (say, act of terrorism). That event, which becomes the evil, is named and, if possible, analyzed and understood. Some leader, the hero figure, usually a representative of the people, then attacks it. However, whether by choice or by nature of his vocation, this leader may not be able to meet the problem alone. So he gains allies, other leaders, and he also gains enemies - potential leaders who disagree with his plan of action, or rebels who align themselves with the evil. As these alignments become apparent, stories are then told of the effect of the problem on the average man. And, if the alignments become a matter more significant than the original event, we will also hear about the suffering of the average man as his appointed leaders fail to meet the problem (Sperry, 1981, p. 31).

In no time is the dramatic narrative of news story as intense as in moments of crises such as terrorist attacks. At these moments the public's lack of clarification caused by the deviance experienced with earlier happenings, will cause a heavy



dependency on the media. According to Bethami Dobkin, "the role of the media in crisis situations is accentuated; the public has a heightened need for information, and thus the media's influence in defining reality increases" (Dobkin, 1992; p. 33).

Challenging the level of accuracy to which news stories of terrorism attacks correspond to the real events, Murray Edelman (1977, p. 47) speculates that terrorism may be a "semantically created crisis" and that it causes "widespread anxiety about an alleged threat that may or may not be real." In the book *Constructing the political spectacle*, Edelman (1988, p. 30) explains his point: "A crisis, like all news developments, is a creation of the language used to depict it; the appearance of a crisis is a political act, not recognition of a fact or a rare situation" (Edelman, 1977; 1988). The implications of Edelman's "semantically created crisis" are extensive considering that the way the crisis is framed in the news stories can become a propaganda tool to mobilize the public towards supporting governmental actions or public sacrifices that would come with the implementation of repressive or vigilant policies. Media coverage of terrorism assaults can contribute to the creation of Edelman's "semantic crisis" (Edelman, 1977; Dobkin, 1992).

This panorama of uncertainty is as true for scholars as it is for the general public. However, the public will find an answer to their uncertainty in media's news stories (Edelman, 1988). The label "terrorist" is never self-proclaimed, but rather given to a group or individual, and the legitimacy of this action comes when the media produces consensus for that political definition (Dobkin, 1992). To produce consensus about the definition of terrorism, the media first defines deviance by

turning to institutional sources (e.g. government, academia) that legitimize definitions of public problems (Dobkin, 1992; Hall, 1980b).

According to Stuart Hall (1980c), the defining of terms by the media through institutional sources results in possible news bias:

The structured relationship between the media and the primary institutional definers is that it permits the institutional definers to establish the initial definition or primary interpretation of the topic in question (Hall, 1978, p. 58).

Edward Herman brings this matter to an even more critical perspective by questioning the sourcing arrangement that we see today in the news media. He argues that this sourcing schema:

...provides a model system of propaganda, where the state line is reinforced regularly by nominally independent experts who are in fact virtual agents of the state, while genuinely independent analysts are ignored as lacking proper credentials (Herman, 1993, p. 60).

This problem of news bias can escalate if one considers questions of media ownership, and media's business relations to the government and advertisers (Hall, 1980b; Chomsky, 2003).

News stories defining and conceptualizing terrorism serve a morally cohesive function as they may legitimize administration labels of certain actors as terrorist villains and the administration's solution for the eminent crisis (Dobkin, 1992).

Knight and Dean (1982) write that:

...as bad news enters our heads openly through the front door, so order and normality reenter largely unnoticed through the back... In this respect, the

news media draw upon raw materials that are already fashioned in the wider ideology (Knight and Dean, 1982, p. 45).

The wider ideology from which the media draw includes the attribution of Western rationality to terrorists and the removal of terrorist acts from the social context (Dobkin, 1992; Knight and Dean, 1982).

This approach to terrorism media coverage as a mass drama of political violence helps locate media representations and understand audience responses to them within this wider ideological frame (Louw, 2003; Dobkin, 1992). As terrorism has political motivations and implications, it is also vital to understand its nature, definition and structure from contrasting political and theoretical paradigms (Nacos, 1994). Next follows a probing on the different perspectives on terrorism and its defining characteristics.

### **Terrorism as political communication**

"It is likely that the terrorist assaults on New York and Washington and their aftermath were the most watched made-for-television production ever" (Nacos, 2002, p. 38). This observation made by Brigitte Nacos in her book *Mass Mediated Terrorism* exemplifies a common perspective held among scholars that the events of September 11, 2001 were, as the majority of contemporary terrorism strikes, media centric events (Baudrillard 2001; Nacos, 2002; Chomsky, 2003; Schechter, 2003). One of modern terrorism's most fundamental goals is to bring a political message to the attention of the general public as well as to the political and decision making elite of the nation or group targeted (Nacos, 2002; Scheter, 2003).

While the literature on contemporary terrorism makes the case of its dependency and symbiotic relationship with the mass media, scholars still struggle and largely disagree on a common definition that would broadly characterize terrorism (Dobkin, 1992; Gerbner, 1990; Herman, 1993). According to Susan Carruthers, terrorism is an "illegitimate recourse to particularly reprehensible forms of violence, directed to ends which may have as much to do with gaining publicity as rectifying political grievances" (Carruthers, 2000, p. 163). Susan Carruthers proposes that terrorism is a form of political violence; however, unlike warfare, terrorism acts are deplete of the conventions, which (at least theoretically), makes it possible for war to be fought justly (Carruthers, 2000).

Others like American scholar Noam Chomsky, point out that terrorist is a term used within the media to identify the acts of political violence by groups or nations that are political adversaries of the United States and its allies; on the other hand, political violence supported by the United States and its allies is disregarded as terrorism acts (Chomsky, 2003). The label "terrorist" is not value-free and since the French Revolution has been used to categorize political enemies. According to Susan Carruthers:

The semantic war over words and definitions form part of a wider battle over the legitimacy of the resort to force: the label "terrorist" connotes illegitimacy, while its alternatives - such as "guerrilla", "liberation army" or "freedom fighter" - confer approbation (Carruthers, 2000, p. 165).

While some scholars are more concerned with the definition of terrorism and its implications for the international political scenario, others are more concerned

with terrorism as a symbolic process with the goal of communicating a specific message (Nacos, 2002). Paul Wilkinson argues that terrorism:

...has been a remarkably successful means of publicizing a political cause and relaying the terrorist threat to a wider audience, particularly in the open and pluralistic countries of the West. When one says "terrorism" in a democratic society, one also says "media." For terrorism by its very nature is a psychological weapon which depends upon communicating a threat to a wider society (Wilkinson, 2001, p. 177).

The act of terrorism, in this perspective, is an act of communication, where the terrorist (individual or group), uses the media as a vehicle for propaganda, disseminating to a global audience with efficiency its existence and its political message (Wilkinson, 2001; Nacos, 2002). [For instance, with the attacks of September 11, Al Qaeda was "successful" in its attempt to show its existence and publicize its act of defiance and political message to an audience in the United States and all over the world (Nacos, 2002).]

Within the many different definitions of terrorism, two aspects are broadly accepted among experts: first, terrorism is violence inflicted for political goals; and second, contemporary terrorism is dependent on the media and its actions are taken according to the demands of the media industry (Nacos, 2002; Wilkinson, 2001). Brigitte Nacos, based on literature built by different scholars, defines terrorism as "an act of communication" or as "politically motivated violence directed against noncombatants or symbolic targets which is designed to communicate a message to a broader audience" (Nacos, 2002, p.17).

George Gerbner has undertaken research in the area of violence and media for more than two decades for the American government and different research institutions in different periods (Gerbner, 1990). George Gerbner approaches terror as a symbolic process, "they [terrorism acts] are not acts or threats of hurting and killing but of representations or symbolic re-creations of such acts or threats" (Gerbner, 1990, p. 3). In their studies of media and terrorism for the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Gerbner and his research team focused on the symbolic uses of terrorism in conveying a public message of outrage and defiance, that as communication itself is produced to a certain audience that is larger in numbers and has little to do with the victims of the attacks themselves (Louw, 2003; Gerbner, 1991).

Contemporary terrorism and the media industries are interrelated in a very complex relationship that is at a certain point beneficial for both parts (Dobkin, 1992). This relationship of interdependency was evident during the happenings of September 11 of 2001, when terrorists were "successful" in sending their message to a worldwide audience, due to the media's intense coverage. And the media industries benefited from the terrorist in that the attacks in the US were the most watched made-for-television production in history [as Brigitte Nacos has pointed out] (Nacos, 2002). According to James Bell:

These transnational gunmen are, in fact, television producers constructing a package so spectacular, so violent, so compelling that the networks, acting as executives, supplying the cameramen and the audience, cannot refuse the offer (Bell, 1978, p. 50).

Terrorists themselves [not only scholars] give media an emphatic position within the terrorism modus operandi (Dobkin, 1992; Livingston, 1993). The revolutionary Carlos Marighella stated in the book *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*:

The war of nerves or psychological war is an aggressive technique, based on the direct or indirect use of communication and news transmitted in order to demoralize the government. In psychological warfare, the government is always at a disadvantage since it imposes censorship on the mass media and winds up in a defensive position by not allowing anything to filter through. At this point it becomes desperate, is involved in greater contradictions and loses time and energy in an exhausting effort at control, which is subject to being taken at any minute (Marighella, 1985, p. 161).

It is evident in the words of Carlos Marighella that terrorists see media as a central issue in their acts; however Marighella underestimates governments' ability to counteract. The relationship between media and terrorism is described in many ways. Some scholars talk about the relationship between terror and mass media as one of symbiosis (Livingston, 1993; Nacos, 2002).

### **Terrorism and Media**

The symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the media exists due to the fact that terrorists rely on the mass media to disseminate their political terror-inspiring goals, and the media uses the terrorists' acts as necessary, rewarding valuable news items that will guarantee massive audience viewing (Livingston, 1992). The ability that terrorists have to "create" news and media's self-assigned mission of covering

news (no matter how bad it is) are factors that make the symbiotic relationship between both parts very obvious (Livingston, 1992; Nacos, 2002).

A theoretical framework for the analysis of the newsworthiness of modern terrorism can be found in the body of literature on the relationship of the newsworthiness of deviance to the social roles of the mass media (Weimann & Brosius, 1991). According to this theoretical framework, one of the ways through which the mass media influences social norms and social change is by assessing the newsworthiness of people and events (Weimann & Brosius, 1991). The news media fulfill a normative function in society by providing ways for society to organize and understand events. The media recognize instances where there is deviance (norms have been broken) and fulfill the normative function. The list of factors that were found to be significant predictors of coverage in previous studies (e.g. Bergsma, 1980; Galtung & Ruge, 1970; Kaplan, 1979; Lent, 1977) includes: timeliness; proximity; importance; oddity and the unusual; impact or consequence; interest; conflict or controversy; sensationalism; prominence; and novelty (Weimann & Brosius, 1991).

Most of the indicators above are related to deviance, and it is with deviance that newsworthiness is strictly related to. Mass media has the role of the "deviatizing" of people and groups (Weimann & Brosius, 1991, p.335). Terrorism acts will definitely bring with them a normative rupture that can be fulfilled by the mass media industry. At the same time terror events will have most of the elements cited above as factors for predicting coverage. In other words, terrorists strike and demand attention



by the media, which immediately offer solutions for the normative social crisis created by the terrorists (Weimann & Brosius, 1991; Nacos, 2002).

The number of studies reviewing media coverage has been extensive in the past two decades and some findings about the types of terrorism that are covered vary not only due to the features of newsworthiness, but also to the source and contextual nature of the acts (Weimann & Brosius, 1991; Picard, 1993). First, state terrorism is generally ignored. Second, the amount of nonstate terrorism covered is limited. Third, news coverage concentrates on incidents and government issues, to the detriment of background information that will enhance the audience's understanding of the happenings. And fourth, there is a similarity in what gets coverage among different media channels (Picard, 1993).

Andrew Katz and his research team also conceptualized terrorism as a media event, or as they called it, "theater of terror." They find all the elements of drama in the terrorism act within media coverage context (Weimann & Winn, 1994). The preplanning of the act is essential as the terrorists are concerned with the media coverage and the reactions from the audience. Both the authorities (as heroes) and the terrorist (as villains) function as literary characters that confront a struggle of good against evil; such struggle demands the audience's attention (Weimann & Winn, 1994). This theatrical structure produces a story dramatically appealing to different audiences, illustrating, as in the case of September 11, McLuhan's global village concept, thus bringing the world's attention to the media coverage of a specific terrorist assault (Weimann & Winn, 1994; Livingston, 1993). The characteristics of terrorism acts and their coverage, by being similar to classical dramatic structure,

drive the attention of audience members with the most varied cultural and socio-economic background and geographical location (Weimann & Winn, 1994; Livingston, 1993).

Terrorism as it exists today is an expression of the terrorists' acknowledgement of mass media's role in political communication in a contemporary society. As Susan Carruthers points out, "widespread attention alone gives purpose and meaning to terrorist acts" (Carruthers, 2000, p. 168). Or in the words of the ABC anchorman Ted Koppel, modern terrorism resembles the philosopher's hypothetical tree falling in the forest: if no one hears the tree falling, the tree will therefore not exist - its existence will not be acknowledged if there is no audience (Carruthers, 2000).

### **Media's Re-presentation of Terrorism**

Maurice Berger goes farther in attributing to the media a more central role within the audience understanding of terrorism and the meaning making process. He argues that the public does not witness the actual violent act, but rather has contact with the happenings through a media "re-presentation" (Berger, 1993). This relationship between audience and representation is the source of "discomfort" among the public, a discomfort that creates conflict - terrorism's ultimate goal. Moreover, Berger writes:

Thus terrorism, whether it is perpetrated by or against the state, abhors neutrality; its *raison d' etre* is to create conflict. Not the result of literally witnessing the actual violent act, the public's discomfort usually arises from its contact with media re-presentations of disruption, destruction, injury, and

death. Terrorism, in other words, operates most effectively as a form of represented images and sounds (Berger, 1993, p.20).

The depictions of brutal terrorism assault through television news reports, photographs, news articles or cinematic productions are powerful and generate conflict (Berger, 1993). The conflict caused by the media "re-presentation" of terrorism will inflict a political polarization of the public - a result that interests not only the terrorists, but the administration as well (Berger, 1993; Chomsky, 2003). According to Berger these images will have a paradoxical effect on the audience:

...confronted with the reality of willful destruction and murder, the public often comes to fear or reject the political causes represented through violent acts. Yet such representations are always, in one sense or another, persuasive; they can help justify government-sponsored counterterrorist campaigns or move a people toward political change (Berger, 1993, p. 21).

On the matter of media representation of terrorism and terrorists, the theorist Edward Herman points to a bias that emerges within the semantic "de-construction" of the events (Herman, 1993). Herman lists four "semantic devices" that are employed in media representation of terrorism. First, Edward Herman describes, "one is to define terrorism so as to exclude states" (Herman, 1993, p.53). Terrorism representations focus on status quo dissidents and rebels. The second, semantic device "is differentiating terrorism from retaliation" (Herman, 1993, p. 56). In this case, everything done to you is considered "autonomous terrorism" while your actions will be always represented in the realm of retaliation for someone else's violence - you are never going to be represented as committing violence, but only acting

towards retaliation. The third semantic trick has been "to use the concept of 'international terrorism.'" This allows the "selective inclusion of states as terrorists" (Herman, 1993, p. 56). The last and according to Herman, the most pivotal device is "selective attention and indignation." The arbitrary choice of which groups or states are given attention in media drags the public focus to certain groups and individuals (the dissidents and rebels) rather than to others (your own nation or administration) (Herman, 1993, p. 57).

The news media coverage of the September 11 events poses even more obstacles to a fair representation of the reality it encodes, due to its international reach and nature. From a yet different theoretical framework, international news flow studies, scholars propose that problems with representation of reality in news media heightens in the case of international events, such as the case of the September 11 terrorist attacks (Hur, 1984; Barnet, 1996). Furthermore, due to the fact that few people have personal knowledge of foreign events, the agenda setting effect of foreign news is stronger than that of domestic news (Wu, 1998).

Contemporary international news have a tendency of increasing importance in the globalized world we live in, as international affairs tend to engage a more diverse and cross-national audience (Barnet, 1996; Wu, 1998). According to scholar Haoming Denis Wu, international news, "this daily, if not the only, source of knowledge about other countries can be expected to have a tremendous impact on how we comprehend the world" (Wu, 1998, p.493). The pioneering scholar within international news flow studies, Wilbur Schramm, pointed out that international news coverage "tends to ignore important events and to distort the reality it represents"

(Schramm, 1964; p. 65). Moreover, scholars have noted a very unbalanced system of news exchange among nations, determined mainly by economic power, ownership and structure of international news organizations and language (Schramm, 1964; Hur, 1984).

The terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. are the most physically and psychologically devastating and media-centric terrorist acts in history (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Kearney 2003; Chomsky, 2003). Scholars have found the body of theory on terrorism events and news manufacturing to be very pertinent to the September 11 events and its coverage by the media channels (Kellner, 2002; Karim, 2002; Louw, 2003; Jenkins, 2003). They have also found the visual nature of the attacks and extensive television coverage to be determining to the understanding of the events themselves and to the way they were framed in other media (Kellner, 2002; Jenkins, 2003). Next follows a detailed description of the terrorist attacks of September 11, as well as a review of media scholars' analysis on the event's encoding by the main television news networks' coverage.

### **9/11 Timeline**

September 11, 2001: at 8:45 a.m. a hijacked passenger jet, American Airlines Flight 11 from Boston, crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York City (Greenberg, 2002). A few minutes later CNN televises live pictures from the scene of the attacks, and at 8:49:50 a.m., CNN anchor Carol Li commented on the images: "This is just in. You are looking at obviously a very disturbing live shot there. That is the World Trade Center, and we have unconfirmed reports this

morning that a plane has crashed into one of the towers of the World Trade Center. CNN Center right now is just beginning to work on this story, obviously calling our sources and trying to figure out exactly what happened” (Mogensen, Lindsay, Li, Perkins and Beardsley, 2002, p.101). As Li described the scene, ABC, NBC, CBS, and Fox News also begin televising live pictures from the scene. At 9:03 a.m. a second hijacked airliner, United Airlines flight 175 from Boston, crashes into the south tower of the World Trade Center (Greenberg, 2002). At this moment all five US news networks, CNN international, and innumerable networks around the world are broadcasting live and show the airliner slamming on the south tower. The audience watches live footage of thousands of people running from the burning towers (Mogensen, Lindsay, Li, Perkins and Beardsley, 2002). At 9:43 a.m. American Airlines Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon. Television shows a global audience at 10:05 a.m. the collapse of the south tower of the World Trade Center; at 10:10 a.m. the collapse of a portion of the Pentagon, and at 10:28 a.m. the collapse of the north tower of the World Trade Center (Greenberg, 2002).

Besides the live coverage of the events as they are unfolding, television also shows the evacuation of the White House, and the audience is told about the closing of the United States border and air traffic control system (Mogensen, Lindsay, Li, Perkins & Beardsley, 2002). During the coverage of the first hours, when events are unfolding, and in the subsequent hours of coverage, the news networks repeat the footage of the airliners' crash on the towers and their collapse for countless times, and that would be true for days to come after the attacks of September, 11, 2001 (Mogensen, Lindsay, Li, Perkins & Beardsley, 2002). The audience of September 11,

unlike previous audiences, could have been changing from one globalized channel to another, only to realize that the same footage and sound-bytes would be shown (Blondheim and Liebes, 2002).

One of the first reactions from the public was of disbelief as the images of the towers on fire and then collapsing resembled a Hollywood production, such as *Armageddon*, *Godzilla* or *Deep Impact*. Along the pronounced reactions to the attacks, the comment "looked like a movie" appeared on the television with a considerable frequency (Semati, 2002). According to Mehdi Semati the mediation of television complicates the complex relationship between the real and the cinematic, as "in the eyewitness coverage of the horrors of the World Trade Center's destruction, the conscience of television, operated through the auspices of the video" (Semati, 2002, p. 214).

However, television not only influenced the public's first impressions of the broadcasted images, television was in a central role of the events (Semati, 2002). The television coverage of the terrorist assault was a clear example of the power that this medium has to engage in "the live broadcast of history" (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002, p.274). Also evident was the problem of the increasing difficulty of distinguishing between television's coverage of the event and it becoming part of the event (Baudrillard, 2001; Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). Even though the focus of this study is on the international media coverage of the September 11 terrorist attacks through the analysis of newspapers, a closer look at television's role is fundamental to any discussion of this event.

## **Encoding 9/11: Television's Role**

The live coverage of the events broadcast by television worldwide has all the features of what theorists call the disaster marathon (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). For a disaster to be considered a media event, and moreover, a television disaster marathon, it is essential that the event has a substantial number of victims or well-known victims, a complete failure of foolproof technologies or the collapse of a well-established institutional or cultural practice (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). This genre of disaster is most effective with the audience when television arrives at the scene while the events are still unfolding, and therefore there is no symbolic or narrative closure. At this point the events are still unfolding and there are no identifiable villains and heroes. This was case of the events (terrorist attacks) of September 11. The events of September 11 match three outstanding features of the disaster marathon genre: special effects, temporal effects and narrative effects (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002).

### **Special Effects**

In terms of special effects, the choice of the targets maximized the attack's visual impact. Television news producers realized this fact from the very beginning of broadcasting and repeatedly showed the images of the planes crashing into the World Trade Center towers and their subsequent collapse. The audience watching the unfolding of the events witnessed the material damage of the tower's physical collapse which caused direct fear: the proximity and the sudden strike gave the impression that it could have happened to virtually anyone (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). The human suffering evidenced by the images of people fleeing the burning



towers covered by dust and many times wounded and bleeding, also heightened the dramatic appeal of the coverage (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). Alongside the dramatic images of the victims, television newscasts also broadcast several interviews with eyewitnesses, police officers and firemen, who narrated their escapes from the burning towers (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002).

Moreover, the symbolic-semiotic characteristics of the witnessing of the Twin Towers' collapse, an icon of American spirit and economic achievement and power, enhanced what scholars Tamar Liebes and Menahem Blondheim characterize as the most relevant special effect feature of September 11 television's disaster marathon (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). The sociologist Jean Baudrillard goes farther in attributing symbolic-semiotic relevance to the target chosen by the terrorists. He argues that the Twin Towers, as the epitome of western capitalism, have a strong symbolic power that goes beyond representing American spirit. His arguments partly explain the continuous repetition of the images by television networks not only in the United States, but also throughout the world (Baudrillard, 2001; Kearney, 2003). Despite the symbolic power of the Twin Towers, the event itself lacked a meaning not only to the audience but also to the news professionals (Debatin, 2002; Kearney, 2003; Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Chomsky, 2003).

The magnitude and unprecedented nature of the events culminated into a situation of incomprehension. As argued by semiotics scholars, there were no existing signifiers that would satisfactorily be equivalent to the signified (the events) or to explain them (Debatin, 2002). In contrast with the focus of contemporary media cultural studies and post-modern philosophy, which characterize television as a

“flood of signifiers without signifieds,” the broadcasting of the attacks on the Twin Towers emerges as a situation where there were no signifiers for the signifieds presented (Debatin, 2002). The lack of signifiers in particular and of an existing language in general to describe the extraordinary events, lead most of the television networks to a broadcasting restricted to the repetition of the images of the crashes and the collapsing towers (Debatin, 2002; Kearney, 2003).

Despite a lack of a proper signifier to comprehend the events of September 11, the media industry relied on history metaphors to compare the present crisis to prior events in history (Winfield, Friedman & Trisnadi, 2002). “Historical context can help interpret as well as augment the narrative, by tapping a collective memory, adding new evidence, revising a once agreed-upon past or imparting lessons and values” (Winfield, Friedman & Trisnadi, 2002; p. 289). In many ways the audience used history metaphors conveyed by the media to understand and view the current world in a sort of event analogy (Winfield, Friedman & Trisnadi, 2002). A recurrent analogy used by the media outlets in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks was related to the Japanese air strike on Pearl Harbor in 1941 (Winfield, Friedman & Trisnadi, 2002; Lewis, 2002). The attack on Pearl Harbor has a specific symbolic value to American imaginary. Pearl Harbor is symbolically remembered as the decisive fact that triggered the American military action in World War II. Therefore, the framing of the events of September 11 in terms of the attack on Pearl Harbor illustrates a case of support to a military action against the perpetrators of the attacks on the American homeland (Lewis, 2002).

## **Temporal and Narrative Effects**

The second feature of the disaster marathon, temporal effects, is an important and vital feature for understanding the "success" of the broadcasting of the events of September 11 to the audience. As a result of careful planning by the terrorists, the attacks unfolded as repetitious acts spaced in time, which granted the attacks long-term exclusivity on the television newscasts (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). The planned chronology of the happenings magnified the psychological effect of the attacks by two means. First, television crews were ready on the spot to cover the second plane crashing into the Twin Towers, broadcasting it live and therefore enhancing the visual impact of the crash. Second, the uncertainty created about the number of attacks was eminent and the audience's anxiety in anticipation of farther possible attacks was enhanced (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002).

The time of the attacks was another influential characteristic of its broadcasting. The terrorists were able to reach the largest live audience possible because most people were awake around the globe (Debatin, 2002). However, the terrorist strategy for getting their message through to the vast global audience is reliant on the media-synchronized society. The apocalyptic events seemed to have brought a sudden stop to the flow of time, a disruption of the temporal structure of our media synchronized society. Television stopped its regular temporal structure, giving the audience an impression that their lives' temporal structure had had an abrupt interruption as well, therefore forcing the audience's full attention. On the network channels, entertainment gave way to 'twenty-four hours' of news coverage (Debatin, 2002).

A third feature of the disaster marathon intrinsic to the unfolding of the September, 11 events, was its narrative effect. The initial invisibility of the actors of the events, the villains as well as the heroes, along with the absence of an explicit rationale or plot enhanced the interest of the audience for the media broadcasting of the attacks, as well as answering for the absent information. With the presence of the what, where, and when, but the absence of "who" and "why," the narrative remained incomplete and therefore involving and extremely "interesting" for the audience (waiting for the informational gap to be fulfilled) (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). The audience expected television to come up with an answer. This narrative structure is argued to be the basis of news reporting in general and especially in terrorism reporting (Weimann & Winn, 1994; Sperry, 1981; Livingston, 1993).

The events of September 11 have all the characteristics necessary to be considered a television disaster marathon (Blondheim & Liebes, 2002). They have the power to derive attraction from the audience due to their narrative and dramatic structure, which, as earlier discussed, is a main characteristic of journalism event encoding (Hall, 1980c, 1993; Dobkin, 1992; Louw, 2003; Weimann & Winn, 1994; Livingstone, 1993). They also fits into the rules of deviance to the social roles of mass media, which dictates newsworthiness (Weimann & Brosius, 1991). For these and other socio-political and philosophical reasons, the television coverage of the terrorism attacks of September 11 were very appealing, the world's made-for-television most watched event (Semati, 2002; Nacos, 2002).

It is clear, as scholar Simon Cottle argues, "...television mediated the events of September 11 for vast majorities around the globe - for many of us in real time - and

it was by these images that we came to know about them" (Cottle, 2002, p. 178). Therefore to understand the impact of September 11 among individuals, it is vital to understand the audience's decoding of the television coverage and television's encoding of the events, which in so many ways constrains the earlier process (Hall, 1979, 1980b, 1993, 1996; Condit, 1989). For an understanding of the media encoding of the events on the morning of September 11, it is fundamental to consider and observe such issues as sourcing and framing (Bell, 1991).

### **Encoding 9/11: Sourcing**

"News is what an authoritative source tells a journalist" (Bells, 1991; p.191). This remark by scholar Allan Bell explains, in a rather pragmatic manner, the influence of sourcing in the manufacturing of news stories (Bell, 1991). In the current format of media coverage of main events, the audience often sees or reads little of the event itself, but a great deal of eyewitnesses and officials' (newsmakers) comments and narratives (Silberstein, 2002). Within media institutional practice, the newsmaker's role is not to provide the news stories themselves, but rather to provide journalists with the raw material for the manufacturing of news stories (Silberstein, 2002).

Despite the fact that contemporary professional journalism is autonomous of political and economical elites and that direct censorship does not apply anymore to most of the media industry, the discourse of the elites is still dominant across media channels (Karim, 2002; Hall, 1979, 1980b). Stuart Hall (1979) argues that the media tends to reproduce dominant discourses and perspectives of official, institutional or governmental knowers, who are seen and presented by the media as rational

authorized sources (Hall, 1979). Moreover, through mechanisms such as licensing, access and advertising, societal elites can impose a certain level of control on what is presented in the media (Karim, 2002; Chomsky, 2003).

In the case of the coverage of a disaster, such as the September 11 terrorist attacks, the media can become more willing to align its coverage with the rhetoric of political elites. In the aftermath of September 11, the media treated (as sometimes happens) U.S. government sources' official information as authoritative and therefore not open to discussion or a deep analysis (Jenkins, 2003). According to scholar Phillip Jenkins:

As in the media response to other kinds of crime problem, such as illicit drugs, the media often seem content to serve as the mouthpieces of the law enforcement bureaucracy (Jenkins, 2003; p. 139).

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, the airwaves were filled with speeches and statements given by current and former government officials (Silberstein, 2002; Greenberg, 2002; Schechter, 2003; Semati, 2002; Jenkins, 2003). During the day of September 11, there were four White House press briefings, a statement by the press secretary, three speeches by President George W. Bush, and countless statements by other government officials [see appendix for full length speeches] (Silberstein, 2002; Semati, 2002; and Greenberg 2002).

President George W. Bush's first remarks on the attacks came forty-five minutes after the first plane hit the north tower of the World Trade Center and drew widespread news coverage (Silberstein, 2002). In his first speech the President of the United States limited his remarks to a description of the happenings: "Two airplanes

have crashed into the World Trade Center." "a difficult moment for America," "an apparent terrorist attack," and "a national tragedy." George W. Bush also assured the audience that he had already taken the necessary initial steps to resolve the eminent crises: "I have spoken to the Vice President, to 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" (Silberstein, 2002).

In his second statement after the attacks (1:04 p.m.), the President maintained the same rhetorical lines and reassured the American people of his actions: "I want to reassure the American people that the full resources of the federal government are working to assist local authorities to save lives and to help the victims of these attacks." And he also shows the magnitude of the measures that are being taken to resolve the crisis: "We have been in touch with the leaders of congress and with the world leaders to assure them that we will do whatever is necessary to protect America and Americans" (Silberstein, 2002). George W. Bush's first and second statements are given within time constraints and in an emergency environment showing a tone of improvisation. The Presidents' third speech to the press goes in a different rhetorical direction (Silberstein, 2002; Semati, 2002; Jenkins, 2003).

Bush's third speech, a five-minute, prime-time address to the nation has a more elaborate tone and is a symbolic starting point for the US government rhetoric for the days to follow (Semati, 2002; Jenkins, 2003). The President starts: "Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under

attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist attacks." By invoking symbols as "freedom" and "way of life," Bush invokes precepts for which most Americans would be willing to sacrifice (Silberstein, 2002). And he continues: "Today our nation saw evil," this phrase, immortalized by the media on television coverage and newspaper headlines, came to be a symbolic one for the rhetoric of the attacks throughout media outlets (Kellner, 2002; Kearney, 2003; Jenkins, 2003).

"God bless America." Using rather religious terms such as 'Evil' and 'God' to depict the terrorist attacks, George W. Bush sets the dualist rhetoric of the US government, which is directly reproduced by the media (Kearney, 2003; Kellner, 2002). The government dualist thesis pervades the media as in expressions such as "God and Evil," "us and them," "allies and enemies," "Islamic terrorism and civilization," and "Islam and the West" (Kellner, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Kearney, 2003). The dualist rhetoric that circulated in the media, privileging the "clash of the civilizations" model, helped to inflate and promote war fever and military solutions to the problem of international terrorism and homeland security (Kellner, 2002).

As he followed with his prime-time address to the nation, George W. Bush announces the building of a coalition and gives his first direct references to war: "Our military is powerful and is prepared," and "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 on terrorism" (Silberstein, 2002). According to several scholars, such as Danny Schechter and Douglas Kellner, the Bush administration's official rhetoric after September 11 has followed a pattern of war propaganda that has already been



used in prior times of war such as in the World War II and the Vietnam War campaigns (Kellner, 2002; Schechter, 2003).

The rhetoric that circulated in the media and which was originated in the public relations offices of the US government, directed the discussions of solutions for the global terrorism threat (Louw, 2003). The media coverage of the September 11 events prompted the audience to support military action rather than instigate a deep discussion of the terrorism threat (Louw, 2003; Kellner, 2002; Kearney, 2003; Semati, 2002; Jenkins, 2003). Questions of the effects of half a century of US foreign policy in the Middle East were hardly ever mentioned in the main media channels and the socio-political and economical contexts of the insurgent terrorist organizations were seldom presented to the audience (Louw, 2003; Kellner, 2002; Kearney, 2003; Semati, 2002; Jenkins, 2003).

The discussion on the reasons and causes of the perpetrators of the attacks was minimal. When existent, this discussion was limited to stereotypes and would inevitably fall into the dualist thesis. The ideas that these terrorist organizations simply "hate our freedom" and that they had no reasons to not like America and Americans, "Why do they hate us?" were presented in George W. Bush's speeches and disseminated by the media (Kellner, 2002; Schechter, 2003; Kearney, 2003; Semati, 2002). Besides sourcing, another relevant issue in the process of encoding an event is media's framing of it (Kellner, 2002; and Hall, 1979, 1980b).

### **Encoding 9/11: Media Framing**

Throughout the live coverage of the attacks and during their aftermath, television news networks framed the attacks in different ways. One way of framing an

event to the audience is through headlines and slogans, which have the function of condensing the subject being presented (Kellner, 2002). Most news networks like CNN and Fox News used a four tier graphic presentation with a capitalized title on the top, such as "BREAKING NEWS" followed by another graphic with the specific slogan that was being used at the moment to construct the event. For instance, CNN used the slogan "ATTACK ON AMERICA" in the initial moments of its broadcasting of the event (Kellner, 2002).

The title and the slogan on the top of the screen were simultaneously accompanied, on the bottom of the screen, by fragments and phrases used by government officials or eyewitnesses in their speeches (Kellner, 2002). All these tiers proved to be very flexible and they came under change in different moments of the coverage in an almost narrative-like plot. According to Douglas Kellner, "media frames shifted from 'America under Attack' to 'America Strikes Back' and 'America's New War' – even before any military action was undertaken, as if the media frames were to conjure the military response that eventually followed" (Kellner, 2002, p.149).

The framing of news, the sourcing process, the transforming of events into narratives, the use of historic metaphors, the television institutional format of the disaster marathon, among other features, are constitute parts of the process of encoding a raw event, like September 11, into news story (Hall, 1979, 1980b, 1996; Dobkin, 1992; Louw, 2003; Weimann & Winn, 1994; Livingston, 1993; Morley & Silverstone, 1990). As earlier discussed, the process of encoding transforms the raw event into news stories shaped by journalists' values, political and religious beliefs,

socio-economical context, cultural background, and personal and corporate interests (Hall, 1979, 1980b, 1993).

The encoding of an event into news stories shapes and influences the moment of their decoding, which moreover will influence the meaning making process of audiences and the way the audience understands events and the context in which they exist. The audience understanding of reality itself is constrained by the encoding of the mass mediated message by media industries and their professionals (Hall, 1979, 1980b; Morley, 1990; McLeod, Kosicki & Pan, 1991; Jensen 1990; Condit, 1989). The preferred meanings encoded by media professionals will therefore influence the encoding of signs from which audiences interpret and make sense of reality. Encoding and decoding are distinct, but strictly linked moments, and it is virtually impossible to understand them apart (Schroder, 2000).

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Cultural studies have intensively investigated media effects, content, and cultural implications (Fiske, 1986). Critics have clearly distinguished between a reception studies tradition and a critical approach to understand mass media messages encoding and decoding. The studies of the Frankfurt school and Althusserian textual analysis and other critical studies based on these early ones, conceive of the text as ideologically closed, while studies from the reception theory perspective approach texts as ideologically and narratively open and providing a "live audience" for interpreting these media messages depending on individuals' cultural background and social context (Jensen, 1990). Recently a myriad of critics have discussed the possibility of messages being ideologically open, yet with decoding limitations (Perez, 1996).

The theoretical struggle on polysemic versus ideologically closed media messages can be assessed in an attempt to illustrate the functioning of Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model through the looking glass of a contemporary case study. A close analysis to the encoding of September 11 terrorist attacks by newspaper journalists was undertaken. A textual analysis of newspaper's editorial pieces referring to the September 11 events was undertaken and the main themes and frames found in each editorial were compared to illustrate differences and similarities among newspapers from different countries.

This textual analysis of newspaper editorials was contextualized within an already existing analysis of news encoding of the September 11 terrorist attacks, which was done through a compilation of media studies that assessed the news

manufacturing process of September 11 and its implication for the audience (e.g. Blondheim & Liebes, 2002; Cottle, 2002; Debatin, 2002; Greenberg, 2002; Karim, 2002; Kellner, 2002; Mongsen, Lindsay, Li, Perkins, and Beardsley, 2002; Nacos, 2002; Semati, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Winfield, 2002; Chomsky, 2003; Jenkins, 2003; Kearney, 2003; Louw, 2003; Schechter, 2003).

Media messages delivered by television, newspapers, and magazines, among other mass media, can be received, understood or decoded differently by individuals. This might lead to misunderstanding of the encoders' "preferred reading" (Hall, 1980c, 1993, Schroder, 2000). "Preferred reading" is a concept first introduced by Stuart Hall in a 1975 study as the ability of the encoder to convey a meaning in his message according to his/her interests or ideology (Hall, 1980c, 1993; Schroder, 2000). The concept of the "preferred reading" is based on an assumption that one of the ways the dominant social class maintains itself in power is by controlling the mass media and conveying through the media its hegemonic ideology (Steiner, 1988). However, the encoders' "preferred reading" can be decoded differently by different audience members (Hall, 1980c, 1993; Schroeder, 2000).

The encoding/decoding model by Stuart Hall became a milestone for media studies within the cultural studies tradition (Condit, 1989). Its theoretical relevance and the possibilities the encoding/decoding model offers in terms of revealing underlying codes in media messages makes its application to the September 11 media coverage essential to the understanding of the event itself. Considering the events on September 11, 2001 and newspaper journalists' encoding of them through editorial

pieces gathered from newspapers from different countries, the author proposes the following research questions:

R.Q.1: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of aspects of identity between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11?

R.Q.2: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of contextual information between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11?

R.Q.3: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of visual descriptions between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11?

R.Q.4: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of sources between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11?

R.Q.5: Are there similarities or differences in the way editorials of different newspapers framed the discussions of the events of September 11?

## Chapter 3

### **METHODOLOGY**

Approaches to method and data have, in most recent years, expanded to include the everyday symbolic and structural reality in which message receivers exist. That is the case for cultural studies' approach to method and data (Altheide, 1996; Eco, 1990). According to David Altheide:

Broadly conceived as "cultural studies," this approach seeks to examine the complex interaction between individual perspectives and patterns of meaning and symbolic ordering to understand new sources of social definitions and sort out their consequences (Altheide, 1996, p. 11).

The use of textual analysis as a methodology to expose meanings in a text implies the acknowledgement of two characteristics in the text: polysemia, the text's inability to close meaning, and the reader's individual decoding strategies, that are related to the audience's understandings, experiences, socio-economical reality and cultural background (Meyers, 1994; Eco, 1990). Although, different interpretations of the message are possible, according to Umberto Eco, all interpretations are contextually bounded (Eco, 1990). Within the cultural studies approach to document analysis, the way the document influences the defining of the situation and the audience member's meaning making process are fundamental issues to be addressed, alongside the document encoding process, context, and significance (Altheide, 1996; Eco, 1990).

A textual or document analysis consists of the method or procedure of probing, identifying and analyzing documents for their significance and meaning

(Altheide, 1996; Worthington, 2002). For that, the first important steps in a textual analysis are to determine the documents to be investigated and the unit of analysis within the documents (Eco, 1990). As asserted by David Altheide, “a document can be defined as any symbolic representation that can be recorded or retrieved for analysis” (Altheide, 1996, p. 2). To answer the research questions proposed earlier, this study used newspapers as the documents of analysis. Moreover, the unit of analysis was newspapers’ editorial pieces that discussed or described the terrorist attacks of September 11 (Altheide, 1996; Worthington, 2001).

The decision to analyze editorials was made due to editorial pieces' nature as an opinionative channel, different from usual articles encoded within widely established journalistic technical procedures and format. Editorials more clearly expose the ideological and cultural assumptions of media professionals and of each newspaper as an institution, due to the fact that they are not presented in such a structured professional format and that they represent the “opinion” of the newspaper as a whole (Worthington, 2001). Furthermore, prior studies show evidence for an agenda-setting effect of the news wires in the content of newspapers’ international news (Atwood, 1982). Choosing editorials as the units of analysis is also a way to avoid the influence from news wires. This study has the goal of probing how the ideological frameworks of encoders from different countries influence the re-presentation of events; therefore news wires articles would not serve this purpose.

This study textually analyzed editorials from different newspapers, and identified within the text themes, frames and discourses that are predominant or determinant in the “re-presentation” of the September 11 terrorist attacks



(Worthington, 2001). The use of the terms theme, frame and discourse in this study follows from Nancy Worthington's study of political activism representation by the print press, which is based on a model developed by David Altheide (Worthington, 2001). David Altheide thoroughly defines these key terms:

Themes are the recurring typical theses that run through a lot of reports. Frames are the focus, a parameter or boundary, for discussing a particular event. Frames focus on what will be discussed, how it will be discussed, and above all, how it will not be discussed. Discourse refers to the parameters of relevant meaning that one uses to talk about things. Meaning and language are implicated in both. We can simply say that discourse and frame work together to suggest a taken-for-granted perspective for how one might approach a problem (Altheide, 1996; p. 31).

### **Instrument**

When analyzing editorial pieces from the different newspapers chosen, certain patterns in the way the terrorist attacks of September 11 were described and categorized were identified. To guide the analysis, and focus on the collection of information that would be relevant for answering the proposed research questions, this study made use of a protocol to investigate the documents (Altheide, 1996; Worthington, 2001).

As put by David Altheide, “a protocol is a way to ask questions of a document; a protocol is a list of questions, items, categories, or variables that guide data collection from documents” (Altheide, 1996; p. 26). The following questions guided the categorization of the text throughout the analysis; they were used before

by Nancy Worthington (2001) in her study of themes and frames for newspaper and magazine coverage of political activism:

(1) How are the aspects of identity (ethnicity and nation) used to categorize the people involved? (2) What contextual information is included or assumed by the coverage? What other stories are used to tell this story? (3) How are descriptions of photographs, illustrations and videos used to create or discuss visual images related to the event (Worthington, 2001, p. 172)?

The questions in the protocol used in Nancy Worthington's study were found to fit the purposes of this study's investigation. Question number one regarding aspects of identity is important to this study as we are dealing with attacks that were perpetrated by individuals of a certain ethnicity and nationality: Arabs in general and Saudi Arabians in particular (Semati, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Kearney, 2003). The second question related to the contextual information, which is assumed or included in the text, comes to answer concerns already raised in the literature review for the use of history, metaphors and political and geographical context to encode news coverage of September 11 (Greenberg, 2002; Kellner, 2002; Semati, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Jenkins, 2003; Kearney, 2003).

The third question in Nancy Worthington's protocol is also useful for the textual analysis undertaken in this study. This question was designed to probe issues relating to the visual aspects within the text. As discussed in the literature review of this study, the role played by the images (videos and photographs) of the crashing and collapsing of the Twin Towers was significant and functioned as special effects for September 11 television disaster marathon (Baudrillard, 2001; Blondheim & Liebes,

2002; Kearney, 2003). Therefore a better understanding of the encoding of these images as well as the implications for journalists is essential to make sense of the symbolic function that they played in the “re-presentation” process of the September 11 events among audience members (Eco, 1990; Baudrillard, 2001; Kearney, 2003).

The first step of the analysis was to go through what Stuart Hall (1979) calls “a long preliminary soak” when the researcher reads all relevant content in the documents selected, in the case of this study, newspapers’ editorial pieces, that dealt with the events of September 11. Besides the familiarizing with the news context it was also important to “soak up” some contextual information on the September 11 events in terms of politics and geography (Hall, 1979, p. 15). The first three questions are concise with the news content to be analyzed and cover the different aspects found in the newspapers; however a need to expand the information on sourcing led the author to adopt other questions (Perkins & Saratosa, 2001).

As discussed earlier when assessing the encoding process of the terrorist attacks coverage, the institutional structure of sourcing in news media plays a central role in news manufacturing in general and for the September 11 news coverage in particular (Greenberg, 2002; Kellner, 2002; Semati, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Jenkins, 2003; Kearney, 2003). With the issue of sourcing as a central concern for this study, the author used questions found in the protocols of two studies dealing with textual analysis of themes and frames within newspapers coverage: Nancy Worthington’s political activism study and Perkins and Saratosa’s coverage of Native Americans (Perkins & Saratosa, 2001; Worthington, 2001).

A fourth question concerning the sources of the reports and articles used in Worthington's study (2001) was combined with questions used in the protocol in Perkins and Saratosa (Perkins & Saratosa, 2001; Worthington, 2001). Worthington's protocol questions on source are: "(1) Who are the sources, and how their information is presented? And (2) Are they paraphrased or quoted" (Worthington, 2001, p. 172)? Worthington's questions on sourcing were combined with the model used by Perkins and Saratosa (Perkins & Saratosa, 2001). Perkins and Saratosa's 5-point model, which includes five questions related to sourcing, derives from cultivation research such as those undertaken by George Gerbner (Gerbner, 1971).

The five questions proposed by the Perkins and Saratosa study for analyzing issues of sourcing are as follows:

(1) Who is/is not quoted? (2) Who is/is not given credence by title? (3) Where are those cited positioned within the news reports? (4) Whose ideas are supported (reinforced) or questioned? And (5) Which details are included or excluded (Perkins & Saratosa, 2001; p. 4)?

Therefore a fourth and final question concerning sourcing was added to the protocol used in this study: (4) Who are the sources and how is the information presented? Are they paraphrased or quoted? Whose ideas are supported (reinforced) or questioned? Which details are included or excluded (Perkins & Saratosa, 2001; Worthington, 2001)?

### **Sample**

The protocol used for the textual analysis functions as a probing tool to expose the underlying meaning in the sample of newspaper editorials. The sample

analyzed was drawn from the period of September 11, 2001 to September 11, 2002. The author used Lexis-Nexis electronic database to select the sample by undertaking a keyword search using the expression “September 11,” in the respective language of the chosen newspapers and the time frame described. The newspapers used in this study were selected for specific reasons.

First, the author needed newspapers from different countries, which were encoded within different ethno-cultural populations and published in different languages. This was a requirement due to the fact that this study probed cultural and ideological influences in the process of encoding and consequently decoding of media messages. A second issue that influenced the choice of the newspapers to be analyzed was the relevance of each periodical to the ethno-cultural population for which it is published. Finally, choosing newspapers that are considered to be in the same political spectrum was central to the selection. Therefore all the dailies selected for this study are considered moderate liberal publications, rather than conservative or extreme liberal ones in their respective countries.

Five newspapers from five different ethno-cultural groups were selected for this research: *The New York Times*, *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais*. *The New York Times* daily was chosen for being considered the most traditional and influential newspaper in the English language and among the Anglo-Saxon ethno-cultural group besides being, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation, the newspaper with the third largest circulation in the United States (largest population among English speaking nations). It is also located in New York,

which was the main stage for the terrorist attacks and is considered to be a moderate liberal publication (Audit Bureau of Circulation, 2004).

The Parisian daily *Le Monde* was chosen for being considered the most influential and traditional liberal newspaper in the French speaking world, besides being the newspaper with the largest circulation among French speakers (Pean & Cohen, 2003). The periodical *El Pais* from Madrid was chosen for being considered the most influential and traditional newspaper among Spanish speaking readers and for being considered a moderate liberal publication in Spain (World Association of Newspapers, 2004). The Sao Paulo daily *Folha de Sao Paulo* was selected because it is the newspaper with the largest circulation in Latin America and considered the most influential liberal daily among Portuguese speaking readers (Bloomberg.com, 2004).

Finally the daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* was chosen because it is the international newspaper with the largest circulation among Arabic speaking readers and considered to be the most influential publication among Muslims. Arab Muslims are an ethno-cultural group, directly involved in the terrorist attacks of September 11 (Allied Media Corp., 2004). *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* is a Saudi owned newspaper, considered a moderate liberal voice within Arab media. Among all the newspapers to be analyzed in this essay, this is the only one that was not analyzed in its original language. *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* articles were retrieved from World News Connection electronic database, and translated from Arabic to English by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, an office within the US State Department, that monitors and translates international media sources for the US government (World News Connection, 2004).

A sample of editorial pieces, six editorials in the original Arabic version and their correspondent English translations were taken to a translator for verification. No major translation problems were found; this issue was further discussed in the strengths and limitations section of this study.

### **Procedures**

All editorials discussing the September 11 events from the five chosen newspapers in the period from September 11, 2001 to September 11, 2002 were gathered and analyzed using the protocol described earlier.

The textual analysis of the newspaper editorials took into consideration the various issues discussed in this study's review of literature. Matters of ideology were central to the analysis, considering ideology from the perspective of the structuralist theorist Luis Althusser, who defines it as "a 'representation' of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (Althusser, 1971; p.153). Within Althusser's perspective, ideology is the result of the interaction between individuals' imaginary and the culture in which she/he lives. Therefore questions of culture, ethnicity, and nation were one of the focuses for finding possible similarities and differences in the editorials from the different newspapers (Heck, 1980).

The first phase of the analysis probed aspects of identity and answered research question number one: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of aspects of identity between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11? This phase of the analysis had the goal to detect words in the editorials that were related to nationality, religion or ethnic groups within which the

people involved in the discussions were identified. The second step consisted of identifying in editorials, specific words or information used in association with the words pertaining to ethnicity, nationality and religion to describe the people involved in the discussion of the September 11 events. Then, a comparison between the editorials from each newspaper was undertaken to reveal important similarities and differences in the way the five newspapers associated ethnicity, nationality and religion to express, characterize and farther constitute a re-presentation of their identity to the reader.

Based on the literature reviewed on news making process, contextual information used to represent the events of September 11 was determinative in the encoding of the events. The second phase of the analysis probed texts for contextual information, such as historical metaphors, past events, and information on terrorism groups and counter-terrorism government action (Semati, 2002; Chomsky, 2003). This phase of the analysis had the goal of answering research question number two: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of contextual information between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11?

This phase consisted on identifying information in the editorials that built a context or informational background to address predominant issues to the reader. In a second step for this phase, the way in which the editorials from each of the newspapers utilized the contextual information was under scope. It was evaluated how relevant the different contextual information was to each of the newspaper editorials. Finally, the way in which editorials from the five newspaper samples



utilized contextual information was probed and a comparison between the samples was undertaken to reveal important similarities and differences.

The use of descriptions of videos, images and photos, was analyzed due to the events television coverage's highly appealing visual nature (Baudrillard, 2001; Blondheim and Liebes, 2002; Nacos, 2002). The third phase of the analysis had the goal of answering research question number three: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of visual descriptions between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11? This phase of the analysis consisted of identifying descriptions of images (videos, photos and illustrations) in the sample editorials that were used to address different issues to the reader. Then, the most frequent and relevant visual descriptions used in the five newspapers samples were listed. It was evaluated how important the categories of visual descriptions were to each of the five samples. Finally, a comparison between the five newspapers was undertaken to reveal important similarities and differences.

According to literature reviewed, sourcing arrangement is an important way to convey meaning in news (Silberstein, 2002; Jenkins, 2003; Chomsky, 2003; Louw, 2003). The fourth phase of the analysis had the goal to answer research question number four: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of sources between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11? This phase of the analysis consisted of identifying information credited to a source (person, institution or authority) in the editorials. After the initial analysis, the most frequent and conspicuously used sources across the five samples were selected. In a second step for this phase of the analysis, the way in which the editorials from the

five newspapers utilized information from the sources was investigated. It was evaluated how relevant sources were to each of the newspaper samples. Finally, a comparison between the five samples was undertaken to reveal important similarities and differences.

After a primary analysis of aspects of identity, contextual information, visual descriptions and sourcing in the newspaper editorials was executed, results were compared among the five newspapers. A secondary analysis, where each one of the editorials was classified within a specific theme and frame was undertaken applying the results found in the primary analysis of the texts. From that emerged themes and frames within which editorials were classified.

A comparison of the dominant themes and frames across newspapers was undertaken to find important similarities or differences in the framing of the September 11 events between the newspapers selected, therefore fully answering research question number five: Are there similarities or differences in the way editorials of different newspapers framed the discussions of the events of September 11? The results from the textual analysis of the newspaper editorials are thoroughly listed and described in the following findings section of this study.

## Chapter 4

**FINDINGS**

Twelve months of editorials from five daily newspapers were reviewed. *The New York Times* had a total of 62 editorials pertaining to the September 11 terrorist attacks and their aftermath. The Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* had 43 editorials discussing the September 11 events. The Brazilian *Folha de Sao Paulo* had 30 editorials pertaining to the terrorist attacks and their aftermath. The French newspaper *Le Monde* had 31 editorials discussing the September 11 events. Finally, the Spanish daily *El Pais* had a total of 39 editorials pertaining to the terrorist assault of September 11 and its aftermath. Considering that each of these newspapers has a minimum of one and a maximum of three editorials per edition and that in almost every edition each editorial approaches a different issue, the September 11 terrorist attacks demanded a considerable amount of attention from the five newspapers analyzed. There was an average of about one editorial per week throughout the one-year timeframe focusing on discussions of the September 11 terrorist attacks and their aftermath.

The editorials in the five samples were then qualitatively analyzed using the protocol proposed in the methods section. Results from the textual analysis revealed critical similarities and differences in the way the editorials from the five newspapers investigated encoded the events of September 11 and its aftermath. It was found that the following lexis (listed in decreasing order of importance) were used in editorials to re-present people involved in the September 11 events: 1) Muslim, Islamic and Arab; 2) United States and American; 3) Afghanistan and Afghani; 4) Saudi Arabia

and Saudi; 5) Pakistan and Pakistani; 6) Israelis and Palestinians; 7) United Kingdom and British; and 8) Brazilian, French and Spanish. Important similarities and differences in the way the five dailies used these expressions were found.

Results showed similarities and differences found among the five newspapers regarding their use of contextual information. The contextual information used by editorials related to: 1) Victims, stories and aid; 2) Civil liberties; 3) Security measures; 4) Afghanistan history and situation; 5) Financial context; 6) Israeli-Palestinian conflict; 7) Definition of terrorism; 8) History of Taliban and Al-Qaeda; 9) Islamophobia, anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism. Findings related to issues of visual encoding showed important similarities and differences in the way the editorials from the five newspapers described the following images: 1) Airliners and Twin Towers; 2) Victims and debris; 3) Al-Qaeda videos; and 4) Afghanistan bombings.

From the results also emerged similarities and differences in the way the five newspapers studied made use of sources' information in their editorials. It was found that the following sources (listed in decreasing order of frequency) were conspicuously utilized in newspaper editorials: 1) United States President Géorge W. Bush; 2) United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair; 3) Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden; 4) United States Attorney General John Ashcroft; 5) Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; and 5) French President Jacques Chirac, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Aznar and Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

Research question number five probed the way in which the editorials analyzed themed and framed the discussions of the September 11 terrorist attacks.

The most frequently found themes across the five samples were the following: 1) War on terrorism; 2) Reacting to the attacks; 3) Victims and aid/coping; 4) Security measures; 5) Criticizing US foreign policy; 6) Economic crisis after 9/11; 7) Civil liberties; 8) Depicting the enemy; 9) Israeli-Palestinian conflict; 10) Defining terrorism; 11) Television and 9/11; and 12) Ground Zero. The themes above mentioned were later clustered within broader frames. Results demonstrate the appearance of three frames among editorials: 1) Nationalism; 2) Internationalism; and 3) Critical. Findings demonstrate the existence of critical similarities and differences in the way the five samples utilized themes and frames. Next are listed the detailed findings from the textual analysis organized research question and divided in the subheadings mentioned above.

### **Research Question # 1: Aspects of Identity**

The following findings answer research question number one: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of aspects of identity between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11? They derive from question number one in the Worthington (2001) protocol: How are the aspects of identity (ethnicity, and nation) used to categorize the people involved?

Results from the qualitative textual analysis show that newspaper editorials made use of identity expressions (nationality, ethnicity and religion) as cues to encode the September 11 events and their aftermath. It was also found that some identity expressions were more relevant than others in constructing a preferred reading to decoders. Therefore, the expressions identified in the newspaper editorials are listed in decreasing order of importance, as follows: 1) Muslim, Islamic and Arab;

2) United States and American; 3) Afghanistan and Afghani; 4) Saudi Arabia and Saudi; 5) Pakistan and Pakistani; 6) Israelis and Palestinians; 7) United Kingdom and British; and 8) Brazilian, French and Spanish.

In a second phase of the analysis, it was found that critical similarities and differences emerged regarding the way in which the five newspapers investigated employed these expressions of identity to re-present people involved in the events to the reader. These similarities and differences are thoroughly discussed in this section in the case for each of the identity lexis.

1) Muslim, Islamic and Arab: Among the various expressions used to characterize identity of the people involved, the most conspicuous occurrence consisted of the words “Muslim,” “Arab,” and “Islamic.” Findings show important similarities and differences in the way in which the five newspapers made use of these words to re-present main issues to the reader.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

Similarities emerged in the way that two of the most conspicuous associations regarding the words “Muslim,” “Islamic” and “Arab” was utilized in editorials from the five newspapers. The second most common association found across the five editorial samples consisted of discussions about Muslim and Arab allies in the coalition against terrorism. Information like the following were commonly found among editorials: “The strategic position of its air bases and the influence it has among the Islamic world makes Saudi Arabia the most important Muslim ally in a possible war in Afghanistan” (*El Pais*, September 26, 2001, p. 26 [my translation]). Such information was utilized to re-present the identity of Muslim and Arab nations

allied to the United States in the war on terrorism or in supporting American government's actions after the September 11 dreadful attack.

The third most important appearance of the words "Arab," "Muslim" and "Islamic" in the five samples related to information about racism and discrimination against individuals of Muslim or Arab background in western countries. The following is an example of how this information was presented in editorials from the five newspapers: "There is already worrisome news alerting that the Islamic community in the United States is suffering with persecutions and discrimination" (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, September 16, 2001, p. A2 [my translation]). These editorials advocated the tolerance for difference, condemned acts of racism, and discussed unfair racial, ethnical and religious generalizations. Results also showed a critical difference regarding the most common use of the lexis "Muslim," "Arab" and "Islamic."

#### Important Differences Across Newspapers

The editorials from the daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* differed from the other four newspapers in terms of its most conspicuous association using the words "Muslim," "Islamic" and "Arab." Information such as the following was commonly found among editorials from the Saudi daily: "The message that came out of Doha, where the Organization for the Islamic Conference foreign ministers held an extraordinary session yesterday, clearly rejected terrorism" (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, October 11, 2001, p.11). While the editorials from the Saudi newspaper most conspicuously associated these identity expressions with information about the reaction of disapproval to the September 11 attacks from Arab and Muslim leaders and governments, the other four

newspapers' editorials most relevant association included information about terrorists and terrorism groups. Information such as the following was common among editorials from *The New York Times*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *El Pais*, and *Le Monde*: "Incompetent F.B.I. officials in Washington turned down a field request in late August to authorize a more thorough investigation of possible links between Mr. Moussaoui and Islamic terrorist groups that might be planning a hijacking operation" (*The New York Times*, July 26, 2002, p. 20). Other associations using the expressions "Muslim," "Islamic," and "Arab" were found, however did not emerge as relevant as the ones mentioned earlier, when considering the overall number of editorials selected. Some of these words were: hateful, immigrant, fanatic, suicidal, religious, peaceful, fundamentalist, extremist, enemy, and clash of civilizations.

2) United States and Americans: Regarding the utilization of words to re-present identity, the second most conspicuous occurrence regarded the expressions "United States" and "American." Findings show important similarities and differences in the way in which the editorials of the five newspapers utilized these words to re-present the people involved in the September 11 events to the reader.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

Results demonstrate that editorials from the five samples most frequently associated the expressions "United States" and "American" with information about victims and the effects of the attacks to American citizens. Statements like these were frequently identified in editorials: "These [Americans] include direct victims, families that lost a relative in the attack, and indirect victims who lost jobs or homes or suffered in some other way" (*The New York Times*, November 17, 2001, p.22).



Another important similarity that emerged from the results regards information about American civil liberties and democracy. The editorials of *The New York Times*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *El Pais*, and *Le Monde* dailies frequently included this type of information, as in the following example: “It is disturbing to verify that the United States, one of the birth places for the liberal democracy in the Western world is going through a terrible regression in terms of civil liberties” (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, November 4, 2001, p. A2 [my translation]). This association was used to criticize United States and European governments’ implementation of new laws and regulations that were considered a threat to civil liberties and democracy after the September 11 events.

#### Important Differences Across Newspapers

Despite the fact that the editorials from the five newspapers under scope used the words “American” and “United States” associated with information about victims and civil liberties, there were critical differences in the way they made other associations with these words. Different from the other four dailies, the editorials of *The New York Times* conspicuously associated the words American and United States with ideas of freedom, as in the following statement: “Few freedoms are as vital to the nation’s character and essential to its economy, as the freedom to travel” (September 18, 2001, p. 30). This type of information was used by the editorials of *The New York Times* to criticize terrorists as it was pointed out that freedom is the main reason why they hate Americans, but it was also used to establish one of the most important characteristics of United States national identity.

The way in which the dailies *Folha de Sao Paulo* and *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* frequently presented information about the United States status as military, political and economical leader in the international scenario constitutes another relevant difference, as this was not the case for the other three dailies. Information asserting American leadership in the world was commonly found, as in the following example: “Why do they hate us? For the Americans to ask this question themselves is in itself considered a modest beginning to deal with the ‘feelings of animosity’ they discovered after 11 September toward their country’s leadership of the world after the Cold War” (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, January 7, 2002, p. 13).

A third critical difference that emerged from results, relates to the dailies *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais* association using the words “American” and “United States” and critics to American unilateral foreign policy before the September 11 attacks and in the months following the attacks to represent main issues to the reader. The following is an example of such critics found in these four dailies: “The refusal to join the efforts to create an International Criminal Court, the withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol and the disrespect for UN resolutions are only some of the unilateral policies taken by Washington, which undermine the international coalition on terror” (*Le Monde*, August 31, 2002, p. 18 [my translation]). This association was used to criticize the unilateral approach to foreign policy taken by the Bush Administration before and mainly after the September 11 terrorist assault. Expressions such as: brave, voluntary, racism, powerful, trauma, fear, self-esteem, patriotism and xenophobia were also associated with “American” and

“United States,” however; these words were not as broadly or conspicuously used as the ones previously mentioned.

3) Afghanistan and Afghans: Among the various expressions used to characterize nationality, the third most conspicuous occurrence included the words “Afghanistan” and “Afghans.” Findings show important similarities and differences in the way in which the editorials of the five newspapers made use of these expressions to encode discussions about the September 11 terrorist attacks.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

The editorials of the five newspapers were similar in the way they used the words “Afghans” and “Afghanistan” in association with information about terrorist harbor, terrorism safe heaven, Taliban, and Al-Qaeda. This is an example of a statement commonly found among the editorials: “With the Taliban’s blessings, Mr. Bin Laden operates terrorist bases and training camps in southern Afghanistan, near the Pakistani border” (*The New York Times*, September 14, 2001, p. 26). This association was used to raise readers’ awareness to the connection made by United States intelligence service between the September 11 perpetrators (Osama Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda members) and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

Findings show another similarity among the five newspapers investigated, regarding the way they associated the expressions “Afghanistan” and “Afghani” with information about reconstruction. Information like the following was commonly identified among the editorials analyzed: “The need for a reconstruction of Afghanistan’s bureaucratic and economic structures goes beyond the war on terrorism; it is a mission that the international community should undertake to rescue

a people under years of war and oppression” (*Le Monde*, December 19, 2001, p. 14 [my translation]). It was advocated in these editorials that a democratic government installed after the reconstruction of Afghanistan was the only way to avoid that country becoming once again a harbor for terrorism groups, and to stop the suffering of Afghani people.

Associations including the word “Afghanis” with information about Taliban ruling and the impoverished situation in Afghanistan were used to describe the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and its effects on the Afghani people: “At its epicenter lies Afghanistan, an impoverished and backward nation that over the centuries has been a battleground and graveyard for the interests of great powers” (*The New York Times*, September 14, 2001, p. 26) This association raised reader’s awareness of the chaotic reality of Afghanistan and constitute the third similarity found among the five newspapers. Despite the three similarities discussed, there was a critical difference between editorials from the five samples.

#### Important Differences Across Newspapers

While editorials from *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, and *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* frequently associated the word Afghani with information about civil casualties in the war on Afghanistan, the same did not happen among editorials of the New York daily. Information like the following was frequently found among editorials of these four newspapers: “The progressive victimization of the civil population, including children, opens the discussion about the legitimization of the prolonged bombings in Afghanistan” (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, October 28, 2001, p. A2 [my translation]). This association served as a means to raise readers’ awareness of

the high number of casualties among the Afghani population caused by the United States-led military action in that country. It was also used to criticize the Pentagon's rhetoric of precision weapons in the Afghanistan war. This association was not found in the editorials of *The New York Times*.

4) Saudi Arabia and Saudis: Among the various expressions used to characterize nationality, the fourth most conspicuous occurrence was related to the utilization of the words "Saudi Arabia" and "Saudis." Results demonstrate important similarities and differences in the way in which the five newspapers made use of these words to re-present Saudis and Saudi Arabia to the reader.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

The five newspapers were similar in the way they utilized associations between "Saudis" and "Saudi Arabia" and the words ally and partner to inform the reader about Saudi Arabia's political position in the war on terrorism. The following is a typical example of such association: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an old friend of the United States and the Saudis have participated totally in the global war on terrorism and have the [Defense] Department and the US administration's profound appreciation" (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, August 7, 2002, p. 19). This association was used by editorials to reaffirm the position of Saudi Arabia as the United States' main ally among Muslim and Arab nations. It was also used to raise readers' awareness to the fact that Saudi Arabia is an important and strategic United States ally in the Middle East, as its bases could be used by American military forces in a war in Afghanistan and in a possible war with Iraq. Despite this similarity the

newspapers investigated had two critical differences in the way they encoded information associated with the expressions “Saudi Arabia” and “Saudi.”

#### Important Differences Across Newspapers

The selected editorials from *The New York Times*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *El Pais*, and *Le Monde* conspicuously used the expressions “Saudi Arabia” and “Saudi” in association with information about the alleged perpetrators of the September 11 attacks, as in the following statement: “Osama Bin Laden comes from a prominent Saudi business family” (*The New York Times*, September 25, p.28). Only one editorial from the Saudi newspaper utilized this association.

Another critical difference that emerged from the textual analysis refers to way in which the editorials from *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, and *Folha de Sao Paulo* frequently made criticisms to Saudi Arabia concerning its harboring and financing of terrorists and to its authoritarian monarchical regime. The following is an example of these criticisms found in editorials of the three dailies: “Due to its prominent business operations in that country, the US has overlooked the fact that the Al-Qaeda network has been financed by wealthy Saudi groups linked to the royal family” (*Le Monde*, November 13, 2001, p. 11 [my translation]). These critics were not found in the editorials of *The New York Times* or in the Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*.

5) Pakistan and Pakistanis: Findings show important similarities and differences in the way in which the editorials of the five newspapers made use of the expressions “Pakistan” and “Pakistani” to encode discussions about the September 11 terrorist attacks.

### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

The five newspapers associated the words “Pakistan” and “Pakistani” with the words ally, alliance and partner. The following is a typical example: “such connections would help shaky Muslim allies like Pakistan’s leader, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, contain whatever domestic political backlash might result from opening Pakistani military bases to American troops and warplanes.” (*The New York Times*, October 3, 2001, p.22). Editorials where Pakistan was mentioned had the goal of raising readers’ awareness to the importance of Pakistan as a militarily strategic ally in the war in Afghanistan in particular and in the war against terror as a whole.

### Important Differences Across Newspapers

Among the sample editorials from the newspapers *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais* the words “Pakistan” and “Pakistani” were mainly used in association to the words ally and partner. However, these three dailies also had editorials using the words “Pakistan” and “Pakistani” to criticize the Pakistani government’s totalitarian and military ruling. They also used this information to raise readers’ awareness to the role of Pakistan as a terrorism harbor. The French daily *Le Monde* also criticized United States’ ties and foreign policy towards Pakistani’s government: “The US policy of financing and arming Musharraf was the main force driving Pakistan’s support for the Taliban against the Soviet Union” (*Le Monde*, February 16, 2002, p. 18 [my translation]).

### 6) Palestinians and Israelis

All newspapers made use of the words “Palestinians” and “Israelis” in their editorials to discuss the war on terrorism and the role played by the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict. No important similarities were found in the way the five newspapers associated these expressions with other information, next follows relevant differences found.

### Important Differences Across Newspapers

There were three clearly identifiable distinctive re-presentations of the identity of Palestinians and Israelis in the sample editorial of the five selected newspapers. *The New York Times* editorials used a rhetoric that was closest to a “neutral” position towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It discussed the strategic importance of solving the conflict for the United States-lead war on terrorism. *The New York Times* editorials discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its implications for the war on terrorism advocated that both parts were to blame for the post-September 11 rise in violence; however, there was a need for an intervention by the United States and the international community.

A second re-presentation of the identity of Palestinians and Israelis was found in the editorials of *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde* and *El Pais*. The editorials of these periodicals made use of a rhetoric similar to *The New York Times* towards the conflict, however, they made a case for Israelis’ culpability in the escalating violence following the September 11 attacks. They also pointed out that Palestinian suicide bombings had aggravated the conflict.

A third re-presentation of the identity of Israelis and Palestinians was identified in the sample editorials from the daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*. These editorials had the main goal of constructing Israel’s national identity as a violent occupying force in the Palestinian territories. These editorials used the words “Israel” and



“Israelis” in association with the words terrorist, oppressive and aggressor. *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*’s editorials addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict made use of strong rhetoric against Israel and Israelis, blaming Sharon’s administration for the escalating violence in the Palestinian occupied territories after September 11: “Israel rushes to employ the disaster [9/11] in covering up its oppressive policy in Palestine, thus taking advantage of the world’s distraction with the US catastrophe” (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, September 14, 2001, p. 9).

#### 7) United Kingdom and British

The re-presentation of the words “United Kingdom” and “British” were also conspicuously used in the editorials of the five newspapers.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

There were no major differences found in the way the five dailies used these expressions. All dailies used the expressions “United Kingdom” and “British” associated with the word ally. This association was generally used to state the United Kingdom’s condition as the United States’ main ally in the war on terrorism and as an American traditional political ally in Europe. This a typical occurrence: “Britain, alone among all the EU countries, is considered the bridge between the Westerners, the Europeans and Americans, and the state occupying a unique position with the administration of President George W. Bush who has publicly and repeatedly asserted that it is his country’s staunchest ally” (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, October 15, 2001, p. 11).

### 8)Brazilian, French and Spanish

These nationalities were significantly utilized in the editorials from the newspapers *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde* and *El Pais*. They were generally used in association with information and reactions from local governments.

#### Important Differences Across Newspapers

They were used in the editorials of the respective newspapers to address the position of the local government towards the September 11 events and the subsequent war on terrorism. The dailies *Folha de Sao Paulo* and *Le Monde* were supportive of their respective governments' positions as they condemned the September 11 attacks, but did not offer unconditional support to the United States lead military retaliation: "The condemning position of Brasilia regarding the tragic terrorist attacks to the United States should not be translated into a unconditional support for military action in the Middle East" (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, September 15, 2001, p. A2 [my translation]). The daily *El Pais* was critical of the Spanish government's position of unconditional support to the United States lead retaliation. The French newspaper was mainly supportive of the French governments' position of not unconditionally supporting Washington's military actions, despite condemning the terrorist attacks.

Other expressions related to the identity of nations or ethnic groups were used throughout the sample editorial of the newspapers investigated, however none of them were central to the discussions of any of the editorials and were found not to be relevant if considered the overall editorial samples selected. Next follow findings regarding research question number two.

## **Research Question # 2: Contextual Information**

The following findings answer research question number two: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of contextual information between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11? They derive from question number two in the protocol: What contextual information is included or assumed by the editorial? What other stories are used to tell this story? From the qualitative textual analysis it was found that editorials utilized the following contextual information: 1) Victims, stories and aid; 2) Civil liberties; 3) Security measures; 4) Afghanistan history and situation; 5) Financial context; 6) Israeli-Palestinian conflict; 7) Definition of terrorism; 8) History of Taliban and Al-Qaeda; and 9) Islamophobia, anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism.

1) Victims, stories and aid: In the editorials analyzed, information about victims, stories of victims and survivors, and measures taken to aid victims and their families was used to construct context to re-present main issues to the reader. This contextual information was mainly used to raise readers' awareness of the tragic outcomes of the terrorist attacks, the large number of casualties and psychological effects on families, friends and people throughout the world. It was also used to inform the reader about measures taken by American national and local authorities and non-governmental organizations to aid or relieve victims, families and friends: "The attorney general is also thinking of setting up a central committee of relief agencies, modeled after Oklahoma City, that would meet regularly to review the database and decide, victim by victim, how to distribute the money" (*New York Times*, October 30, 2001, p. 16).

2) Civil liberties: The history of civil liberties and rights in western countries and the threats posed to them by the regulations and laws proposed by the United States and some European countries after September 11 was widely used in the editorials from four of the five newspapers investigated. Among the editorials from these newspapers, information about threats to civil liberties was used to construct context to criticize some of the measures and changes of legislation proposed by western governments: “Congress passed the U.S.A. Patriotic Act, rolling back civil liberties in key areas, and the Bush administration has held hundreds in secret detention” (*The New York Times*, June 29, 2002, p.14).

3) Security measures: Among editorials, information about measures taken by the United States and other countries (mainly European) to tighten security after September 11 was significantly used to construct context to re-present main issues to the reader. This contextual information was mainly used to raise readers' awareness of the governments' reaction to the September 11 terrorist attacks, and what was being done to solve security flaws and improve citizens' safety: “Last week, George W. Bush, gave two upper ranking Generals the power to shoot down suspicious airplanes without previously consulting him” (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, October 2, p. A2 [my translation]).

4) Afghanistan history and situation: The editorials from each of the five newspapers made extensive use of contextual information about Afghanistan history, the present economic and socio-political situation, and geographic aspects to re-present various issues to the reader. This contextual information was mainly used to convey information about a country central to the war on terrorism; however, relatively

unknown to most readers: “The late happenings illustrate the growing difficulties of Hamid Karzai, head of the transitional government, to enlarge its control over a vast territory ethnically fragmented, desired by its neighbors and displaced due to more than twenty years of war” (*El Pais*, February 2, p. 12 [my translation]).

5) Financial context: In editorials, information about the financial crisis that was aggravated by the September 11 terrorist attacks and its effects in the various areas of international economy was utilized to construct context to re-present main issues to the reader. This contextual information was mainly used to raise readers' awareness of the terrorist attacks' effects on the economy and to advocate or discuss governments' measures to counter the crisis: “The United States government took a new step towards the execution of an ambitious plan for economic stimulus. The total value for the economic aid package was US\$100 billion” (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, October 27, 2001, p. A2 [my translation]). It also served as a means to propose financial forecasts for international economic scenario.

6) Israeli-Palestinian conflict: The recent history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, its present situation, its characteristics and the peace process were frequently used as contextual information among the editorials from *The New York Times*, *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais*. This information was used to construct context to re-present main issues to the reader. This contextual information was mainly used to raise readers' awareness to the importance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the stability of the Middle East region: “Bush has directed his attention and efforts to the Middle East crisis in an attempt to return the Palestinian and Israeli to the negotiating table for the sake of attaining regional peace” (*Al-Sharq*

*Al-Awsat*, November 12, 2001, p. 11). It was also utilized to advocate to the reader that solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and bringing peace to the region was fundamental to achieve success in the war on terrorism. Editorials also discussed the need of the United States, European Union and United Nations to get involved in the conflict's negotiations.

7) Definition of terrorism: In the editorials analyzed, information about how governments, research institutions, and organizations define terrorism was utilized as contextual information. Differences of definitions and the implications of these definitions for the war on terrorism and civil rights were discussed. This contextual information was mainly used to raise readers' awareness of the importance of coming to an agreement on a definition of terrorism, so liberation armies and other non-terrorist groups wouldn't become targets: "The definition that is sought is important not for the sake of semantic debates or abstract philosophizing, but because without it, it is impossible to reach a wide-spread international understanding on the dangers of this phenomenon [terrorism], not to mention agreement on ways to confront it" (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, May 15, 2002, p. 10). It was also used to inform the reader about different governments' misuse of the word terrorism to label dissent groups.

8) History of Taliban and Al-Qaeda: The history of Taliban and Al-Qaeda and its development in Afghanistan, Sudan and Saudi Arabia was notably used as contextual information among the sample editorials from each of the five newspapers under scope. This contextual information was mainly used to inform the reader about the alleged perpetrators to the terrorist attacks of September 11 and their supporters: "For the moment, the main suspect is the terrorism network Al-Qaeda, headed by the Saudi

millionaire Bin Laden. It is not trivial to acknowledge that this is the same Bin Laden that was used by the CIA in the fight against the Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan” (*Le Monde*, September 14, 2001, p. 13 [my translation]). This contextual information was also used to inform the reader about the results of investigations undertaken by American intelligence services.

9) Islamophobia, anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism: Among editorials, information about people’s sentiment of racism, and the phenomena of Islamophobia, anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism after September 11 was remarkably used to construct context to re-present main issues to the reader. This contextual information was mainly used to raise the readers' awareness of the rise of racism in western and Muslim countries, and to advocate ethnical, racial and religious tolerance: “That includes Americans of Islamic descent, who could now easily become the target for another period of American xenophobia and ethnical discrimination” (*The New York Times*, September 12, 2001, p.26). Next follows important similarities found in the way the five newspapers utilized the contextual information mentioned.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

The sample editorials of all the five newspapers investigated utilized contextual information about “Afghanistan, history and situation” and no major differences were found in the way and degree to which they used it. The use of “Security measures” as contextual information was similarly present in editorials from *The New York Times*, *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais* dailies. No major differences were found in the way the five dailies analyzed utilized “Security measures” as contextual information.

The stories of victims and survivors, and the measures taken to aid victims and their families were frequently used to construct an informational background by the editorials of all the five newspapers analyzed. The editorials from the newspaper *The New York Times* used "Victims, stories and aid" contextual information more frequently than any of the other newspapers. Regarding information about discrimination against Muslims or Arabs in western countries (Islamophobia), editorials from the five dailies used this contextual information. Next follows important differences found in the way the five newspapers utilized contextual information.

#### Important Differences Across newspapers

Despite being used by editorials from *The New York Times*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais*, "Civil liberties" as contextual information was completely absent within editorials from the Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*. The French daily utilized this contextual information more frequently than the other three newspapers mentioned. The use of "Financial context" as information was frequent among the editorials from four out of the five newspapers studied: *The New York Times*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais*. Editorials from the *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* daily did not use contextual information on the economic crisis following the September 11 attacks.

The editorials from the five newspapers analyzed utilized the "Israeli-Palestinian conflict" as contextual information; however the Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* was outstanding in the way it made use of it. The Saudi daily utilized contextual information on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict extensively. The same was



not found among the sample editorials from the other four dailies. The use of "Definition of terrorism" as contextual information was identified in editorials from four newspapers: *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* (most occurrences found), *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais*. Despite being used by editorials from these four dailies, the utilization of "Definition of terrorism" as contextual information was completely absent within editorials from *The New York Times*.

The history of Taliban and Al-Qaeda was used as contextual information by editorials from the five newspapers analyzed; however the way and extent to which they provided information on Al-Qaeda and Taliban differed. The dailies *Folha de Sao Paulo* and *Le Monde* provided the reader with more in-depth information about the Taliban and Al-Qaeda than the dailies *The New York Times*, *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* and *El Pais*. The sample editorials from the dailies *Folha de Sao Paulo* and *Le Monde* provided the reader with information about Taliban's and Al-Qaeda's connection to the CIA, United States and Saudi governments in an extent not found in the other three dailies.

The contextual information about discrimination against Jews (anti-Semitism) was only found in the editorials from *Le Monde* and *El Pais*. The editorials from these two dailies used this contextual information to inform readers about a crescent sentiment of anti-Semitism in Europe. Regarding information about feelings of anti-Americanism around the world, the editorials from *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais* used this information as context to discuss the reactions from parts of the international community to United States foreign policy and the war on terrorism following September 11. The editorials from *The New York*

*Times* did not make meaningful use (it was found in only one editorial) of information about anti-Americanism to construct context to discuss main issues. Next follow findings regarding research question number three.

### **Research Question # 3: Visual descriptions**

The following findings answer research question number three: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of visual descriptions between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11? They derive directly from question number three in the protocol: How are descriptions of photographs, illustrations and videos used to create or discuss visual images related to the event? The most conspicuously used descriptions of images (television footage, illustrations and photos) by the editorials were: 1) Airliners and Twin Towers; 2) Victims and debris; 3) Al-Qaeda videos; and 4) Afghanistan bombings.

1) Airliners and Twin Towers: Description of the shocking television footage showing airliners' crashing into the World Trade Center Twin Towers and their subsequent collapse was found in the editorials dating within the first weeks following the September 11 terrorist attacks. They were also found in editorials dating close to the attacks' one-year anniversary. The description of this television footage was utilized in editorials to inform the reader about the size and scope of the terrorist attacks, as in the following example: "As the scenes of the explosions replayed themselves on television throughout the day, the shock only deepened as we began to perceive the suffering those pictures from New York and Washington concealed" (*The New York Times*, September 12, 2001, p.26). It was also used to discuss other issues such as the impact of the television repetition of the attacks'

images on the audience and the traumatic effects that they had on people mainly in the United States, but also around the world.

2) Victims and debris: Editorials used the description of images (photos and television footage) showing debris at the Ground Zero site and at the Pentagon, together with images of victims and rescuers to raise readers' awareness about the magnitude of the attacks and their destructive effect. The descriptions of these images were also used to describe a chaotic situation where the suffering of victims and the courage of the rescue teams constituted a dramatic scenario: "The fires still burned with most of their original heat, and the rescue teams were hard at work on a scene that looked literally like some chaotic inferno" (*The New York Times*, March 28, 2002, p.30). They were used to advocate the difficulty of governmental efforts to reconstruct the Ground Zero site and to discuss some of the reconstruction projects proposed. Overall these descriptions were used to sensitize the reader to the consequences of the tragic happenings.

3) Al-Qaeda video: A video released by the Pentagon where Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden converses about the September 11 attacks was described in editorials, as in the following example: "The tape released yesterday by the Pentagon, found by its troops in Jalalabad in November, comes as another piece to solve the puzzle of Osama bin Laden's psychopath character, as he naturally contemplates the holocaust of September 11 as the apotheosis of a holy war blessed by Allah" (*El Pais*, December 14, 2001, p. 20 [my translation]). The description of the video where Bin Laden indirectly assumes responsibility for the September 11 terrorist attacks was used by editorials to advocate Al-Qaeda's and specifically Osama Bin Laden's

responsibility in the September 11 events. It was argued that with the video mentioned above, no more doubts about Bin Laden's culpability remained.

4) Afghanistan Bombings: The description of images (Al-Jazeera network footage) showing the consequences (debris and civilian victims) of the military bombings in Afghanistan was found in editorials, as in statements like this: “The images of Afghani civilian casualties in Muslim television networks are fueling anti-American sentiments in a region already in turmoil” (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, December 12, 2001, p A2 [my translation]). Editorials utilized the Afghanistan bombings’ footage description to criticize Pentagon's rhetoric of a war with minimum civilian casualties and the use of precision weapons and to address media’s coverage of the war.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

Four newspapers utilized descriptions of the airliners crash into the Twin Towers and their subsequent collapse. The editorials from *The New York Times* used these descriptions more frequently. The editorials from the newspapers *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais* made a more moderate use of these specific visual descriptions.

The description of video footage showing Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden's speech about the September 11 attacks was used by sample editorials from the five newspapers analyzed. The description of the television footage showing the speeches was found in one editorial in the sample of each newspaper. The description of the Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden video was used almost simultaneously by the editorials of the five newspapers studied; one day after it was made available to the press by the Pentagon.

### Important Differences Across Newspapers

Editorials from the Saudi newspaper *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* did not make use of image descriptions of the airliners crashing into the towers of the World Trade Center, and one editorial from the French daily *Le Monde* differed from the other three dailies as it utilized this visual description to address the symbolic role of the Twin Towers as a terrorist target.

The description of images (photos and television footage) showing debris at the World Trade Center site and at the Pentagon, together with victims and rescuers was only utilized by editorials from *The New York Times*. Editorials from all the other four newspapers did not use descriptions of these images. The description of television footage and photos showing the tragic images of victims and debris was most found in editorials dating within the first weeks following the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Editorials from *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais* utilized descriptions of television footage showing debris and victims of the military bombings in Afghanistan. The editorials from *The New York Times* did not utilize descriptions of Afghanistan bombings' videos. One editorial from the French daily *Le Monde* and one from *Folha de Sao Paulo* also used description of Al-Jazeera's footage showing Afghanistan bombings to discuss television coverage of the war. Both dailies discussed the appearance of Al-Jazeera as a counter balance to CNN's hegemony over the war images in the Middle East region. Next follows results related to research question number four.

#### **Research Question # 4: Sourcing**

These findings answer research question number four: Are there similarities or differences in the encoding of sources between the editorials of different newspapers discussing the events of September 11? They derive from question number four in the protocol: Who are the sources, and how is their information presented? Are they paraphrased or quoted? Whose ideas are supported (reinforced) questioned? Which details are included or excluded?

Results showed that the most frequently used sources in newspaper editorials were: 1) United States President George W. Bush; 2) United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair; 3) Al-Qaeda Leader Osama Bin Laden; 4) United States Attorney General John Ashcroft; 5) Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; 6) Pakistani President Musharraf Pervez; 7) French President Jacques Chirac, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Aznar, and Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Information from other sources was also used by the editorials of the newspapers studied; however, none of those sources were used as frequently as the ones mentioned above.

1) United States President George W. Bush: Among the editorials from the five newspapers analyzed, the most quoted and paraphrased source was the United States President George W. Bush. His speeches, press releases and interviews were used as sources by the editorials of the newspapers to re-present United States government positions toward the main issues being discussed. The United States President George W. Bush was quoted and paraphrased in editorials ranging from the beginning till the end of the study's timeframe.

2) United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair: The second most quoted or paraphrased source among the five sample editorials was British Prime Minister Tony Blair. His speeches, press releases and interviews were used as sources by editorials to re-present British government as well as the international coalition against terror's positions toward the main issues being discussed.

3) Al-Qaeda Leader Osama Bin Laden: The third most used source among the sample editorials under scope was Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden. His speeches and videos were used as sources by the editorials of the five newspapers to re-present Al-Qaeda as well as his own positions toward the main issues being discussed. Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden was paraphrased, but not quoted in editorials ranging from the beginning till the end of the timeframe of this study.

4) United States Attorney General John Ashcroft: Among sample editorials from the newspapers analyzed, information quoted and paraphrased from the United States Attorney General John Ashcroft was frequently used. His speeches, press releases and interviews were used as sources by editorials to re-present United States government positions, mainly on legal issues. The United States Attorney General John Ashcroft was most quoted or paraphrased among editorials using civil liberties and security measures contextual information.

5) Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon: In the editorials from the newspapers analyzed, information quoted and paraphrased from the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was conspicuously used. His speeches, press releases and interviews were used as sources by editorials to re-present Israeli government positions on terrorism and on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

6) Pakistani President Musharraf Pervez: Among editorials, information quoted and paraphrased from the Pakistani leader Musharraf Pervez was frequently used. His speeches, press releases and interviews were used as sources by newspaper editorials to re-present Pakistani government positions on Afghanistan and on the war against terrorism.

7) Jacques Chirac, Jose Aznar, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso: In editorials, information quoted and paraphrased from the French President Jacques Chirac, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Aznar, and Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso was frequently used in editorials from the French, Spanish, and Brazilian newspapers respectively. Their speeches, press releases and interviews were used as source by editorials to re-present their respective governments' positions on the war on terrorism and their reactions to the September 11 terrorist attacks to New York and Washington D.C.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

Findings showed only one similarity in the way newspapers utilized information from the most frequently cited sources listed above. The editorials from the five newspapers analyzed frequently used information from Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden. All of the five dailies questioned or criticized his ideas, as in the following example: “But it does say that Mr. Bin Laden indicated he was ‘about to launch a major attack on America’ shortly before Sept. 11, and that the detailed planning was carried out by one of his close associates” (*The New York Times*, October 2, 2001, p. 22).



The British Prime Minister Tony Blair was quoted and paraphrased in editorials ranging from the beginning till the end of the timeframe for this study. The editorials from the five newspapers both reinforced (supported) and questioned the British Prime Minister's information at different moments. Despite both reinforcing and questioning information from Tony Blair, editorials most frequently reinforced (supported) Prime Minister Tony Blair's ideas, as in the following example: “The American case against Osama bin Laden has now been put before the world, thanks to Britain’s prime minister, Tony Blair” (*The New York Times*, October 6, 2001, p.22).

#### Important Differences Across Newspapers

The use of information quoted or paraphrased from the United States President George W. Bush was overwhelmingly more frequent than the information by any other source among the editorials from the five newspapers. The difference in the ways the editorials from each of the newspapers used George W. Bush's information was in terms of reinforcing (supporting) or questioning his ideas. The editorials from the five newspapers both reinforced (supported) and questioned the American President's information at different moments. Despite questioning information from the American President, the editorials from *The New York Times* most frequently reinforced (supported) George W. Bush's ideas: “Mr. Bush has been a busy and burdened man, and as the nation’s leader, he has pushed us forward on several fronts. He has proposed a new architecture of homeland defense that could do much to rationalize our quarrelsome and porous security agencies” (*The New York Times*, September 8, 2002, p. 14).

On the other hand, the French daily *Le Monde* most frequently questioned George W. Bush's ideas. The other three dailies (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, and *El Pais*) both questioned and reinforced (supported) the American President's ideas in an almost equivalent frequency: "Pushed by critics about his lack of leadership, Bush might be tempted to make use of 'easy actions' such as prompt bombings and restriction of civil rights" (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, September 14, 2001, p. A2 [my translation]).

Within the five newspapers investigated, only the daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* did not use information from the United States Attorney General John Ashcroft. Among the four newspapers that quoted or paraphrased information from John Ashcroft, only *The New York Times* both questioned and reinforced (supported) his ideas, as in this example: "If Mr. Ashcroft feels that one part of that information stream looks more sinister and reliable than the rest, he is right to share that with the nation, even if people resent being frightened without getting enough specifics on which to act" (*The New York Times*, October 31, 2001, p.14). The editorials from the other three periodicals (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais*) questioned United States Attorney General's idea, but did not support or reinforce them. This is an example of a commonly found statement in these three newspapers: "The words from the US General Attorney Ashcroft, stating that everything in the war on terrorism has been done according to the law, are obviously insufficient" (*El Pais*, October 21, 2001, p. 20 [my translation]).

The five dailies studied used information from the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Among the five newspapers, *The New York Times*, *Folha de Sao Paulo* and

*El Pais* both questioned and reinforced (supported) his ideas. The editorials from *Le Monde* also both questioned and reinforced (supported) his ideas, however the cases when editorials from this daily questioned the Israeli Prime Minister's ideas were dominant. The Saudi newspaper *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* was the only newspaper where Ariel Sharon's ideas were solely criticized or questioned. The Saudi daily at some points made use of aggressive rhetoric when discussing the Israeli Prime Minister's ideas and even associated his name with terrorism: "Sharon -a graduate from the Zionist terrorist school- was the first to call for striking 'Arab' and 'Islamic' terrorism before US official circles issued accusations against any party for being responsible for the recent terrorist attacks" (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, September 14, 2001, p. 9).

All the five dailies quoted and paraphrased information from Pakistani leader Musharraf Pervez, alternatively questioning and reinforcing (supporting) his ideas. The only relevant difference found among the editorials from the five dailies was on how he was presented to the reader. The editorials from the daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* presented him to the reader as Pakistani President Musharraf Pervez, as in the following example: "However, a closer examination of the situation in Pakistan would suggest that Pakistani President Musharraf's decision may signal a strategic shift that aims to rid the country of the extremists' sabotage policy" (*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, September 25, 2001, p. 9). The editorials from the other four newspapers (*The New York Times*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *El Pais*, and *Le Monde*) presented him as General Musharraf Pervez to the reader, as displayed in the following statement: "Pakistan, under the control of a military dictator, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has until

now rebuffed American requests to help secure Mr. Bin Laden's arrest" (*The New York Times*, September 14, 2001, p. 26).

The leaders of Spain, France and Brazil were frequently used as sources among the newspapers from their respective countries. Spanish Prime Minister Jose Aznar was an important source in the editorials from *El Pais*, as in the following statement: "Prime Minister Jose Aznar signed an agreement with US President Bush of cooperation between both countries intelligence services" (*El Pais*, April 6, 2002, p. 10 [my translation]). French President Jacques Chirac was an important source in the editorials from the Parisian daily *Le Monde*. And the Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso was frequently quoted or paraphrased in editorials from the daily *Folha de Sao Paulo*, as the following statement shows: "President Fernando Henrique condemned the terrorist attacks in a press release last night at Palacio do Planalto" (*Folha de Sao Paulo*, September 13, 2001, p. A2 [my translation]). They were not quoted or paraphrased among the editorials from *The New York Times* or *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* newspapers. Next follows findings regarding research question number five.

#### **Research Question # 5: Themes and Frames**

"Framing analysis [is]... a constructive approach to examine news discourse... [with a] focus on conceptualizing news texts... [as] syntactical, script, thematic, rhetorical structures... so that evidence of the news media's framing of issues in the news texts may be gathered" (Zhondang and Kosicki, 1993, p. 55). The results in this section derive from the findings related to identity aspects, contextual information, description of images, and sources. A meta-analysis of the findings from the first four research questions was utilized as a means to answer research question

number five: Are there similarities or differences in the way editorials of different newspapers framed the discussions of the events of September 11? Primarily, each editorial was classified within a specific theme. Then, themes were clustered within broader frames.

### Themes

Based on data from prior findings, editorials from the five samples were classified within the following themes: 1) War on terrorism; 2) Reacting to the attacks; 3) Victims and aid/coping; 4) Security measures; 5) Criticizing US foreign policy; 6) Economic crisis after 9/11; 7) Civil liberties; 8) Depicting the enemy; 9) Israeli-Palestinian conflict; 10) Defining terrorism; 11) Television and 9/11; and 12) Ground Zero. Next follows a summary of the scope and what issues are mainly discussed by the editorials classified within each of these themes.

1) War on terrorism: Editorials within this theme presented discussions about the international war against terrorism that followed the September 11 terrorist attacks. The way the United States and its allies handled the war was discussed, reports on the progress of the war in Afghanistan and suggestions on how the war should have been handled were found in editorials within this theme. The role of allies and the international political scenario behind the war on terrorism were also predominant issues in the editorials within this theme.

2) Reacting to the attacks: The reactions from national authorities, communities, and citizens as well as initial evaluations on the effects of the September 11 attacks were the main focus of editorials within this theme. These editorials were mainly found in the first two months after the attacks and close to the one-year anniversary. Some

issues that were discussed within this theme related to the way citizens reacted, the new threat of terrorism and the first measures taken by national governments, institutions and organizations.

3) Victims and aid/coping: Editorials within this theme discussed issues concerning the victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks, their families and friends. One of the main issues within these editorials regarded aid (financial and psychological). Traumas and psychological damages were frequent issues. Many of these editorials had an affective role as trying to cheer up the reader and suggest actions to be taken to resume normalcy to their lives.

4) Security measures: Among editorials within the theme "Security measures" there were discussions of both security failures and proposals for change in national security regulations and procedures. Airport security, immigration law, function of intelligence and police services, and changes in national legislation were common issues, to which editorials pointed out flaws and solutions.

5) Criticizing US foreign policy: Editorials within this theme discussed United States foreign policy before and after September 11. These editorials criticized the Bush administration's handling of the war on terrorism and its effects on the international political scenario. They also discussed foreign policies that, despite not being directly related to the war on terrorism, were influential in the way various governments and common citizens around the world viewed the United States as a nation. Moreover, the consequences of this perception to the international war on terrorism as well as its effects on governments' decisions to join the United States-lead coalition on terror were assessed.

6) Economic crisis after 9/11: The effects of the September 11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent war on terrorism on the economy of the United States, Europe and the world as a whole were the main focus of editorials within this theme. The economic slowdown and the aggravation of the international financial crisis by the terrorist attacks, together with effects on industries and the stock market, were issues found among editorials within the theme "Economic crisis after 9/11."

7) Civil liberties: Editorials within this theme presented discussions about civil rights, civil liberties and democracy, and the implementation of new laws and national regulations that followed the September 11 terrorist attacks. Threats to national civil liberties and democracy, in western countries as well as criticisms of governments' measures were the main issues found in editorials classified within this theme.

8) Depicting the enemy: Editorials within the theme "Depicting the enemy" included discussions about international terrorism, terrorists and their supporters. The history, nature, functioning and characteristics of the international terrorist organization Al-Qaeda and the Taliban were common issues. Editorials focused on the Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden and his prior operations. The international terrorism-financing network was also discussed among editorials found within the theme "Depicting the enemy."

9) Israeli-Palestinian conflict: The history and characteristics of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis as well as the main authorities and nations involved in the international efforts for a peace process were discussed among editorials within this theme. The effects of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the conflict were assessed. The main issue among editorials within the theme "Israeli-Palestinian conflict" was

the participation of the United States, European countries and the United Nations in the conflict's peace talks as fundamental to the success of the international war on terrorism.

10) Defining terrorism: The implications of the definition and use of the words terrorism and terrorist by the United States and other governments were the focus of criticism by editorials within the theme "Defining terrorism." Critics of the way different governments around the world label groups or individuals as terrorists were made by the editorials. The misinformation caused by the lack of a commonly agreed definition, as well as efforts to arrive at an international agreement on a definition of terrorism, were among the main issues in these editorials.

11) Television and 9/11: The impact of the live television broadcasting of the September 11 terrorist attacks as well as critics of the media coverage of the event were the focuses of editorials within the theme "Television and 9/11." Criticism regarding the role of television networks such as CNN and Al-Jazeera in the terrorist attacks and in the war on terrorism was common in these editorials.

12) Ground Zero: Among editorials within the theme "Ground Zero" there were discussions about both the destruction the terrorist attacks caused to the World Trade Center and the national efforts of cleaning the site. The financing, the national and local governments' budget, and the projects proposed for the reconstruction of the World Trade Center site were concurrent issues. The symbolic nature of the World Trade Center as a national target was discussed as well.

Some of the editorials analyzed were classified within one of the above themes; other editorials were classified within more than one theme (two or three), as



they clearly approached more than one main issue. After each of the editorials were classified within the specific themes based on elements of identity, contextual information, visual descriptions and sourcing, there was an accounting of themes within editorials from each of the five newspaper samples. On the next page there is a table summarizing the findings related to themes followed by a detailed account of frequency of appearance of themes among the sample editorials of each of the five newspapers: *The New York Times*, *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde*, and *El Pais*.

**Frequency of theme appearance in newspaper samples**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>New York Times</b>	<b>Al-Sharq Al-Awsat</b>	<b>Folha de Sao Paulo</b>	<b>Le Monde</b>	<b>El Pais</b>
<b>War on terrorism</b>	5 (6.8%)	17 (31.4%)	10 (21.2%)	10 (24.3%)	23 (45%)
<b>Victims and aid/coping</b>	24 (32.8%)	3 (5.5%)	2 (4.2%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (1.9%)
<b>Reacting to the attacks</b>	13 (17.8%)	7 (12.9%)	9 (19.1%)	5 (12.1%)	5 (9.8%)
<b>Criticizing US foreign policy</b>	0	4 (7.4%)	7 (14.8%)	9 (21.9%)	11 (21.5%)
<b>Security measures</b>	9 (12.3%)	2 (3.7%)	4 (8.5%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (1.9%)
<b>Depicting the enemy</b>	4 (5.4%)	6 (11.1%)	5 (10.6%)	4 (9.7%)	3 (5.8%)
<b>Israeli-Palestinian conflict</b>	1 (1.3%)	10 (18.5%)	1 (2.1%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (1.9%)
<b>Economic crisis after 9/11</b>	5 (6.8%)	0	3 (6.3%)	2 (4.8%)	4 (7.8%)
<b>Civil liberties</b>	3 (4.1%)	0	3 (6.3%)	5 (12.1%)	2 (3.9%)
<b>Defining terrorism</b>	0	5 (9.2%)	1 (2.1%)	1 (2.4%)	0
<b>Ground Zero</b>	8 (10.9%)	0	0	0	0
<b>Television and 9/11</b>	1 (1.3%)	0	2 (4.2%)	2 (4.8%)	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73 (100%)</b>	<b>54 (100%)</b>	<b>47 (100%)</b>	<b>41 (100%)</b>	<b>51 (100%)</b>

*The New York Times*: There were a total of 62 editorials analyzed and a total of 73 themes (100%) identified within the editorials. Out of all the themes described above, the most frequent one was "Victims and aid/coping" which was found in 24 editorials (32.8%). The second most frequent theme within editorials of *The New York Times* was "Reacting to the attacks" which was found among thirteen editorials (17.8%). The third most common theme, "Security measures," was found in nine editorials (12.3%). The fourth most frequent theme was "Ground Zero" with eight editorials (10.9%).

The frequency to which other themes appeared was not as relevant as the themes mentioned above. The "Economic crisis after 9/11" and "War on terrorism" themes appeared both in five editorials (6.8%). "Depicting the enemy" appeared in four editorials (5.4%). "Civil Liberties" was found in three editorials (4.1%). "Television and 9/11" and "Palestinian-Israeli" conflict were both found only once (1.3%) among the editorials from *The New York Times*.

*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*: There were a total of 43 editorials analyzed and a total of 54 themes (100%) identified within the editorials. Out of all the themes described above, the most frequent one was "War on terrorism" which was found in 17 editorials (31.4%). The second most frequent theme within editorials of *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* was "Israeli-Palestinian conflict" which was found among ten editorials (18.5%). The third most common theme, "Reacting to the attacks," was found in seven editorials (12.9%). The fourth most frequent theme was "Depicting the enemy" found in six editorials (11.1%).

The frequency to which other themes appeared was not as relevant as the themes mentioned above. The "Defining terrorism" theme appeared five times (9.2%). Editorials with the theme "Criticizing US foreign policy" appeared four times (7.4%). The "Victims and aid/coping" theme appeared in three editorials (5.5%). And finally, "Security measures" was identified as theme in two editorials (3.7%).

*Folha de Sao Paulo*: There were a total of 30 editorials analyzed and a total of 47 themes (100%) identified within the editorials. Out of all the themes described, the most frequent one was "War on terrorism" which was found in ten editorials (21.2%). The second most frequent theme within editorials of *Folha de Sao Paulo* was "Reacting to the attacks" which was found among nine editorials (19.1%). The third most common theme, "Criticizing US foreign policy," was found in seven editorials (14.8%). The fourth most frequent theme was "Depicting the enemy," found in five editorials (10.6%).

The frequency to which the other themes appeared was not as relevant as the themes mentioned above. The "Security measures" theme appeared four times (8.5%). Editorials with the themes "Economic crisis after September 11" and "Civil liberties" both appeared three times (6.3%). "Victims and aid/coping" and "Television and 9/11" themes both appeared in two editorials (4.2%). And finally, "Defining terrorism" and "Israeli-Palestinian conflict" were identified as themes in one editorial each (2.1%).

*Le Monde*: There were a total of 31 editorials analyzed and a total of 41 themes (100%) identified within these editorials. Out of all the themes described above, the most frequent one was "War on terrorism" which was found in ten

editorials (24.3%). The second most frequent theme within editorials of *Le Monde* was "Criticizing US foreign policy," which was found among nine editorials (21.9%). The themes, "Reacting to the attacks" and "Civil liberties" were the third most frequent ones: both themes were found in five editorials (12.1%).

The frequency to which the other themes appeared was not as relevant as the themes mentioned above. The "Depicting the enemy" theme appeared four times (9.7%) in the editorials analyzed. The themes "Television and 9/11" and "Economic crisis after 9/11" appeared both two times (4.8%). The themes "Victims and aid/coping," "Security measures," "Israeli-Palestinian conflict," and "Defining terrorism" appeared in one editorial each (2.4%).

*El Pais*: A total of 39 editorials were analyzed and a total of 51 themes (100%) identified within these editorials. Out of all the themes described above, the most frequent one was "War on terrorism" which was found in 23 editorials (45%). The second most frequent theme within editorials of *El Pais* was "Criticizing US foreign policy" which was found in 11 editorials (21.5%). The third most frequent theme, "Reacting to the attacks" was identified in five editorials (9.8%) and the theme "Economic crisis after 9/11" was the fourth most frequent one appearing in four editorials (7.8%).

The frequency to which the other themes appeared was not as relevant as the themes mentioned above. The "Depicting the enemy" theme appeared three times (5.8%) in the editorials analyzed. The theme "Civil liberties" appeared two times (3.9%). The themes "Victims and aid/coping," "Security measures," and "Israeli-Palestinian conflict" were identified once (1.9%) among the editorials from the

Madrid daily *El Pais*. Next follows an account of important similarities found in the way the five newspapers themed their editorials.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

Important similarities emerged in the way the newspapers themed the discussions about the September 11 events in their editorials. The newspapers *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *El Pais*, and *Le Monde* had more similarities than differences regarding the way they used themes to encode their editorials. The editorials of the three dailies had "War on terrorism," "Criticizing American foreign policy" and "Reacting to the attacks" as their three most frequently used themes. The themes "Victims, and aid/coping" and "Ground Zero" were not frequently used among the three newspapers, as it was the case for *The New York Times*. And the frame "Israeli-Palestinian conflict" was not frequently used among the editorials of the three dailies, as it was the case for the Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*.

The theme "Depicting the enemy" appeared in the five newspapers, and there were no major differences in the frequency to which they were utilized. Within the editorials of *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Le Monde* and *El Pais*, the most frequent theme focused on the aspects of the war on terrorism and the international political scenario in which it developed: "War on terrorism." The same was not found in *The New York Times* editorials.

#### Important Differences Across Newspapers

*The New York Times* differed from the three other dailies in the way its editorials were themed. The New York daily most frequently used theme (32.8%) was "Victims, and aid/coping," which focused on informing the reader about the suffering

of victims, and families and friends of the victims resulting from the September 11 events as well as government and NGOs actions to aid these victims. The second most frequently used theme (17.8%), "Reacting to the attacks," focused on informing the reader about authorities' first reactions about the attacks. The third most frequently used theme (10.9%), "Ground Zero," focused on the destruction caused by the terrorist attacks as well as government actions to clean and reconstruct the Ground Zero site. The three themes listed above represent 61.5% of all themes found in *The New York Times* editorials. Considering the similarities among these three themes, the editorials within them mainly discussed the tragic effects of the terrorist attacks and government's actions to aid, reconstruct and react. This was not found among the other four dailies.

The second most frequently used theme (18.5%) within the editorials of the Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* was "Israeli-Palestinian conflict." This theme was not frequently used by any of the other newspapers studied. The same was the case for the frequency in which the theme "Defining terrorism" appeared. *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* was the only daily where this theme was frequently used (9.2%). Two other newspapers utilized this theme: *Folha de Sao Paulo* (2.1%) and *Le Monde* (2.4%). The Saudi daily was the only daily out of the five studied that did not encode discussions of September 11 within the themes "Civil liberties" and "Economic crisis after 9/11" in editorials. The other four newspapers utilized information about civil liberties as a theme for their editorials, being *Le Monde* where this theme was most frequently found (12.1%). Regarding the themes "Economic crisis after 9/11," the other four newspapers utilized it in a similar frequency (average of 6%).

The five newspapers studied encoded editorials within the theme “Security measures,” however they differed in the frequency to which this theme appeared. *The New York Times* and *Folha de Sao Paulo* themed respectively 12.3% and 6.3% of their editorials using information about security measures, while in the other three dailies the theme “Security measures” appeared in average within 2.5% of all editorials. The theme “Television and 9/11” was only identified within *The New York Times*, *Folha de Sao Paulo* and *Le Monde* samples. Next follows an account of frames found among editorials.

### Frames

The twelve themes identified within the editorials from the five newspapers were clustered within three broader frames. According to David Altheide's definition: “Frames are the focus, a parameter or boundary, for discussing a particular event” (Altheide, 1996; p. 31). The three frames identified within the newspaper editorials were: 1) Nationalism; 2) Internationalism; and 3) Critical. Next follows a description of each of the frame’s scope and which themes they encompass.

1) Nationalism: The editorials classified within this frame discussed the September 11 terrorist attacks focusing on issues related to its effects, measures taken by authorities, and reactions from leaders and the public within a national parameter. Discussions of the attacks’ effects on the common citizen, victims, relatives of victims, security regulations, and the physical structure of the target sites were concurrent in editorials identified within the frame “Nationalism.”

Measures taken by the local and national governments and various institutions and organizations to aid victims and their families (psychological and financial aid)



were one of the focuses of this frame. The editorials within this frame also discussed measures by the national government to improve safety and security regulations as well as measures related to the reconstruction of the targeted sites. Moreover, an accounting of the reaction from citizens, as well as national authorities and leaders were presented by the newspaper editorials found within the frame “Nationalism.” The themes clustered within this frame were the following: “Victims, and aid/coping;” “Reacting to the attacks;” “Security measures;” and “Ground Zero.” Within this frame, international issues and critics on a national or international level were absent.

2) Internationalism: The editorials encoded within the frame “Internationalism” discussed the events of September 11 focusing on issues related to government and institutions’ measures and the effects of the terrorist attacks and the subsequent measures taken within an international parameter. Discussions focused on the terrorist attacks’ effects on the international political and economical scenario, reactions from the international community, measures taken by governments within the scope of the international war on terrorism, and information about aspects and threats from international terrorist networks.

The September 11 terrorist attacks’ consequences to the international political scenario and the political relationship among nations were assessed in editorials encoded within the frame “Internationalism.” The formation of an international coalition to fight terrorism and the participation of European and Muslim nations were frequent issues. Editorials discussed the role of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the war on terrorism as well as in the political relation between western countries and

Arab and other Muslim nations. The reactions from governments around the world, and international organizations such as the United Nations and NATO were found in editorials within this frame.

Editorials encoded within the frame “Internationalism” also focused on the way the terrorist attacks affected the international economy, and the financial crisis fueled by the aftermath of the events. The consequences to industries, stock market and international trading were evaluated as well. Finally, editorials encoded within this frame provided readers with information about the international terrorism networks involved in the September 11 attacks as well as the nations that supported or harbored them. The themes clustered within this frame are: “War on terrorism;” “Depicting the enemy;” “Israeli-Palestinian conflict;” and “Economic crisis after 9/11.” The encoding of editorials within an “Internationalism” frame implied the exclusion of information on measures taken by local government and on the terrorist attacks effects on a national level. Criticisms of governments’ measures on both international and national levels were absent as well.

3) Critical: Discussions of the September 11 terrorist attacks found in the editorials encoded within the frame “Critical” focused on criticizing government and institutions’ measures both on a national and international parameter. Some of the most commonly identified discussions related to government counter-terrorism measures and actions on a national level as well as within the scope of the international war on terrorism.

The editorials encoded within the above mentioned frame focused their discussions on critics of measures and actions of their respective national

governments and of other governments and institutions involved in the September 11 events and the international war on terrorism. On the national level, editorials criticized government's measures to tighten security. These editorials argued that the security measures taken were a threat to civil rights and liberties and to the overall exercise of national democracy.

On an international level, editorials encoded within the frame "Critical" focused on issues such as American foreign policy, the international definition of terrorism, and the role and influence of international television networks. Critics to way various groups are labeled as terrorists by western countries were frequently used. It was also identified in these editorials discussions about television networks' role in the September 11 attacks as well as critics about media coverage of the international war on terrorism. Finally, various editorials encoded within this frame made use of critics of the United States' foreign policy as a way to frame their discussions of the September 11 terrorist attacks. The themes clustered within the frame "Critical" were as follows: "Criticizing US foreign policy;" "Civil liberties;" "Defining terrorism;" and "Television and 9/11." Editorials encoded within a "Critical" frame commonly excluded arguments supporting governments and institutions' reactions and measures following the September 11 attacks.

The editorials from the five newspapers studied were compared regarding the frames in which they were encoded. This comparison revealed the frequency editorials from the five newspapers were encoded within the above frames. On the next page follows a table showing the frequency of appearance of each frame among

the five newspaper samples and a detailed account of differences and similarities in the way their editorials were framed.

**Frequency of frame appearance in newspaper samples**

<b>Frames</b>	<b>Nationalism</b>	<b>Internationalism</b>	<b>Critical</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>The New York Times</b>	54 (73.9%)	15 (20.5%)	4 (5.4%)	73 (100%)
<b>Al-Sharq Al-Awsat</b>	12 (22.2%)	33 (61.1%)	9 (16.6%)	54 (100%)
<b>Folha de Sao Paulo</b>	15 (31.9%)	19 (40.4%)	13 (27.6%)	47 (100%)
<b>Le Monde</b>	7 (17.0%)	17 (41.4%)	17 (41.4%)	41 (100%)
<b>El Pais</b>	7 (13.7%)	31 (60.7%)	13 (25.4%)	51 (100%)

*The New York Times:* Among editorials from *The New York Times* the most frequent found frame was “Nationalism,” with 54 editorial themes, and accounting for 73.9% of the total number. The second most frequent frame was “Internationalism,” with 15 editorial themes (20.5%). The third most frequently found frame among editorials from the New York daily was “Critical” with four editorial themes (5.4%).

*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat:* From the sample of the daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, the most frequently found frame was “Internationalism,” with 33 editorial themes (61.1%). The second most commonly found frame was “Nationalism,” with twelve editorial themes (22.2%), and the third most frequent way in which editorials from the Saudi

daily were encoded was within the frame “Critical,” accounting for nine editorial themes (16.6%).

*Folha de Sao Paulo:* The Brazilian daily *Folha de Sao Paulo* had most of its editorials encoding the discussions of September 11 within the frame “Internationalism,” with nineteen editorial themes accounting for 40.4% of the total number. The second most frequent found frame was “Nationalism,” with a total of fifteen editorial themes (31.9%). And finally, the third most commonly identified frame within editorials from the Sao Paulo daily was “Critical,” with thirteen editorial themes (27.6%).

*Le Monde:* Among the editorials from the French daily *Le Monde*, two frames were found with identical frequency. The frames “Critical” and “Internationalism” were both found in seventeen editorial themes, accounting each one for 41.4% of the total number of themes. The third most frequently found frame among editorials of the Parisian daily was “Nationalism” with seven editorial themes (17%).

*El Pais:* Discussions in the editorials from the Spanish daily *El Pais* were most frequently framed within the category “Internationalism,” with 31 editorial themes, accounting for 60.7% of the total number. The second most frequent frame was “Critical” with a total of thirteen editorial themes and accounting for 25.4% of the total. Finally, the third most commonly found frame among editorials from the Madrid daily was “Nationalism,” with seven editorial themes (13.7%).

After the analysis of the editorial framing was complete and the findings from the samples of each of the five newspapers were compared, considerable similarities and

difference were found in the way each newspaper under investigation framed discussions of the September 11 terrorist attacks in their editorials.

#### Important Similarities Across Newspapers

*The New York Times*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, and *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* dailies were similar in the aspect of the least used frame. Their editorials most seldom framed the discussions of the September 11 events focusing on critics of national and international measures taken by government and institutions: “Critical.” Moreover, the Brazilian daily *Folha de Sao Paulo* and the Saudi *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* showed similarities in the way they framed the discussions of the September 11 attack within their editorials. Both newspapers had the frames “Nationalism,” “Internationalism,” and “Critical” respectively as first, second, and third most frequently found frames within their editorials.

The two European dailies studied, *Le Monde* and *El Pais* more frequently framed their editorials focusing on critics on measures taken by government and institutions on a national and an international parameter. The French daily had “Critical” as the most frequently found frame while the Madrid daily had the same frame as its second most frequently found one. The European dailies were also similar in the frequency with which their editorials were encoded within a “Nationalism” frame. In the editorials of both newspapers the frame “Nationalism” was the least used one.

#### Important Differences Across Newspapers

The editorials from *The New York Times* most frequently framed its discussions of the September 11 terrorist attacks focusing on reporting measures and effects within a national parameter: “Nationalism.” In this aspect, the New York daily

differed from the newspapers *El Pais*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, and *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* which most frequently framed their editorials focusing on measures and effects of the September 11 events within an international parameter: “Internationalism.”

The French daily *Le Monde* diverged from all other four newspapers as the frames “Critical” and “Internationalism” were both the most frequently found ones among its editorials. None of the other newspapers most frequently framed their editorials focusing on critics of measures on a national and an international parameter. Next follows a discussion of results from the textual analysis.

## Chapter 5

### **DISCUSSION**

A comparison among the results from the textual analysis of editorials within the samples of the five newspapers selected (*The New York Times*, *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, and *Folha de Sao Paulo*) showed important differences in the way the September 11 events and their aftermath were encoded. These differences will be discussed in this chapter in the particular case for the findings correspondent to aspects of identity, contextual information, visual descriptions, sourcing and framing.

#### **Aspects of Identity**

Regarding aspects of identity, findings show that the five newspapers studied encoded their editorials more frequently utilizing distinct rather than similar representations of the various nationality, ethnicity and religion lexis to convey their preferred reading. Considering structuralism theory regarding ideology, these findings support previously developed theoretical precepts. Italian scholar Umberto Eco (1990) defines ideology as the entirety of knowledge of the individual, and moreover, of the group to which she or he belongs (Eco, 1990). The fact that the encoders of these media belong to different groups (nations and ethnic groups) suggests that their different ideological perspectives are a main factor in the divergent re-presentations revealed by the textual analysis. Some relevant cultural differences emerged in the encoding of identity aspects.

The editorials from the daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* differed from the other four newspapers regarding its most conspicuous association using the words Muslim,



Islamic and Arab. While the editorials from the Saudi newspaper most frequently associated these words with information about the reaction of disapproval of the September 11 attacks from Arab and Muslim leaders, the other four newspapers' editorials most conspicuous association included information about terrorists and terrorism. Avoiding associations of Arabs and Muslims with terrorism is evidence of an ethnocentric position held by the Saudi daily encoders.

Findings illustrate another major cultural influence in the encoding of identity aspects by editorials. This is the case for the way in which the word "Israeli" is employed by the Saudi daily. The re-presentation of Israelis is an expression of an ethnocentric view held by encoders. The Saudi daily's association of Israel with information about terrorism and military aggression together with the use of strong rhetoric against Israelis reveal the influence of anti-Semitic feelings in the text encoding, which are commonly strong in Arab culture. The other four dailies under investigation did not associate Israel or Israelis with such rhetoric. Besides important ideological differences within the cultural spectrum, findings also support the influence of ideology within the political spectrum in the encoding process.

The specific case for the findings showing the differences in the representation of United States, Afghans, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan's identity set support for theoretical precepts regarding the relationship between media channels and government. Stuart Hall (1979) argues that the media tends to reproduce dominant discourses and perspectives of official, institutional or governmental knowers (Hall, 1979). Moreover, through mechanisms such as licensing, access and

advertising, societal elites can impose a certain level of control on what is presented in the media (Karim, 2002; Chomsky, 2003).

In the case of the coverage of a disaster, such as the September 11 terrorist attacks, the media can become more willing to align its coverage with the rhetoric of political elites (Jenkins, 2003). The absence of critics of United States' foreign policy in *The New York Times* constitutes a major difference considering that the other four dailies frequently criticized the Bush administration's international policies in their editorials. Besides the absence of critics to foreign policy, *The New York Times* editorials also avoided the association of the word "Afghani" with information about civil casualties caused by the American lead coalition's bombings in Afghanistan. The other four dailies associated the word "Afghani" with such information. This evidence demonstrates an alignment of *The New York Times* with the United States government positions, a common case among American mainstream media as advocated by various scholars (e.g. Karim, 2002; McChesney, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Chomsky, 2003; Lipschultz, 2003).

The editorials from the dailies *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, and *Folha de Sao Paulo* frequently criticized Saudi Arabia vis-à-vis its government's indirect harboring and supporting of terrorism, as well as its authoritarian monarchical regime. These critics were not found in the editorials of *The New York Times* or in the Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*. This is also evidence of alignment with government political positions, as the Saudi daily did not criticize its own government and *The New York Times* did not criticize a strategic American ally in the war on terrorism, as well as a historic political and business partner of the United States in the Middle East.

Another case of alignment with governmental position is found in the way in which the editorials represented Pakistan. The editorials from the dailies *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, and *Folha de Sao Paulo* associated Pakistan with critics of its governments' military dictatorship and with information that Musharraf's administration tolerated and supported terrorism. The editorials of *The New York Times*, and *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* did not make the same association. Pakistan is a country with long ties to the United States and together with Saudi Arabia, it is one of the two most important Muslim allies in the international coalition against terrorism. However, it is fair to assume that the absence of critics of the Pakistani regime in the Saudi daily also reflects Muslim political realities where authoritarian governments are the rule and the lack of media criticism of these governments is common.

The uses of the words French, and Brazilian by the editorials of the dailies *Le Monde* and *Folha de Sao Paulo* respectively, are also evidence of the tendency found in the five dailies to convey political positions aligned with the local governments; as advocated by various scholars (Bell, 1991; Silberstein, 2002; Chomsky, 2003; Hall, 1979, 1980b; Karim, 2002; and Greenberg, 2002). The editorial of the three dailies utilized the perspective of local leaders and governments in the encoding of discussions pertaining to the September 11 terrorist attacks.

### **Contextual information**

Findings suggest critical disparities in the way the five newspapers utilized contextual information to encode meaning in their editorials. Among the editorials of the five dailies, contextual information used to re-present main issues was included or excluded for different reasons.

The Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* differed from the other four newspapers in the frequency and extent to which it used contextual information on the definition of terrorism to encode discussions of the September 11 events and their aftermath. This illustrates the concern of Saudi newspaper encoders with the utilization of the word “terrorism” by western countries. Various scholars have the same concern (Dobkin, 1992; Livingston, 1993; Carruthers, 2000; Wilkinson, 2001; Nacos, 2002; and Chomsky, 2003). According to scholar Bethami Dobkin, the problem of the definition of terrorism occurs mainly due to the fact that the label “terrorist” is never self-proclaimed, but rather given to a group or individual (Dobkin, 1992).

In the editorials of the Saudi daily the concern with the definition of terrorism was related to the case of the groups Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, Hamas and Fatah. Israel and most western countries label them as terrorist organizations; however among Muslims, these groups are considered liberation movements against Israel’s occupation of Palestinian, Lebanese and Egyptian territories respectively. This is a major cultural influence in the ideological perspective of the Saudi newspaper encoders.

The editorials from *The New York Times* show relevant disparities with the editorials from the other four newspapers analyzed regarding contextual information included. The dailies *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, and *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* included contextual information about the relationship of feelings of anti-Americanism, United States foreign policy and terrorism. This contextual information was not found among editorials of *The New York Times*. This is evidence of an ethnocentric perspective held by the encoders of the New York daily, as individuals

(encoders) traditionally have ideological obstacles when critically assessing their own culture; however, it might also suggest avoidance of criticism of government policies.

### **Visual Descriptions**

The use of descriptions of videos, television footage and photos was distinct in the editorials of the five dailies investigated. The Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* was the only newspaper among the five studied that did not make frequent or moderate use of visual descriptions in its editorials (only two editorials out of a total of 43). This difference might reflect the nature of Muslim and fundamentalist Islam culture, whose anti-visual standpoint is traditional. This is evident in some hardliner Islamic theocratic countries where governments have laws restricting public access to television and Internet. Saudi Arabia is a theocratic monarchy abiding by the rules of the fundamentalist Sunni strain of Islam (the same strain of the majority of Syria, Libya, Palestine, Yemen and Sudan's population). It also might demonstrate media reality in Muslim countries, where television does not have the large audience and influence that it does in western countries.

The editorials from *The New York Times* also presented differences in the frequency they used visual descriptions compared to the dailies *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, and *Folha de Sao Paulo*. The occurrence of visual descriptions among the editorials of *The New York Times* was much more frequent than among the editorial of the three other dailies. This suggests the important role television played in the dissemination of the attacks' images in the United States.

Many scholars advocate the impacting effect to Americans of the repetitious broadcast of images showing airliners crashing into the World Trade Center Twin

Towers and their subsequent collapse (e.g. Blondheim and Liebes, 2002; Cottle, 2002; Greenberg, 2002; Karim, 2002; Kellner, 2002; Nacos, 2002; Semati, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Jenkins, 2003; Kearney, 2003; Louw, 2003). American television networks interrupted their regular programming to repeatedly broadcast the images of the dreadful terrorist attacks and destruction of the Twin Towers; in other countries such extensive television coverage did not take place (Semati, 2002; Jenkins, 2003).

Another distinction in the way the New York daily used description of images compared to the other three newspapers (*Le Monde*, *El Pais*, and *Folha de Sao Paulo*) regards the images of the civil casualties of the Afghanistan bombings. While the editorials of the three dailies used descriptions of the images of Afghani civil casualties broadcast by the Al-Jazeera network to criticize the United State government, *The New York Times* editorials did not make use of the same descriptions. That suggests ideological influence within a political spectrum in the encoding of the September 11 discussions in editorials.

### **Sourcing**

Findings showed that information provided by certain sources was more frequently used than others. Government sources such as United States President George W. Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, United States General Attorney John Ashcroft, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Pakistani President Musharraf Pervez, French President Jacques Chirac, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Aznar, and Brazilian President Fernando Henrique were the main sources of information among the editorials analyzed. The sourcing arrangement in the newspapers studied supports the theoretical perspective advocated by Hall (1979, 1980b) Bells (1991), Herman

(1993), Karim (2002), Silberstein (2002) and Jenkins (2003). These scholars state that in the current format of media coverage of main events, the audience often reads little of the event itself, and a great deal of officials' comments and narratives (Bells, 1991). Another theoretical implication within findings related to sourcing, regards the news narrative format in which the September 11 events were encoded.

The use of the sources revealed in findings, together with the format used by editorials, is evidence of media's tendency to use narrative to represent terrorist attacks. The literary features of news narrative contribute to the creation of drama characteristic of terrorism news coverage (Dobkin, 1992; Sperry, 1981). According to James Sperry (1981) there is a common plot for the news narrative of terrorist attack media coverage. The common plot described by James Sperry is also applicable for the case of the September 11 events:

The world at peace is disrupted by some event [terrorist attacks to the WTC]. That event, which becomes the evil, is named [Osama Bin Laden] and, if possible, analyzed and understood. Some leader, the hero figure [US President George W. Bush], usually a representative of the people, then attacks it. However, whether by choice or by nature of his vocation, this leader may not be able to meet the problem alone. So he gains allies [British Prime Minister Tony Blair], other leaders [Spanish Prime Minister Jose Aznar, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Pakistani President Musharraf Pervez], and he also gains enemies - potential leaders who disagree with his plan of action [French President Jacques Chirac], or rebels who align themselves with the evil [Taliban]. As these alignments become apparent, stories are then told of the

effect of the problem on the average man [information about “victims, aid and coping”] (Sperry, 1981, p. 31).

Besides theoretical implications, cultural influence was found in the way editorials from the five newspapers presented Pakistani leader Musharraf Pervez. The four western newspaper analyzed introduced him to the reader as General Musharraf Pervez, however the Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* introduced him to the reader as President Musharraf Pervez. Besides, the Saudi daily did not criticize the Pakistani regime as the dailies *Le Monde*, *El Pais* and *Folha de Sao Paulo* did. The use of the title General in referring to the Pakistani leader and critics to the regime would provide the reader with information against the military dictatorship in Pakistan. The Saudi government is also a dictatorship; information against the Pakistani government in the *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* editorials could become arguments for readers to criticize their own ruling government. This also reflects a Muslim cultural and political environment where democracy and civil liberties are not a reality and where most governments are dictatorships of either religious or military nature, which manipulate information in the media as a way to maintain status quo.

Besides the theoretical implications described above, there is also evidence in the findings that supports cultural influence in the representation of sources. The editorials of the daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* used aggressive rhetoric against the Israeli Prime Minister Israel Sharon. This was not found in the editorials of the other four dailies. This reflects the strong anti-Semitic sentiments in Arab culture, and anti-Israeli sentiments among Muslims due, among other factors, to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



## Themes and Frames

Results showed that newspapers encoded discussions of the September 11 events in their editorials within specific themes and broader frames. The various themes and frames that emerged from the textual analysis were listed and thoroughly explained, and findings demonstrate important differences and similarities regarding the frequency with which newspapers utilized them.

The newspaper *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* used information about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in its editorials much more frequently than the other four periodicals: 18.5% of its total themes against an average of 2% of all themes in the other dailies. This demonstrates the daily encoders' position of considering the conflict central to discussions about the September 11 attacks and the war on terrorism. Arabs in particular and Muslims in general consider the conflict to be the main source of disagreements between Muslim and Western countries. It is a common perspective among Muslims (according to several editorials of the Saudi daily) that United States' inaction regarding Israel's violent policy against Palestinians is one of the main causes of anti-western feelings boosting Islamic terrorism. Therefore, from the cultural perspective of Muslims and Arabs, the September 11 terrorist attacks are part of an ethnical conflict, whose main front is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Moreover, scholars propose that events are transformed into news stories based on the common images of a culture, and as those images are appropriated, they also shape the range of understanding about the event (Dobkin, 1992; Hall, 1979, 1980b).

The Saudi daily was the only daily out of the five studied that did not encode discussions of September 11 within the themes “Civil liberties” and “Economic crisis after 9/11.” The other four newspapers frequently utilized information about civil liberties as a theme for their editorials. This demonstrates a cultural influence on the encoding process. Civil liberties are limited in Muslim societies, and legislation supporting civil rights and liberties in these countries is almost non-existent. By advocating civil liberties in their editorials, the encoders of the Saudi daily would go against their cultural tradition and the position of their governments. Democracy and civil liberties are not part of Muslim cultural and political traditions.

Regarding information about the economic crisis after 9/11, the absence of this theme in *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* editorials reflects Saudi economic reality. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not a participative player in the global economy, due to its underdeveloped industrial and financial systems; therefore, changes in the international economic scenario would not have any major effects in that country. Moreover, Saudi Arabia’s economy is based on its oil exports to the United States (Saudi Arabia is the world largest oil exporter), and independent of international crisis, history has shown that the demand for oil has continuously increased, as has been the case for the past fifty years.

*The New York Times* was the only newspaper that most frequently framed discussions in its editorials reporting the September 11 attacks effects and measures taken by government on a national parameter: “Nationalism” frame. The New York daily did not frequently frame its editorials within discussions of the international war

on terrorism or within criticisms of government measures, as it happened in the other four newspapers investigated.

Findings showing that *The New York Times* did not frequently encode its editorials within an “Internationalism” frame (as in the case for the other dailies) suggest a tendency in American media discussed by various scholars (e.g. Wu, 1998; McChesney, 2002; Louw, 2003). Various media studies undertaken in the past fifteen years have observed that American media’s focus has shifted to domestic issues rather than international matters (Louw, 2003).

Scholars propose that the space and attention dedicated to foreign issues in media has been decreasing continuously (Louw, 2003; McChesney, 2002) and hence, the American public has become almost entirely uninformed about global politics, “Americans supported the war, though they knew next to nothing about the region we were fighting in and its history, or the US role in the world” (McChesney, 2002, p. 94). The way *The New York Times* encoded the September 11 events within a “Nationalism” frame show evidence for support of this tendency in American media. Moreover, news flows scholars have noted a very unbalanced system of news exchange among nations, determined mainly by economic power, ownership and structure of international news organizations and language (Schramm, 1964; Hur, 1984).

Besides not using an “Internationalism” frame as often as the other four dailies, *The New York Times* very seldom encoded its editorials within a “Critical” frame. Only 5.4% of the total editorials were identified within a “Critical” frame. The other dailies made more frequent use of this frame: *Le Monde*, 41.4%; *Folha de Sao*

*Paulo*, 27.6%; *El Pais*, 25.4%; and *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, 16.6%. This suggests an ideological influence within the political spectrum in the encoding of editorials, despite reaffirming the fact, already discussed, that media tends to reproduce dominant discourses and perspectives of the national government (Hall, 1979; Karim, 2002; and Chomsky, 2003). The relationship between the media and American government sources determines the way events are framed: “To the extent that news media rely on government sources at the Pentagon and Department of State, it is likely that the frame changes with whatever is the political expedient position” (Lipschultz, 2003, p. 110). In the case of the coverage of a disaster, such as the September 11 terrorist attacks, the media can become more willing to align its coverage with the rhetoric of political elites. In the aftermath of September 11, the media treated (as sometimes happens) U.S. government sources' official information as authoritative and therefore not open to discussion or a detailed analysis (Jenkins, 2003).

The editorials from the French daily *Le Monde* also demonstrated a critical difference in the way it framed its editorials compared to the other four dailies. *Le Monde* was the only newspaper that had “Critical” as the most frequently found frame among editorials. Most editorials identified within this frame made criticisms of United States' foreign policy and the Bush administration's measures restricting civil liberties and rights. This shows an alignment of the Parisian daily with the French government and media, as both are traditionally critical of the United States foreign policy. But it also illustrates ideological influences within a cultural spectrum, as anti-American feelings are not rare among French people and media. However, findings

related to the French newspaper use of a “Critical” frame were part of a broader panorama within the European political scenario.

The Spanish daily *El Pais* frequently encoded its editorials within a “Critical” frame as well. The Madrid daily had this frame as its second most frequently found one (25.4% of all editorials). The way the two newspapers framed their editorials correspond to the development of public opinion and governmental positions towards American foreign policy after September 11 in Europe. As the war on terrorism progressed and issues such as Afghani civil casualties and a possible war with Iraq emerged, European public opinion started shifting from a supportive to a critical position regarding American policies within the war on terrorism. This was not only the case for French and Spanish public opinion; it reflected the public opinion in most European countries and in several other countries around the world.

In the case of France, not only the public opinion, but also the French government was critical of the way the United States was handling the war on terrorism, coming to the point of pulling out of the international coalition on terror and opposing (together with Russia and China), American requests for a U.N. security council resolution approving a military action in Iraq. In Spain the situation was very different. The Aznar administration fully supported American actions within the war on terrorism despite national public opinion and media being massively against the direction that the war on terrorism was taking. However, in the March 2004 elections, the former Spanish Prime Minister Jose Aznar was defeated by the Socialist Candidate Rodriguez Zapatero, whose political platform was critical to the

United States lead war on terrorism. Rodriguez Zapatero pulled Spanish troops out of Iraq in his first week in power.

Frames are boundaries or parameters that limit the way events are discussed. They determine information that will be included in the media encoding of an event, and more importantly, they determine what information or perspective will be excluded (Altheide, 1996). Therefore frames will inevitably narrow the focus and distort the re-presentation of a particular event. After comparing with media from other countries, it became clear that *The New York Times* excluded information about the international scenario within which the post-September 11 war on terrorism developed as well as criticisms of how the war was handled by the Bush administration. Such framing of the September 11 events and their aftermath inevitably constrained public decoding. The outcomes were a poorly informed public, unable to critically assess the unfolding of the international war on terrorism, and on the other hand, broad public and political support for two large scale wars within 18 months - unprecedented fact in American history.

### **Implications**

The results from this study show that the editorials of the five newspapers had relevant differences in terms of framing, re-presentation of identity and sources, and the use of contextual information. Overall, the way preferred reading was encoded in the editorials of each one of the newspapers was distinct. Within the context of media cultural studies this finding could be interpreted in two distinct manners: within a critical theoretical framework or within a reception theoretical framework. Within a critical paradigm, many scholars see media messages as vehicles that convey the

dominant ideology of the encoders to the audience (Perez, 1996). Researchers from the reception theory tradition see mass media messages as polysemic texts that allow an active audience to read texts independently, therefore leaving out the ideological implications from the encoding moment (Fiske, 1986; Perez, 1996).

If observed from the perspective of critical theoretical framework, the different preferred readings encoded by the five newspapers in their editorials lead to major differences in the decoding moment and therefore crucial for readers' imaginary representation of the September 11 events and their aftermath. On the other hand, if observed from reception theoretical paradigm, the different preferred readings encoded by the five newspapers were not germane for the decoding moment. However, if considered public opinion in the countries where the newspapers studied circulate, evidences demonstrate support for the critical theoretical paradigm.

*The New York Times* most seldom encoded its editorials within a "Critical" frame; most of its editorials were encoded within a "Nationalism" frame, supportive of national government policies and actions. The New York daily coverage of the September 11 events is similar to what has been found about mainstream American media coverage (McChesney, 2002). Comparing its framing of the September 11 events and their aftermath with the supportive American public opinion regarding Bush administration's handling of counter terrorism, there is a equivalence among both. The newspapers *Le Monde* and *El Pais* frequently encoded their editorials within a "Critical" frame. Both of these dailies are influential and fairly representative of the media in France and Spain (Pean and Cohen, 2003). Comparing their framing of the September 11 events and their aftermath with the critical public opinion

position towards American counter terrorism policies in these countries, it would be fair to say that these evidences build support for critical framework theoretical claims on the encoding and decoding of media messages.

Moreover, prior research, theory and results show the determining role played by media in the re-presentation of the September 11 events and the consequences for public opinion (e.g. Baudrillard, 2001; Cottle, 2002; Debatin, 2002; Greenberg 2002; Karim, 2002; Kellner, 2002; Nacos, 2002; Pompper, 2002; Semati, 2002; Silberstein, 2002; Chomsky, 2003; Jenkins, 2003; and Louw, 2003). According to Bethami Dobkin, "the role of the media in crisis situations is accentuated; the public has a heightened need for information, and thus the media's influence in defining reality increases" (Dobkin, 1992; p. 33). Media had great influence in the way international public understood the September 11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent war on terrorism, as well as the reality profoundly changed by these events.



### **STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

In order to better evaluate the inclusion or exclusion of visual descriptions in a medium such as newspaper, it would be useful to analyze regular news articles. Out of the sample editorials chosen to this investigation, only *The New York Times* sample had a relevant number of editorials making use of visual descriptions: seventeen out of 62 (27.4%). To better understand the nature and impact of the September 11 images it would be necessary to investigate news reports. The format of the editorials in the samples chosen proved not to be rich in visual descriptions due to their nature as dissertation or suggestive pieces. News reports might be more descriptive and therefore make more use of visual descriptions.

Newspaper editorials were analyzed in their original languages in the case for *The New York Times*, *Le Monde*, *El Pais*, and *Folha de Sao Paulo*. This can be considered a strong point for this study, as the author did not find a single cross-cultural media study where a textual or content analysis was undertaken using documents in the original languages they were produced (four different languages). In a qualitative textual analysis, semantic structures are the focus of the study, therefore, the importance of analyzing documents in their original language. Nevertheless, one of the newspapers was not analyzed in its original language. The sample editorials from the Saudi daily *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* (originally published in Arabic) were translated to English by Foreign Broadcast Information Service (an office within the United States State Department). Problems with the translation might have occurred. Translations always pose problems; however, in an attempt to verify and legitimize the translated editorials, a sample of English translated and Arabic original editorials

was taken to a translator. The translator identified few mistakes in two out of the six editorials in the sample; nonetheless the mistakes were peripheral to the holistic meaning of the editorials. Moreover, the use of newspapers from five different countries stands as strength for this study.

There is a difficulty in determining the extent to which the differences found in the editorials from the five newspapers under scope are due to disparate organizational culture, political or cultural influences. In many cases, findings, after contextualized within known cultural and political contemporary scenarios, strongly point to political or to cultural reasons to the differences, however that is not always the case. For instance, it is difficult to determine whether the lack of critics to the United States foreign policy concerning the war on terrorism in the editorials of *The New York Times* is due to an American cultural tradition of being supportive of government in times of crisis, or if it is due to political or advertising pressure. Or even a combination of both.

The same is true in the case for the differences found in the editorials of the French daily *Le Monde*. The fine line between political, organizational and cultural influences is also a problem in determining differences found in the editorials of the French newspaper. The conspicuous use of critics to the United States foreign policy as a frame to discuss the September 11 events might be an influence of French governments' agenda of not fully supporting (and at some moments opposing) United States foreign policies regarding the war on terrorism, or it even might be an influence of anti-Americanism within French culture, or may be both factors. Despite these difficulties, the author made use of contextual political and cultural information

about the contemporary international scenario to recognize influences emerged in findings within the most appropriate ideological spectrum: cultural or political.

A strong point for this study regards the utilization of contrasting theoretical frameworks to scrutinize an issue, which appeared in different moments of this study, and reflects the author's concern to include various ideological perspectives. The very choice of probing the September 11 events from two contrasting theoretical paradigms is an evidence of such concern. The author also exposed the diverse definitions for terrorism, besides making use of interdisciplinary studies on the September 11 events published by scholars within the fields of philosophy, sociology, anthropology, psychology and communication, and structured according to quantitative, qualitative and critical methodologies.

Future studies on the cross-cultural aspects of media coverage of the September 11 terrorist attacks should also take in consideration a textual analysis of television content. This medium was central to the dissemination of the terrorist assaults in the United States and all over the world. An analysis of the broadcasting scripts from television networks around the world might show how differently news anchors encoded the terrorist attacks' images to the large audiences that had their first contact with information about the happenings through television. That would be very informative as television's reach in terms of audience outnumbers that of print media.

Moreover, to broadly identify cultural and socio-political influences in the media encoding of the September 11 events it would be useful to analyze a larger number of media from an even larger number of countries. Such a task was not possible within the timeframe for completion of this study. An analysis of more than

one newspaper per ethno-cultural group would better represent the print media of these groups and nations. Many times the organizational culture of one specific medium and its relations with government and other organizations might restrain the way this medium re-presents reality to the reader. Furthermore, a comparison between newspaper editorials and international news wires articles from the United States and Europe regarding the framing of the post September 11 war on terrorism will be enlightening to the discussion of ideological influence in the encoding of terrorism news in different countries.

Scholars attribute to the media a central role within the audience understanding of terrorism and the meaning making process. They argue that the public does not witness the actual violent act, but rather has contact with the happenings through a media "re-presentation" (Berger, 1993). This study found diverging re-presentations of the September 11 events and their aftermath in the media of different countries. It also found that cultural and political perspectives held by encoders as well as national governments' agenda influenced these diverse re-presentations of the events. These findings call for a critical assessment of government's role in media re-presentation of terrorism in future research.

The conflict caused by the media "re-presentation" of terrorism will inflict a political polarization of the public - a result that interests not only the terrorists, but the administration as well (Berger, 1993; Chomsky, 2003). According to Maurice Berger, "the public often comes to fear or reject the political causes represented through violent acts; they can help justify government-sponsored counter terrorist campaigns or move a people toward political change" (Berger, 1993, p. 21). As, we

could see in the cases for the terrorist attacks of September 11 in the United States and of March 11 in Spain, there was a political polarization of the public, and the media definitely played an important role in both countries' cases.

In the United States, the public supported Bush administration's counter terrorism campaign despite historical rollbacks in civil rights and liberties germane to American culture as well as a preemptive military strike. In Spain the terrorist attacks triggered a reversal on the election process. Two days prior to the attacks, opinion polls pointed to a reelection of Prime Minister Jose Aznar, however on the day of the elections (March 14) opposition candidate, Rodriguez Zapatero, was victorious. Future research on terrorism should take into consideration the important role, played by government and authorities, in the process of terrorism news encoding and the subsequent audience meaning making of these events.

**APPENDIX**

**PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES****REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AFTER TWO PLANES CRASH INTO WORLD  
TRADE CENTER, EMMA BOOKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SARATOSA,  
FLORIDA**

September 11, 2001, 9:30 a.m. EDT

THE PRESIDENT Ladies and gentlemen, this is a difficult moment for America. I, unfortunately, will be going back to Washington after my remarks. Secretary Rod Paige and the Lt. Governor will take the podium and discuss education. I do want to thank the folks here at Booker Elementary School for their hospitality.

Today we've had a national tragedy. Two airplanes have crashed into the World Trade Center in an apparent terrorist attack on our country. I have spoken to the Vice President, to 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.

And now if you would join me in a moment of silence. May God bless the victims, their families, and America. Thank you very much.

.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911.html>

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT UPON ARRIVAL AT BARKSDALE AIR  
FORCE BASE, LOUISIANA

September 11, 2001

THE PRESIDENT I want to reassure the American people that the full resources of the federal government are working to assist local authorities to save lives and to help the victims of these attacks. Make no mistake: The United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts.

I've been in regular contact with the Vice President, the Secretary of Defense, the national security team and my Cabinet. We have taken all appropriate security precautions to protect the American people. Our military at home and around the world is on high alert status, and we have taken the necessary security precautions to continue the functions of our government.

We have been in touch with the leaders of Congress and with world leaders to assure them that we will do whatever is necessary to protect America and Americans.

I ask the American people to join me in saying a thanks for all the folks who have been fighting hard to rescue our fellow citizens and to join me in saying a prayer for the victims and their families.

The resolve of our great nation is being tested. But make no mistake: We will show the world that we will pass this test. God bless.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-1.html>



## STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE NATION

September 11, 2001, 8:30 p.m. EDT

THE PRESIDENT 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. The victims were in airplanes, or in their offices; secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers; moms and dads friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror.

The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed; our country is strong.

A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.

America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for the freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.

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 the neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington, D.C. to help with local rescue efforts.

Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from farther attacks.

The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight, and will be open for business tomorrow. Our financial institutions remain strong, and the American economy will be open for business, as well.

The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources of 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 harbor them.

I appreciated so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance.

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. Tonight, I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the

ages in Psalm 23: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me."

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.

Thank you. Good night, and God bless America.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010911-16.html>

**PROTOCOL**

1. How are the aspects of identity (ethnicity, and nation) used to categorize the people involved?

3. How are descriptions of photographs, illustrations and videos used to create or discuss visual images related to the event?

2. What contextual information is included or assumed by the coverage? What other stories are used to tell this story?

4. Who are the sources, and how is their information presented? Are they paraphrased or quoted? Whose ideas are supported (reinforced) questioned? Which details are included or excluded?

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agger, B. (1992). Cultural Studies as Critical Theory, London and Washington, DC: The Falmer Press.
- Allied Media Corp. (n.d.) Arab Media Information. Retrieved March 26, 2004, from <http://www.allied-media.com/Arab-American/asharq.html>
- Altheide, D. (1996). Qualitative media analysis. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Althusser, L. (1971). Ideology and the State. London: New Left Books.
- Atwood, L., and Bullion, S. (1982). News Maps from the World: A view from Asia. In International Perspectives on News. Atwood, L., Bullion, S. and Murphy, S. (eds.). Southern Illinois University Press: Carbondale and Edwardsville.
- Audit Bureau of Circulation. (n.d.) US newspaper industry information. Retrieved March 26, 2004, from <http://www.accessabc.com/reader/top100.htm>
- Baudrillard, J. (2001). L'esprit du Terrorisme, Le Monde, November 2, 2001.
- Barnett, Kim (1996). The determinants of international news flow: a network analysis. Communication Research, 23 (3), 323-352.
- Bell, A. (1991). The language of news media. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Bell, J. (1978). Terrorist script and live-action spectacles. Columbia Journalism Review, 28, 47-50.
- Berger, M. (1993). Visual Terrorism. In Violent Persuasions: The politics and imagery of terrorism. Brown, D. and Merrill, R. (eds.), Seattle: Bay Press.
- Bernstein, J. (2001). The culture industry: selected essays on mass culture: Theodore Adorno, New York and London: Routledge.
- Blondheim, M. & Liebes, T. (2002). Live television's disaster marathon of September 11 and its subversive potential. Prometheus, 20 (3), 271-276.
- Bloomberg.com. (n.d.) Latin American press information. Retrieved March 24, 2004, from [http://quote.bloomberg.com/apps/news?latin\\_america](http://quote.bloomberg.com/apps/news?latin_america)
- Carruthers, S. (2000). The Media at War. New York: St. Martin's Press.

- Chomsky, N. (2003). Power and Terror: Post 9/11 talks and interviews. New York: Seven Stories Press.
- Condit, C. (1989). The rhetorical limits of polysemy. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 6, 103-122.
- Cottle, S. (2002). Television agora and agoraphobia post-September 11. In Journalism after September 11. Zelizer, B. and Stuart, A. (eds.). New York and London: Routledge.
- Curan, J., Gurevitch, M., & Woollacott, J. (1982). The study of media: theoretical approaches. In Culture, society and the media. Bennett, T., Curan, J., Gurevitch, M., and Woollacott, J. (eds.). London and New York: Methuen.
- Davis, L. (1997). Prime Time in Ecuador: National, regional television outdraws U.S. programming. Journal of American Culture 20 (1), p. 9-19.
- Deacon, D. (1999) Researching communications: a practical guide to methods in media and cultural analysis. London: Arnold; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Debatin, B. (2002). "Plane wreck with spectators:" Terrorism and media attention. In Communication and Terrorism: public and media responses to 9/11. New Jersey: Hampton Press, Inc.
- Deming, R. (1986). Theorizing television: Text, textuality, intertextuality. Journal of Communication Inquiry, 10, 33-44.
- Dobkin, B. (1992). Tales of Terror: television news and the construction of the terrorist threat. New York: Praeger Publishers.
- Eco, U. (1990). The limits of interpretation. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Edelman, M. (1977). Political Language: words that succeed and policies that fail. New York: Academic Press.
- Edelman, M. (1988). Constructing the political spectacle. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Fiske, J. (1986). Television and popular culture: Reflections for British and Australian critical practice. Critical Studies in Mass Communications, 3, 200-126.
- Fiske, J. (1987). Television Culture. London: Methuen.

- Gerbner, G. (1971). Violence in television drama: trends and symbolic functions. Television and Social Behavior, 1, 28-187.
- Gerbner, G. (1990). Symbolic Function of Violence and Terror. In Terrorism and the Media: Dilemmas for government, journalists & the public. Latter, R. and Alexander, Y. (eds.), New York: Brassey's (US).
- Gerbner, G. (1991). Symbolic Function of Violence and Terrorism. In In the camera's eye: News coverage of terrorism events. Picard, R. & Alexander, Y. (eds.), New York: Brassey's (US).
- Greenberg, B. (2002). Communication and Terrorism: Public and media responses to 9/11. New Jersey: Hampton Press, Inc.
- Greimas, A. (1987). Selected writings in semiotic theory. London, United Kingdom: Frances Pinter.
- Gossberg, L. (1993). Cultural studies in/and new world. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 10, 1-22.
- Hall, S. (1974). Media Power: The Double Bind. Journal of Communication, 24 (4), 19-26.
- Hall, S.; Critcher, C.; Jefferson, T.; Clarke, J.; & Roberts, B. (1978). Policing the crisis: Mugging, the state, and law and order. New York: Holmes & Meier.
- Hall, S. (1979). Culture, Media and the 'Ideological Effect', in Mass Communication and Society, (eds.) Curran, J., Gurevitch, M. and Woollacott, J. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hall, S. (1980a). Introduction to Media Studies at the Centre. In Culture, Media, Language. (ed.) Stuart Hall et al. London: Hutchinson in association with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham.
- Hall, S. (1980b). The rediscovery of 'ideology': the return of the repressed in media studies. In Culture, society and the media. M. Gurevich, T. Bennett, J. Curran, and J. Woollacott: London and New York: Methuen.
- Hall, S. (1980c). Encoding/decoding. In Culture, Media, Language. (ed.) Stuart Hall et al. London: Hutchinson in association with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham.
- Hall, S. (1993). Encoding and Decoding in Television Discourse, in The Cultural Reader, (ed.) During, S. London and New York: Routledge.



- Hall, S. (1996). The problem of ideology: Marxism without guarantees, in Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies, (eds.) Morley, D. and Chen, K. London and New York: Routledge.
- Hardt, H. (1996). British cultural studies and the return of the critical in American mass communication research: accommodation or radical change? In Stuart Hall: critical dialogues in cultural studies. Chen, K. and Morley, D. (eds.). London and New York: Routledge.
- Heck, M. (1980). The ideological dimension of media messages. In Culture, Media, Language: working papers in cultural studies, 1972-79. London: Hutchinson & Co. Publishers Ltd.
- Herman, E. (1993). Terrorism: Misrepresentation of power. In The politics and imagery of terrorism. Brown, D. & Merrill, R. (eds.), Seattle: Bay Press.
- Hur, K. (1984). A critical analysis of international news flow research. Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 1, 365-378.
- Jenkins, P. (2003). Images of Terror: what we can and can't know about terrorism. New York: Walter de Gruyter, Inc.
- Jensen, K. (1990). The politics of polysemy: Television news, everyday consciousness and political action. Media, Culture and Society, 12, 57-68.
- Kanihan, S. & Gale, K. (2003). Within 3 hours, 97 percent learn about 9/11 attacks. Newspaper Research Journal, 24 (1) 78-91.
- Karim, K. (2002). Making sense of the Islamic peril. In Journalism after September 11. Zelizer, B. & Stuart, A. (eds.). New York and London: Routledge.
- Kearney, R. (2003). Terror, philosophy and the sublime: Some philosophical reflections on 11 September. Philosophy and Social Criticism, 29 (1), 23-51.
- Kellner, D. (2002). September 11, the media and war fever. Television and New Media, 3 (2), 143-151.
- Knight, G. & Dean, T. (1982). Myth and the structure of news. Journal of Communication, 32, (2), 44-61.
- Lazarsfeld, P. (1941). Remarks on administrative and critical communication research. Studies in Philosophy and Social Science 9, 2-16.
- Lewis, J. (2002). Speaking of wars... Television & New Media, 3 (2) 169-172.
- Livingston, S. (1993). The Terrorism Spectacle. Boulder: Westview Press, Inc.

- Lipschultz, J. (2003). A content Analysis of American Network Newscasts before 9/11. In Crisis Communications: Lessons from September 11. Noll, A. (ed.). Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, INC.: Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto and Oxford.
- Louw, E. (2003). The war against terrorism: a public relations challenge to the Pentagon. Gazette: The International Journal for Communication Studies, 65 (3), 211-230.
- Lowery, S. & DeFleur, M. (1988). Milestones in mass communication research: media effects. New York: Longman.
- Marighella, C. (1985). Minimanual of the urban guerrilla. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications.
- McChesney, R. (2002). September 11 and the structural limitations of US journalism. In Journalism after September 11. Allan, S. and Zelizer, B. (eds.). Routledge: London and New York.
- McLeod, J. Kosicki & Pan, Z. (1991). On Understanding and Misunderstanding Media Effects, in Mass Media and Society, Curran, J. and Gurevitch, M. (eds.). New York: Edward Arnold.
- Meyers, M. (1994). News of battering. Journal of Communication, 44 (2), 47-63.
- Mongensen, K.; Lindsay, L.; Li, X.; Perkins, J. & Beardsley, M. (2002). How TV news covered the crisis: the content of CNN, CBS, ABC, NBC and Fox. In Communication and Terrorism: the public and media responses to 9/11. New Jersey: Hampton Press.
- Morley, D. & Silverstone R. (1990). Domestic communications: Technologies and meanings. Media, Culture and Society, 12, 31-55.
- Morley, D. (1992). Television, audiences and cultural studies. London and New York: Routledge.
- Nacos, B. (1994). Terrorism and the media: from the Iranian hostage crisis to the World Trade Center bombing. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Nacos, B. (2002). Mass-mediated terrorism: the central role of the media in terrorism and counterterrorism. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Pean, P. & Cohen, P. (2003). La face cache du Monde. Mille et une nuits (Editions): France.

- Perkins, D. & Saratosa, W. (2001). Representing coculturals: On the forms and news portrayals of Native Americans. The Howard Journal of Communication, 12, 73-84.
- Perez, L. (1996). Rethinking ideology: Polysemy, pleasure and hegemony in television culture. Journal of Communication Inquiry, 20, 37-56.
- Picard, R. (1993). Media Portrayals of terrorism: functions and meaning of news coverage. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press.
- Pompper, D. (2002). Representing patriotism: The blurring of place and space in an 'All-American City'. In Communication and Terrorism: Public and media responses to 9/11. B. Greenberg (ed.). Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press, Inc.
- Schechter, D. (2003). Media Wars: News at a time of terror. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Schramm, W. (1964). Mass media and national development; the role of information in the developing countries. Stanford University Press: Stanford, CA.
- Schroeder, K. C. (2000). Making Sense of Audiences' Discourses: Towards a Multidimensional Model of Mass Media Reception. European Journal of Cultural Studies, 3(2), 255-268.
- Semati, M. (2002). Imagine the Terror. Television & New Media, 3 (2), 213-218.
- Severin, W. & Tankard J. (2001) Communication Theories: Origins, Methods and Uses in the Mass Media. New York: Longman.
- Silberstein, S. (2002). War of words: language, politics and 9/11. New York and London: Routledge
- Sperry, S. (1981). Television news as narrative. In Adler, R. (ed.), Understanding television.
- Steiner, D. (1988). Oppositional decoding and social act. Critical Studies in Mass Communications, 5, 1-15.
- Veron, E. (1969). The semanticization of political violence. In Lenguaje y Comunicacion Social, E. Veron (ed.). Buenos Aires: Nueva Vision. [my translation].
- Weimann, G. & Brosius, H. (1991). The newsworthiness of international terrorism. Communication Research, 18 (3), 333-354.

- Weimann, G. & Winn, C. (1994). The theater of terror: mass media and international terrorism. New York: Longman Publishing Group.
- Wilkinson, P. (2001). Terrorism versus Democracy: The liberal state response. London: Frank Cass.
- Winfield, B.; Friedman, B.; & Trisnadi, V. (2002). History as the metaphor through which the current world is viewed: British and American newspapers' uses of history following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. Journalism Studies, 3 (2) 289-300.
- World Association of Newspapers. (n.d.) Info Services EXPO 2004. Retrieved March, 26, 2004, from <http://www.wan-press.org/article4039.html>
- World News Connection. (n.d.) About World News Connection. Retrieved March 23, 2004, from <http://wnc.dialog.com/>
- Worthington, N. (2001). A division of labor: Dividing maternal authority from political activism in the Kenyan press. Journal of Communication Inquiry, 25 (2), 167-183.
- Wu, H. (1998). Investigating the determinants of international news flow. Gazette: The International Journal for Communication Studies, 60 (6), 493-512.
- Zhondang, P. and Kosicki, G. (1993). Framing analysis: An approach to news discourse. Political Communication, 10, 55-69.