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Greek mythic frames in the New York times' coverage of Hurricane Katrina

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GREEK MYTHIC FRAMES IN *THE NEW YORK TIMES*'

COVERAGE OF HURRICANE KATRINA

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Vaishali Kirpekar

May 2006

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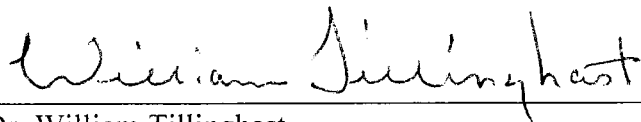
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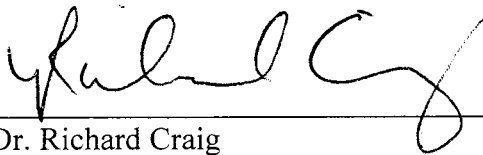
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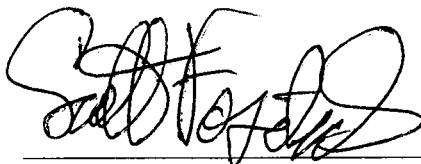
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ABSTRACT

GREEK MYTHIC FRAMES IN *THE NEW YORK TIMES*'

COVERAGE OF HURRICANE KATRINA

by Vaishali Kirpekar

The topic of this thesis is myths in news of the Katrina tragedy. Developed from Greek mythology, seven themes of chaos, hero, reference, tragic flaw, catharsis, hubris, and villain are investigated using quantitative content analysis on Wednesdays (August 31, 2005-October 23, 2005) and Sundays (September 4, 2005-October 26, 2005). Greek stories could have been assimilated as part of the Western subconscious since Greek civilization influenced the west (Burns, 1954). This explains Lule's (2001) assessment that U.S. journalists organize tragic stories using myths instinctively.

Used in this study is an explanation for organizing stories—the framing theory. Chi square results show proportionally fewer weekday stories use frames than Sunday stories (32% vs. 75%). This underscores that in tragedies journalists adapt news to tell stories that sustain mankind. Examples of human endurance were the focus of reference frame used more in the immediate aftermath than in the later period (45% vs. 19%).

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

August 29, 2005, and September 11, 2001, are historic dates. Both are marked by death, tragic shock, loss, despair, anger, chaos, and suffering. Hurricane Katrina struck Louisiana and continued to wreck havoc along the entire Gulf Coast of Mississippi, and Mobile, Alabama among other areas. In the other tragedy, the twin towers, symbols of American capitalism were attacked.

The rebuilding cost of New York city after terrorist attacks was \$21 billion, but the total federal cost of this hurricane was \$100 billion as described in the September 7 story “Hurricane’s Toll is Likely To Reshape Bush’s Economic Agenda.” It was also described as the largest insured loss since the attacks in the August 31 story “Payouts Hinge on the Cause of Damage.”

Journalists, media researchers, and government officials have described Hurricane Katrina and the World Trade Center attacks as two historic American tragedies. President George Bush was quoted from the weekly radio address to have said, ““This time, the devastation resulted not from malice of evil men, but from the fury of water and wind,”” in the September 11 story “As Recovery Slowly Starts, Some Lights Go On, and Some Mail is Delivered.”

News writing of a tragic event shows that reporters draw from basic mythic themes such as hero and villain, as indicated by past studies. Lule (2002) found that journalists relied on four myths to interpret the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks: The

end of innocence, the victims, the heroes, and the foreboding future myths. He also noted (2001) that journalists used the flood myth in coverage of Hurricane Mitch. Based on the study of the hurricane coverage, Lule (2001) asserted that American journalists used the themes of the flood myth. The flood was a curse to punish human beings who erred, he noted (p. 25).

He defined myth as an “essential social narrative, a rich and enduring aspect of human existence, which draws from archetypal figures and forms to offer exemplary models for social life” (2002, p. 277). For example, he noted that the hero was an enduring archetype, found in societies around the world and across time. In his study of editorials in *The New York Times* on the September 11 attacks, he referred to Greek epics such as Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to assert that news adapts from the antiquity of Greek drama to be ceaselessly modern (2001, p. 204).

The Greek civilization influenced the West. Stromberg (1969) attributed such influence on Christianity and the Western civilization to the diffusion of the Greek thought to Europe during the Roman Empire. He wrote, “So we shall meet the Greeks again and again in Western history” (p. 47). Switzer (1988) noted its relevance in a modern society and wrote, “We recognize ourselves in the myths and legends, and can identify with Greek civilization through those very human gods and heroes” (p. xiv).

A myth is a story by which a culture explains or understands some aspect of reality or nature, noted Barthes (1957/1972) and reiterated Fiske (1990). Myths can also be described as stories from classical mythology, especially Greek mythology that offers the most widespread and best-known aspects of the Western heritage from the ancient

world, noted Burns (1954). He wrote, "For the Greeks were the founders of all those ideals which we commonly think of as peculiar to the West" (p. 162). Among all people of the ancient world, the one whose culture most exemplified the spirit of Western man was the Greek, he noted.

Greek myths are present in news. Hanson (2002) noted that the former president Bill Clinton was depicted by the media as a trickster, symbolized by lust and greed. In Greek mythology, Prometheus is a trickster-god, who was punished by Zeus for stealing fire from the gods and providing it to mankind (Thury & Devinney, 2005).

Bird and Dardenne (1988) noted that the use of myths in news offers reassurance and familiarity in shared community experiences. Similarly, Picquet and Shanty (2002) noted that the press was a vehicle for reassurance to the public, after the September 11 attacks.

Journalists get exposed to tragedies during their lifetime such as wars, terrorist attacks, airplane crashes, natural disasters, fire, murders, and so forth (Hight & Smyth, 2003). There is a likelihood that news writing in such circumstances goes beyond the five W's and one H, to help make meaning of the event, when grief and anger run rife.

Some studies done after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, highlight the impact of grief. People cope by praying (as noted by Ai, Tice, Peterson, & Huang, 2005) and by forgiving (as noted by Friedberg, Adonis, Von Bergen & Suchday, 2005).

Such problems in coping with day-to-day life after a tragedy underscore the need to find an enduring approach. Mythic themes and news framework are, both, enduring because they continue to be used through time. Bird and Dardenne (1988) wrote, "The

facts, names, and details change almost daily, but the framework into which they fit—the symbolic system—is more enduring” (p. 69).

Similarly, it was of interest to this study to investigate whether Hurricane Katrina’s coverage would reveal the use of mythic themes. In “Homeland Security Chief Defends Federal Response” (September 4, 2005), an emergency management official is quoted to have said, ““In a city like New Orleans, where they had been talking for some time about the levee system not holding, why did they not expect the possibility of a levee break?””

At other times, journalists asserted a tragic flaw frame by adding their own comments and including their perspective. In “Geography Complicates Levee Repair” (August 31, 2005), the reporter described the 22 pumping stations in New Orleans as follows, “But they are notoriously fickle. Efforts to add backup power generators to keep them all running during blackout have been delayed by a lack of federal money.”

In other words, news stories highlighted the tragic flaw of the federal government. Tragic flaw is one of several Greek mythic themes that influence the Western civilization. Lucas (1928) wrote that the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, defined it as a moral weakness in characters that leads to a tragic outcome.

Scope of Study

The focus of this research paper is different than Lule’s. First, the mythic themes are developed broadly from Greek mythology. Second, he used the method of

qualitative content analysis to research editorials, whereas this study uses quantitative content analysis and qualitative framing theory to examine the use of Greek mythic themes in coverage of Hurricane Katrina.

The use of myths was the focus of the study. How do journalists who have been described as specialists with access to the truth (Bird & Dardenne, 1988, p. 80) and as priests who guided the shocked society (Lule, 2002; Schudson, 2003) report disasters when they are as likely to be affected by what they see and cover?

Media sociologist Schudson (2003) has noted the effect of the tragedy on journalists. “There was a rush of feeling that for journalists felt quite wonderful after September 11—a sense that this group, often alienated and alien, was momentarily at one with the general public” (p. 189). Therefore, the focus of this study is on how journalists draw from common mythic themes.

Purpose of Study

The focus of the study is to examine the use of Greek mythic themes of tragic flaw, hero, villain, catharsis, chaos, and reference frames in news stories in *The New York Times*' coverage of Hurricane Katrina. The underlying assumption in this study, based on past research, was that journalists use mythic themes when covering a tragedy.

Furthermore, the researcher wanted to investigate whether there was any difference in the way frames were used in the initial period, which includes the first four Sundays and the first four Wednesdays. The underlying assumption was that during the initial period, in the direct aftermath of the tragedy, less information is available to the

journalists, the news is fresh, and people are shocked by the extent of the damage, therefore, journalists use familiar stories and past events, or provide comparisons, to connect the current event rather than isolate it.

Since the aim of this study is to understand how reporters of *The New York Times* presented the stories using Greek mythic themes, framing theory is used. Frames can be used as general principles around which information is structured, defined, labeled, and categorized. Reporters use frames as categories that exist in the mind that enable them to locate, perceive, identify, and label that event. However, this researcher, by identifying the myths as Greek fundamental themes present in the Western civilization, attempted to present a likelihood that the use of mythic frames in tragedies is not the result of a planned and deliberate aim to present news as such, but more an inherent response to share collective beliefs.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

American journalism should be examined beyond the dichotomy of hard and soft news, noted Bird and Dardenne (1988), who argued for a different approach to studying news. According to them, the mythical qualities of news offer more than facts. News stories help to understand the meaning of the event. They wrote, “News stories, like myths, do not ‘tell it like it is,’ but rather, ‘tell it like it means’” (p. 71). The meaning-making function of myths was also highlighted by Campbell (1991a) who wrote: “I define myths not as apocryphal stories associated with earlier cultures but as vital contemporary creators of meaning and value” (p. 265).

Like Bird and Dardenne (1988), who noted the mythic narrative in news stories, Thornburn (1988) described television as consensus narrative. He said it was an institution of storytelling in American lives. He called the television “an instrument for continuity as well as change” (p. 56).

In popular culture, the storytelling function of television helps fulfill the emotional needs of people irrespective of their ethnicities (Katz & Liebes, 1988). They studied the pattern of involvement between viewers and Dallas, “the world hit program” and “a quintessentially American cultural product” (p. 113). Viewers were from “Israel – Arabs, newly arrived Russian Jews, Moroccan Jews, and kibbutz members and nonethnic Americans in Los Angeles” who universally seek the primordial themes of human relations as noted by the two researchers. They, then, described *Dallas* as a primordial

tale echoing the most fundamental mythologies. They drew several parallels between Dallas and Genesis. For example, “The brothers in *Dallas*—J.R. and Bobby—are simply variations on Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau” (p. 118).

Storytelling is an important part of a culture, noted several media researchers such as Bird and Dardenne (1988), Silverstone (1988), and Thornburn (1988). Silverstone described the relation between myth and ritual. He said that myths occupied a particular space in culture and folktales. He noted, “Myths are associated with rituals, as beliefs to action, both together defining a transcendent and liminal space and time for a people in their otherwise mundane reality” (p. 23).

Furthermore, Carey (1989) compared news consumption to a ritual. He presented two views of communication: ritual and transmission, what he called “two contrasting definitions in the history of Western thought” (p. 14). Transmission view defined communication as transmission of messages. Ritual view is not directed toward the extension of messages but toward the maintenance of society in time, he wrote (p. 18).

He asserted that the ritual view draws people together in fellowship and commonality, to the representation of shared beliefs. Community ideals are embodied in dance, plays, architecture, news stories, and strings of speech, he noted. A ritual view of newspapers presented a model not that of “information acquisition, but of dramatic action in which the reader joins the world of contending forces as an observer at a play” (p. 21) “News reading, and writing is a ritual act and moreover a dramatic one” (p. 20). He argued that what is arrayed before the reader is not pure information but a portrayal of the

contending forces in the world. For example, “A story on the meeting of the women’s political caucus casts them into the liberation movement as supporter or opponent” (p. 20). Carey said the newspaper’s role is “like a Balinese cockfight, a Dickens novel, an Elizabethan drama, a student rally, it is presentation of reality that gives life an overall form, order, and tone” (p. 21).

Carey's ritual view is significant in understanding the role of language in communication. A ritual view of communication considered language as an instrument of dramatic action whereas a transmission view of communication emphasized a language that was an instrument of practical action and discursive reasoning.

Fiske (1990) noted that language maintains the fellow feeling in a group. Like Bird and Dardenne (1988), Fiske suggested a new approach to understanding communication where language generates meaning and is not only a process.

Language

Language uses metaphors. Fiske (1990) studied the use of metaphors in the sensational appeal of popular texts, and commented on their broader implications. He noted that the hegemonic metaphor of time, such as spending time, and investing time conformed to the Protestant work ethic by comparing time with money. A metaphor is a figure of speech containing an implied comparison, in which a word or phrase ordinarily and primarily used of one thing is applied to another.

Like Fiske (1990), linguists Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explained that people use metaphors to make sense of everyday experience. They noted that metaphors structured

reasoning. Lakoff and Johnson (1989), like Fiske, pointed out the common metaphors in newspaper headlines, for example, “Prices rose” or “Stocks plummeted.”

Fiske highlighted the presence of excessive elements of parody and clichéd metaphors. He described primitive myths as myths of life and death, good and evil, and men and gods, and sophisticated myths such as of science and success. Fiske noted, “Such everyday metaphors are different from literary metaphors in a number of ways. They do not draw attention to themselves as metaphors, and thus do not invite us to decode them consciously” (p. 94).

Similarly, Burke (1969) criticized the wrong use of metaphors. He said that the grammar of motives deflects attention from scenic matters to the nature of the situation by giving examples of metaphors in a newspaper article, which praised the Russian soldier against the Nazi forces. He said that descriptions such as “Mother Russia” and “devotion to the soil,” are essential motives located in the agent (p. 17).

The use of metaphors was found in a study on business reporting (Anderson & Nicholson, 2001). They highlighted the use of metaphors in journalistic writing. Their content analysis of media's coverage of entrepreneurs from 1989-2000 showed that male entrepreneurs were portrayed as wolfish charmers, seducers, supernatural gurus, successful skyrockets, community saviors, and corruptors. They found the prominence of action-oriented metaphors, such as magician, warrior, and explorer.

Therefore, it is clear that metaphors are central to the thought process (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). This leads the review's focus to writing.

Writing and Collective Memory

Philosophers Ricoeur (1980/1982) and Barthes (1957/1972) noted the connection between language and myth. Although Ricoeur said that writing preserves discourse and makes it an archive for individual and collective memory, Barthes claimed that a writer's language is not expected to represent reality but to signify it.

A journalist's language of news signalizes events, noted Lippmann (1922). News stories give people a general sense of what is happening and who is dealing with it rather than informing ordinary readers constrained by limited knowledge and everyday distractions about complex events.

However, it can be asserted that contemporary events that make news are connected to the past. Eliade (1963/1968) noted that the endeavor to preserve the memory of contemporary events and the desire to know the past of humanity as accurately as possible "was of interest to the investigation on myths" (p. 135).

Journalism and Mythic Themes

News is part of an age-old cultural practice, narrative, and storytelling. Ehrlich (2002) illustrated this by giving example of Charlie Kuralt's rural reporting, which showed the use of the myth of a peaceful neighborly Other America and traditional American myths of the Other world, small-town pastoralism, and rugged individualism.

A journalist tells stories to reaffirm the commonsensical values of "Middle America," Campbell (1991 b) noted. In doing this, he asserted, a journalist played the

roles of a detective, an analyst, and a tourist and news is transformed from facts into a mystery that needs to be solved; and a therapy that needs to be analyzed.

According to him, a journalist constructed formulaic ways to read the texts to speak to common themes and ties that bind. He contended that the CBS news magazine 60 minutes that began in 1968 and became one of the most watched programs in television history was a key repository for contemporary mythologies.

Common themes such as life, relationships, marriage, and partners are used in business news sections on mergers of companies. Examples of business reporting showed the references to themes of marriage and birth. Reporters Fonda (2005) and Krantz (1996) used myths that evoked a positive image of mergers and acquisitions. Krantz described the Time Warner-Turner Broadcasting merger as “a marriage,” and Fonda described the P&G merger with Gillette as “a honeymoon.” Fonda wrote in the lead, “The business world has become obsessed with corporate nuptials” and ended the story by writing, “We'll know when the honeymoon ends” (p. 56).

Greek and Other Mythic Themes in Coverage of Tragic Events

A pattern of myth was found in Kitch's analysis (2002) of magazines' coverage of the tragic death of John F. Kennedy Jr. She found that the coverage in five magazines evoked the myth of the torch-bearer, redemption of a cursed family, and the hero. She noted that news tells myths about people who are part of the nation's cultural mythology like the Kennedy family. Kitch's study of magazines (*Times, Newsweek, U.S. News &*

World Report, *People's Weekly*, and *Newsweek's* Memorial edition) demonstrated that magazine coverage of a tragedy showed the prominent use of mythic patterns.

Similarly, Lule (2001) discovered the seven “master myths”—the victim, scapegoat, hero, good mother, trickster, other world, and flood in his case studies involving Huey Newton, Mother Teresa, Mark McGuire, and Hurricane Mitch in *The New York Times*, apart from other newspapers.

Hurricane Mitch, ranked as a Category 5 storm with wind speeds 180 miles per hour, hit Gulf of Mexico in October 1998. It was a tragic event that killed more than 10,000 people in a span of a week, as described by Lule (2001), who found the use of the flood myth in 125 articles from October 26, 1998, to December 6, 1998. He noted the four underlying themes of the flood myth in the articles: Humans err, the flood devastates, human efforts are futile, and rebuilding begins, he illustrated. The flood punished those who sin, he noted and gave an example of fault of authorities in allowing houses to be built illegally in the flood area.

Flood Myth. The adventure of Noah and the Ark is known throughout the Judeo-Christian world and beyond through the ceaseless efforts of missionaries (Dundes, 1988). Genesis “part of the sacred history of the Western civilization” underlines the significance of this myth (p. 3). However, Dundes also showed the widespread distribution of this myth by stating that the flood myth has been collected among peoples of the Pacific, India, Babylonia, Greece, Rome, Australia, and South America.

Several themes describe the flood myth. Dundes (1988) and Lule (2001) stated that folklorists often refer to myths by motif number in accordance with the system devised by Thompson (1955). His mythological motifs provide abundant categories for floods or natural devastation. For example, under the entry marked A1011.2, the theme is flood caused by rising of the river (p. 182). There are several other themes listed under separate entries: Flood from Adam's tears of repentance, Flood caused by gods or other superior beings, floods from conflict of gods, from conflict of monsters, and flood as punishment.

According to the Greek flood myth, Prometheus and Athena created the new race out of mud in a city called Eikonian in the third century B.C. (Calder, 1988, p. 108). In another version, Deucalion, the son of Prometheus and his wife Pyrrha were saved from the flood. Similar themes are listed in Thompson's index for disasters caused by fire, earthquake, and weather. Disaster, as defined by Fritz (1961) is:

An event, concentrated in time and space, in which a society or a relatively self-sufficient subdivision of a society undergoes severe damage and incurs such losses to its members and physical appurtenances that the social structure is disrupted, and the fulfillment of all or some of the essential functions of society prevented. (p. 655)

Hurricane Mitch, September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and Hurricane Katrina are such disasters that disrupted the social structure. Researchers like Lule (2001 & 2002) have found that myths were used in the coverage of the first two tragedies.

This study's focus is the Greek mythic frames used in coverage of Hurricane Katrina based upon Lule's studies. Furthermore, it might be interesting to investigate whether mythic themes were present in the weekday news stories, which are expected to

be pure news than features. Therefore, news stories on Sunday and Wednesday were selected.

Lule's study (2002) of the coverage of terrorist attacks showed that *The New York Times'* editorials used myths. Lule wrote, "Myths of the apocalypse, such as Phaethon's destruction of the earth by fire, Flood myths, and stories of Armageddon, have long warned of devastation to come and called people to sacrifice and repentance" (p. 285).

Chaos. Lule (2002) used the term "foreboding future" to imply the chaos, uncertainty and fear after September 11 attacks. He wrote that the myths of war, such as those of Res and Mars, the Greek and Roman gods of war, heralded the need for conflict they also prepared people for unavoidable costs and inevitable losses. He found that editorials portrayed a frightening and foreboding world in which the country was faced with unimaginable terror and attacks.

The category of chaos included such descriptions of uncertainty, confusion, and fear. However, chaos was also defined as creation, because according to the Greek mythology, creation came out of chaos. Creation and destruction are aspects of chaos. The Pelasgian and the Olympian creation myths describe how creation originated from chaos (Graves, 1955). According to the Pelasgian myth, "In the beginning, Eurynome, the Goddess of All Things, rose naked from Chaos" (p. 27). She "created the seven planetary powers" (p. 27). The planetary powers were as follows: Sun for illumination; Moon for enchantment; Mars for growth; Mercury for wisdom; Jupiter for law; Venus for love; and Saturn for peace (p. 29).

Similarly, other myths also highlight the origin of creation from chaos.

According to the Olympian myth, Graves (1955) noted, “At the beginning of all things Mother Earth emerged from Chaos and bore her son Uranus as she slept” (p. 31).

According to a philosophical myth, he concluded, “From a union between Darkness and Chaos sprang Night, Day, Erebus, and the Air” (p. 33).

Furthermore, Thury and Devinney (2005) noted that Greek writers like Hesiod redefined the meaning of chaos from disorder to a void or a gap between heaven and earth. This definition is different than what chaos is known as today, they stated.

Chaos has not been described as a void but destruction. Although Lule (2002) did not include these Greek creation myths in his definition of chaos, he made references to the Greek epics to highlight that the hero is one of mankind's most enduring archetypes, including *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, and the Arthurian romance (p. 283).

Hero. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, the Mesopotamian flood story, provides an understanding of the mortal nature of human beings. Gilgamesh is the enlightened hero who brings back this understanding to the people, described Thury and Devinney (2005). In Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, the Roman flood story, new human beings are created from the rocks thrown by flood survivors.

Heroism, as described in Greek stories, was a way of dealing with limitations, danger, and unexpected situations. Homer wrote about the adventures of the Greek leader Odysseus who struggled to get home. The *Odyssey* is an epic poem dealing with

Odysseus' tortuous journey and the way he restored order to his kingdom, which was in danger from usurpers (Stapleton, 1986, p. 148).

After 10 years, he returned to his home in Ithaca. He was described as a strong, brave fighter, and a great leader, especially, known for his intelligence and great wit. Stapleton described the heroic qualities by noting the characterization of Odysseus as a clever leader, who survived anything and everything, and had the courage and resourcefulness.

It is said that Odysseus gave the Greeks the idea of the Trojan horse which helped the Greek forces destroyed Troy in the Trojan War, in 1184 B.C.E (Thury & Devinney, 2005). According to them, the Greeks built a large wooden horse and pretended to sail away. The Trojans, thinking that the horse was an offering to the gods that would bring them luck, took it into their citadel. At night, the Greek warriors climbed out of the horse, opened the gates to their fellow soldiers who came through the back door, and together they captured the city. Troy was burned and Helen was brought back to her husband.

Thury and Devinney (2005, p. 13) summarized the types of insights obtained from myths. They gave examples of insights such as historical (e.g., Homer's account allowed archaeologists to determine an actual site which may have been Troy); cosmological (e.g., Poseidon, the god of sea, prevented Odysseus from going home); aetiological explained the cause (e.g., ravens are black because they escaped through the smoke hole); sociological (e.g., the Trojan War changed the nature of family because fathers were

away fighting and sons were often raised by mothers); and psychological (e.g., Telemachus, Odysseus' son, defended his home and served as a role model).

Homer's epic poem *The Odyssey* also includes some parts of another story Oedipus written by Greek dramatist Sophocles in the 425 B.C.E., noted Segal (2000). It is the tale of the hero called Oedipus, the king of Thebes who cares for his people, and is determined to wipe out the widespread disease of plague that was causing them suffering. But, ironically, Oedipus who is a hero known to do extraordinary deeds had, unknowingly, killed his father, and married his own mother.

Therefore, some describe him as a tragic hero who had a fatal flaw (Segal, 2000). He described that a tragedy required that a hero learned from the downfall. Segal wrote, "His fatal flaw,' if he can be said to harbor one, is not sin but an error, and the corrective is not a repentance but a revised view of the world" (p. 132).

Scholars have described the characteristics of heroes in different ways. In the proposed study, hero is used for people who serve as role models for everyone and who commit extraordinary deeds like the relief workers, police officers, and others. Segal (2000) noted that Prometheus was defined as a defiant hero. The Promethean defiance linked the downfall of the hero with hubris and tragic flaw, he stated

Goodman, Duke, & Sutherland (2002) referred to the Greek definition of hero in their television commercials' study. They wrote, "Dating back to ancient Greece, the term 'hero' was defined as 'a superior man, embodiment of composite ideals'" (§ 6). They defined the modern hero in sharp contrast to the ancient Greek hero. "Whereas the ancient hero was generally a warrior, the modern hero is often a sports figure."

They studied 31 commercials during NBC's telecast of the 2000 Summer Olympics and found that male athletes were more likely to be portrayed as preparing for battle and doing battle successfully while female athletes were more likely to be celebrated for their athletic skills and achievements. Their study was based on hero typologies and gender concepts of heroism. They used "traditional archetypes of heroes—the Innocent, Orphan, Martyr, Wanderer, Warrior, and Magician" and semiological analysis to study the depiction of male and female athletes. In contrast to the hero frame is the villain frame.

Villain. Ingebretsen (2001) pointed out news media's use of the word "monstrous" to depict former president Bill Clinton (p. 133). The commentary about the Lewinsky affair, he noted, highlighted the culture of consumption. However, Hanson (2002) who noted the use of monster rhetoric as highlighted by Ingebretsen, also argued for the possibility of using other myths to describe Clinton, for example, the trickster myth or the tragic hero myth.

He wrote, "In some ways 'Trickster' fits Clinton better than 'monster'" (p. 472). The media used the term "monster" to refer to mass murderers, such as Timothy McVeigh and Ted Bundy, he noted.

The trickster has been symbolized by the Norse god Loke who tricked gods (Fontana, 1994). A combination of malice and childishness, and voracious appetite and lust described the trickster (Campbell, 1988). There are trickster figures in many

traditions such as the Kweku Anansi from Africa, and the Loki from Icelandic myth among others.

“News stories about Mike Tyson actually seem to have retold the eternal story of The Trickster,” Lule found in his case study of *New York Times*’ articles of Tyson’s rape trial coverage and compared it to the Greek Hermes. Hermes was a pastoral god of Arcadia, connected with fertility (Stapleton, 1986), whereas Prometheus was described as a trickster-god in Greek mythology, who was punished by Zeus for stealing fire from the gods and providing it to mankind (Thury & Devinney, 2005). He was chained to a rock where an eagle ate his liver daily, according to the mythology. Prometheus became a Greek hero after he endured suffering, besides a benefactor who provided human beings with the basis of their civilization.

References to the Greek characters, mythology, and poets such as Homer have also been noted by other media scholars like Thornburn, who compared television aesthetic appeal with “oral-formulaic narrative of Homer’s day” (p. 57). In addition, he contended that the institutions of mythmaking and popular narrative extended back into Western history to “at least the time of Homer” (p. 56).

Hubris. The display of arrogance and excessive pride by government officials and other authorities can be studied in this category, which has been studied by Greene (1956). He compared and contrasted Greek and Christian beliefs, noting that for the Greeks, only a person of nobility, like a king, was liable to hubris; and for Christians all men were liable to spiritual pride. He compared the Greek cultural heritage with the

Western, and noted, “The much-debated Christian doctrine of original sin is in many ways a close counterpart to the Greek doctrine of hubris, or impious pride”(p. 105).

Tragic Flaw. The category of tragic flaw includes flaws in the system, flaws of the concerned authorities whose action has been criticized in the newspaper. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the White House were blamed for not taking the necessary action in time.

Several themes have their origin in the Greek drama. Therefore, in addition to the Greek mythic themes of tragic flaw, hubris, hero, and chaos used in the coverage, another theme that originated from Greek tragic drama, catharsis, was also included.

Catharsis. This term was described by Lule (1988) in the study of terrorism coverage of the 1985 hijacking of the Italian cruise-ship Achille Lauro. He noted that news stories engaged readers in a vicarious and cathartic participation that showed empathy for the victim’s family.

Catharsis, defined by Aristotle, is an important element of storytelling of a tragic event. Greek actors performed tragedies with the aim to have a cathartic effect on the audience members, who would empathize with the hero. Lucas (1928) noted Aristotle’s definition of tragedy:

Aristotle noted that tragedy is a representation of an action, which is serious, complete in itself, and of a certain limited strength ; it is expressed in speech made beautiful in different ways in different parts of the play; it is acted, not merely recited ; and by exciting pity and fear it gives a healthy outlet to such emotions. (p. 15)

The Greek tragic drama element of catharsis was studied by Silcock (2002). It is an interesting study of how catharsis promoted “the shameful myth of the Nazi past.” He conducted a study of an English-language newsroom at Germany’s Deutsche Welle where German and Anglo journalists worked together. He found that although the Anglo-producers wanted to drop stories related to the Nazi past, the German producers wanted to rebroadcast them for a “cathartic reason to acknowledge cultural shame.” He noted that the past was a powerful cultural myth for the Germans allowing them to admit to a collective guilt. The study revealed that journalists confronted with the shame and guilt of the Nazi past, and the genocide during holocaust, described as the German myth of the past by Silcock.

Similarly, collective national identity of Americans was studied by Anker (2005) who researched how Fox news channel covered the September 11 attacks for an hour after the terrorists attacks the towers, producing a specific American collective identity through a melodramatic plotline. She wrote, “Melodrama is a mode of popular culture narrative that employs emotionality to provide an unambiguous distinction between good and evil though clear designations of victimization, heroism and villainy” (p. 23).

In addition to the above frames, which have roots in Greek drama, the reference frame was also included because disasters are often placed in the context of similar events by the news media, noted researchers Sood, Rogers, and Stockdale (1987). They studied news coverage of the 1979 Hurricane David, the 1980 Seattle snowstorm, 1980 Southern California storms which caused floods and mudslides, a 1982 report on Southern California, and 1983 California earthquake in the city of Coalinga. They noted

that disaster stories have immense news value. In the same way, reference frames have immense value in news of disasters.

Reference. Burns (1954) described the ancient Greek theater and wrote that the main business of the actors was to recite the incidents of a plot that was already familiar to the audience, for the story was drawn from popular legends (p. 153). But the reference frame was also made to include descriptions and analogies drawn from the past.

Friedman, Gorney, and Egolf (1987) noted the importance of the use of analogies as “translation aids,” which are “important explanatory devices” among others such as graphics, charts, glossaries and so forth, in news reporting of a disaster such as Chernobyl accident (¶ 43). They found 30% of 171 newspaper articles used the analogy device more than any other and attributed this result to the difficulties in reporting on complex scientific matters about which people tend to panic. Analogies included radiation levels of Hiroshima and Nagasaki radiation, chest X-ray levels, and airplane flight dose levels.

Katz and Liebes (1988) used the referential frame that described how viewers connected the Dallas program to their own life. For example, some viewers were quoted to have said, ““Their women are immoral, our Arab women would not behave that way”” (p. 115).

Besides presenting facts and source attributions, reporters tell stories by including their viewpoints (Campbell, 1991 a, 1991 b; Lule, 2001, 2002). Another category of reporter asserted frames was made to include reporters’ comments on a situation or individuals.

Careful Use of Mythic Themes

Grant (2005) called ground zero “a cultural text” that referred to a holy ground and prelude to holy war. In his analysis of *Time's* coverage of the September 11 attacks, he found that a new set of devil terms emerged that referred to Al Qaeda, Osama Bin Laden, the Taliban, Saddam Hussein, and Yasser Arafat. He suggested that American citizens should reconsider the situation and develop a plan based not on war, but on peace. Similarly, Aoun (2004) criticized television broadcasting of beheadings and kidnappings and called such media portrayal a “theater of war.”

In sum, the review pointed to a manipulated use of myth, sometimes misused, for example, to gain publicity. Fursich noted that Public Relation officials created mythic stories to attract publicity. Journalists used myths created by public relation staff to develop their business stories. He noted that for business profits, the public relations department of Daimler Chrysler tied its campaign to the mythic frames of marriage and birth (p. 353). In this light, it can be considered that a proper use of mythic themes in news might be one that draws from ethics and uses caution.

Thury and Devinney (2005) compared the impact of the Trojan War on Greek society with the Vietnam War and said that the effects were alike because both wars caused a generation of young men to go off and fight in a foreign land. But they also cautioned and emphasized that drawing a parallel should be done with care because the two societies were different.

Similarly, Woo (2001) cautioned that journalists should not try too hard in retelling the myth. He wrote that even without embellishment and pretense, all stories could touch the universal subconscious.

In another article, Woo (2000) argued against linguists like Georgia Green who criticized the old pyramid news story for its “disjointed hard-to-read structure.” He accepted that there was a need for an easier narrative structure, but not without asserting that imposing a narrative structure does not always work.

News Framing Analysis

Framing theory will be used to determine how journalists used Greek mythic themes of tragic flaw, chaos, hero, villain, hubris, catharsis, and frames of reference. A frame is associated with a picture or an idea through which people can organize and construct the outside world.

Several researchers asserted that a frame is a vital theme for organizing information. Goffman (1974) originally defined a frame as “the principles of organization [of the life experience] which governs events . . . and our subjective involvement with, them” (pp.10). Gitlin (1980) described these principles of organization as “the principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters” (p. 6).

Several researchers have noted the function served by frames. Gamson (1989) described a frame as “a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue” (p. 257). Whereas, Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss,

and Ghanem (1991) defined news frame as a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration. Pan and Kosicki (1993) added that framing approach systematically analyzes how an event is portrayed in a news story.

Frames and Choice of Words

Words used in everyday language are of interest to the studies of frames. For example, metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions, and visual images (Gamson & Lasch, 1983; Gamson & Modigliani, 1987) are used in daily communication.

Pan and Kosicki (1993) described them as rhetorical devices and noted that they are used by journalists to reinforce news accounts. Words are the fundamental elements of framing and functions as “designators.” The rhetorical structure is one of the four main dimensions into which they categorized news frames. The other three dimensions are: Syntactical, script, and thematic.

The syntactical frame can be found in the inverted pyramid structure, a professional convention, in which information is arranged in descending order of importance. The professional rules such as objectivity in framing devices appear by quoting official sources, experts, or empirical data (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). The syntactical principle is an appropriate way to understand news content (Barkin, 1989).

The script refers to news as stories that cover newsworthy events. This story-oriented structure integrates the five Ws and one H in news content (Pan & Kosicki,

1993). Like them, Barkin, (1989) noted that this kind of narrative frame dramatizes or personalizes events.

The thematic structure focuses on an issue, relevant information, events, and actions. Such a frame is viewed as “as set of propositions that forms a system of casual or logic empirical relations” (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 61). Causality can be presented through the uses of such words or phrases “as because, since, or, not, and unless.” The use of examples, quotes, and background information logically functions to support the main theme, they noted.

Therefore, it can be seen that the presentation of a news frame is the combination of journalistic professional routines and fundamental sources such as government officials and law enforcements for issues or events (Pan & Kosicki, 1993; Reese & Buckalew, 1995; Tuchman, 1978). But objectivity can still be maintained while using frames, asserted Reese and Buckalew. They examined the coverage of the 1991 Gulf war and suggested three frames: Conflict, in which journalists arrange two conflicting sides, consensus, in which journalists are the representatives of social order, and control in which journalists place dissent as a threat.

News frames are integral elements of journalism. A news frame functions as both an “internal structure of the mind” and a “schema of interpretation embedded in the news content” (Kinder & Sander, 1990, p. 74). Media researchers have explained the sociological and psychological perspectives in using news frames. The news media tend to use story lines, symbols, and stereotypes to develop new stories (Iyengar & Simon, 1993) through interpretative and symbolic process (Park & Kosicki, 1995).

Furthermore, Pan and Kosicki, (1993) emphasized that such a set of symbolic devices can also be used by the audience to take positions on various policies. Iyengar (1991) noted that people use frames to judge an issue by selecting certain elements and placing the information about the issue in a unique context. He described the framing process as “alterations in the statement or representation of judgment” (p. 11). Therefore, it can be seen that frames become a cognitive resource of individuals and help assess situations and take decisions as has been noted by Pan and Kosicki (1993).

News frames have a social significance. News frames are largely unspoken and unacknowledged (Iyengar & Simon, 1993). They consist of shared belief and “common sense” accepted by majority of the society (Pan & Kosicki, 1993) as well as a sense of the local community (Reese & Buckalew, 1995) that provide a way to “locate, perceive, identify, and label” occurrences and information (Goffman, 1974, p. 21).

News frames can be used to favor the interest of a particular organization or source (Gamson, 1989). As can be noted, Entman (1991) studied distinct news frames employed by the U.S. media in covering two incidents. The focus of the coverage of Korean aircraft shot down by a Soviet fighter in 1983 was the Soviet moral responsibility for this tragedy, whereas the focus of the coverage of the Iran air crash by the U.S. Navy ship in 1988 was technical problem.

In sum, frames are of use in a social context even beyond the media. Tuchman (1978) noted that frames are used to begin discussions and share knowledge. She wrote that knowledge is socially constructed by learning from others.

Research shows that framing theory has broad applications, which make it a useful approach. It has been used in a wide range of studies—from examining television’s use of metaphors in narrative (Barkin, 1989) to analyzing the intent of the message senders (Gamson, 1989).

The aim and scope of this study are of significance in frame analysis. In the case of coverage of tragedies, framing analysis might reveal an approach to the use of myths as a natural than a more deliberate plan to present news. When responding to the complex and tragic situations, it might be considered that American journalists draw from Greek mythic themes, which have become a part of the Western culture, as has been noted by Burns (1954), Stromberg (1969), and Switzer (1988).

Mythic themes were used as frames by newspaper reporters. Lule (2002) noted that *The New York Times* responded to the catastrophic events of September 11 attacks by drawing upon stories and structures of myth. He found the following:

The *Times* lamented a loss of innocence and grieved over a world in which everything had changed. It offered the myth of the Victim, called out for vengeance, and built support for survivors. It constructed and celebrated heroes and bolstered leaders as they responded to the crisis. It mobilized for war and warned of a foreboding future, of suffering and sacrifice to come. Take together, these myths offer, in Burke’s terms, a formidable array of strategies for dealing with the enormity of September 11. (p. 286)

This study’s focus is not on ideology, but on news writing that helps readers understand and interpret the events. The study was aimed to understand the way Greek mythic frames were incorporated into news stories. Since Sunday stories are more analytical features rather than news reports, it was assumed that they have a higher frequency of mythic frames.

But because of the nature of the event, which is a natural disaster affecting millions of people, weekday news stories will also show a use of mythic frames even if not to the same extent as in Sunday stories which will have higher frequency of myths. Furthermore, reporters will use the reference frame more in the initial period of first four Wednesdays and Sundays because there is more shock and not much is known as reporters begin collecting the data as compared to the later period when the data collection is over and analysis begins.

Research Questions

The questions to be answered in this study are:

RQ1) How were the storytelling elements used in Wednesday and Sundays stories?

RQ2) Was there any difference in the use of frames in the initial period and the second period?

Framing theory will help answer the following hypotheses that arise based on the review and the studied material:

H1) Greek mythic frames in story, headlines and leads, and reporter asserted frames will be present less frequently on Wednesdays than on Sundays.

H2) Reference frame will be present more in the initial period than in the second period.

Summary

The literature review shows studies from diverse fields that relate to the study's focus. The scope and breadth of the review demonstrated the way myths have been used in everyday language and in the media since ancient times. Several media scholars who noted the storytelling characteristic of journalism in the mythological framework have referred to the Greek art of storytelling. Based on the literature review, it can be said that Greek mythic stories are based on fundamental themes, found relevant in contemporary American journalism.

Studies have highlighted the significance of myths in tragedies. Content analysis, case studies, and semiotics were some of the methods used in past studies. Although framing theory has been used to study media bias, it will be used in this study to analyze how journalists organize stories of tragedy by instinctively using Greek mythic themes. In addition, this body of literature showed that while covering disasters, journalists should exercise care and caution when writing about sensitive issues.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This study examined *The New York Times*' coverage of Hurricane Katrina on Wednesdays from August 31, 2005 to October 26, 2005; and on Sundays from September 4, 2005 to October 23, 2005. A content analysis method was used as a research method. The study focused on whether news stories of weekday also included Greek mythic frames, similar to Sunday's news stories. The study examined the way reporters used frames on Sundays and on a weekday.

Newspaper

The New York Times newspaper was chosen because of its credibility and prestige. It has received many more Pulitzer Prizes than any other organization (Lule, 2001). It received six Pulitzers for its coverage of the September 11, 2001, attacks. The Pulitzers included the public service award for the section "A Nation Challenged" which featured a full page titled "Portraits of Grief," comprising biographical sketches of those who died at the World Trade Center.

This newspaper's editorials were also studied by Lule (2002) who researched the myths in *The New York Times*'s coverage of September 11 attacks. Lule (2001) has previously stated that this newspaper has become crucial reading for both critics and admirers and those interested in the news, national politics, and international affairs. He

noted that studies confirm the influence of the *Times* in the White House, Congress, State Department, and Pentagon (2001, p. 6).

Sampling

Only those news stories about Hurricane Katrina were selected which were categorized by *The New York Times* under document type: news and had a column name such as “Storm and Crisis.” The underlying assumption was such stories that continue to be published under a specific name and topic, for many months after the disaster, will reveal interesting aspects of myths.

Since this study is based on news stories retrieved from the database, it was necessary to ensure that no story was missed or wrongly included. Yanovitzky (2002, p. 429) who used the term lack of precision to describe irrelevant stories and the term impertinent as lack of recall noted that these threaten the internal and external validity of the research. However, as found in Yanovitzky’s study, developing a search syntax for online databases was not found necessary because (a) the study focused on one publication, (b) the ProQuest Newsstand database included the document type and name, categorized by *The New York Times*, and (c) It has features called “More documents like this” and “Search by date,” which helped yield the specific data.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is one of the most frequently used research methods in communication research because it involves the systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (Stempel, 1989). Stone, Singletary, and

Richmond (1999) noted that the most frequent uses of content analysis include describing the content itself, testing hypotheses, documenting trends, relating media content to the real world and assessing the messenger's motives.

Selection of Items for Coding. Headlines, lead, date, day, word count, and column name were coded. Since the articles were accessed online, not all focal points could be identified. Therefore, some photographs, subheads, enlarged quotes for emphasis, logos, statistics, and charts were excluded from this study.

Unit of Analysis and Operationalization of Variables. The unit of analysis was chosen as the entire story to yield data about all the mythic themes that were present in the story since a story contained more than one frame. For this study, coding categories were developed on the basis of the literature review and the studied news content.

1) **Chaos.** A chaos frame is defined by such descriptions of creation, destruction, uncertainty, dispute, confrontation, rivalry, violence and confusion. Chaos frame was depicted by "lawlessness, theft, stealing, rapes, sexual assault" in "Breakdowns Marked Path from Hurricanes to Anarchy" (September 11, 2005). According to the Greek mythology, creation came out of chaos. Therefore, those stories that focused on problems of return to normalcy and changes to the existing system were also included. For example, Governor Blanco pushed for changes in the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act regulations to allow funds to pay regular

salaries and not just emergency-related overtime of public employees as described in “Mayor Announces Layoffs of City Workers” (October 5, 2005).

2) **Hero.** This category included stories with heroic descriptions of individuals who risked their own lives to save others, served as role models in times of crisis and helped. Keywords like help, hero, defy, and leader were used to identify this frame. Hero frame was found in “Police Quitting Overwhelmed by Chaos” (September 4, 2005) in which the reporters quoted officers who stood by their motto and wrote:

Some officers have expressed anger at colleagues who have stopped working. “For all you cowards that are supposed to wear the badge,” one officer said on Fox News, “are you truly – can you truly wear the badge, like our motto said?” (¶ 24)

3) **Villain.** This category will include words that describe individuals as wrongdoers, individuals who did not do their duty, and those who were criticized. Villain frame was present, used by sources to describe Michael Brown, FEMA director. In “Homeland Security Chief Defends Federal Response” (September 4, 2005), the reporter wrote, “Mr. Brown has come under fire from critics of the federal government’s hurricane response, who describe him as a political appointee who had no disaster experience before joining FEMA.”

4) **Hubris.** A hubris frame is defined as one that focuses on such attributes as arrogance and exaggerated sense of self. This category included such themes from stories that were oriented around the country, specifically about its power. Hubris frame was present in the story, “Bush pledges more troops as the evacuation grows,” September

4, 2005, because the president's quote underscored the nation's pride at a time when the federal government was being criticized. The president was quoted to have said, "In America, we do not abandon our fellow citizens in our hour of need. And the federal government will do its part."

5) **Tragic Flaw.** A tragic flaw frame can be defined by those depictions when people pointed out a loophole in the state, local, or federal system or when they complained about authorities who despite being in-charge for the emergency preparation, education, housing and others did not offer timely help. In "Homeland Security Chief Defends Federal Response" (September 4, 2005), a source was quoted to have said, "In a city like New Orleans, where they had been talking for some time about the levee system not holding, why did they not expect the possibility of a levee break?"

6) **Catharsis.** This category will include frame of empathy for individuals. In "Navy Pilots Who Rescued Victims Are Reprimanded" (September 7, 2005), the reporter summed up in the last paragraph, "In protest, some members of the unit have stopped wearing a search and rescue patch on their sleeves that reads 'So Others May Live.'" This showed the unit members' empathy for the pilots.

7) **Reference.** Like the Greek drama, where familiar plots from the past were enacted, a reference frame is defined as one, which provides comparisons and references to the past. The frame of reference for looting incidents that took place after the

hurricane was a similar looting incident in the 1977 blackout in New York City. In “Storm will have long-term emotional effect on some, experts say” (September 4, 2005), the reporter referred to findings of a study on this incident, done by researchers at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, to explain how people driven by basic necessities of “hunger, thirst and fear” can become criminals. The researchers’ statement quoted from their study was, ““thousands of otherwise law-abiding citizens joined in what was to become the largest collective theft in history.””

8) **Other.** This category was made to include those stories that could not be coded for any of the above mythic themes. Stories that could have frames that did not belong to the seven categories will be coded in the other category.

In addition to these coding categories, reporter asserted frames, dramatic leads, and headlines were also coded. Frames in headlines will indicate that like reporters, copyeditors also perceived the situation as one of the seven themes.

9) **Reporter Asserted Frames.** Reporter asserted frames are the same seven themes reinforced by reporters. Opinion, viewpoint, sarcasm, and emphasis on a particular issue suggest the use of such frame.

An example of reporter asserted hero frame is: In “For the Needy, a Web of Matchmakers Offers Help and Hope” (October 16, 2005), the reporter described two women who helped 103 evacuees find homes. “They work for neither church nor state,

they are not wealthy or worldly, just two Samaritans who sum up their mission in an e-mail signature, ‘LET US HELP YOU.’”

An example of reporter asserted chaos frame is: In “Hurricane’s Toll is Likely to Reshape Bush’s Economic Agenda” (September 7, 2005), the reporter wrote, “Indeed, there were signs on Tuesday that Republicans and Democrats were had already begun to compete with each other over who might be willing to spend more.”

An example of reporter asserted tragic flaw frame is: In “Stumbling Storm-Aid Effort Put Tons of Ice on Trips to Nowhere” (October 2, 2005), the reporter asserted the flaw theme in the federal government and wrote:

Those numbers [the federal bill for Hurricane Katrina purchases about \$200 million] add up fast, and reports like Mr. Kostinec’s have stirred concern on Capitol hill, as more wearying evidence of the federal government’s incoherent response to the catastrophe. (¶ 14)

In addition, the story had descriptions such as “government-ordered meandering,” “broken system of tracking goods at FEMA,” and “The next time FEMA calls for help, it may find the response far less willing.”

An example of reporter asserted villain frame is: In “Homeland Security Chief Defends Federal Response” (September 4, 2005), the reporter supported a quote from the critics of FEMA’s director and wrote:

Though he [Michael Brown] once worked as a municipal official in Edmond, Okla., Mr. Brown’s major previous job was as commissioner of the International Arabian Horse Association, from which he resigned under pressure in 2001 after a controversial 10 years. (¶ 4)

An example of reporter asserted reference frame is: In “Urban Evacuees Find Themselves Among Rural Mountains” (September 7, 2005), the reporter reinforced the assimilation of New Orleans residents in Arkansas by referring to the Mariel boatlift. He wrote that Fort Chaffee, which was handling the influx, was “a symbol a generation ago

of the nation's response to the tens of thousands of refugees from Cuba in what became known as the Mariel boatlift."

An example of reporter asserted catharsis frame is: In "Amid One City's Welcome, a Tinge of Backlash," (September 7, 2005), the reporter described the warm response of some of the Baton Rouge residents toward the evacuees with empathy. He wrote: "Make no mistake. The overwhelming response of people in Baton Rouge to Hurricane Katrina has been one of compassion and sacrifice with every church in town, it seems, housing or feeding evacuees."

Similarly, categories for hubris and other frames were also made to include such assertions by reporters. But such assertions were found to be absent. Leads and headlines were coded for the seven frames.

10) **Lead.** In the lead of the September 11 story, "For Storm Survivors, a Mosaic of Impressions Rather than a Crystalline Moment," the reference frame was indicated by the comparisons to president John F. Kennedy's assassination and the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. It read as follows:

"For the survivors of Hurricane Katrina, there is no shared moment to put one's finger on, no clock-stopping space-holder of history as there was on Nov.22, 1963, or on Sept. 11 to remind them: this was where we were and what we were doing when it all came down." (p. 1.25)

11) **Headline.** Adjectives and verbs used in headlines indicated frames. The headline of the September 4 story, "Police Quitting, Overwhelmed by Chaos," indicated use of chaos frame.

Item and Statistical Tool

A single story was chosen as the unit of analysis. The criteria for determining a single coding item were (a) a news story under a single dateline was considered as one item (b) a news story under one column name was counted as one, and (c) a news story under one headline was counted as one.

Chi-square analysis was used to test whether there were significant differences in the use of the Greek mythic frames present on the selected two days. SPSS software student version 11.0 was used to code the variables, calculate percentages, and count the frequency of frames.

Intercoder Reliability

To test the reliability of the coding, a pretest was conducted with the researcher and one coder, a graduate student of University of Kansas. To determine percentage of agreement, both coded the same 20 stories. One story was studied at a time.

Of the total sample of 121 stories, 20 each were chosen randomly from Sundays and Wednesdays. The variables coded are mutually exclusive.

Stories used in this reliability test represented 16 % of the total content analyzed. Holsti's formula discussed in Budd, Thorp, and Donahew (1967), was used to determine reliability:

$$R = \frac{2(C_{1,2})}{C_1 + C_2}$$

$C_{1,2}$ is the number of category assignments both coders agree on, and $C_1 + C_2$ is the total of category assignments made by both coders (p. 68). The intercoder reliability for the variables was .80.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The total number of news stories studied was 121. Sunday stories accounted for 43% of the sample and Wednesday stories accounted for 57%. Furthermore, there were 95 stories in the initial period and 26 stories in the later period.

The average number of frames per story was two. Overall, the seven frames were used 246 times: Chaos frame was present 96 times, hero 22 times, tragic flaw 42 times, reference 48 times, catharsis 29 times, villain 7 times, and hubris twice. No other frame was found. Both hypotheses about storytelling elements present less frequently on Wednesdays and reference frame present more in the initial period were fully supported.

Frequency of Frames

As shown in Table 1, the difference between frequencies on Wednesdays and Sundays is statistically significant ($\chi^2 (1, N = 246) = 4.55, p \leq .05$). Greek mythic frames in story, in headlines and leads, and reporter-asserted frames were absent more frequently in Wednesday stories than in Sunday stories (6% vs. 1%). This could be because Sunday stories have high feature content unlike the Wednesday stories, which focus more on day-to-day news.

The seven mythic themes were used 122 times on Sundays and 124 on Wednesdays. Although the number of frames present on Wednesdays is more than Sundays, this difference was too small to do a chi square test.

Table 1:

Frequency Distribution of Frames by Number of Times Present and Absent in

The New York Times' Coverage of Hurricane Katrina on Sundays and Wednesdays

Number of times	Sunday (<i>n</i> = 122)	Wednesday (<i>n</i> = 124)
Frames present	99%	94%
Frames absent	1 —	6 —
	100%	100%

$$\chi^2 (1, N = 246) = 4.55, p \leq .05$$

Frames in Headlines and Leads

The first hypothesis was supported as shown in Table 2 by the finding that the difference in the use of dramatic headlines and leads between Wednesday and Sunday stories is statistically significant ($\chi^2 (1, N = 121) = 22.05, p \leq .001$). Seventy-five percent of headlines and leads in Sunday stories had frames as compared to 32% of Wednesday stories. Therefore, it can be concluded that proportionally, more leads and headlines of Sunday stories had Greek mythic frames.

Table 2

Comparison of Frames Present in Headlines and Leads by Hurricane Katrina Related Stories in *The New York Times* on Sundays and Wednesdays

Headlines and leads	Sunday (<i>n</i> = 52)	Wednesday (<i>n</i> = 69)
With frames	75%	32%
Without frames	25	68
	—	—
	100%	100%

$\chi^2 (1, N = 121) = 22.05, p \leq .001$

Reporter Asserted Frames

The first hypothesis is also supported as shown in Table 3. The difference in the use of reporter asserted frames on Wednesdays and Sundays is statistically significant ($\chi^2(1, N = 121) = 10.82, p \leq .01$). Forty-seven percent of total stories have reporter asserted frames. Sixty-three percent of Sunday stories had reporter-asserted mythic frames as compared to 33 % in Wednesday stories. Therefore, proportionally more Sunday stories had reporter asserted myths, which can be because Sunday stories do not focus on news as much as Wednesday stories.

In the Sunday story, “Heavy Damage, Lost Lives and Plaintive Pleas” (September 4, 2005), the reporter asserted the frame of tragic flaw was indicated by descriptions such as “officials were still trying to fathom the devastation.” The reference frame asserted in the Wednesday story, “Gulf Coast Lawmakers in Spotlight as Aid Requests Pour In” (October 5, 2005), was used to describe the role of the House Energy and Commerce Committee in building refineries “just as it did for the New York delegation after the Sept. 11 attacks.” Thirty percent of Sunday stories versus 26% of Wednesday stories had this frame. The reference frame was the most asserted frame on Wednesdays and Sundays although a chi square test was not done due to small percentages.

Table 3

Comparison of Reporter Asserted Frames by Hurricane Katrina Related Stories in *The New York Times* on Sundays and Wednesdays

Stories	Sunday (<i>n</i> = 52)	Wednesday (<i>n</i> = 69)
With reporter asserted frames	63%	33%
Without reported asserted frames	37	67
	100%	100%

$\chi^2 (1, N = 121) = 10.82, p \leq .01$

Reference Frame

As anticipated, the second hypothesis that reference frame is present more in the initial period of first four Sundays and Wednesdays than in the second period of last four Sundays and Wednesdays was fully supported. As shown in Table 4, there is a statistical significant difference ($\chi^2 (1, N = 121) = 5.78, p \leq .001$). The reference frame was used more in initial period as compared to the later period (45% vs. 19%). This can be explained by stating that when there is a shortage of news in the immediate aftermath journalists portray the event using familiar events.

Since the numbers of villain and hubris frames were small, the chi square test was not done. But results for other frames showed there was no statistically significant difference: for chaos ($\chi^2 (1, N = 121) = .254, p = .05$); for hero ($\chi^2 (1, N = 121) = .982, p = .05$); for tragic flaw ($\chi^2 (1, N = 121) = 1.397, p = .05$); and for catharsis ($\chi^2 (1, N = 121) = .311, p = .05$).

Some examples of reference frames are September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, past hurricanes such as Hurricane Andrew, gasoline lines of the 1980's, the 1977 blackout in the New York city, San Francisco earthquake, and the Civil War. In the Sunday story "Storm is Devastating for Businesses in Gulf Area, but its National Effect Remains Muted" (September 4, 2005) the frames of reference are the September 11 attacks to explain the impact of traumatic events on economy, and the reporter pointed out the difference between the two disasters' economic impact, "There is a major difference this year, however: the Fed and the Bush Administration have less in their arsenal to fight economic weakness today than they did in 2001."

It clearly shows that *The New York Times* analyzed the economic impact from a national perspective to define the weakness of the Federal Reserve and the government. Similarly, reference frame was used to describe the social chaos resulting from FEMA's incompetence. A reference to the experience of storm evacuees who were offered FEMA housing after Hurricane Charley hit southwest Florida in August 2004 was highlighted in the fourth paragraph, in "Life in the Shelters: Isolated and Perilous" (September 18, 2005). The reporters wrote, "But the experience of those who have lived in what residents here call 'FEMA Village' for nearly a year provides a sobering preview of what could await the people rendered homeless by Katrina." They described the social problems and wrote that, "the community has been plagued by problems of domestic violence, drug abuse, theft and vandalism."

Sometimes, the reference frame added a descriptive local and historic touch in a refreshing way. In a story in the first period, "Perils of Casinos that Float" (September 7, 2005), the reporter wrote, "The initial vision for casinos up and down the Mississippi River involved riverboat casinos that invoked quaint memories of Mark Twain and riverboat card games."

The reference frame also helped show the extent of the disaster. In "A Rescue Mission Under Control: Houston Adjusts Well on the Fly" (September 14, 2005), Houston's emergency medical service director, Dr. David Persse was quoted to have thought of "the radio announcer who, on witnessing the Hindenburg disaster, lamented, 'Oh, the humanity!'" Hindenburg was the name of the German aircraft that exploded on May 16, in New Jersey killing 70 (see Hindenburg).

Reference frames added interesting pieces of information, for example, the Mariel boatlift (in “Urban Evacuees Find Themselves Among Rural Mountain,” September 7, 2005), the Dust Bowl Movement, and the Civil War (in “Uprooted and Scattered Far From the Familiar,” September 11, 2005) highlight the displacement of evacuees. The Mariel boatlift refers to the successful assimilation of 125,266 Cuban refugees including criminals and the mentally ill who headed for South Florida’s Port of Mariel in 1980. Corral and Viglucci (2005) described it as an extraordinary social upheaval that roiled Miami, and forever altered the city’s makeup, politics and history. In the same way the displacement was compared with the Dust Bowl movement, which is marked by the displacement of thousands of families who left the Great Plains, which were affected by severe drought, at the height of the Great Depression in the early and mid-1930s (see Dust Bowl).

In the last period, reporters continued to use the reference frame, although to a lesser extent than the initial period, to highlight the uniqueness of the disaster. Hurricane Audrey was described to point out the unique problems of Hurricane Katrina such as reaching the trapped and those who had refused to evacuate the bayou hamlet of Hackberry. In the story in the second period, “Surging Waters Stirs Up Fears and Memories” (September 25, 2005) residents described their experiences of living through Hurricane Audrey that hit southwestern Louisiana in 1957. For example, David French, a deputy with Cameron Parish Sheriff’s office was reported to have said, ““Audrey didn’t do that.””

Sometimes, the distinctiveness of Hurricane Katrina was highlighted by the use of irony as shown in “In This Storm, White House Tries to Take New Tack” (September 25, 2005). Descriptions such as “President Bush caught sight of a famous image of himself: with bullhorn in hand at ground zero on Sept. 14, 2001” in the lead and “four years and ten days ago, when Mr. Bush told the world he was going after the terrorists” in the second paragraph illustrate the irony drawn by reporters. Later, in the fifth paragraph, the reporter pointed out the difference between September 11 attacks and Hurricane Katrina, and wrote, “Rescue and recovery is very different than retaliation and war.”

Table 4

Comparison of Reference Frame Present in Initial and Later periods of *The New York Times*' Coverage of Hurricane Katrina.

Stories	Initial Period (<i>n</i> = 95)	Later Period (<i>n</i> = 26)
With reference frame	45%	19%
Without reference frame	55	81
	100%	100%

Note: Initial period refers to first four Wednesdays and first four Sundays. The later period refers to second four Wednesdays and second four Sundays.

$$\chi^2 (1, N = 121) = 5.78, p \leq .001$$

Percentage Distribution of Frames

As shown in Table 5, most news of the hurricane was depicted as chaos, followed by reference, tragic flaw, catharsis, hero, villain, and hubris. Apart from these seven frames, no other frames were present. Hubris frame, which implies exaggerated pride, was not expected to be found in large number as those who could have expressed it such as authorities and officials were blamed by the affected people and media.

Since the number of frames found on Sundays and Wednesdays was small, the differences were not statistically tested. However, it is noteworthy to analyze which frames were used more than others.

Frames in Wednesday Stories

Wednesday stories show a higher percentage of tragic flaw frame than Sunday (55% vs. 45%). Although tragic flaw is present only 17% out of the total number of times that frames are used, it has been described as a significant theme that underscores this disaster. The federal government continued to be depicted by this frame in Wednesday stories. In “Hurricane’s Toll is Likely to Reshape Bush’s Economic Agenda” (September 7, 2005), the reporter reinforced the tragic flaw frame by stating, “The problem is that, even without the hurricane, the federal government’s underlying fiscal health is in poor shape.”

Wednesday stories had chaos and reference frames proportionally more than Sunday stories (56% vs. 44%). It might be reasonable to consider that these frames were used to support facts because reporters perceived the situation as chaos, added with the

deadline pressure. For example, fuel shortage was presented as a chaotic situation. The Wednesday story, “Carriers are Stricken by Cancellations and Lack of Fuel” (August 31, 2005), outlined the implications of shortage of fuel supply such as inconvenience to travelers, bankruptcy, and others. Greek mythic frame of chaos was implied by the statement, “Wall Street feared that the financial problems of the sickest airlines could grow worse.”

It was interesting to note that the Wednesday business story, “Markets Assess Hurricane Damage, and Shares Fall” (August 31, 2005), had mythic frames. Insurance and gambling stocks “suffered,” descriptions such as “stocks skidded” and “Adding to the nervousness, notes released from Federal Reserve’s most recent meeting of policy makers signaled that rate increases could continue into 2006,” show that chaos theme was present.

As Wednesday news stories of August 31 show references to past hurricanes were made to imply the restoration of normalcy. In “Damage to Economy Is Deep and Wide,” the reporter stated that the Florida hurricanes of 2004 provide a useful precedent for understanding Katrina’s potential economic impact. Those hurricanes had made only a small dent in the nation’s growth despite affecting job hiring and holding average job gains to just a 2,000 a month, which by October bounced back to almost 33,000.

Frames in Sunday Stories

The frames of hero, villain, and catharsis frames were present proportionally more on Sundays than on Wednesdays. Sunday stories had 73% of hero frames as compared to

27% in Wednesday stories which can be explained by the fact that Sunday stories did not focus on the news events such as power failures and communication breakdown but on people like an ambulance owner whose quick response in providing “the first medical care at the Superdome” saved lives in the September 11 story “Amid Busy Signals, Hope Rested on Ambulance Firm That Could Still Communicate.”

The same reason can explain the reason for a higher percentage of villain and catharsis frames in Sunday stories. Sunday stories had 71% villain frame versus 29% in Wednesday stories and 62% catharsis frame versus 38% in Wednesday stories.

It is interesting to note that the catharsis frame is used as an enduring feeling despite losses in business due to the storm in the business story “Storm is Devastating for Businesses in Gulf Area, but its National Effect Remains Muted” (September 4, 2005). In the end graph, the reporter wrote, “‘We’re not feeling sorry for ourselves,’ said Mr. Mellik of River/Gulf Grain. The human tragedy of the storm was far bigger than any economic problems, he said.”

Table 5Percentage Distribution of Frames in *The New York Times*' coverage of Hurricane Katrina on Sundays and Wednesdays

	Chaos (<i>n</i> = 96)	Hero (<i>n</i> = 22)	Flaw (<i>n</i> = 42)	Villain (<i>n</i> = 7)	Reference (<i>n</i> = 48)	Catharsis (<i>n</i> = 29)	Hubris (<i>n</i> = 2)	Other (<i>n</i> = 0)
Sunday	44%	73%	45%	71%	44%	62%	50%	0
Wednesday	56	27	55	29	56	38	50	0
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0

Frames in News Columns

As shown in Tables 6, 7, and 8, the 121 news stories were published under 10 different column names. In Wednesday news columns under “Storm and Crisis,” chaos frame was found 42% versus 33% in Sunday news columns, tragic flaw was 22% versus 17%, and reference was 20% versus 19% in Sunday news columns. This higher percentage could be because of initial chaos and news about authorities’ response that was discussed under tragic flaw. As the percentage differences were small, a chi square test was not done. However, it is noteworthy that reporters organized the content in specific columns to offer readers a consistent supply of information.

As shown in Table 7, Sunday-only columns have hero, chaos, and catharsis, whereas as shown in Table 8, Hurricane Katrina, the Wednesday-only column has all seven frames present in addition to hero, chaos, and catharsis in other news columns. There is no singular reason for this result.

First interesting finding was that both “Hurricane Katrina” and “Storm and Crisis” columns addressed similar issues such as evacuees, rescue operations, health, and so forth. Second interesting finding was that the catharsis frame was present in sports columns such as “Pro Football,” and “Sports of The Times,” which focused on players’ empathy for the storm affected people; and chaos frame in “Advisory Travel Notes,” which focused on the gambling and tourism industry’s estimated losses of \$500,000 a day.

Table 6

Percentage Comparison of Frames in Storm and Crisis News Column in *The New York Times* by day

Frames	Sunday (<i>n</i> = 113)	Wednesday (<i>n</i> = 93)
Hero	12%	5%
Chaos	33	42
Tragic Flaw	17	22
Villain	4	2
Reference	19	20
Catharsis	14	9
Hubris	1	0
Other	0	0
	100%	100%

Table 7Percentage of Frames in *The New York Times*' Columns Published Only on Sunday

Frames	Advisory Travel Notes (n = 1)	Databank (n = 3)	Voices from the storm (n = 2)	Sports of the Times (n = 3)
Hero	0	0	50%	33%
Chaos	100%	100%	0	34
Tragic Flaw	0	0	0	0
Villain	0	0	0	0
Reference	0	0	0	0
Catharsis	0	0	50	33
Hubris	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 8Percentage of Frames in *The New York Times*' Columns Present Only on Wednesday

Frames	The Market (<i>n</i> = 2)	Hurricane Katrina (<i>n</i> = 27)	ProFootball (<i>n</i> = 1)	International Business (<i>n</i> = 1)
Hero	0	4%	0	0
Chaos	100%	44	0	100%
Tragic Flaw	0	11	0	0
Villain	0	0	0	0
Reference	0	30	0	0
Catharsis	0	7	100%	0
Hubris	0	4	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0
	—	—	—	—
	100%	100%	100%	100%

Combination of Frames in Stories

Since a story had an average of two frames, it was interesting to note the combination of frames, especially the villain frame. The seven times that the villain frame was used, it was used with tragic flaw, and 6% stories show this pattern (see Appendix A-1).

In sum, results indicate that the villain frame is not used for an individual without presenting the existing tragic flaw. Villain frame was used five times on Sundays and twice on Wednesdays. Although the difference is too small to infer, results imply a possibility that a cautious approach was used when portraying individuals as villain. An individual was not targeted but presented in a context of the existing flaws and problems of poverty, education, housing, budget cut for levees, and others.

This can be explained by the fact that news has to be balanced. Reporters follow this principle by including quotes from the person held responsible. For example, the reporter included the quote of Michael Brown, the FEMA director, who said that, “infigting among officials in Louisiana hampered the effort,” in “Homeland Security Chief Defends Federal Response” (September 4, 2005).

Similarly, 11% of stories show that catharsis frame was used with the hero frame. Although, the data shows that hero frame was not present every time that catharsis frame was used, it is noteworthy to see how reporters used the catharsis frame by incorporating the hero frame. In the September 18 story, “Amid Ruins of Home, Sorrow and Solidarity” (see Appendix A-2) a group of current and former N.B.A. and W.N.B.A. players empathized with the residents whom they met on the road trip by sharing their

stories. The reporter used an entire paragraph to quote Reed, a forward for the Boston Celtics, and it reads as follows:

“I come from a single-parent home, and once upon a time we were homeless,” he said. “I know how hard it is to start from scratch, to have to build and build and you wonder if you’re ever going to be able to live like you once lived. I feel what they’re going through because I come from a path like that.” (¶ 17)

The catharsis-hero combination can also be explained by the presence of camaraderie, as is clear from the quotes and descriptions that inspired unit members in the police department or the Navy to support their role models or heroes by following them and/or by expressing empathy for them. Unit members referred to their badges and mottos to set an example and show support for those who showed heroism in “Police Quitting, Overwhelmed by Chaos” (September 4, 2005), and “Navy Pilots Who Rescued Victims Are Reprimanded” (September 7, 2005).

In another September 7 story, “Remembering Help Received After Sept. 11, New York Sends Officers to Louisiana,” the New York police officers were depicted as heroes because they volunteered to go to the storm affected areas and “pay back the nation” as described by the police commissioner. The camaraderie between the officers shows empathy for others and therefore is cathartic. The police chief was quoted to have said, ““During 9/11, they [New Orleans police officers] were cooking gumbo for us.””

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Media researchers (Bird & Dardenne, 1988; Carey, 1989; Lule, 1988, 2001, & 2002; Thornburn, 1988) have studied the significance of myths and mythology in journalism. Lule asserted that news stories are eternal stories. He raised a question: “Do U.S. journalists make decisions regarding coverage of disastrous events guided by stories as old as humankind?” (2001, p. 173). He explained and said that it was natural for them to do so because American news media are powerful mythic storytellers and “state scribes” who like Homer have been accorded with a privileged status

This study was an investigation and identification of such naturalness which can be seen when copyeditors and reporters of a prestigious newspaper use myths in headlines and in stories respectively. Frames of Greek mythic themes are neither used by chance or by motive, but by a naturalness. Both Carey (1989) and Lule (2001) noted that things become so familiar that people no longer perceive them at all.

Storytelling is not the domain of Sunday stories. It might be reasonable to say that myths are so intrinsic that they are used in a weekday story. It is this familiarity that in times of crises functions as a solid base for the representation of shared beliefs and can be analyzed by using qualitative framing theory and quantitative content analysis.

Framing, usually, implies a bias, a motive of the sender of the message, but this research will use the theory to highlight a neutral, natural use of shared beliefs. Framing, analyzed as the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration in past studies,

could also be viewed as a natural process that reporters and copyeditors rely upon in times of disasters.

Furthermore, the instantaneous use of frames did not imply a careless use of words. Reporters and copyeditors were mindful of sensitivity while using mythic themes. The context was explained with source attribution before defining an individual as villain. Journalists did not vindictively use the villain frame. Although such intent cannot be addressed, it is the meaning of such news language that is at issue, as has been noted by Lule (2001).

Limitations of the Study

This study focused on those stories that were categorized under news columns. It might have strengthened the study to include stories from the entire week but that would have been virtually impossible since the current sample is exhaustive and covers a period of two months. By the second month, the number of stories about Hurricane Katrina had dropped.

Implications of the Study

Lule (2002) found that editorials described terrorists as perpetrators. Similarly, this study shows that villain frame was present in news stories to describe the federal and local government officials. A difference between his study and this is that myths of vengeance and end of innocence described the September 11 attacks whereas myths of

tragic flaw, chaos, catharsis, hubris, reference, hero, and villain mark the coverage of Hurricane Katrina.

In the case study of several newspapers including *The New York Times*, Lule (2001) found that *The Times* used the archetypal scapegoat myth in the coverage of Huey Newton, the founder of Black Panther Party in 1966, depicted as a dissenter who opposed the social order. However, this study shows that although the villain frame was used, it was not used to vilify an individual. Therefore, myths can be used without deviating from the principles of journalism.

Contributions to the Literature

Lule (2001) suggested that myths can provide an additional perspective to the literature on gatekeeping. But this study on myths might provide an insight into the literature on framing. It will enrich the scope of developing framing analysis in mass communication, particularly with regard to the types of mythic themes used in coverage of tragic events.

This study showed that weekday news tells stories within the accepted norms of news reporting. Wednesday news columns showed more variety of Greek mythic themes than did Sunday news columns. A story that used myths was a complete story, a balanced story that did not focus on any one particular frame but used all to offer conflicting points of view.

The seven categories are basic themes of a story, which might be present more as a result of the cultural influence than a planned way to present news. Facts need

interpretation, especially when a tragedy happens. If this interpretation is rational, based on facts, sources, and background information, themes help organize the data.

Furthermore, the use of enduring examples in stories published in the initial aftermath point to the mythical qualities of news—to sustain mankind.

Eliade's (1963/1968) approach can be applied to the insights on news writing provided by this study. Similar to storytelling, which preserves the narratives, it will not be wrong to say that journalism of tragedies is an endeavor to preserve the memory of contemporary events and the desire to draw from the past accurately.

Directions for Further Research

It could be interesting to analyze a diffusion of mythic themes in online media where stories are collected, presented, and exchanged by people from all over the world. A comparison of mythic frames present in a local newspaper such as the *Times Picayune* with mythic frames present in *The New York Times* might add to myths in local and national newspaper. In addition, it might be of interest to compare mythic frames present in the coverage of tragic and non-tragic events.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A-1

Villain-Tragic Flaw Combination in *The New York Times's* Stories of Hurricane Katrina

- 1) Police Quitting, Overwhelmed by Chaos (September 4, 2005).
- 2) Homeland Security Chief Defends Federal Response (September 4, 2005).
- 3) Storm Stretches Refiners Past a Perilous Point (September 11, 2005).
- 4) Breakdowns Marked Paths from Hurricane to Anarchy (September 11, 2005).
- 5) In Astrodome, Survivors Find Restless Refuge (September 4, 2005).
- 6) Prisoners Evacuated After Hurricanes Allege Abuse (October 2, 2005).
- 7) Uprooted and Scattered Far From the Familiar (September 11, 2005).

Appendix A-2

Catharsis-Hero Combination in *The New York Times's* Stories of Hurricane Katrina

- 1) Police Quitting, Overwhelmed by Chaos (September 4, 2005).
- 2) Navy Pilots Who Rescued Victims Are Reprimanded (September 7, 2005).
- 3) Amid Ruins of Home, Sorrow and Solidarity (September 18, 2005).
- 4) Remembering Help Received After Sept. 11, New York Sends Officers to Louisiana (September 7, 2005).
- 5) Storm is Devastating for Businesses in Gulf Area, But Its National Effect Remains Muted (September 4, 2005).
- 6) With a Deluge of Claims, Adjusters Work Quickly to Ease the Burden for Homeowners (September 11, 2005).
- 7) Uprooted and Scattered Far From the Familiar (September 11, 2005).
- 8) For Storm Survivors, a Mosaic of Impressions Rather than a Crystalline Moment (September 11, 2005).
- 9) Breakdowns Marked Paths from Hurricane to Anarchy (September 11, 2005).
- 10) Aging, Frail, and Now refugees From a Devastating Hurricane (September 18, 2005).
- 11) Storms Stretch Safety Net for Black Colleges (September 25, 2005).
- 12) For the Needy, a Web of Matchmakers Offers Help and Hope (October 16, 2005).

13) 'First Go For Life,' Workers Are Told (August 31, 2005).

APPENDIX B**Code Book**

- 1) Story ID number
- 2) Day: S [Sunday] or W [Wednesday]
- 3) Date
- 4) Name of the story
- 5) Word Count
- 6) Are any of the seven mythic frames present in the story?
- 7) Is Hero present?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 8) Is Chaos present?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 9) Is tragic flaw present?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 10) Is villain present?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 11) Is reference present?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 12) Is catharsis present?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 13) Is Hubris present?
0 = no
1 = yes

- 14) Is any other present?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 15) Were reporter asserted frames present in story?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 16) Was chaos frame asserted by reporter?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 17) Was hero frame asserted by reporter?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 18) Was tragic flaw frame asserted by reporter?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 19) Was villain frame asserted by reporter?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 20) Was catharsis frame asserted by reporter?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 21) Was hubris frame asserted by reporter?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 22) Was reference frame asserted by reporter?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 23) Are frames present in headlines?
0 = no
1 = yes
- 24) Are frames present in leads?
0 = no
1 = yes