The Only Language They Understand: The Production and Circulation of Propaganda

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Declaration

I Christian Tatman certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

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Acknowledgements

Table of contents

Abstract

The Bush administration-led 'war on terror' saw the dissemination of a plethora of visual and linguistic rhetoric aimed at galvanising different audiences. Using an interdisciplinary approach to draw on French intellectual Bruno Latour's analytical tool of inscription and Cottle and Rai's framing theory, this thesis interrogates notions of 'propaganda', its mediatised diffusion in the US-led invasions of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003) and the robust contestations of this. The durability and malleability of propaganda in these conflicts and antecedents, such as the Vietnam War, along with the 'otherness' of designated and dehumanised enemies, is also examined. The utility of other propaganda models for examining rhetorical devices, particularly Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model, is considered. Key research aims include analysing the continuing use of specific rhetorical devices justifying violence and presenting it as unavoidable and unchallengeable. By analysing varied rhetorical devices including but not limited to photographs, cartoons, speeches and specific phraseology, the thesis examines the persuasion of audiences as to the necessity of violence, related militaristic valour and its reflection in political figures, along with the coterminous distancing of specific constituencies from the consequences of bloody carnage carried out in their name. The thesis departs from prevailing liberal conceptions of propaganda and Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model to extrapolate from Latour's work to indicate the rhetorical persuasiveness of propaganda in terms of the 'hard facts' of repetitive inscriptions.

Introduction

> This is the only language the Japanese understand.
>
> – an unnamed journalist writing in a front page article in *The Age* about the Atomic bomb dropped on Japan (Age special correspondent in New York, 1945: 1).

As an Honours student researching the bombing of Hiroshima, this sentence caught my eye with its striking brutality, racist attitude and inherent mendacity. But what particularly leapt out at me was its import when considered as a galvanising rhetorical device – potentially drawing allies to a cause while at the same time distancing them from actions carried out in their name against a dehumanised enemy. The connotations of this phrase – that 'they only understand force' (such as the dropping of a bomb) – achieves many things, but it is this latter aspect that is the most disturbing – its ability to strip the humanity from individuals and populations. My interest was further kindled when I noticed United States (hereafter US), Australian and other Western politicians were using variations of the expression to demonise Saddam Hussein and justify involvement in the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Subsequent preliminary research showed such phrasing to be extraordinarily flexible and durable with a lifespan and use across a multitude of conflicts. It was this curiosity that led me to dig deeper and ultimately consider a major research project examining the intensely disconcerting nature of uses of such wartime rhetorical devices.

Coterminous with this was an interest in the prosecution by largely Western governments of the 'war on terror', which has variously been rhetorically recalibrated as World War III (AFP, 2006), World War IV on the basis the Cold War was World War III (Feldman and Wilson, 2003), Bush's War on Terror (Eland, 2004), the Long War (Graham and White, 2006) and the 'global struggle against violent extremism' (*The Age*, 2007: 16). I was particularly intrigued by the eruption of highly charged persuasive rhetoric directed at specific audiences that accompanied the conflict. The research project registers a profound interest in the struggles over rhetorical inscription – its solidification, frequent contestation and recurrent recalibration. As an example of the latter, the Obama Administration has dropped the 'war on terror'

nomenclature – after its highly successful dissemination by his predecessor, George W. Bush, other members of his Administration and allies – in favour of 'Overseas Contingency Operation' (Wilson and Kamen, 2009). While rhetorical contortions and reconfigurations are not new – the Reagan Administration infamously used the phrase 'war on terrorism' in the 1980s – the durability, adaptability and flexibility of this and other similar persuasive wartime phrases suggests substantive matters for investigation: the role of communication practices and techniques in disposing populations towards war, and how best to describe and analyse these.

Overview of the thesis

The thesis will describe, analyse and examine the use of rhetorical devices in a range of media texts justifying violence in the 'war on terror'. To achieve this, the thesis will test the conjecture: The promulgation of violence, as inevitable and justifiable leading up to and during wartime is circulated by rhetorical devices using techniques of inscription, rhetorical devices which are characterised by a marked recurrence. Among other things, this will involve analysing inscription of the words 'rat', 'lair', 'satan' and 'evil' used to dehumanise designated enemies and justify what is presented to audiences, constituencies and markets as necessary violence. A key element of the thesis includes gathering instances and analysis of the enunciation and circulation of the expression 'the only language they understand is violence' and other derivatives such as 'they only understand force'.

The thesis considers the usefulness of propaganda models for examining such rhetorical devices. Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model – the subject of two international conferences in recent years[1] – which views media as interlocked with corporate and governmental strategies and goals, will be assessed. Further, academic and journalistic applications of Herman and Chomsky's oft cited model will be

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[1] The University of Windsor, Canada, hosted the '20 Years of Propaganda?' conference in May, 2007, to consider critical discussions and evidence on the ongoing relevance of the Herman/Chomsky propaganda model. Northumbria University, UK, subsequently hosted the 'Twenty Years at the Margins: The Herman Chomsky Propaganda Model and Critical Media and Communication Studies, 1988 – 2008' conference in December, 2008.

gauged and discussed. Lesser known models such as Sheryl Tuttle Ross's (2002) Epistemic Merit Model and Frederick and De Alwis's (2009) Catherine Wheel Model will be critiqued. Briefly, the former is intrinsically linked to the problematic Sender→Message→Receiver (SMR) communication model and was initially designed to consider works of art. (The SMR model is briefly outlined in the Working Definitions section of the Introduction.) Tuttle Ross argues the propagandist aims to create a semblance of credibility and as such appeals to an epistemology that is weak or defective. The Catherine Wheel Model is proposed by Frederick and De Alwis to demonstrate how Sri Lankan national press circumvented military censorship and taught readers how to 'read' blank space.

The thesis will investigate the use of rhetorical devices in a range of media coverage justifying violence in the conflicts defined as part of the current 'war on terror' and their antecedents in earlier conflicts. Primarily, the thesis will examine the use of rhetorical devices in media texts justifying violence as it occurred between US-led military forces and various designated enemies including the Afghan Taliban regime, the former regime of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda forces and their associates. The research project will investigate whether similar rhetorical devices have been used in media texts justifying violence in other military conflicts last century.

Firstly, the thesis aims to investigate the currency of the category of propaganda to understand current justifications of violence circulated in various media. How useful is the category of 'propaganda' to understand current justifications of violence circulated through various media? Secondly, it aims to investigate the marked recurrence and enduring use of a particular range of rhetorical devices justifying violence and presenting it as being inevitable and thus unchallengeable. Specifically, it seeks to answer what rhetorical devices have been routinely in use in the media coverage of the 'war on terror' and its historical antecedents? It analyses points of comparison between current media circulated justifications of violence and previous justifications. Thirdly, it will examine the successful use of particular rhetorical devices to dehumanise enemies and thus persuade audiences as to the necessity for violence. A key aspect of this is describing how these rhetorical devices and accompanying inscriptions work and for which audiences.

3

Rationale and methodology

The thesis takes an interdisciplinary approach to communication and media studies, drawing on news framing theory in certain ways and considering how historian of science and technology Bruno Latour's theory of inscription may provide useful forms of description and analysis. This particular interdisciplinary approach, to my knowledge, has not been previously applied to an analysis of propaganda. Specifically, this approach will be used to consider how rhetorical devices drawing on techniques of inscription constitute what is classified as 'propaganda', a term which is widely circulated and often unexamined. Officials have openly speculated that the US-led 'war on terror' may last up to 50 years (BBC News, 2001). While as noted earlier the 'war on terror' phrase itself has been dropped by the Obama administration, the conflicts continue in Afghanistan and Iraq, both significantly intertwined with uses of propaganda and fierce rhetorical eruptions. If predictions that the current conflicts will continue are correct, it is likely that the wars embarked upon in Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 will only be the precursors to escalating conflict. With such ongoing events, it is imperative to research and understand the justification of violence and instances of its rhetorical operation. It will be important for citizens and audiences to identify what might be counted as the historically usual propaganda[2] and understand its consequences. Investigating the concept of propaganda is part of understanding the role and operation of these justifications of violence circulated in particular media texts.

The thesis departs from Herman and Chomsky's influential propaganda model and dominant liberal humanist conceptions, of which the latter posits propaganda as a conveyor of 'ideas', involves the restraint of thought and is complexly entwined with 'ideology' and prevents 'activity of the mind' (Neale, 1977: 10). In his extensive analysis of liberal humanist conceptions of filmic propaganda, Neale notes this argument takes all ideologies to be ideological 'except liberal humanism' and furthermore 'diverse political ideologies such as communism and fascism can be dismissed on the grounds that they produce propaganda: the only non-propagandist

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[2] In terms of wartime propaganda, it is almost a century since US Senator Hiram Johnson famously declared: 'The first casualty when war comes is truth' (In Knightley, 2003: vii).

space left is that of liberal or social democracy' (Neale, 1977: 13). The thesis departs from these arguments to extrapolate from Latour's work to specify the rhetorical persuasiveness of propaganda in terms of what Latour calls 'hard facts' regarding matters outside and beyond mere propaganda, established by repetitive and reductive cascading inscriptions.

Latour's theory of inscription grew out of his analysis of how scientists construct 'fact' and what is taken to be knowledge, particularly through their work in laboratories. In his important work with Steve Woolgar, *Laboratory Life*, the pair define an inscription device as 'any item of apparatus or configuration of such items which can transform a material substance into a figure or diagram which is directly usable by one of the members of the office space' (Latour and Woolgar, 1986: 51). Furthermore, inscriptions help create stability:

> Our argument…was that writing was not so much a method of transferring information as a material operation of creating order…Between scientists and chaos, there is nothing but a wall of archives, labels, protocol books, figures, and papers. But this mass of documents provides the only means of creating more order and thus…of increasing the amount of information in one place (Latour and Woolgar, 1986: 245-246).

Latour attends to the complexity of how inscriptions essentially stabilise and solidify what is accepted as 'fact'. In developing his theory in *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society*, Latour argues that inscriptions are immutable, mobile and can be combined with other inscriptions. Examining the astronomer Tycho Brahe's work on the position of planets and his request to other European astronomers to make notes at the same time, Latour convincingly argues:

> All these charts, tables and trajectories are conveniently at hand and combinable at will, no matter whether they are twenty centuries old or a day old; each of them brings celestial bodies billions of tons heavy and hundreds of thousands of miles away the size of a point on a piece of paper (Latour, 1987: 227).

Latour further reiterates the importance of combinable inscriptions and their significance in creating and reinforcing what is taken to be knowledge in his later work *Pandora's Hope*. In a discussion of how two maps can confirm the location of a site and circulate reference and therefore confirm data, Latour argues: 'A single

inscription would not inspire trust, but the superposition of the two allows at least a quick indication of the exact location of the site' (Latour, 1999: 28). Examining the significance of combinable inscriptions and their import in solidifying 'fact', Latour argues: 'Yes, scientists master the world, but only if the world comes to them in the form of two-dimensional, superposable (sic), combinable inscriptions' (Latour, 1999: 29). The importance of combinable inscriptions and their ability to stabilise and solidify what is taken to be knowledge is significant when examining propagandistic inscriptions, such as 'Saddam Hussein', 'evil' and 'rat', along with visual rhetoric, which will be analysed in Chapter 3. That is, the promulgation of pro 'war on terror' propaganda and presenting this as 'fact' – never uncontested – to diverse audiences.

Latour highlights the importance of inscriptions and their use to mobilise allies, particularly through what he terms 'paperwork'. That is, the significance of scientists working on two dimensional inscriptions rather than 'the sky, the air, health, or the brain' (Latour, 1990: 44). In his piece 'Drawing Things Together', Latour cites nine advantages of this, which are briefly summarised. Firstly, inscriptions are *mobile* in that planets and microbes cannot move whereas maps and photographic plates can. Secondly, inscriptions 'are *immutable* when they move'; for example, even 'exploding stars are recorded on graph paper in each phase of their explosion' (p.45). Thirdly, inscriptions are made *flat,* particularly as:

> In politics as in science, when someone is said to ''master'' a question or to ''dominate'' a subject, you should normally look for the flat surface that enables mastery (a map, a list, a file, a census, the wall of a gallery, a card-index, a repertory) and you will find it (Latour, 1990: 45).

Flat surfaces can also be taken to include a television screen or computer monitor. Fourthly, the '*scale* of the inscription may be *modified* at will' and fifthly, they 'can be *reproduced* and spread at little cost' (p.45). Sixthly, inscriptions can be reshuffled and *recombined.* This is particularly pertinent when considering evolving wartime propaganda and its linkages to historical antecedents. Seventhly, Latour argues these recombinations make 'possible to *superimpose* several images of totally different origins and scales' (p.45). For example, to link geology and economics. Eighthly, inscriptions can be *'made part of a written text';* the text 'carries all there is to see in what it writes about. Through the laboratory, the text and the spectacle of the world

6

end up having the same character' (p.47). This could be extrapolated to television and film studio work. In his final point on the significance of inscriptions, Latour argues:

> The two-dimensional character of inscriptions allows them to *merge with geometry*…space on paper can be made continuous with three-dimensional space…because of this optical consistency, everything, no matter where it comes from, can be converted into diagrams and numbers…You cannot measure the sun, but you can measure a photograph of the sun with a ruler (p.46. Emphasis in original).

In these ways, Latour stresses the value of stabilising 'fact' along with mobilising and galvanising allies in the process of doing this. On his ninth advantage, Latour expands this to make a valuable point regarding the solidification of what is taken to be knowledge and its relationship to power: 'The mobilization of many resources through space and time is essential for domination on a grand scale. I proposed to call these objects that allow this mobilization to take place ''immutable mobiles'' ' (p.47). In his lengthy analysis regarding the origins of the immutable mobile, Gorman saliently notes that Latour showcases 'examples of the power of immutable mobiles in creating asymmetrical power relations between groups of humans in different social and geographical settings' (Gorman, c2001). This underpins the thesis' argument that analysis must attend to relations of power and not simply view propaganda in terms of 'ideology', 'ideas' or 'words floating about'. That is, relations of power such as those between senior politico-military figures, allies in other governments and potential media audiences. To the extent that 'ideology' can be a useful term in this analysis, it can be defined as socially and culturally learnt material dispositions and rhetorical capacities. Latour argues that immutable mobiles are based on 'written, numbered, or optically consistent paper surfaces' (Latour, 1990: 47). However, he links this to *cascades* of more simplified inscriptions (p.47. Emphasis in original). That is, the reductive repetition of what is presented as 'fact'. This is critical when considering the fluidity and mobility of propaganda in terms of the 'hard facts' established by highly repetitive and over simplistic cascading inscriptions.

Latour argues convincingly that the *cascade* of reductive and repetitive inscriptions allows 'harder facts' to be produced (p.40. Emphasis in original). For example, scientific texts include 'more and more layers of graphic display', tables, diagrams and so forth (p.41). While Latour's theory grew out of his work studying the history

of science and technology, it provides a powerful basis from which to analyse wartime propaganda and its underlying visual, linguistic and musical rhetoric.

Joerges and Czarniawska succinctly summarise the importance of inscription as the foundation for Latour's analysis: 'Literary inscription, performed with the aid of inscription devices, turned out to be the core activity of laboratory life, and scientists turned out to be writers and readers' (Joerges and Czarniawska, 1998: 2). As they put it, Latour's notion of inscription has made 'a highly satisfactory passage from literary theory to social theory' (p.2). To adapt Latour's framework, propaganda deploying specific words, phrases and images can be presented either separately or in combination to audiences, constituencies and markets as potentially persuasive inscriptions.

Latour argues that inscriptions – presented to specific audiences familiar with knowledge in fields such as geography, biology, architecture, painting, medical science and education theory – can muster, increase, or ensure the 'fidelity of new allies' (Latour, 1990: 24). Specifically, the thesis will explore Latour's maxim that 'inscriptions allow conscription' (p.50). Latour argues that the use of inscriptions within particular relations of power demonstrates how 'someone convinces someone else to take up a statement, to pass it along, to make it more of a fact' (p.24). Latour's approach to inscription offers possibilities for a more rigorous form of analysis than both orthodox studies and dominant liberal conceptions of propaganda. I will apply Latour's concepts of 'cascading' inscription – essentially a form of accelerated repetition – and 'drawing together', that is, technically manipulating inscriptions, to empirical data drawn from media texts. On 'drawing together', Latour argues that 'the weakest, by manipulating inscriptions of all sorts…become the strongest' (p.60) and these variously weak or strong agents are always situated within and across specific organisations and institutions including government and media ones (pp.54-55). In advancing this, Latour argues that the summarisation of records by these various entities plays a vital role on how the weakest can *dominate* (pp.55-56. Latour's emphasis). Latour argues convincingly:

> A man is never much more powerful than any other – even from a throne; but a man whose eye dominates records through which some sort of connections are established with millions of others may be said to *dominate*. This…is not a

given but a slow construction and it can be corroded, interrupted, or destroyed if the records, files, and figures are immobilized, made more mutable, less readable, less combinable, or unclear when displayed (p.56. Latour's emphasis).

In these ways, Latour attends to the complexity regarding the exploitation and mobilisation of inscriptions and the ways in which this is related to relations of power. As Latour states, this enables examination of how 'small entities…become big ones' (p.56). Acknowledging this paradox, Latour argues: 'By working on papers alone, on fragile inscriptions that are immensely less than the things from which they are extracted, it is still possible to dominate all things and all people' (p.60). The thesis extrapolates from this argument to analyse how comparatively small groups of senior politico-military figures and media allies such as sympathetic columnists disseminate and cascade inscriptions in order to become the strongest and potentially muster support from audiences and constituencies.

In advancing an interdisciplinary approach based partly on the work of Latour, it needs to be mentioned that his theory of inscription has been widely applied and contested by other researchers. For example, Schreiber (2005) makes an interesting contribution in his use of Latour's theory of inscription in a study of mathematical problem solving via internet chat. For the purposes of intellectual accuracy, I note Latour is considered hard to categorise. Evincing this is Wainwright's description of Latour's work as difficult to pigeonhole; his 'originality, style of argumentation, and aversion to being defined vis-à-vis other thinkers' (Wainwright: 2005: 115) make him hard to define. I also note for the purposes of academic precision that the ethnomethodological sociologist of science Bloor – in an acerbic dispute with Latour over the Strong Program – has accused the latter of raising obscurantism 'to the level of a general methodological principle' (Bloor, 1999a: 97) and producing writings 'full of unresolved tensions' (1999b: 131). While acknowledging these vigorous debates, I am arguing that Latour's work on inscriptions provides powerful analytical tools with which to consider the sense-making of visual and linguistic propagandistic rhetoric.

The other key element of the interdisciplinary approach involves the application of news framing theory. Norris, Kern and Just contend that news frames represent persistent patterns of selection, emphasis, and *exclusion* that furnish a coherent

interpretation and evaluation of events (Norris, Kern and Just, 2003: 4. My emphasis). Similarly, Entman states the standard definition of framing as: 'Selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or situation' (Entman, 2004: 5).

Entman is a major figure in the field of news frames and his approach will be elaborated in Chapter 5, section 5.1. Gamson, too, has made a significant contribution to news frames analysis. He argues that frames

> …do not appear to either journalists or audiences as social constructions but as primary attributes of events that reporters are merely reflecting. News frames…determine what is selected, what is excluded, what is emphasized (in Ryan, 1991: 54).

Further, Gamson contends that journalists' sense of news and socio-cultural values leads them to present issues within particular frames, 'often reflecting broader cultural themes and narratives that help define ideas available to audiences as they talk about and think about the issue' (Gamson, 1992: 26. In Blood and McCallum, 2006: 3).

While acknowledging the important role of these scholars in the field, I will predominantly adopt Cottle and Rai's approach to framing. While their methodological framework was primarily formulated to analyse television news journalism, it has lessons for the study of other media as well. They define communicative frames as 'analytical categories designed to capture recurring and evident communicative structures of television news while…admitting to further levels of complexity in any particular case' (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 169). They argue that a number of communicative frames lie 'at the centre' of television news journalism's 'communicative architecture', routinely 'structuring the presentation and elaboration of news stories' (p.169). Further, they argue the frames 'prove pragmatically useful' in terms of the

> …logistics, technical capabilities and pressurized organization of news production while…permitting some degree of journalist and organizational latitude in…how to construct both conflictual and consensual news stories (p.169).

Cottle and Rai argue that the repertoire of frames they identify variously allows for giving a voice to the powerful, occluding or dissimulating dissent, constructing consensus, advocating and championing causes, expressing cultural differences, telling mythic tales and bearing witness. The particular argument they bring to framing theory is that communicative frames pre-exist the 'discursive constructions of any particular issue or news event' (p.170). Cottle and Rai argue that conventional ideas about frames are discourse dependent and issue specific and, as such

> …insufficiently cognizant of the communicative structures that routinely make up the television news and too quickly foreclose on the deliberative and open-ended possibilities that inhere within many of the communicative frames comprising television news (p.170).

It is this form of analysis and attention to open-ended possibilities of sense making that makes Cottle and Rai's news framing theory useful. Their analytical tools will be employed alongside Latour's account of inscription to 'dig deeper' and produce a detailed study of propaganda across a range of media including print (news media), film, radio, television and literature. It is important to acknowledge that Cottle, particularly, has engaged with similar concerns to those in the thesis. Specifically, Cottle's *Mediatized Conflict* (2006) tackles Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model, televisual rhetoric associated with the 'war on terror' such as the US-led invasion of Iraq and imagery associated with the putative 'rescue' of US soldier Jessica Lynch in Iraq, to name a few. Given this overlap, elements of Cottle's analysis and argument are referenced throughout the thesis. While the significance of parts of Cottle's analysis to the concerns of the thesis is acknowledged, the thesis differs in considerable ways through the interdisciplinary approach, outlined above.

In developing the thesis' interdisciplinary approach, the rigorous eclecticism exemplified by Der Derian is significant:

> Using archival research, empirical techniques, and critical theories, I preferred to mix and match, plug and play, in the hope of finding the combination that provided the deepest insights and illuminated the gravest dangers. Early on, I realized that if I were to have anything worthwhile to say, I would need not only to escape the disciplinary boundaries (and extensive border skirmishes) of my own academic

field…but also to find some way to develop a cross-disciplinary theory for other travelers (Der Derian, 2001: 210).

The thesis similarly works with such a rigorously piecemeal approach to get beyond narrow disciplinary boundaries and frameworks. Furthermore, the thesis departs from Cultural Studies frameworks and philosophically oriented concepts of discourse, such as that espoused by Jeff Lewis (2005). There is a partial overlap regarding the analysis of rhetoric within the 'war on terror', Lewis's work and the research aims of this thesis. Lewis's work is discussed in Chapter 1, section 1.5. The next section "Latour on 'publics' and politics" supplements the thesis' attention to and work on inscriptions.

Latour on 'publics' and politics

Latour has also advanced highly salient argument regarding politics and 'publics' on other occasions. Some of these are now considered to augment the Introduction's emphasis and work on inscription. Concerning 'publics', this is done to develop the argument that audiences and constituencies cannot simply be assumed, but are rather assembled with people brought together, around particular matters of concern. Attention to 'publics' is restated and specified throughout the thesis in the form of attention to particular audiences, constituencies and sometimes markets – audiences and constituencies which are both *activated*, for example, in terms of *support* or *resistance* to varied conflicts, or in terms of recruitment and incitement, and acted on at a distance. Regarding activation, distances vary. It can be a distance in Baghdad or Los Angeles depending on the audiences and constituencies that are being addressed. Action at a distance is Latour's definition of power, which he adapts from the physicist Einstein in non-positivist ways. This activation can potentially mobilise military personnel or civilians to support and/or oppose a war effort. This is not to *assume* outcomes or deny both contestations *and* the existence of varied audiences and constituencies. Essentially, ensuing chapters reiterate the argument of plural and empirically assembled audiences. Four papers by Latour, which in part address and progress this argument, are summarised with key points highlighted (Latour, 1991,

2004, 2005, 2007). Furthermore, the four papers formulate a notion of politics that goes beyond limited political science postulations, but again encompasses the argument of the formation or assemblage of 'the common world' (Latour, 2007: 813). This is also briefly discussed in summarising the four papers.

Latour's 'The Impact of Science Studies on Political Philosophy' (1991) argues that science studies is often seen as an augmentation of science with politics, but rather case studies can be shown to indicate a 'redefinition of politics…in the laboratories'; and to the familiar notion of political representatives should be added scientific representatives (Latour, 1991: 3). Latour addresses how mediators, such as 'the spokespersons for nature', and the media, drawing on social scientific knowledge, connect audiences. The spokespersons are

> assembled every day through the auspices of the newspapers, of television, in corporate suites, in the classroom, on the bench in courts…they all gather with the constituencies they represent behind their backs. Here are those who speak in the name of the whales; here are those who speak for the logging and timber industry; on their side is the lobbyist for frozen embryos; next is another one representing business interests; another speaks for the Milky Way, in the name of stars and black holes; another one speaks in the name of the soil; another one for the Greyhound bus drivers; another for the mining of uranium…The similarities between all these representatives, *their connections and controversies and tangles;* are they not much more important than the moot distinction between those who have been elected to speak in the name of voting citizens, and all the others designed to speak in the name of whales, workers, forests, capitals, or stars? (Latour, 1991: 16. My emphasis).

Here, Latour not only alludes to the complexity and diversity of propagators and partisans of particular knowledges to audiences, but also the often mediatised inscriptions that jostle against each other and are disseminated to and contested across varied 'publics' with political consequences. Similar to 'official' representatives, the spokespersons for these varied constituencies can promulgate and circulate their propositions. In terms of the 'ties' that bind 'society' or 'publics', Latour argues the necessity of looking beyond 'social forces' to consider 'loyalties…[and] telephones, electricity, *media,* computers, trains, and planes' (Latour, 1991: 16. My emphasis).

Along with more mundane means of attachment such as modes of transport and communication devices, Latour signals the importance of media as 'instruments'. This coheres with the thesis' attention to empirical media. Latour's paper also addresses the role varied actors play in terms of raising questions of political philosophy: 'They are raised again and again by people who observe social changes – and there are many of them: pollsters, politicians, businessmen, columnists, cartoonists.' (p.4) In these ways, Latour adroitly identifies the multiplicity of key actors that can potentially impact on the field of political philosophy. To extrapolate, the thesis similarly considers the role these actors, particularly politicians, columnists and cartoonists, play in terms of disseminating, formulating and contesting propagandistic inscriptions. Latour also stresses the importance of using *instruments* when recruiting and convincing allies. Considering this from a scientific perspective, Latour argues:

> You will see a collective of practicing scientists turning with skill around instruments, trying to interest and to convince each other, and, in order to do so, introducing into their exchanges slides, tables, documents, photographs, and reports, coming from far away places of quite different scales…Depending on the heat of the discussion, on the mustering, mobilization, and use of these resources, other colleagues will or will not be convinced (p.8).

In these ways, Latour highlights the complex practices of inscription, which muster and mobilise potential allies. The thesis draws on this approach when examining the pro and anti war inscriptions cascaded by skilled actors in the 'war on terror'. Similarly, the thesis also outlines the use of mediatised *instruments* used by senior politico-military officials – in this instance, to potentially persuade audiences through journalistic accounts of propaganda inscriptions such as the presentation of a battle in Baghdad (Chapter 4, section 4.6) or the putative 'rescue' of US soldier Jessica Lynch in Iraq (Chapter 6, section 6.3). Critically, this is linked to the question "What are the relations of power established between 'senior politico military figures and allies in governments', inscriptions and various publics?" That is, the mediatised *instruments* that the Pentagon officials use to potentially influence outcomes are propaganda inscriptions, never uncontested. For example, visual and textual propaganda inscriptions variously concerning the satanic attributes of Saddam Hussein (Chapter 3) and the instances regarding the battle in Baghdad and Lynch. This point about

instruments and *persuasion* along with its linkages to relations of power is analysed and restated throughout the thesis, particularly through the aforementioned examples.

Finally, Latour's paper addresses what he terms as a 'political constitution of truth', which is defined as

> …broader and unwritten, but it also distributes powers, will, rights to speak, and checks and balances. It decides on the crucial distribution of competence: for instance, matter has or does not have will…only landowners are allowed to vote for the parliament; women have no rights; there are no witches but only madwomen; and so on (p.13).

In such ways, Latour highlights politics as removed from narrow political science understandings, instead attending to it as involving relations of power and knowledge or what Foucault would term organisational and institutional regimes of truth.

The second of Latour's papers to be considered in this section, 'Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern' (Latour, 2004) examines what has become of the spirit of critique and whether it has run out of steam. Latour argues that a particular form of critical spirit

> … has sent us down the wrong path, encouraging us to fight the wrong enemies and, worst of all, to be considered as friends by the wrong sort of allies because of a little mistake in the definition of its main target. The question was never to get *away* from facts but *closer* to them, not fighting empiricism but … renewing empiricism (Latour, 2004: 231. Emphasis in original).

Here, Latour highlights the salience of empiricism (perhaps more felicitously rendered as empirical evidence) – a key aspect of the thesis in terms of the media materials it assembles (Chapters 3, 5, 6, 7) to analyse conflictual wartime and politicised inscriptions. Latour also stresses what can be taken to be the partisan nature of what is presented as fact: 'Matters of fact are only very partial and, I would argue, very polemical, very political renderings of matters of concern and only a subset of what could be called states of affairs' (Latour, 2004: 232). Again, these pertinent matters are examined in the thesis, particularly in terms of combustible politicised, if not polemical, inscriptions entwined with putative 'fact' in the 'war on terror' (Chapters 3, 6 and 7).

The importance of pre US-led war on Iraq machinations, particularly the need to recruit credible allies, is also addressed in Latour's paper. Discussing US attempts to draw the UN to its pro war cause and the televised presentation of this, Latour argues it was difficult to determine

> …whether this gathering was a tribunal, a parliament, a command-and-control war room, a rich man's club, a scientific congress, or a TV stage. *But certainly it was an assembly where matters of great concern were debated and proven – except there was much puzzlement about which type of proofs should be given*…at the United Nations, we had an investigation that tried to coalesce, in one unifying, unanimous, solid, mastered object, masses of people, opinions, and might (Latour, 2004: 235. My emphasis).

Latour notes the significance of propagandistic inscriptions and their political purposes in the case of their deployment to potentially enlist allies and opinion to a pro war cause – a recurring subject of investigation throughout the thesis. Latour also alludes to the non homogenous nature of audiences, sarcastically noting that a US newspaper had complained 'about the "pathological reaction" of the "Arab street" with truth' (Latour, 2004: 226). The diversity of Arab audiences and notions of the 'street' are critical matters analysed and discussed in the thesis (Chapter 2, section 2.9 and 2.10).

Latour raises the crucial issue of what he terms 'fetishes', particularly avoiding turning "false objects into fetishes that are supposed to be nothing but mere empty white screens on which is projected the power of society, domination, whatever'' (Latour, 2004: 238). This notion of a 'fetish', which presents something as an 'object' rather than considering the practices and relations involved, can be likened to Chomsky's position on propaganda, which is examined in Chapter 1, section 1.6. Latour argues that it would be unbecoming to "accuse something of being a fetish", as this is the "ultimate gratuitous, disrespectful, insane, and barbarous gesture" (Latour, 2004: 243). To draw on this, it would be critically unproductive to examine propaganda as a mere fetish. Attempting to devise '*new* critical tools' and replace "matters of fact by matters of concern" (Latour, 2004: 243) Latour addresses the politics of things – bringing power and politics, in non reductive senses, and by

extrapolation interdisciplinary media and communication studies ways, as well as what Latour defines as 'realism', into play. The thesis makes a similar move in analysing propaganda from an interdisciplinary perspective in terms of relations of power and historical actualities or 'facts' rather than idealist notions of 'ideology'. This is to understand Latour's 'realism' as not epistemologically defined (in terms of Kantian philosophy with its subject of knowledge separate from the object of knowledge), but as historically produced realities.

Finally, Latour addresses the notion of a 'multifarious inquiry', which can be "launched with the tools of anthropology, philosophy, metaphysics, history, sociology to detect *how many participants* are gathered in a *thing* to make it exist and maintain its existence" (Latour, 2004: 246. Emphasis in original). In such ways, Latour underscores the significance of a broad and plural approach and for the thesis' purposes, propaganda would be on such *thing*.

Latour's third piece to be considered in this section, 'From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik or How to Make Things Public' (Latour, 2005), engages with terrorism, inscriptions, methods of representation and an alternative and in some ways oppositional broad democratic politics. As Dieter summarises, *Dingpolitik* is taken to be a 'densely materialist approach to representational forums in two meanings of the word *represent*: drawing together legitimate actants around an issue (politics), and presenting a matter of concern, a *topos*, to those assembled (science)' (Dieter, 2009: 58. Emphasis in original; see also Latour, 2005: 16). Further, in encapsulating Latour's argument, Dieter notes:

> Construed as a response to the perceived crisis of contemporary forms of governance, this concept focuses on how emergent, material, collaborative and complex dynamics have become important topics for thinking of new ways of acting politically…*Dingpolitik* can be seen as marking a shift away from targeted forms of tactical intervention or 'resistance' towards modes of networked assembly, projective action and the participatory assembling of social issues…According to Latour's proposal for democratic reform, we require a new stylistic grammar that can effectively mediate the convergence of political, artistic and technical representations (Dieter, 2009: 58:).

Dieter highlights Latour's significant shift from narrow political science formulations of politics, including 'governance'. This is further underscored by Latour's emphasis on the importance of non human political actors, such as rivers. Interviewed on the subject, Latour expands on forms of representation and broader conceptualisations of what constitutes a political actor, arguing

> …an actor is whatever makes a difference…Rivers make a difference, especially now…in Spain where the politics of water is very important. It makes sense to say that rivers are important political actors. On two conditions: one of them is that the river has to be made to speak through plenty of techniques of representation. The question is 'what is the speech of this river?' And the second one is 'what is the role played by the river speech where the people in charge of water management talk about it?'…Distinguishing living from nonliving entities was interesting for pre-revolutionary Kantism somewhere in the 18th century, but we are now living in the 21st century (Latour in Latour and Sanchez-Criado, 2007: 366).

For that matter, what is the 'speech' of weaponry and munitions?

In other words, Latour argues that a 'new citizen' in *Dingpolitik* can constitute 'things' such as rivers. Reflecting on gathering matters of concern, Latour argues it would be 'useless to tell humans from non humans', particularly as:

> They are things we need to assemble around in order to solve cohabitation with. And that is a very important political question. To distinguish between humans and non humans would not solve what I am interested in. If you tell me any question in which distinguishing between humans and things clarifies anything I would be convinced, but which one?' (Latour in Latour and Sanchez-Criado, 2007: 366).

This draws together the complex translatability and interfaces between human and non-human forms of agency. In such ways, Latour emphasises an expanded democratic politics and assemblage, humans and non humans, brought together around topics of concern. As Latour stresses: 'We might be more connected to each other by our worries, our matters of concern, the issues we care for, than by any other set of values, opinions, attitudes, or principles' (Latour, 2005: 14). Latour also engages with notions of terrorism and inscriptions, particularly in his contrast between

the 'Good City' and the 'Bad City', as well as assertions around the 'weapons of mass destruction' rhetoric. On the contrast between the Good City/Government (taken to be New York/the United States) and the Bad City/Government (taken to be Baghdad/Iraq), Latour draws on the fresco painted by Lorenzetti in Siena, to argue that:

> The Bad Government is not simply illustrated by the devilish figure of Discordia but also through the dark light, the destroyed city, the ravaged landscape and the suffocating people. The Good Government is not simply personified by the various emblems of Virtue and Concordia but also through the transparency of light, its well-kept architecture, its well-tended landscape, its diversity of animals, the ease of its commercial relations, its thriving arts. Far from being simply a decor for the emblems, the fresco requests us to become attentive to a subtle ecology of Good and Bad Government (Latour, 2005: 17).

In these ways, Latour attends to both the critical importance of representation in political contexts and inscriptions – in this instance, inscriptions solidifying the 'fact' that a particular city/government is 'good' while the other can be situated as 'bad'. Latour critically addresses the components of the inscription, particularly the precise use of visual rhetoric. Similarly, the thesis analyses the political usage and contestations of similar sorts of rhetoric as entwined within inscriptions and disseminated to varied audiences and constituencies. Drawing partly on this, the thesis particularly examines the complexity surrounding visual rhetoric, such as cartoons, to analyse their varied presentation and uses (Chapter 3, section 3.6.1). How such rhetoric jostles alongside other propositions, providing alternative or diversified accounts for audiences to make sense of and negotiate, is also discussed (Chapter 3, section 3.6).

Reprising his discussion of the instance in 'Why has Critique Run Out of Steam?', in 'From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik' Latour examines the former US Secretary of State Colin Powell's address to the United Nations in February 2003 in which Powell laid out a pro war case. Here Latour deals with the political uses of rhetoric in the 'war on terror'. Concerning Powell's notorious presentation, vigorously built around the repeatedly asserted 'fact' that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, Latour notes:

Every one of the slides [in Powell's presentation] was a blatant lie – and the more that time has passed, the more blatant it has become. And yet their showing was prefaced by these words: "My colleagues, every statement I make today is backed up by sources, solid sources. *These are not assertions*. What we are giving you are *facts* and conclusions based on solid intelligence"…Never has the difference between facts and assertions been more abused than on this day' (Latour, 2005: 18. Emphasis in original).

Latour pejoratively notes Powell's use of rhetoric (Latour, 2005: 18) and what was involved in his passing on of 'hard facts':

And sure enough, having aligned so many "indisputable" facts behind his position, since the "dispute" was *still* going on, Powell had to close it arbitrarily by a show of unilateral force. Facts and forces, in spite of so many vibrant declarations, always walk in tandem. The problem is that transparent, unmediated, undisputable facts have recently become rarer and rarer (Latour, 2005: 19. Emphasis in original).

The formation and circulation of inscriptions along with 'hard facts' within the 'war on terror', as highlighted by Latour, is the main focus of the thesis. Powell circulated inscriptions that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction and the need for US-led action as part of the 'war on terror'. The thesis rigorously examines inscriptions related to Iraq theatre of the 'war on terror' (Chapter 3) along with iconic actors such as the US soldier Jessica Lynch (Chapter 6) and the filmmaker Michael Moore (Chapter 7).

Latour engages with politics and notions of democratic change and consideration of how people and things are brought together in spaces of decision-making, spaces which are also sites of practices of representation (p.26) and of the negotiation of what counts as an inscription of a fact (p.21), representative practices (p.26) and renovated forms of democracy (p.29):

Scientific laboratories, technical institutions, marketplaces, churches and temples, financial trading rooms, Internet forums, ecological disputes – without forgetting the very shape of the museum inside which we gather all those *membra disjecta* – are just some of the forums and agoras in which we speak,

vote, decide, are decided upon, prove, are being convinced. Each has its own architecture, it own technology of speech, its complex set of procedures, its definition of freedom and domination, its ways of bringing together those who are concerned – and even more important, those who are not concerned – and what concerns them, its expedient way to obtain closure and come to a decision (Latour, 2005: 31).

This list could also include media and other sites of the production of, among other things, propagandistic inscriptions. What the quotation also demonstrates is Latour's attention to the *varied* character of 'publics'. As foreshadowed earlier, this attention to plurality is taken up throughout the thesis as a multiplicity of audiences, constituencies and sometimes markets for the inscriptions being considered. Latour highlights not only the diversity of what can be taken as 'publics', but also the varied positions from which actors disseminate conjecture and inscription which jostles against that of other actors and agencies. Assemblage, termed by Latour as 'bringing together those who are concerned', is a key factor. To restate, these are significant aspects of the research in the thesis. On Latour's argument regarding assemblage, it is important to note that this does not guarantee outcomes in terms of a uniformity of response from a given 'public' or *assume* that publics are automatically assembled. Publics can be inadvertently assembled (p.37). For Latour, an oppositional broad democratic politics can exist when there is an assemblage of 'disorderly voices, contradictory interests and virulent claims' (p.39). In such ways, Latour's *Dingpolitik* argument notes that publics are not pre-given, but rather are assembled with people brought together around matters of import. Thus, Latour develops a sense of politics significantly broader than functionalist and behaviouralist political science understandings. In summary, Latour attends to heterogeneous audiences and ways of gathering them as actors, as well as to political practices and relations potentially available for broad based alternative forms of politics.

Latour's final paper to be considered in this section, 'Turning Around Politics: A Note on Gerard de Vries' Paper' (Latour, 2007), critiques de Vries' 'What is Political in Sub-politics? How Aristotle Might Help STS?' (de Vries, 2007). De Vries offers to reroute the Science and Technology Studies community's awareness of politics but Latour's response is to dispute de Vries' assumptions and argument concerning both

technology and politics. Latour argues that the STS field *has* played a role by reformulating the question of politics as *cosmopolitics,* argues for 'embracing the pragmatist rather than the Aristotelian tradition' and examines how different meanings of 'political' could be 'redescribed as successive *moments* in the trajectory of an issue' (Latour, 2007: 811-812. Emphasis in original):

> The machinery of what is officially political is only the tip of the iceberg compared with the many other activities generated by many more 'activists' than those who claim to do politics per se…politics is something entirely different from what political scientists believe: it is the building of the cosmos in which everyone lives, the progressive composition of the common world (Latour, 2007: 813).

Continuing this striking claim, Latour describes politics as the 'agonizing sorting out of conflicting *cosmograms*' (Tresch, 2005. In Latour, 2007: 813) linking to Stengers' neologism, *cosmopolitics*, meaning 'the politics of the cosmos' (Stengers, 1996. In Latour, 2007: 813). This highlights Latour's work in advancing a broad and constitutive sense of politics, moving it beyond de Vries' narrow conception of what he takes to be STS's formulations. Latour also pertinently notes how outcomes cannot be guaranteed, indicating the contestations of politicised inscriptions, arguing that 'political' should 'qualify certain moments, stages or segments in the complex and rather erratic destiny of issues' (Latour, 2007: 814). Examining the significance of *instruments* and *entanglements* – both taken up in the thesis to describe and analyse propagandistic inscriptions – Latour notes 'political' is 'not an adjective that defines a profession, a sphere, an activity, a calling, a site, or a procedure, but it is what qualifies a *type of situation*' (Latour, 2007: 814. Emphasis in original). In terms of analytical imperatives, Latour underscores the necessity of attention to the use of *instruments* in association with objects of concern in order to 'grasp the questions they have raised and in which we are hopelessly *entangled*' in specific relations of power and knowledge (Latour, 2007: 814. My emphasis). In these ways, Latour addresses the complexity and heterogeneity of politics. As in his other articles and as noted above, Latour here too stresses that 'publics' cannot be assumed, but are rather assembled with people brought together, around matters of concern and the empirical evidence/'facts' that this involves (Latour, 2007: 814-815). Reminding de Vries that 'each assemblage deserves its own assembly' (p.819) – that 'publics', how they are

formed and the things around which they are formed is an ongoing work – Latour concludes: "The progressive composition of the common world would…be defined therefore by two basic elements: *what* are the things politics should turn around and *how* it is going to turn around those things' (Latour, 2007: 819. Emphasis in original). This is a view of politics in which one way of investigating that 'how' is to consider the potential mobilisations enabled by inscriptions.

In conclusion, the four papers drawn on here underscore the breadth and depth of Latour's analytical work and argument concerning inscriptions, politics as relations of power and knowledge, and 'publics' or audiences and constituencies. While this is not a thesis exclusively devoted to the considerable and extensive work of Latour, this section highlights the relevance of that work to major aspects of the thesis' focus on propagandistic inscriptions.

Notes on method

The rigorously eclectic interdisciplinary approach to Communication and Media Studies draws on techniques of description and analysis from a variety of frameworks including, but not limited to, Cultural Studies (including literary/textual and linguistic analysis), Semiotics (signification practices, discourse analysis), Sociology, Political Studies (including political history and theory, feminist analyses, geopolitics and international relations) and Science and Technology Studies, orthodox Communication Studies, and elements of orthodox Media Studies. Among the works cited using these varied frameworks include Jeff Lewis's (2005) *Language Wars* and Mercer's (1992) 'Regular imaginings: the newspaper and the nation' (Cultural Studies), Arthur Marwick's (1974) *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century* (history)*,* Deepa Kumar's (2004) *War Propaganda and the (Ab)uses of Women: Media Constructions of the Jessica Lynch Story* and Susan Faludi's (2007) *The Terror Dream*: *Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America* (feminist analysis), Teun van Dijk's (1988) *News as Discourse* (Semiotics, critical discourse studies) and Arjun Appadurai's (2006) *Fear of Small Numbers* (sociology/anthropology), to name a few.

Techniques from these diverse frameworks are drawn together to form this thesis' use of the 'interdiscipline' of Media and Communication Studies.

Analysis in the thesis predominantly focuses on print media texts, which are derived from Western pro-'war on terror' sources rather than those that contest these. This is based on the argument that newspapers are 'journals of record' and as such provide the basis for potentially rich heuristic and analytical outcomes, particularly given the ubiquity of the pro 'war on terror' argument and its intrinsic relationship to (then) senior politico-military figures in the US and allied countries. This enables application of news framing theory and Latour's analytical tools to examine the accelerated dissemination of pro war inscriptions and the ways in which they are buffeted, contested and solidified. A key strategy in selecting newspaper articles as the basis for empirical data involves Colin Mercer's detailed argument that this form of media is representative of the ordinary and the daily (Mercer, 1992: 26). Mercer provides a rationale for newspapers as deserving detailed attention, particularly with his argument that they provide 'repertoires of conduct, systems of distinction and classification and modes of affiliation and identity' (Mercer, 1992: 28). In developing this argument, Mercer notes:

> The newspaper is a key technology in the formation of those plural but demarcated arts of living and doing, the capacities and dispositions of the 'everyday', the coordination of which, in a saturated network of identifications, classifications and lifestyles – the *habitus* – has been one of the preconditions for the solidity of modern polities (Mercer, 1992: 31. Emphasis in original).

Mercer also convincingly argues that newspapers are 'thin' both as a commodity and aesthetic object, however, are 'thick in cultural history' (Mercer, 1992: 33). He outlines the linkages between identity and the everyday 'banal', as diffused by newspapers, and provides a forceful argument for the analysis of newspaper articles as empirical data. Mercer draws on Foucault's argument regarding 'governmentality' – the 'potential domain of government…or the domain of the potentially governable' (Mercer, 1992: 42). Mercer considers Foucault's (1979a) examination of 'areas in which ''government'' can be operative', ranging from 'religion and morals…roads…buildings…the liberal arts, labour and the poor' (Mercer, 1992: 42). Mercer compellingly argues this can be linked to interrogation of newspapers because

> …we have a line to be traced from roads and dams to the provision of forms of religious, ethical and moral life in their diverse locations. The newspaper 'fits' this emergent logic of governmentality' (Mercer, 1992: 42-43).

Regarding Foucault's concept of 'governmentality' and the examination of newspapers, Mercer also notes:

> The day-to-day, the lively, the friendly and the human. It is not possible to ignore the connections which can be established between the historically evolved components of the newspaper *as genre* and this new threshold beyond which things hitherto disparate could be brought together spatially, if not thematically, within the heterogeneous newspaper format, imagined as communicable and therefore as governable (Mercer, 1992: 43. Emphasis in original).

In such ways, Mercer's argument coheres with the conflictual instances examined in the thesis – for example, the disparate themes of 'Saddam Hussein', 'rat' and 'evil', all woven together thematically in specific newspapers. Mercer also alludes to the relations of power – in this instance, between senior US politico-military figures as leaders of the 'Coalition of the Willing', allied governments and media audiences, particularly in terms of potentially galvanising the audiences to support military action against Hussein. This is a significant point of analysis in the thesis.

The thesis also draws on other forms of empirical data including Michael Moore's (2004a) highly successful and hotly contested film *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Briefly, this was selected because of its contestation of pro 'war on terror' rhetoric and the heated debates surrounding the film focusing on 'propaganda' and what it means to be a 'propagandist'. Finally, the thesis also draws on books such as Graham Greene's (1955) *The Quiet American* in order to consider democratic rhetoric being at odds with violent, racist action and the phraseology disseminated to justify the latter. This enables examination of a historical example of wartime propaganda, specifically in the instance of the pre-Vietnam War.

The thesis overwhelmingly focuses on propaganda disseminated as part of the US-led 'war on terror' with some historical examples of wartime rhetoric, such as words,

phrases and images, also interrogated. This is in order to examine the longevity, flexibility and fluidity of particular rhetorical devices and their application in contemporary conflicts. However, the thesis does not provide a full-scale genealogy of specific words, phrases and images. This is beyond the thesis' scope and would warrant a research project in its own right. The thesis examines commercial and corporate propaganda in connection with the explosion of persuasive phraseology and imagery disseminated by the Allies during World War I. More sanguine concepts of religious propaganda, particularly those associated with the Catholic Church, are examined in order to consider its historicity and how it came to be considered in an overwhelmingly pejorative light.

Working definitions

A short list of key working definitions, which organise the thesis' framework and argument, are provided at this point.

Propaganda: This is categorised as the 'repetition of unelaborated certitudes directed towards particular audiences' and 'manifest in a reliance on simplifications and slogans, with its assumption that the audience cannot handle complexity' (Greenfield, Tatman and Williams, 2005: 63). The definition is elaborated in Chapter 1, section 1.1. While adopting this definition, the thesis also draws on Foulkes' (1983) attention to open ended possibilities regarding 'propaganda' – its meaning, scope and function. In his analysis of Arthur Miller's play (2003, c1953) *The Crucible*, Foulkes examines highly contested notions of 'propaganda' and 'propagandist', arguing the play is 'anti propaganda' while acknowledging initial US reviewers (during the McCarthy anti Communist era) variously viewed it as 'simple minded liberalism', unpatriotic and propaganda (Foulkes, 1983: 97-98). Other reviewers saw it as an allegory about witch hunts in the (then) contemporary US (Foulkes, 1983: 95). Foulkes highlights the shifting evaluations of and contestations surrounding 'propaganda' – a key aspect of this thesis. Foulkes also notes the specificity of audiences – in this instance, what Miller's 'interpretation [of events depicted in *The Crucible*]…might hold for a particular audience' (Foulkes, 1983: 103) – again, a key aspect of this thesis. Foulkes

also usefully itemises the contribution of the US mass communication research to prevailing notions of 'propaganda'. Propagandistic inscriptions can be recognised as bearing 'family' resemblances across various media, that is as having core and peripheral meanings loosely grouped and able to change. The concept of 'family resemblances' is drawn from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (Wittgenstein, 1986, c1953) and has been used by theorists such as Latour (1991: 7, 14).

Rhetoric: The thesis adopts a working definition of rhetoric as repetitive and repeatable statements, audiovisual sounds and images and digital notations calculated to persuade particular audiences and constituencies to take up and pass on specific information and arguments. This is restated in Chapter 1, section 1.1. In adopting this definition, Leith and Myerson's approach that rhetoric is less a system of categories but rather 'a *process* in the production, transmission and interpretation of utterances, spoken or written, scripted or unprepared' (Leith and Myerson, 1989: xii) is acknowledged. Leith and Myerson base their approach on three principles. Firstly, Address, wherein 'language is always ''addressed'' to someone else, even if that someone is not immediately present, or is actually unknown or imagined'. This instates audiences as well as composers of utterances addressing someone as central to rhetoric. Secondly, Argument, wherein 'all utterances can be seen as ''replies'' to other utterances…all utterances can…be seen as opposing moves in a dialogue which in principle can go on forever'. This alludes to sharp rhetorical contestations – a key point of analysis in the thesis. Thirdly, Leith and Myerson base their approach on the principle of Play, wherein the 'meaning of an utterance will always go beyond the conscious control of the speaker or writer' (Leith and Myerson, 1989: xii). This fits with the gamble of communication, wherein communicative transactions involve possibilities and risk as opposed to guaranteed outcomes – a point of analysis in the thesis. This is expanded upon in Chapter 2, section 2.2. In outlining their approach, Leith and Myerson note their decision not to analyse advertisements despite these being rhetorical in that they are intended to persuade:

> The reason for this is that we do not want to reinforce the widespread
> Enlightenment assumption that Rhetoric is a special, and slightly underhand,
> use (or abuse) of language. *All* utterances can be seen at one level as attempts to
> persuade; but the precise mechanisms by which someone is persuaded to part

with their money in exchange for a commodity, or to adopt a particular course of action (as in the public sphere of politics) cannot be discovered by concentrating solely on language (Leith and Myerson, 1989: xiv. Emphasis in original).

In such ways, Leith and Myerson highlight the need to consider rhetoric as not simply 'lies' and 'abuse of language', but rather dig deeper to analyse the power relations involving the various actors engaged in communicative transactions across various media.

The Sender→Message→Receiver (SMR) communication model: The thesis contests the SMR model. This arguably still dominant model posits that communicative acts simply consist of a Sender (S), a Message (M) and a Receiver (R) 'linked in a unidirectional way: S→M→R' (Kress, 1993: 4). Simply put, this can be likened to a 'Leeds textile manufacturer (S)…sending a bale of cloth (M)…to a merchant (R) in Liverpool' (Kress, 1993: 4).

As Kress argues, the model's problematic assumptions include that: the Message goes in 'one direction only'; it treats the Sender and Receiver as 'asocial, isolated individuals'; and the Sender is 'active and has power' whereas the Receiver is 'passive' (Kress, 1983: 13). On this last point regarding passivity, the model is essentially coterminous with what the propaganda scholar J. Michael Sproule describes as the 'magic bullet myth', whereby messages are viewed as 'magic bullets capable of mesmerizing listeners who passively received and responded to communicative stimuli in an essentially uniform manner' (Sproule, 1989: 225). Kress also makes the key point that communication entails the production of meanings rather than a functionalist transmission of information:

By making that distinction I wish to include matters such as attitudes, social relations, individual feelings, social positioning of sender and receiver, as well as those things normally thought of as information – statements about the physical and social world (Kress, 1993: 4).

In such ways, Kress provides an overview of the shortcomings of the S→M→R model. Working with Kress's founding argument (above), the thesis argues that communication centrally involves the production of meanings, pleasures and pains, not simply their idealised, abstracted 'transmission'. The model does not attend to the

diversity of or within audiences, who are taken to be homogenous and largely inert, nor to communicative acts as entailing gambles. The S→M→R model assumes that messages ideally should be transparent and unambiguous. It does not take into account a potential multiplicity of senders. The thesis contests the S→M→R model, arguing that audiences are diverse, active and knowledgeable in different socially and culturally equipped ways. The model refers to messages, but doesn't take account of the different media used and their specific properties. The generalising category of Sender does not distinguish between individuals, groups or organisations nor the generalised category of Receiver between different audiences, constituencies and markets. Neither is the 'transmission' or 'flow' as direct or unambiguous as the model implies.

Brief outline of chapters

Chapter 1 presents a brief history of what has been classified as propaganda and outlines subsequent definitional dilemmas and disputes before substantiating the thesis' working definition. The chapter also includes an extensive literature review along with a section considering propaganda models, such as the highly influential one expounded by Herman and Chomsky and disputed throughout the thesis. Chapter 2 focuses on the primacy and importance of media audiences, particularly as this differentiates the thesis from Herman and Chomsky's inference regarding the manipulability of these audiences (Herman and Chomsky, 1994: 302-303).[3] In considering this, the chapter delineates both the historical and contemporary links between advertising and public relations, particularly the desire to *sell* a message, and propaganda. The chapter also considers notions of appealing to and/or influencing audiences by means of violent acts – that is, the 'terrorism as communication' argument. Notions of 'soft power' and how this communicative form is deployed in

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[3] In *Manufacturing Consent*, Herman and Chomsky argue that the US public was 'managed and mobilized from above, by…the media's highly selective messages and evasions' regarding Indonesian atrocities in East Timor and similar cases (Herman and Chomsky, 1994: 303). In these ways, they infer a malleable and passive media audience. They also approvingly cite the media analyst W. Lance Bennett's argument that US political leaders wield power 'over the political system by using the media to generate support, *compliance*, and just plain confusion among the public' (Bennett, 1988: 178-179. In Herman and Chomsky, 1994: 303. My emphasis).

attempts to rhetorically neutralise 'terrorism' are also interrogated. Chapter 3 examines the demonisation, of Arabs generally and the former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein specifically, through the use of enduring and explicit rhetorical images and expressions. The contentious role of certain cartoonists both in terms of questioning and conversely relaying pro war rhetoric is also examined. Works by Peter Nicholson and Michael Leunig, to name two, are analysed and discussed.

Chapter 4 scrutinises the statement 'the only language they understand is violence' and its multifarious derivatives as a strategy of dehumanisation to both paradoxically galvanise yet at the same time distance audiences from the consequences of wartime actions. In order to compare and contrast instances of similar phraseology, the chapter also examines Graham Greene's questioning of democratic rhetoric at odds with, but also paradoxically linked to, violent, racist action within the early stages of the pre-Vietnam conflict in his masterful novel (1955) *The Quiet American*.

Chapter 5 interrogates rhetoric related to both the separate Soviet (1979) and US-led (2001) invasions of Afghanistan. Rhetorical contestations, points of difference and similarities are identified and discussed. Notions of 'aggrieved patriots' incredulous anyone would question or impugn the motives of the national aims and/or conflict they support are elucidated. Chapter 6 examines persuasive discourse related to the media promoted heroine, Jessica Lynch (Iraq), imbricated in the 'war on terror' and how this was presented to various audiences. Analysis focuses on the linkage of Lynch as a heroised reification of the 'collective force of the nation', in supporting military action in Iraq and Afghanistan respectively, through particular forms of rhetoric in certain media texts. The final chapter deals with the intense rhetorical contestations surrounding Michael Moore's (2004a) *Fahrenheit 9/11* and his alleged similarities with the notorious Nazi filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl. Analysis also centres on comparisons between Moore's provocative work and two films made in direct response to it; the pro President George W. Bush hagiography *George W. Bush: Faith in the White House* (Sellier, 2004) and the mordant Australian-made no-budget concerning Australian Prime Minister John Howard, *Time To Go John: The Awful Truth About John Howard* (Gough-Brady et al, 2004).

In conclusion, the thesis aims to interrogate recurring propaganda pertinent to conflict and especially the 'war on terror', using an interdisciplinary approach comprising, amongst other things, notions of inscription and news framing theory. Highly charged rhetorical contestations and sense-making around varied texts ranging from those relayed by news media to others produced by playwrights and filmmakers are described and discussed. A major aspect of the thesis is analysis of cascading instances of the circulation of the expression 'the only language they understand is violence' and similar phrases. In this way, the thesis advances an argument that interrogating the concept and classifications of what counts as propaganda is essential to understanding justifications of violence relayed through media texts.

Chapter 1

Propaganda and its Discontents

…the word is so carelessly used…that sociologists, social psychologists, political scientists and others have grown to eschew the very word in their studies, calling instead on such respectable and more neutral labels as social change, persuasion, attitude change, or communication itself.

– Scholar Leonard Doob on the disputes about identifications of 'propaganda' (Doob, 1989: 375).

1.1 Introduction

Contestations and fierce debates over precisely what constitutes propaganda are legendary with Doob (above) cutting to the heart of the matter. This chapter examines and expands on arguments and definitional quandaries in order to assemble a more differentiated understanding of propaganda. Further appraisal is made of different histories of and approaches to propaganda studies. Military studies and academic research of the identification and contestation of the category of propaganda are considered including the perverse contribution of Nazism. The significant role of Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model as well as the writer George Orwell's contribution to propaganda studies are also described and analysed. Overall, the chapter propounds the concept of rhetoric as not simply 'manipulative language'. It identifies rhetorical analysis as about power: how power relations are materially formed and maintained or transformed, rather than being primarily about ideology, language or 'ideas'.

Doob's assessment highlights the contentious and vexed debates related to the taxonomy of propaganda. He highlights the need for a differently inflected understanding of propaganda. Many academic studies (for example, Corner, 2007:

32

671; Curnalia, 2005: 239; Nohrstedt, Kaitatzi-Whitlock, Ottosen and Riegert, 2000: 385-386) cite Jowett and O'Donnell's definition, with its emphasis on what they categorise as 'the communication process', as a key one:

> Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 231).

This influential definition is situated as an idealist notion of propaganda in terms of the exclusive attention it pays to the intentions of its producers and the imputed passivity of its audiences.

Further discussion of the disputations over the identification of persuasive rhetoric is outlined in the next section regarding the history of accounts of and approaches to propaganda. It is important to note that different senses of rhetoric have been included in studies of propaganda. Bryant makes the connection, while maintaining a distinction. In his seminal essay 'Rhetoric: Its Function and Scope', Bryant states that the understanding of propaganda is grounded in an understanding of rhetoric, adding that the major techniques of propaganda were 'long known rhetorical techniques gone wrong' (Bryant, 1953: 415). In this thesis, I will use a working definition of rhetoric as repetitive and repeatable statements, audiovisual sounds and images and digital notations calculated to persuade particular audiences and constituencies to take up and pass on specific information and arguments. Both Jowett and O'Donnell's sense of rhetoric and the thesis' working definition acknowledge the importance of audiences, however, the former notably situates these within a meek context. The working definition is different in that it is aligned to Latour's materialist sense, paying attention to how persuasive rhetoric is passed along, repeated, cascaded and accelerated to become 'hard facts' and potentially gain allies.[4] This provides a more solid basis from which to identify and analyse influential rhetoric including but not limited to declarations, images and textual transcripts as they are relayed through various media.

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[4] For more in depth definitional specificity regarding rhetoric, see Leith and Myerson (1989). Their study of television news coverage of the 1985 TWA Flight hijacking and hostage crisis considers various rhetorical approaches – legal oratory, Epic ('a term for the great story in culture' p.214) and classical rhetoric (Leith and Myerson, 1989: 207-235).

I define rhetorical devices as techniques for the formation of specific and carefully crafted images, words and phrases. This is to take up Aristotle's argument, outlined by Jowett and O'Donnell, that a 'crafty person could artfully manipulate the instruments of rhetoric for either honest or dishonest ends' (In Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 37). I argue that this indicates Jowett and O'Donnell's philosophical take on propaganda. To be even-handed to Aristotle's work, he was not writing about and could not have envisaged 19th and 20th century techniques of what counts as propaganda. The evaluations by Jowett and O'Donnell, Bryant and particularly Doob demonstrate the need for the consideration of a somewhat different designation of 'propaganda'. In order to do so, the thesis defines propaganda in terms of dominantly defined, putatively 'hard facts', arrived at by cascading inscriptions, a flow of repetitive and reductive statements, audiovisual sounds, images or digital notations:

> Propaganda is the repetition of unelaborated certitudes directed towards particular audiences, and which, in addition, treats those audiences with a fundamental disrespect while claiming to speak their interests. This is manifest in a reliance on simplifications and slogans, with its assumption that the audience cannot handle complexity. It is also routinely manifest in the denigration of propaganda's objects (Greenfield, Tatman and Williams, 2005: 63).

This working definition will enable the thesis to further the debate and outline a particular comprehension of propaganda and its operations; not only through a distinctive interdisciplinary methodological approach, as outlined in the introduction, but also in terms of unravelling and analysing its 'ecology', taken here to mean situations of utilisation and connections. The next section considers the historicity of propaganda, to understand changing forms of its production and distribution, as well as reviewing different approaches to propaganda.

1.2 A brief history of accounts of propaganda

Many scholars and writers have noted how propaganda was constituted and initiated by the Roman Catholic Church. Mattelart notes that Pope Gregory XV established the Sacra Congregatio Nomini Propaganda, more commonly known as the Sacra Congregatio Nomini de Propaganda Fide (Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith) in 1622, with the aim of amplifying 'the faith in all corners of the world' and bringing 'the flock back to the fold of the church' (Mattelart, 1996: 179). Further reinforcing the ecclesiastical beginnings of propaganda, Mattelart notes the second goal was considered as important as the first since the Roman Catholic Church had to face up to 'heretics' or 'lost sheep' in the 'countries of early evangelization' (Mattelart, 1996: 180). Thus, in order to counter the Protestant Reformation, the French chapter of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith sent out missionaries to combat and demonstrate 'the errors of Calvinist ministers in regular confrontations, refuting before the people in public squares what they might have heard from these ministers in their preaching' among other methods including 'instructing the heretics under their covered markets' (Mattelart, 1996: 180).

Mattelart shows in his genealogy of communication that the notion of propaganda is tied to the 17th century 'strategy of re-Christianisation at the time of the Counter-Reformation' (Mattelart, 1996: 179). Mattelart demonstrates that through mainly Jesuit missionaries and subsequently, such organisations as the Alliance Francaise, the 'language of propagation and, beyond this, the religious model of propaganda impregnated the modes of speaking and practicing communication' (Mattelart, 1996: 186). That is, the secular adoption of these techniques by the French Saint Simonians for their promotion of 'industrialism' in France and its colonies, as described by Mattelart (Mattelart, 1996: 88-92).

Lambert notes the Roman Catholic Church established a College of Propaganda to educate young priests to spread the Catholic faith. While this institute was charged with improving the spread of a group of religious dogmas, Lambert argues propaganda 'soon came to be applied to any organisation set up for the purpose of spreading a doctrine' before being applied to the doctrine and finally the methods

used in the dissemination (Lambert, 1938: 7-8). Lambert stresses that propaganda was 'associated from the start with religion' (p.8). *The World Book Multimedia Encyclopaedia* entry on propaganda notes that gradually the word

> …came to mean any effort to spread a belief. It acquired its present meaning after World War I, when writers exposed the dishonest but effective techniques that propagandists had used during the war (*The World Book Multimedia Encyclopaedia*, 2001).

Writing in 1989, Doob echoes this, adding that

> …in more recent times the word has acquired pejorative connotations in most countries, with notable exceptions…elsewhere at the present time, to call someone a propagandist is to discredit him or her as a source of information (Doob, 1989: 375).

Jowett and O'Donnell describe World War I as the first time that populations of entire nations were actively involved in a global struggle, which has been described by historians such as Arthur Marwick as the first instance of 'total war' involving civilian populations as well as military combatants in mechanised combat (machine guns, airships, planes and tanks) as if civilian populations hadn't historically had havoc wrought upon them by more geographically limited scales of war. This inclusion of civilians in wartime is important, particularly given it becomes more significant in subsequent definitions of 'terrorism'. Following from this, it is noted Marwick defines 'total war' as a

> …war meaning whole populations; a war in which organisation of the domestic front becomes as important as organisation of the military front; a war into which is thrown every resource of science and technology, and every resource of propaganda: an 'all-out' and 'all-embracing' war (Marwick, 1974: 217).

In this way, Marwick highlights linkages of the concept of 'total war' with a galvanised civilian populace, the military effort and essential propagandistic rhetoric. On this last point, Marwick notes that the 'total war' phrase itself had sometimes been deployed in a highly rhetorical context for 'emotional and propagandist purposes' (Marwick, 1974: 217). This indicates the importance of analysing phrases, along with

images and audiovisual notations, particularly as relayed within a wartime context, again a key feature of the thesis.

During World War I people in the US and Europe were asked to make sacrifices; many families lost loved ones. Jowett and O'Donnell note:

> To accomplish these ends, attempts were made to arouse hatred and fear of the enemy and to bolster the morale of the people. *Mass media were used in ways they had never been used before to propagandise entire populations to new heights of patriotism, commitment to the war effort, and hatred of the enemy.* Carefully designed propaganda messages were communicated through news stories, films, photographic records, speeches, books, sermons, posters, rumours, billboard advertisements, and handbills to the general public (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 162. My emphasis).

In his analysis of this period, Squires outlines the determined skill and effort the British put into their propaganda campaign to entice the neutral US onto their side. An impression was built up that the Germans were barbarians and British agents 'managed to make a large part of the American people believe that German soldiers had cut off the hands of Belgian children' (McAdoo, 1931: 322. In Squires, 1935: 67). Squires, reflecting on the 'almost primitive ecstasy that could sometimes grip the American people', cites Fosdick:

> We hated with a common hate that was exhilarating. The writer of this review remembers attending a great meeting…A speaker demanded that the Kaiser, when captured, be boiled in oil, and the entire audience stood on chairs to scream its hysterical approval. This was the mood we were in. This was the kind of madness that had seized us (Fosdick, 1932: p.unknown. In Squires, 1935: 68).

Simple unities of 'we' and 'us' are asserted here in rhetorically charged and highly populist ways.

It is important to note that propaganda has been studied by scholars in a diverse range of disciplines – sociology, psychology, political science, history, linguistics, rhetoric

and cultural studies to name a few.[5] The vast research on propaganda has also related to specific conflicts, ideologies and/or governments, and the corporate/business sphere. On the sheer range of material, Jowett and O'Donnell note that the topic has been studied from numerous perspectives, as well as interdisciplinary perspectives (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 1). As it is not possible to cover the sheer mass of literature on propaganda, indicative key works are examined here for the purposes of the thesis argument introduced earlier.

Researchers such as Harold Lasswell began to analyse propaganda after World War I. In his seminal work (1927) *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, Lasswell argues 'every war must appear to be a war against a menacing, murdering aggressor. There must be no ambiguity about whom the public is to hate' (Lasswell, 1927: 47). Lasswell also examined ideologically-based propaganda deployed by Communists in Chicago during the 1930s Depression era (Lasswell and Blumsenstock, 1938).[6] Lasswell's work is a founding and highly influential historical instance of propaganda analysis. In his later work (1967) *America's Debt to Propaganda*, Lasswell defines what he terms the 'main stream of American propaganda' as not religious, partisan, official nor philanthropic, but commercial, arguing: 'With rhetorical license one might say that if Columbus found the continent, the advertiser formed the nation' (Lasswell, 1967: 322).

Walter Lippmann's classic study *Public Opinion* (1922) signalled the beginnings of public opinion research. Lippmann examined how World War I was reported in US newspapers and 'wondered what a typical American citizen could be expected to learn from those reports about the complex political, economic, and military events in Europe' (Neuman, Just and Crigler, 1992: 1-2). Lippmann argues that the audience did not 'receive' a complete image of the political scene; rather it got a 'highly selective series of glimpses instead' (Graber, 2007: 48). By the time of World War II, studies were conducted into attitude research. As Mattelart notes, a new US firm specialising in opinions and attitudes was created by the 1920s; pioneers Daniel

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[5] Cunningham notes that one of the features of propaganda scholarship is the plethora of definitions, adding: 'Throughout the literature, there appear to be well over a hundred such definitions, and several studies have been dedicated to analysing these accounts as far back as 1933' (Cunningham, 2002: 60).
[6] Lenin has made a distinctive contribution to notions of Communist propaganda, as analysed by A. J. Polan (Polan, 1984).

Starch, George Gallup and Claude Robinson were 'developers of the first quantitative measure of the relationships between media, product and consumer' (Mattelart, 1996: 293). Arthur C. Nielsen created the concept of share-of-market and organised the first panels to measure it, auditing the flow of selected merchandise through a representative sample of all the nation's stores (Mattelart, 1996: 293). Mattelart further notes that behaviourism and behavioural sciences were mobilised by advertisers to measure the 'impact' and 'effect' of the message on the consumer. The abstraction and reification of 'the consumer' in these sciences is identified by Mattelart as generalising audiences as passive recipients of media 'messages' in idealist ways. Mattelart argues:

> The quest for motivations drove the founding fathers of the 'public relations' industry who, along with Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays, developed 'publicity techniques on a policy making level' and christened their project 'the engineering of consent' (Mattelart, 1996: 293).

This array of developments is cited as important to the formation and rise of the largely neo Freudian, US based sub-discipline of political psychology with its complex linkages with the development of modern advertising and public relations organisations and techniques. The US-based Institute for Propaganda Analysis was subsequently established in 1937 by Clyde R. Miller, a World War I reporter convinced he had been 'hoodwinked' by Allied propaganda (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 231). The Institute later published its famous 'seven devices for propaganda' including 'name calling', 'glittering generality', 'transfer', 'testimonial', 'plain folks', 'card stacking' and 'band wagon' (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 232; see also Sproule, 2001).

US communication and media studies scholar, Professor J. Michael Sproule, has worked to continue updating the history of North American mass media research regarding propaganda, including a valuable questioning of the 'magic bullet myth' (Sproule, 1989: 225). Sproule saliently argues that the

> …'standard account' of the beginnings of American mass communication research holds that the propaganda critic between the world wars adopted the European concept of the mass audience, treating messages as 'magic bullets' directly and powerfully infused into passive receivers (Sproule, 1989: 225).

Contesting this 'mythical account', Sproule argues it failed to consider the progressive reformist mission of propaganda analysis 'to help an essentially competent public against the new co-option of communication channels by powerful institutions' (Sproule, 1989: 225). Sproule is cited at length given his significant work deepening comprehensions of the history of propaganda. Sproule provides a comprehensive overview of the different schools of thought circulating in the US post 1900 regarding the implications of propaganda for a purportedly rational-democratic society. Highlighting a conversation among 'progressive' propaganda critics and others, Sproule identifies 'the panorama of American experience with and interpretation of mass persuasion' (Sproule, 1991: 211). Sproule positions 'progressives' including himself within a liberal humanist framework, which is neither Right wing or buying into the European Althussian framework concerning ideological state apparatuses. Sproule argues that when fully recovered, the 'long standing American dialogue on propaganda supplies a useful alternate vocabulary to Marxism for analysing the diffusion of ideology through such ostensibly neutral channels of public communication such as news, entertainment, government agencies, religion, and education' (Sproule, 1991: 211). He notes that the post Vietnam return of critical media inquiry in the US brought to the fore important Marxist writers including Gramsci, Hall and Althusser, members of the Frankfurt school such as Jay and students of Marx such as Parekh. Marxist criticism and key concepts such as ideology, hegemony and ideological state apparatuses 'invigorated American media studies' (Sproule, 1991: 211). Resorting to national generalisations, he attempts to counter political, economic and class analysis of the formation and consequences of propaganda by his argument that a long tradition of analysis and critique of propaganda already existed, noting that progressives, communication scientists, right-wing polemicists and counterprogressive humanists had all 'contributed to an American dialectic about propaganda' since 1900 (Sproule, 1991: 232). Jowett and O'Donnell summarise Sproule's further argument

> …that the American intellectual tradition was to treat public opinion as 'enlightened discussion,' rather than as the European intellectuals' concern about the 'rise of the masses'. This tradition came about because, in the United States, the alienation between the government and its citizens was far less than found in European countries. Also, inherent in democracy was the faith that public opinion would ultimately be rational because it would be judged by an

educated citizenry. Whereas European Marxist-based theories tended to treat social class and the political state as the prime shapers of ideology, the major concern of the propaganda critique that emerged in the United States in the Progressive Era was for 'the implication for democratic social organization of the new marriage between private institutions and the emerging professions of mass communication (Sproule, 1991: 212. In Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 105).

Sproule provides a distinctive liberal-democratic description of what he terms the materialisation of 'Propaganda and American Ideological Critique'. As Jowett and O'Donnell note, World War I was a 'watershed moment' in the chronicle of propaganda studies both in Europe and the US (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 105). Sproule argues that World War I indicated the US government was 'capable of pursuing ideological hegemony', but

> …unlike Marxists, progressive critics treated state propaganda in the Great War as less a central problem and more a harbinger of how various private institutions and interest groups would compete after the war…American progressives developed a body of criticism focused on the array of social forces that competed for control of what Marxists would call the ideological apparatuses of civil society: education, news, religion, and entertainment (Sproule, 1991: 214. In Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 105).

Sproule (1997) subsequently built on this in his later history of the 'propaganda critique' movement in the US. In their summary, Jowett and O'Donnell note that Sproule

> …pointed out that almost all forms of communication and entertainment came under critical examination as potential vehicles for propaganda. Thus, the new media such as movies and later radio, as well as the more traditional forms of journalism – newspapers and magazines – were all subjected to intense analysis in the period between the two world wars. The progressive propaganda critics also directed their attention to religious preaching and teaching, now more widely disseminated through the new media (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 107).

Sproule's revisionist work on the history of North American propaganda research importantly challenges both the magic bullet myth of 'passive receivers' and

influential Marxist criticism and concepts. On the latter, Sproule crucially highlights an American dialogue on propaganda that sprung up during the interwar period. Sproule's argument provides a powerful counterpoint to Marxist-influenced propaganda theory and suggests more positive notions of 'enlightened discussion' within a democracy. Sproule locates the North American 'dialectic' on propaganda blossoming in the interwar period and his research into questionable notions of 'passive receivers' raises a debate with substantially more robust discursive tensions involving democracy, progressive critics and a post World War I competition between business institutions and interest groups.

Curnalia (2005) provides a significant contribution to the field with her retrospective of early studies of propaganda. She notes that the propaganda analysis tradition was 'replaced by individual-level media effect studies in mass communication research' by the 1960s and 1970s (Curnalia, 2005: 242). Measures of effects in laboratory studies 'yielded only minimal support for the effects of propaganda' (Curnalia, 2005: 242). On this same point, Hovland et al's (1949) research on four of Capra's landmark *Why We Fight* films – commissioned by the US Army to motivate recruits to fight in World War II – found

> …the films were not effective in motivating the recruits to serve and fight in the war. The films were also not effective in influencing attitudes related to the army's orientation objectives – for example, deepening resentment toward the enemy, giving greater support to the British, and demanding unconditional surrender (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 171).

Curnalia notes that Klapper (1960) used this and findings from Lazarsfeld (1944) 'on the effects of interpersonal communication in formulating political opinions, to substantiate the claim that the media had only minimal effects' (Curnalia, 2005: 242). This is a historical instance of a study into media effects within a propaganda paradigm.[7]

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[7] Curnalia's compelling study reviews the findings of early propaganda analyses and examines the decline in propaganda studies. In a similar argument to Sproule, she argues that a paradigm shift in the late 1940s, which was dominant in the 1960s, 'led to the abandonment of this field and the valuable results it yielded' (Curnalia, 2005: 237). Interestingly, she concludes 'it is unreasonable to assume … that propaganda has nominal effects but the media's agenda and framing of single issues do have any effect. To disregard or discredit the study of propaganda as critical or biased is to ignore that certain rhetorical and linguistic devices were found consistently across studies spanning nearly 50 years …'

Cunningham (2002) notes that theorists such as Edelstein (1997), Hummel and Huntress (1949) and Rohatyn (1988) included 'all communication within the general label of propaganda' (Cunningham, 2002: 14). As Cunningham notes, such interpretations 'threaten to plunge us into even greater confusion' (p.14) with their excessive generality.

The French propaganda theorist Jacques Ellul's 1965 work *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* had a major impact on studies in the area. His scholarly work is both valuable and problematic. On the one hand, Ellul argues for a more complex and sophisticated understanding of propaganda, that in the words of Black 'took some of the fun out of the old fashioned and some times simplistic search for bad guys who tell the Big Lie' (Black, 1991: 57). Yet on the other hand, his argument that propaganda was the inevitable result of the 'various components of the technological society' (Ellul, 1965: 160) can risk treating a particular communication form as a symptom of a given totality. Summarising Ellul's argument, Black notes the theorist construes propaganda as a popular euphemism for the 'totally persuasive components of culture' (Black, 2001: 124) – reprising an unhelpful level of generality in analysis of the term. The Nazis adroit use of propaganda is now examined.

1.3 Nazism: propaganda and the soul

There is enormous literature on propaganda related to specific governments, periods and ideologies – the latter taken here to mean socially and culturally learnt dispositions and rhetorical capacities rather than false or distorted 'ideas' in people's 'consciousness'. The Nazis' skilful use of propaganda, particularly, is the subject of wide-ranging literature (for example, Baird, 1974; Herb, 1996; Herf, 2006). Further, Marlin (2002) analyses the origins of persuasion and traces its development in Nazi and Communist propaganda. Hitler's blunt views on the subject include his contention that sloganeering was an effective form of propaganda because of the small intelligence and limited receptivity of the masses (Hitler, 1969: 165). Repetition of 'a

(Curnalia, 2005: 253). Curnalia's careful advice will be noted while considering empirical data later in the thesis.

few points' was crucial for successful propaganda given the masses would only remember them provided they were 'repeated thousands of times' (Hitler, 1969: 169). Hitler argues that propaganda had to be aimed 'at the emotions and only to a very limited degree at the so-called intellect' (Hitler, 1969: 164).

In his remarkable 1934 address at Nuremberg, Goebbels argues that propaganda helped the Nazis conquer Germany, theorising the propagandist as a 'master of the soul' and arguing propaganda was 'indispensable in building a modern state' (Goebbels, 1934). Goebbels saw propaganda as a means for directing populations categorised as masses and thus maintaining power:

> Political propaganda, the art of anchoring the things of the state in the broad masses so that the nation will feel a part of them, cannot therefore remain merely a means to the goal of winning power. It must become a means of building and keeping power (Goebbels, 1934).

The Nazi Propaganda Minister defines propaganda as a means to an end that would lead the German people to 'devote themselves to the tasks and goals of a superior leadership' (Goebbels, 1934). Goebbels argues that propaganda was neither good nor evil as its 'moral value' was determined by its goals (Goebbels, 1934). This resonates with older senses of propaganda as broad, instructional inculcation of faith in the 'soul' of the state. As noted earlier, the Roman Catholic Church designed the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to carry 'the faith' to the New World and to reinforce it in Europe to counter the Protestant Reformation. Similarly, Goebbels espouses a view of propaganda as a means by which the German citizenry were inculcated with the 'faith' of Nazism and its goals.

In their speeches and writings both Goebbels and Hitler indicate they had learnt lessons from the Allies' successful use of propaganda during World War I. The former complained bitterly that Germany had been 'completely defenceless' against enemy atrocity propaganda during the Great War and consequently had 'lost the war in this area more than in any other' (Goebbels, 1934). Similarly, Hitler states the enemy's anti-German propaganda had been executed with 'amazing skill and really brilliant calculation' (Hitler, 1969: 161). Hitler 'learned enormously from this enemy war propaganda' (Hitler, 1969: 161); Germans had been portrayed as barbarians and

Huns, in propaganda leaflets and posters, helping to increase the 'rage and hatred' of allied soldiers against 'the vile enemy' (Hitler, 1969: 165).

The period of Nazi rule was particularly notable for propaganda disseminated by filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, framing Hitler as a quasi deity. It is discussed now as a prelude to a thorough analysis in Chapter 7. Leni Riefenstahl's (1935) *Triumph of the Will* stands as the most renowned propaganda film of all time and is regarded by some scholars as the 'most famous piece of propaganda associated with the Nazi regime' (Cull, Culbert, and Welch, 2003: 401). Ostensibly centred on the Nazi Party's 1933 rally at Nuremberg, it has been variously described as an 'impressive spectacle of Germany's adherence to Hitler', a 'Nazi masterpiece' and a 'masterpiece of romanticised propaganda' (Cheshire, 2000). Examining the film and Riefenstahl's technique, Doherty argues that the filmmaker

> …gave the iconography and rituals of Nazism a purely cinematic vitality. Her screen vision – the exultant compositions of brawny ubermensch and budding Hitlerjungen, the night-for-night glow of Teutonic bonfires and torchlit parades, the worshipful low-angle shots and natural lighting silhouetting a deific Fuhrer – imprinted the spectacular allure of the Nazi mythos in motion picture memory (Doherty, 1993: 18).

Doherty situates Riefenstahl as an 'enemy propagandist', who became a 'parable for the corruption of art by power' (Doherty, 1993: 19). Yet indicating the fierce contestations over what constitutes 'propaganda', Riefenstahl stridently rejected suggestions *Triumph of the Will* was propaganda, instead maintaining it was a historical film that reflected the truth. Of her film, Riefenstahl argues:

> It is history. A pure historical film...It reflects the truth that was then in 1934, history. It is therefore a documentary. Not a propaganda film. Oh! I know very well what propaganda is. That consists of recreating events in order to illustrate a thesis, or, in the face of certain events, to let one thing go in order to accentuate another (Riefenstahl in Thomson, 1975: 514).

It has also been argued that *Triumph of the Will* is clearly a work of art. Lewis sums up this argument with his statement that *Triumph of the Will* was 'a great film and can be seen as a work of art' despite evoking intense feelings of revulsion because scenes

in the film 'can be seen as the seeds of World War II and of the Holocaust' (Lewis, 2005: 43). Riefenstahl's work and the contestations surrounding it indicate the difficulty of conceptualising and defining propaganda. This is discussed extensively in Chapter 7, particularly regarding alleged similarities between Riefenstahl's work and that of US filmmaker Michael Moore.

There is a plethora of works analysing Nazi propaganda, some of which are now highlighted. Robert Wistrich's *Anti-Semitism: The Longest Hatred* (1992) examines anti-Jewish racism and propaganda. In his section on Hitler's Final Solution, Wistrich notes Hitler as early as the 1920s referred to Jews as being made in the image of the devil, a form of tuberculosis or a subhuman species of vermin (Wistrich, 1992: 66). The thesis will expand upon these practices of dehumanisation and demonisation as a crucial element of propaganda in Chapter 3.

Herf's contemporary research (2005) adds to the voluminous studies of Nazi propaganda. Herf describes how Nazi propaganda 'presented the regime's threats to exterminate the Jews as part of a policy of massive retaliation against those who had waged war against Germany' (Herf, 2005: 71). In his study, Herf describes the anti-semitic narrative in Goebbels' speeches focusing on the key point that Nazi Germany was not fighting two separate wars against the nations of the anti-Hitler coalition and a second war against the Jews, but rather 'in their own imaginations World War II and the Final Solution were different aspects of the one war fought between Nazi Germany…on one hand, and an international Jewish conspiracy on the other' (Herf, 2005: 71).

1.4 Academic studies of propaganda

This section deals with relatively recent studies of contemporary conflicts, particularly from a Communication Studies perspective. These are 'academic studies', as, generally, distinct from those by journalists writing in a reportage and occasionally reflective style.

Thematically, the initial studies discussed in this section all highlight the salience of and critical linkages between the iteration of persuasive 'war on terror' rhetoric and George W. Bush administration figures, which as foreshadowed is a key focus of this thesis. Further, while drawing on a different methodology, the research of Elliott (2004), Ivie (2004), Freedman (2004) and Patrick and Thrall (2004) supports my argument that 'war on terror' persuasive phraseology and imagery is not simply a contest of or about 'ideas', but rather intrinsically linked to power relations, specifically in this case, those entailed in George W. Bush administration objectives and aims. For example, the US ethics scholar Deni Elliott demonstrates George W. Bush's reductive yet highly effective linkage of 'Saddam Hussein' and 'September 11' (Elliott, 2004: 34). This is a major focus of Chapter 3 and of Chapter 7, particularly regarding the filmmaker Michael Moore's dissection of such matters. Yet Elliott uses only a sample of Bush rhetoric and doesn't deal with critically relevant visual devices. Further, Elliott's argument that journalism was needed to 'keep citizens from being mesmerized by the line that any particular government – our own or others – wants us to buy' (Elliott, 2004: 43) fails to consider the critical role of filmic provocateurs such as Moore, whose incendiary take on the role of the media and Bush rhetoric provides a critical basis for analysis, discussed later in the thesis.

The US Professor of Rhetoric, Robert Ivie, pursues an analysis of Bush's good versus evil binary and of the then president's linkage of his rhetoric to a strident Christian discourse. Highlighting the iteration of this strident persuasive phraseology, Ivie argues that:

> The open secret…was to stay on message and say it often. Thus, each
> presidential communication after 9/11 was laced with simple reassurances that
> Americans are good people defending themselves against evildoers (Ivie, 2004).

While Ivie's identification of Bush's rhetoric as being exemplary of 'pious extremism' is useful and will be returned to later in the thesis, his argument that Americans 'may have become thoroughly habituated to the demagoguery of Orwellian rhetoric in one form or another' (Ivie, 2004) is less helpful recourse to a sense of propaganda as lies, through the connotations of the term 'Orwellian'. It is this connotation of propaganda as 'merely lies', and at the level of 'ideas', that the thesis works to contest.

Like Ivie, Freedman analyses rhetoric disseminated by the Bush administration, particularly from the perspective of it 'selling' the threat of Iraq as part of its campaign to launch the 2003 Gulf War. A UK Professor of War Studies, Freedman bases his analysis on an examination of the use of intelligence during the policy debates that led up to the March, 2003, invasion of Iraq. Freedman's analysis of the rhetorical linkage of Iraq and the September 11 attacks identifies the critical relevance of such rhetoric and of its diffusion by administration agents, the latter clearly entailing significant relations of power. In this regard, Freedman's analysis is helpful in establishing some of the ground the thesis will consider. But in arguing that this rhetoric had a 'power', which 'took hold with the American public' (Freedman, 2004: 20), Freedman seems to assume a self-evident and inevitable effect for the rhetoric in a homogenous and passive population. The thesis argues against such a Sender→Message→Receiver conception of communication, as outlined in the Introduction.

Further relevant research on the 2003 Gulf War includes Patrick and Thrall's use of content analysis in examining *New York Times* articles both during and after the war (Patrick and Thrall, 2004). Their argument that the Bush administration pursued a 'classic propaganda strategy' reliant on 'symbols, arguments and rhetoric…to manage the debate over Iraq at home, conduct foreign policy and attempt to win the peace' (Patrick and Thrall, 2004: 3) pays attention to importance of multiple audiences – a key point of similarity with this thesis. Yet similar to Freedman, Patrick and Thrall situate audiences as essentially passive receivers whereby the more a viewer watched the conservative Fox News network, the more likely they were to believe an Iraq – al Qaeda link, as propagated by President Bush and his aides (Patrick and Thrall, 2004: 30). This overlooks other critical sites of resistance, such as films and comics, to name two, which will be examined later.[8]

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[8] In fairness, Patrick and Thrall argue that from 'another perspective…official propaganda appears seriously limited' (Patrick and Thrall, 2004: 31). This argument is based on failing poll ratings of approval of presidential handling of the situation in Iraq post invasion. They contend 'using the media to influence the public becomes more difficult as the administration's control over information erodes and as the public slowly grows aware of discrepancies between official rhetoric and the reality on the ground' (Patrick and Thrall, 2004: 31). This argument partially counter balances Patrick and Thrall's situating of audiences as essentially passive, but doesn't develop an alternative account of what audiences do with inscriptions.

A key analytical aspect of this thesis includes the longevity, fluidity and flexibility of propagandistic rhetoric and this is dealt with in the research of Bates (2004), Nohrstedt et al (2000) and Artz and Pollock (1997). Bates and Nohrstedt et al, particularly, highlight the longstanding demonisation and denigration of Saddam Hussein as propagated by the Bush Snr administration during the first Gulf War in 1991. This is highly pertinent given the rhetorical association of 'evil', 'rat' and so forth with Hussein – examined in Chapter 3 – during the later 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq. It demonstrates the critical relevance of understanding rhetorical strategies designating enemies as profoundly uncivilised and capable of 'only understanding violence or force'. Bates analyses President George Bush Snr's use of metaphoric clusters, framing his coalition as the embodiment of civilisation against Saddam Hussein's savagery (Bates, 2004: 450). Bates argues that in war rhetoric, metaphors – components of propaganda – were used to shape public opinions of the enemy so that there was no alternative to war (Bates, 2004: 451). In this way, Bates lends evidence to the thesis' proposition, outlined in the introduction: 'The promulgation of violence, as inevitable and justifiable leading up to and during wartime is circulated by rhetorical devices using techniques of inscription'.

Nohrstedt et al's (2000) pilot study combines discourse and propaganda analysis to research the discourse deployed in the NATO bombing campaign against Serbia during the Kosovo conflict in 1999. Their study researched the discourse on Kosovo in four daily newspapers from Greece, Norway, Sweden and the UK. They argue that the NATO 'propaganda' strategy was 'an almost exact copy' of that applied against Saddam Hussein in the first Gulf War (Nohrstedt et al, 2000: 391). Notably, they found that NATO and the US administration propagated a view that the Serbian leader Milosevic 'can only be persuaded by *hard methods*' (Nohrstedt et al, 2000: 390. My emphasis). In other words, analogous propagandistic tropes have been used and reiterated by a variety of actors, recalibrating and refracting them through diverse media, in the course of different conflicts. The phrase, 'only be persuaded by hard methods', has been highlighted because of its similarity to the 'only understand violence' trope, a complex and multi dimensional persuasive phrase, which will be analysed in depth in Chapter 4. In their research, Nohrstedt et al conclude that NATO achieved its propaganda objectives (Nohrstedt et al, 2000: 402).

Artz and Pollock (1997) help us consider the longevity of propagandistic rhetoric with their analysis of the rhetoric of unconditional surrender, focusing on demands made on Japan during World War II and Iraq in the first Gulf War in 1991. They argue that in both instances 'unconditional demands codified politico-military goals and foreshadowed intense physical coercion' (Artz and Pollock, 1997: 159). Their work aims to demonstrate that a deeper understanding of the coercion accompanying the rhetoric of unconditional demands can assist in 'constructing and advocating a more enlightened course of action' (Artz and Pollock, 1997: 159). They argue that this rhetoric 'must be dissected carefully to ascertain if its internal organs function with the best reasons, or as is too often the case, follow the political pulse of nationalism, racism and demonization' (Artz and Pollock, 1997: 169). Their analysis connects rhetoric, racism and demonisation, linkages which will be examined in detail in Chapter 5 in relation to both the Vietnam conflict and the theories of the renowned post colonial writer Fanon. Artz and Pollock also deal with President Bush Snr's rhetorical linkages of Saddam Hussein and Hitler, through 'allusions to Hitler and the aggression of Nazi Germany' (Artz and Pollock, 1997: 166) – further evidence of the durability and flexibility of this propagandistic rhetoric, examined in Chapter 3.

Another relevant area of research includes Tilley's analysis of governmental materials as a form of propaganda. Using content analysis, Tilley examines the former Howard Government's 'terror kit'. These 'terror kits', distributed to eight million Australian households in early 2003 at a cost of $15 million, included a

> …fridge magnet with 24-hour 'National Security Hotline' numbers, a 20 page booklet describing 'anti-terrorist', 'security' and 'emergency' procedures and 'encouraging' public vigilance, and a two-page letter from Prime Minister John Howard, addressed to 'Dear fellow Australian' (Tilley, 2004: 30).

Tilley notes that some saw the kits as public or useful 'information' while opponents such as former Brisbane Lord Mayor Jim Soorley characterised them as 'propaganda by the federal government as it seeks to justify a likely war in the Middle East' (Soorley in Morris, 2003: 2. In Tilley, 2004: 31). Tilley concurs with Soorley that the kit contained propaganda (Tilley, 2004: 40). The differing views about the kits provide an example of a continuing concern of the thesis – the fiercely contested notions of what constitutes 'propaganda'.

Schwoch also provides insights into propagandistic government policy in his examination of space race technology being profoundly and explicitly anchored in rhetoric and persuasion. Analysing Cold War space race technology, Schwoch argues that US science and technology was linked to images of freedom and democracy and that for this form of propaganda, the 'domestic audience is…the most important target audience' (Schwoch, 2002: 22). Schwoch's rhetorical analysis is particularly useful in its attention to power, specifically during the Cold War, aspects of which will be examined and discussed in Chapter 5.

Further relevant research related to the theme of governmental persuasive rhetoric and the power relations it entails includes Cooper's argument that high-tech weaponry is legitimising war. While Cooper does not use the term 'propaganda', he locates high tech weaponry as bound up with rhetoric and argues:

> High-tech modes of war make it easier to kill; they also allow for the idea of war to be more acceptable for domestic populations by submerging the reality of killing behind fantasies of low-casualty conflict, unmanned weaponry and the idea that technology brings its own civilising benefits (Cooper, 2005: 74).

That is, Cooper views high-tech weaponry and the surrounding persuasive rhetoric as making it easier for governmental and military senior figures to 'legitimate military conflict' (Cooper, 2005: 83). Cooper partly bases his argument on the return to power, in 2004, of the conservative Bush and Howard governments, despite it being clear that 'none of the reasons for going to war [in Iraq] could be sustained' – such as no weapons of mass destruction and no previous link between al Qaeda and Iraq (Cooper, 2005: 73). Cooper demonstrates the point that rhetorical analysis addresses forms of power and that high-tech weaponry bound up with rhetoric 'make it easier to kill', particularly through a 'distance relationship' whereby the enemy is rendered as an 'abstract entity' (Cooper, 2005: 79). Examination of this 'distance relationship', as Cooper terms it, will be undertaken in Chapter 4, particularly as it pertains to situating enemies as grossly uncivilised and distancing soldiers and publics from the

consequences of actions taken against these adversaries. Critically, this constitutes a major basis of war propaganda.[9]

Other academic studies have eschewed notions of propaganda as an inherently pejorative or nefarious communicative act, instead arguing that *more propaganda* or competing propaganda is required in democratic societies. For example, Jay Black examines shifting definitions of propaganda before defining it as part of an 'open market place of ideas' (Black, 2001: 135). Black argues that it

> …is not only inevitable, but may be desirable that there are openly recognizable and competing propagandas in a democratic society, propagandas that challenge all of us – producers and consumers – to wisely sift and sort through them (Black, 2001: 135).

Similarly, scholars such as Philip Taylor and Nancy Snow argue passionately after September 11 that more propaganda is required. In a piece written little more than a month after the September 11 attacks, Snow argues that 'war propagandists are dominating the media landscape' and that independent media operators therefore 'need more propaganda, not less' (Snow, 2001). A US Professor of Communications, Snow bases her argument on a 'call to arms' whereby such independent media would 'arouse world opinion to the ''product'' of peaceful coexistence' (Snow, 2001).[10] Snow approvingly cites the UK Professor of International Communications Philip Taylor, who argues:

> In a nuclear age we need peace propagandists, not war propagandists – people whose job it is to increase communication, understanding and dialogue between different peoples with different beliefs (Taylor, 1990. p.unknown).

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[9] Singer similarly examines the detachment between Western, particularly US, publics and the consequences of bloody military action in his analysis of 'militainment', which he defines as the 'blurring between entertainment and war' (Singer, 2010). Singer demonstrates how cutting edge technology, such as the US Army produced video game *America's Army,* was utilised by the US Army to engage with and potentially persuade recruits to its values, aims and objectives. What can be taken to be persuasive rhetoric or 'propaganda', in other words, can involve much more than mere 'lies' or distorted 'ideas'. Singer's work registers the 'detachment' between Western populations and the military action taken in their name.

[10] Snow has written extensively about propaganda post September 11, sweepingly positing the media as a 'manipulative mind manager' that contributed to societal 'brain numbing effects of a society underexposed to real information and analysis, rendered incapable of critical judgement and social resistance' (Snow, 2003: 31). This generalising argument situates audiences as relatively passive – a key point of departure with this thesis.

Further developing this argument, Taylor[11] states that he aims to 're-establish ''propaganda''…to its pre-1914 meaning' (Taylor, 1992: 12) and therefore:

> What we really need is more propaganda not less. We need more attempts to influence our opinions and to arouse our active participation in social and political processes' (Taylor, 1992: 13).

Arguments such as these are among the many within the wide ranging debates across within the extremely broad and diverse field of propaganda analysis. Concerning this particular argument, it is worth noting Corner's point that Taylor's argument 'risks extending the category too far for its analytic good'. Corner argues that the 'more propaganda' dictum ultimately 'overlaps messily with other categories for describing communicative practice' (Corner, 2007: 671).

In the background of the 'more propaganda' debate is critical discussion of the contentious revival of US 'propaganda' both at home and abroad after September 11. This is raised and briefly considered here to prefigure a more extensive discussion of notions of soft power and public diplomacy in Chapter 2. Snow and Taylor extensively examine public diplomacy and media 'manipulation' post September 11 (Snow and Taylor, 2006). They address the tension between democratic ideals and military needs to secure public support for the 'war on terror'. They argue that this

> …ongoing tension requires a genuine movement toward a more open media and advocacy on the part of global citizens, including the strengthening of independent and non-corporate media, in order to challenge prevailing media that are subject to government and military influence (Snow and Taylor, 2006: 389).

Snow and Taylor's argument highlights contemporary discussion and research, about persuasive US rhetoric as coterminous with public diplomacy and soft power.

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[11] Taylor has made an important contribution with his works deepening understanding of the scope, function and techniques associated with propaganda. His books (1982) *British Propaganda during the First World War, 1914-18* and (2003) *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda from the Ancient World to the Present Era* are significant works. In the latter, Taylor argues democracies engaged in propaganda must do so 'based on democratic principles. These include persuasion rather than coercion, telling as much of the truth as can be told without jeopardizing lives, respect for individual rights and freedoms for all peoples, tolerance of minorities and so on' (p.323).

Relatedly, Andrejevic usefully examines the rehabilitation of 'propaganda' in the US after September 11. Andrejevic describes the rediscovery of and historical roots regarding the 'strategic importance of propaganda' (Andrejevic, 2004: 85), specifically arguing its rehabilitation

> …neatly corresponds to the ''great generation'' era nostalgia associated with the rediscovered sense of journalistic purpose…Both harken back to a version of U.S. policy freed from the taint of the Vietnam era (Andrejevic, 2004: 88).

Considering the rehabilitation of 'propaganda' post September 11, Andrejevic argues that US policy in the Middle East has failed to 'live up to our nation's stated commitment to freedom, democracy, and the rule of law' (Andrejevic, 2004: 89). He argues that this contradiction between democratic aims and the support of despotic regimes has to be addressed directly so that US values are resuscitated 'by attempting to make our policies live up to our stated principles rather than spinning the principles into an alibi for our policies' (Andrejevic, 2004: 90). Andrejevic highlights the significance attached to strategic 'propaganda' after September 11 and importantly, recalibration of it whereby US media, 'sought to recuperate the term *propaganda* itself by countering a perceived tendency to equate propaganda with totalitarian manipulation' (Andrejevic, 2004: 87. Emphasis in original).[12]

Walton's work underscores the definitional dilemmas surrounding 'propaganda' and the reductive analytical outcomes when it is equated with mere 'lying or dishonesty of some sort' (Walton, 1997: 385). Walton argues that persuasive rhetorical appeals

> …should not…be regarded as sufficient for drawing the conclusion that all propaganda is irrational or illogical, or that any argument used in propaganda is for that reason alone fallacious (Walton, 1997: 392).

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[12] Both Andrejevic and Plaisance (2005) demonstrate the significance placed on persuasive rhetoric and its dissemination by the Bush administration after September 11 with the appointment of former advertising executive Charlotte Beers as Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy. Beers played a pivotal role in the 'Shared Values' campaign, in which videos featuring US Muslims were screened in Muslim countries in 2002 to 'dispel myths about the persecution and discrimination of American Muslims' (Plaisance, 2005: 250). Plaisance notes that then US Secretary of State Colin Powell stated of Beers' appointment: 'We need someone who can rebrand American policy' (Powell in Plaisance, 2005: 253). These studies highlight the connections between public diplomacy and notions of rhetoric, along with the import placed on these by governmental agents after September 11, which as foreshadowed will be examined in the following chapter.

In these sorts of ways, Walton argues that propaganda must be assessed according to 'evaluation of the argumentation…especially the assessment of dialectical relevance' (p.411). Walton's argument that persuasive rhetoric should not automatically be dismissed as erroneous is germane to key research aims of the thesis, specifically those pertaining to the contestations surrounding the currency and value of 'propaganda'.

The US sociologist Altheide examines the politics of fear, terrorism and the maintenance of social control. He argues that after September 11, the 'skilful use of ''terrorism alerts'' to demand attention to the talk at hand is critical in avoiding any detractor' (Altheide, 2003: 53). Altheide usefully discusses the diversity of rhetorical devices after September 11 with his argument that terrorism alerts, used by the Bush administration, were a powerful form of propaganda. Altheide doesn't precisely define 'propaganda', initially linking it to repetition involving nefarious stereotypes (p.38) and later presenting it in these terms: 'Skilful propaganda and the cooperation of the of the most powerful news media enabled simple lies to explain complex events' (Altheide, 2003: 53). In some ways akin to Orwellian views of propaganda as 'lies' and Herman and Chomsky's view of media interlocked with powerful governmental figures and therefore able to disseminate rhetoric aligned with their aims and objectives, this account registers some of the problematic features the thesis will contest.

Contemporary research concerning media and the 'war on terror' from a Cultural Studies perspective includes Jeff Lewis's (2005) *Language Wars*. By 'language wars', Lewis means the 'congregation of discursive tensions that are evolving around the current phase of global terror and political violence' such as the Beslan school massacre in southern Russia and the conflict in Iraq.[13] Lewis argues that language wars

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[13] The Beslan massacre occurred in North Ossetia in September 2004 when armed rebels entered a school and held more than 1000 teachers, students and parents hostage in a gymnasium. Three hundred people subsequently died, a substantial number of them children, in the ensuing carnage wherein Russian Special Forces 'stormed the building after a bomb appeared to have exploded inside and hostages had begun to escape through a hole in the building' (Snetkov, 2007: 1352).

…derive from circumstances that lie beyond the moment of suffering. They reach into history and through the complex matrix of cultural politics, mediated expression and power (Lewis, 2005: 3).

For example, Lewis argues those who carried out the Beslan massacre drew on a cultural memory with Beslan representing the brutal hegemony of Soviet and Russian imperialism:

> The meaning of the siege in Beslan can never be disengaged from the historical, cultural and political circumstances that brought these players into conflict at this particular place and at this particular time. It is not, therefore, sufficient to reduce this complex matrix of causes to simple polemics – good against evil, the west against the east, Christianity against Islam. Rather, these agonisms are generated through the confluence of historical and contemporary cultural conditions that inevitably construct, deconstruct and challenge various modes of meaning and meaning-making. Our principal term for describing this effect is 'language wars' (Lewis, 2005: 2).

Lewis argues that September 11 marked an escalation of language wars, which 'lay behind the attacks and which have their roots in historical and contemporary discourses of violence and terror' (Lewis, 2005: 4). The media, Lewis argues, was a critical player in these language wars, 'not merely as a conduit for their expression, but as a substantive contributor to their shape, direction and force of impact' (Lewis, 2005: 5).

Lewis's work marks a serious effort to analyse linkages between the media, culture and political violence. According to Long, it is engaged, complex, and yet flawed' (Long, 2006: 238). Long notes that Lewis draws on post-structuralist and phenomenological perspectives and is critical of an argument in which 'discourse is taken to be constitutive of reality, and consciousness, and is thus *productive* in terms of inscribing the actions and dispositions of individuals' (Long, 2006: 239. Emphasis in original). Long also identifies shortcomings concerning methodology (Long, 2006: 240). Finding Lewis's textual analysis 'rather generally pitched for my taste', he also assesses his use of some direct empirical interview-based research to be not as 'developed, detailed or methodological as it could be' (Long, 2006: 240).

There is some overlap, particularly regarding the examination of rhetorical tropes in the 'war on terror', between Lewis's work and the research aims of this thesis. There are also some differences between the choice and application of methodological approaches in this thesis and Lewis's work. The thesis is based on a distinctive interdisciplinary Media and Communication Studies approach, outlined earlier, while Lewis draws on a Cultural Studies framework with arguably a more philosophically oriented and linguistically inflected concept of discourse and cultural politics. Nevertheless, *Language Wars* has considerable currency and deals with adjacent and overlapping matters and concerns of the thesis.

In concluding this section, the academic works cited draw on diverse methodologies and frameworks to describe propagandistic devices, not solely within the 'war on terror'. They indicate the vast field of research related to the linkages between rhetorical devices and bloody military action, both before and after September 11. The studies underscore the importance of understanding how rhetorical devices work and for which audiences – a key research aim of the thesis. Contributing to debates about propaganda, the work of the renowned English writer, Eric Arthur Blair, better known by his pen name of George Orwell, is now discussed. Orwell's work is discussed as a prelude to an examination of specific propaganda models, given some of these models partially use Orwellian doctrines.

1.5 Newspeak: Orwell's contribution to propaganda studies

George Orwell looms large in the field of propaganda studies and no serious discussion of the subject would be possible without considering his influential contribution. This is especially the case in Anglo American and Australasian contexts. Put simply, Orwell condemned the manipulation and abuse of language by those in power; that is, language traducing reality. In his famous essay 'Politics and the English Language', Orwell likens euphemism to a mass of Latin words falling on facts like soft snow, 'blurring the outlines and covering up all the details' (Orwell, 1984a: 363). But it is Orwell's classic novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that has had a monumental impact on propaganda studies with its concepts of 'newspeak' and

'doublethink' (Orwell, 1984b c1949).[14] For example, Goodman and Goodman go so far as to describe the work as 'a parable for our time' in their assessment of the George W. Bush administration's manipulation of news (Goodman and Goodman, 2006: 292). Other contemporary works such as Rampton and Stauber's *Weapons of Mass Deception* draws heavily on Orwellian concepts to construct arguments about the George W. Bush administration and the propagandistic techniques such as rhetorical devices it used to persuade audiences of the need for war against Iraq (Rampton and Stauber, 2003). They draw on Orwellian concepts of 'doublethink' and 'newspeak' with the former a 'contradictory way of thinking that lets people say things that mean the opposite of what they actually think' (Rampton and Stauber, 2003: 114) and the latter taken to be words

> …deliberately constructed for political purposes: words, that is to say, which not only had in every case a political implication, but were intended to impose a desirable mental attitude upon the person using them (Orwell, 1990. p.unknown. In Rampton and Stauber, 2003: 114).

Rampton and Stauber locate Bush's 'axis of evil' phrase, taken to include Iran, Iraq and North Korea, as an example of 'newspeak'. While briefly noting this rhetoric had been mocked, they argue that the phrase had 'played an influential role in creating the frame through which the public has perceived the problem of terrorism and the question of whether to go to war with Iraq' (Rampton and Stauber, 2003: 116). But while attributing it considerable significance, *how* the phrase played this role – for example, through repetition and circulation, and being made sense of in particular ways by audiences – is left undetailed. Rampton and Stauber also consider other Bush administration phraseology, such as 'Operation Iraqi Freedom', 'shock and awe' and 'Coalition of the Willing' in terms of a highly limiting form of Orwellian analysis – that is, arguing that the phrases, essentially amounting to examples of 'manipulative language', in themselves guaranteed propagandistic effects.

Locally, academics such as Broinowski have drawn on Orwellian notions while examining Australia's involvement in the Iraq conflict. Broinowski argues:

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[14] Ironically, it has been argued that Orwell was a 'willing participant in the propaganda campaign of the early Cold War, secretly briefing British intelligence on fellow writers whom he considered untrustworthy' (Cull, Culbert and Welch: 2003: 280).

George Orwell…would have enjoyed 2003. Howard's mid-February visit to Washington, London, and Jakarta to plan the war was called a 'peace mission'. Even after the troops had sailed, they were still not said to have gone to 'war'. When we were clearly in the American coalition of the willing, Howard still said we weren't (Broinowski, 2003: 53).

Broinowski's work demonstrates the application of Orwellian concepts of manipulative rhetoric within a contemporary conflict. More broadly, writers such as Watson have condemned the manipulation and abuse of language by those in power. Watson identifies what he terms 'weasel words' that 'hide truth and slew or complicate meaning'. He also argues 'this language…poisons politics: the politicians, the media, the public service and the voters' (Watson, 2005: 1). In his dictionary of 'weasel words', Watson approvingly quotes Orwell and links the abuse of 'political language' with 'lies'. Further drawing on Orwellian notions, Watson argues:

Weasel words are the words of the powerful, the treacherous and the unfaithful, spies, assassins and thieves. Bureaucrats and ideologues love them. Tyrants cannot do without them. The Newspeak of *1984* is an invention, but also a satire on real states such as the Soviet Union where death from starvation and abuse in slave camps was recorded by officials as 'failure of the heart muscle' (Watson, 2005: 1-2).

Works by Goodman and Goodman, Rampton and Stauber, Broinowski and Watson all mark contemporary applications and use of Orwellian notions – highlighting their pervasiveness and longevity.[15] Orwellian notions are limited as they ignore the different sense making capacities of audiences and resistances such as the filmmaker Michael Moore's to persuasive rhetoric. Moore's technique forms the centrepiece of Chapter 7. The influential conceptualisation of propaganda analysis, Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model, will now be considered.

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[15] Poole applies an updated Orwellian approach to political uses of language in his work (2006) *Unspeak*. Poole's work is a contemporary application of Orwellian notions of manipulative language for political purposes and similar to other works cited in the section that assumes that language is ideally transparent and 'neutral'.

1.6 Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model

Herman and Chomsky's renowned Propaganda Model, abbreviated by some scholars simply as 'PM', has garnered a significant critical response, both negative and positive. This model is arguably the pre-eminent conceptualisation in the field of propaganda analysis of the past two and a half decades. This section focuses on their approach because of its currency and because of the methodological differences between the propaganda model, outlined below, and the thesis' overall framework, outlined in the introduction and applied in the ensuing chapters. At the outset, it is important to acknowledge that Herman and Chomsky's model is grounded in critical political economy theory while also partially grounded in linguistic theory. Flew summarises the critical political economy framework as follows:

> [It was] argued that there exist economic structures of dominance in the media and communications industries that set limits to the diversity of ideas and opinions in circulation through the media, and that this in turn promotes the circulation of a hegemonic set of ideas, or a 'dominant ideology', among the wider population (Flew, 2007: 31).

Flew notes that political economists 'place a particular primacy upon the structure of economic relations under capitalism, because structures of domination based upon class relations have been seen as the core element of what both defines a capitalist economy and generates its dynamics, including those of class conflict' (Flew, 2007: 31). Flew argues that the 'boldest and most prominent restatement of the ''ruling class = ruling ideology'' equation' was exemplified by Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model' (Flew, 2007: 33). It is important to acknowledge this for establishing the theoretical architecture of the propaganda model. In their model, Herman and Chomsky argue that the mass media mobilise support for special interests that dominate the state and corporate activity. They argue that their propaganda model suggests

> …that the 'societal purpose' of the media is to inculcate and defend the economic, social, and political agenda of privileged groups that dominate the domestic society and the state. The media serve this in many ways: through selection of topics, distribution of concerns, framing of issues, filtering of

information, emphasis and tone, and by keeping debate within the bounds of acceptable premises (Herman and Chomsky, 1994: 298).

In positioning their model, Herman and Chomsky argue the US media operates differently from the 'propaganda system' in totalitarian states. They argue the US media

> …permit – indeed, encourage – spirited debate, criticism, and dissent, as long as these remain faithfully within the system of presuppositions and principles that constitute an elite consensus, a system so powerful as to be internalised largely without awareness (Herman and Chomsky, 1994: 302).

Essentially, Herman and Chomsky charge that five 'filters' operate to 'filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across' to media audiences (Herman and Chomsky, 1994: 2). They categorise the filters as

> …(1) the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms; (2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass media; (3) the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power; (4) 'flak' as a means of disciplining the media; and (5) 'anti communism' as a national religion and control mechanism (Herman and Chomsky, 1994: 2).[16]

After September 11, Herman and Chomsky argued that anti-communism had 'receded as an ideological factor in the Western media' and 'the ''war on terror'' provided a useful substitute for the Soviet menace' (Herman and Chomsky, in Mullen, 2009: 15).[17]

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[16] Jhally provides a highly complimentary overview of the Propaganda Model in his documentary *The Myth of the Liberal Media – the Propaganda Model of News* (Jhally, 1997).

[17] Chomsky's (2004) *Letters From Lexington* draws on Orwellian doctrines, equating propaganda with 'lies' and manipulative phraseology. It is based on material written for the journal *Lies Of Our Times*. In his Introduction, the US Professor of Liberal Arts and Education, Donaldo Macedo, argues that Chomsky's work 'represents a much-needed denunciation of the pedagogies of lies that are shaped and supported by the interplay of ''the main business propaganda'' and the ''academic streams'' designed to produce the manufacturing of consent' (Macedo, 2003: xvi). Macedo highlights the linkages between Chomsky's notions of propaganda and Orwellian doctrines whereby calculating words and phrases are intrinsically enmeshed with 'propaganda'. Reflecting this, Chomsky accuses various editors of adopting alternatively an 'Orwellian style' (Chomsky, 2004: 38) or 'Orwellisms' (Chomsky, 2004: 96). This is not to suggest that Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model is analogous with Orwell's

Critics have questioned the model as 'too reductive, too deterministic, unsophisticated' (Jensen, 1999). Jensen, a US associate professor of journalism and supporter of the model, argues it has been 'trashed' by opponents because it was 'too radical, too clear, and too accurate for most journalism professors and journalists to deal with' (Jensen, 1999). Lehrer, in a vituperative critique, derides the propaganda model as based on illogical, flawed or fallacious arguments (Lehrer, 2004: 68). For example, Lehrer argues that Chomsky asserts 'that the media are all ''corporate''…assuming that this term alone conveys a sufficiently malign purpose'. Furthermore demonstrating his contention that Chomsky bases the propaganda model on specious argument, Lehrer argues: 'Chomsky does nothing to show how being owned by a corporation leads to a desire to advance particular political views' (Lehrer, 2004: 69). Lehrer argues that different newspaper publications could be seen to be either 'Left' or 'Right', sometimes while owned by a single company.[18] As such, he argues:

> The politics of a media outlet's ownership…do not necessarily correlate with the opinions expressed in that media outlet. To the extent that media owners impose their own politics, there's little consistency in the politics they impose (Lehrer, 2004: 70).

In fairness to Herman and Chomsky, their model is partly premised on the argument that

> …elite media interlock with other institutional sectors in ownership, management and social circles, effectively circumscribing their ability to remain analytically detached from other dominant institutional sectors. The model argues that *the net result of this is self-censorship without any significant coercion* (Klaehn, 2002: 147. My emphasis).

totalitarian propaganda system, outlined in *Nineteen Eighty Four* (Orwell, 1984b) and partially premised on violence and coercion. Herman and Chomsky's model is a 'non-terrorist propaganda system, which operates without the use of force' (Rai, 1995: 33). Rather, this is to acknowledge the Propaganda Model's imputation regarding the passivity of audiences and Chomsky's linkages of 'propaganda' with *some* Orwellian notions, such as 'lies' and 'manipulative language'.

[18] Although, of course, newspapers appoint boards of directors responsible for the hiring of editors. In advancing their argument regarding the 'ownership' filter, Herman and Chomsky state that 'dominant media firms are quite large businesses; they are controlled by very wealthy people or by managers who are subject to sharp constraints by owners and other market-profit-oriented forces; and they are closely interlocked, and have important common interests, with other major corporations, banks, and government' (Herman and Chomsky, 1994: 14).

Therefore, as a riposte to Lehrer's argument, Chomskyian media theory is partially grounded in editorial self censorship rather than the putative bias of individual staff or proprietors. Lehrer's assessment demonstrates the fierce, if not highly passionate, contestations that surround critical debate involving Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model.

In a more measured yet no less critical assessment, Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang accuse specifically Chomsky of selective citations and omissions (Lang and Lang, 2004: 99) and as such producing propaganda (Lang and Lang, 2004: 98). Chomsky, they argue, was a 'political activist promulgating his political doctrine'[19] rather than a media scholar with a 'new seminal theoretical model' (Lang and Lang, 2004: 100).[20] Considering Chomsky's application of the model in his book *Necessary Illusions* (1988), the Langs took issue with Chomsky's analytical framework, specifically as his

> …paired situations include the different treatment by the American media of the concurrent massacres by Pol Pot in Cambodia and by Indonesian troops in East Timor and the contrast in media judgment of the elections in two American client states, El Salvador and Guatemala, and that in Nicaragua when under the Sandinistas. The method sounds scientific except that Chomsky selected his cases (and his data) to make a political point while a lack of information on sampling, coding procedures, and so forth raises questions not so much about the existence of bias in any particular case, but about the viability of a model about ''the media'' in general based on anecdotal evidence (Lang and Lang, 2004: 95).

Thus, the Langs critique the propaganda model as having serious methodological deficiencies and its co-founder, Chomsky, of being a *propagandist* rather than being a scholar who produced a model that could credibly explain the media dissemination of propaganda. The irony of this argument, that a scholar endeavouring to analyse propaganda is framed as a propagandist, will be further discussed in Chapter 7,

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[19] In terms of Chomsky's 'political doctrine', the Langs note Chomsky was an opponent of the US-led war in Iraq and had expressed 'ardent support for the Palestinian cause'. They also note his comments on the September 11 attacks had been 'greeted with outrage' (Lang and Lang, 2004: 100). Briefly, on the latter, Chomsky argues in his best seller, *September 11,* that the US was the world's 'leading terrorist state' (Chomsky, 2002: 43). Chomsky has made different political arguments at different times about different situations.

[20] Both Herman and Chomsky responded to the Langs' critique. Among other charges, they accuse the Langs of blending their own 'entirely inaccurate perception of Chomsky's political views' with the Propaganda Model. See Herman and Chomsky, 2004: 103-107.

particularly in relation to conservative critiques of filmmaker Michael Moore. While it is stressed that Moore is not a scholar, he was subject to similar denunciations, which will be examined in depth. Furthermore, the Langs' conceptualisation of 'propaganda' is cast far too narrowly, as evinced by their argument:

> If the highly selective use of information from documents characterizes the propagandist, then this part of Chomsky's work has to be considered propaganda (Lang and Lang, 2004: 98).

This part of the Langs' argument shows a lack of definitional attention to 'propaganda', let alone its constitutive and highly contested elements.

Other appraisals of the propaganda model have been laudatory, notably that of Klaehn (2002). Following an extensive overview of debates surrounding the model, Klaehn acclaims it as

> …forceful and convincing, as is their analysis of the ideological formation of public opinion and of the ''Orwellian'' abuse of language in western democracies (Klaehn, 2002: 173).

However, this reference to Orwell and its connotation of propaganda as 'manipulative lies', as linked with the theoretical aims of the propaganda model, was undeveloped and unsupported by empirical evidence in Klaehn's piece. Klaehn's argument also fails to fully appraise what an Orwellian approach might constitute, let alone any potential differentiation between it and the propaganda model. Klaehn posits 'Orwellian' as manipulative phraseology without attention to the sense-making capacities of diverse media audiences.

In a more robust analysis, Mullen (2007) applies the model to national British press coverage of the European integration issue. Mullen argues the successful application of the model could, 'both explain editorial positioning during the 1970s and the 2000s and the difference in coverage between the two periods' (Mullen, 2007: 16). Further, Mullen argues that the model

> …predicted that the elite consensus of the 1970s would be reflected in the national press coverage, as indeed was the case; nearly all the main national newspapers adopted a pro-EU position during this period. Likewise, the PM predicted that the elite dissensus (sic) of the 2000s would be reflected in the

national press coverage, which was also true; newspapers were evenly divided on the euro and the European Constitution (Mullen, 2007: 16).

In concluding his argument, Mullen argues that the 'difference in coverage between the two periods' could be explained as 'transformations in the operation [of] the five filters…demonstrated the utility of the PM' (Mullen, 2007: 16). Mullen's assessment is a persuasive application of the model to a specific issue and adds to the weight of scholarly analysis highlighting the salience of the model and placing it at the centre of debate involving propaganda analysis. Mullen references numerous scholars as presenting evidence in support of the central hypotheses of the propaganda model, including Herman (1982, 1992), Parenti (1986), Herman and O'Sullivan (1989), Aronson (1990), Lee and Solomon (1990), Winter (1992, 1998, 2002) and Gunn (1994) among others (In Mullen, 2007: 4).

Thompson (2008) also makes a valuable contribution with his application of the propaganda model to financial news. Thompson highlights instances whereby financial news discourse could be both seen to be consistent with *and* contradict the model. For example, Thompson argues

> Financial market discourse in the mass media has helped legitimate the prioritisation of fiscal policy over welfare and employment policy and promote new 'opportunities' for public participation in the financial sector (such as private pension plans)…This would seem to be broadly consistent with the PM (Thompson, 2008: 1).

However, Thompson also notes that

> …market perceptions and news announcements can precipitate buying and selling trends. Indeed, the inter-dependency of financial reporters, traders and analysts suggests that market information is not merely representative of financial reality but reflexively constitutive of it. This significantly complicates the PM's account of news production and representation (Thompson, 2008: 1).

Thompson's paper marks a serious attempt to apply the propaganda model to a specific area of news discourse while avoiding a binary either/or approach. That is, the binary that model works or it doesn't. He also avoids reducing it to other

approaches, such as Orwell's. Having examined both possibilities and applying the model to financial news discourse, Thompson concludes that the model

> …asks all the right questions about the structural constraints of news production. However, when it comes to specific types of news production, such as financial reporting, it is too blunt an instrument for the complexities underpinning the filtering processes it posits (Thompson, 2008: 16).

Thompson's analysis demonstrates the difficulties with the propaganda model in terms of its potential application and shortcomings. Thompson's concluding remarks regarding the model being 'too blunt an instrument' can be joined by other questions about specific media audiences and their sense-making practices. Registering these other practices, Cottle and Rai argue in their assessment of Herman and Chomsky's model that there is

> …more going on in the communication of news than the manipulation of news agendas by powerful strategic interests or the circulation of powerful semiotic codes and discourses (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 164).

The debates encompassed by Thompson's and the other works cited acknowledge the persuasiveness, significance and impact of Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model. They also indicate the breadth and highly contested field of propaganda scholarship.

1.7 Some other propaganda models

As foreshadowed in the introduction, this section briefly considers other propaganda models posited by Frederick and De Alwis along with Tuttle Ross and others. While these models do not have the same currency or prominence of Herman and Chomsky's, they indicate the depth and range of scholarly work in the field. Frederick and De Alwis (2009) predominantly focus on press censorship circumvention in the Sri Lankan conflict, but nonetheless propose a 'novel propaganda model' (Frederick and De Alwis, 2009: 73) through the metaphor of a Catherine Wheel. Contesting the Herman and Chomsky model for providing 'little to the analysis of internal conflict in

the developing world' (p.65), they argue Sir Lankan conflict reporting during censorship is 'so explosive and unpredictable that no single force such as censorship can control it' (p.74). In such ways, they aim to challenge the Herman and Chomsky model as 'inapplicable' to the Sri Lankan situation, particularly as the country's newspapers 'did not appear to be constrained by a hegemonic model of a dominant political ideology' (p.75). They also argue the filters posited by the Herman and Chomsky model, such as flak, influential advertising and anti communist ideology, were not present (p.75).

Frederick and De Alwis use a Catherine Wheel Model to explain
> …internal conflict within the developing world context in which the press system is based deeply in culture and is more accustomed to circumventing censorship than obeying it (Frederick and De Alwis, 2009: 59).

They draw on interpretive analysis of censorship and conflict reporting in their examination of Sri Lankan press coverage of two Sri Lankan military operations in 1997 and 2000. They explain their model via the 'Catherine Wheel' metaphor:
> Each Catherine Wheel contains a unique composition of colour, sound, and strength. When ignited, it rotates at varying rates and display sparks and flame until it is expended. No two manufacturers produce the same Catherine Wheel (Frederick and De Alwis, 2009: 73-74).

Frederick and De Alwis argue that Sri Lankan newspapers abided by censorship regulations, but in effect manoeuvred around the regulations. Further, they argue journalists taught readers how to 'read' blank space and used conflict frames to avoid pre-dominance of official views. While Frederick and De Alwis do not fully develop this interesting point or fully specify conflict frames, the Catherine Wheel model does attempt to incorporate unpredictability into how critical matters such as conflict are presented to media audiences by reporters through newspapers.

Tuttle Ross (2002) uses a significantly different approach with her Epistemic Merit Model and its application to artworks, such as Picasso's *Guernica*. Tuttle Ross states the argument all propaganda is false and merely lies fails to capture 'the actions of those who use propaganda to achieve their political ends' (Tuttle Ross, 2002: 23).

She argues that what she calls epistemic defectiveness provides a better explanation for how propaganda works:

> I have argued that propaganda is an epistemically defective message used with the intention to persuade a socially significant group of people on behalf of a political institution, organization or cause… this successfully accounts for the pejorative sense propaganda has come to have. Epistemic defectiveness captures the role that the emotions play in propaganda as well as commands, conceptual schemes and metaphors (Tuttle Ross, 2002: 24).

By 'epistemic defectiveness', Tuttle Ross includes loosely defined 'inapt metaphors' (Tuttle Ross, 2002: 28) and posits 'propaganda' as epistemically defective messages in contrast to 'mere persuasion' (Tuttle Ross, 2002: 16). But treating propaganda in epistemic terms suggests that philosophical categories of truth and falsity are the key to its analysis, overlooking questions of power and how propaganda is enmeshed in power relations. Tuttle Ross's hypothesis is therefore problematic, particularly in terms of what is not considered in her argument.

While considering philosophical approaches to propaganda, Cunningham similarly situates propaganda as 'originally, primarily, and unavoidably a philosophical concept' (Cunningham, 2002: 4). Cunningham does not posit a model per se, but like Tuttle Ross argues propaganda is at its core 'an epistemically structured phenomenon' (p.4). Cunningham's account is reductive of propaganda's complex and situationally embedded composition, circulation and sense-making to abstracted philosophical categories. The 'climate of illusion' conjecture, with its Orwellian 'language traducing reality' overtones – considered earlier – is part of this reduction. Examination of propaganda, cascaded through the mediasphere, provides a more useful basis for demonstrating its operation, form and scope. The thesis' argument is that attention to propagandistic rhetoric in terms of its operation, form and scope and the power-knowledge relations in which it is bound up do tell us more than general philosophical accounts.

These other models and conceptualisations highlight the breadth of research and intensity of debate in the wide ranging field of propaganda. The next section examines relevant studies of propaganda by serving US military officers.

1.8 'Influence management'

Serving US military officers have also studied propaganda in the war on terror. Both Lt Colonel Shawn Mateer (2002) and Lt Colonel Susan Gough (2003) note the importance of 'propaganda' in the war on terror. The former prefers the term 'influence management' while the latter deploys the phrase 'strategic influence'. Mateer defines influence management as

> …actions to convey information to influence foreign audiences to sway their emotions, motives, and reasoning while countering opponents misinformation…it typically combines international public information and counter-propaganda…it is both offensive and defensive in nature (Mateer, 2002: 4-5).

Mateer argues that the US could win the military 'war on terrorism', but can also win the 'propaganda war with systematic planning and proper dissemination of information to influence a target using the correct medium' (Mateer, 2002:15). Mateer argues the US could not win the support of the 'Muslim Street' because of its past policies, but rather should aim to 'move the audience back toward a moderate stance or a neutral position that will not support the terrorists or their networks' (Mateer, 2001: 16). While connecting military engagement with the importance of persuasion, Mateer's argument indicates the military's reliance on the very general notions of the 'Muslim Street' and 'target'.

Gough argues that the US after September 11 had, 'entered a war of ideas, of hearts and minds – a war of ideologies as potent and potentially dangerous as the Cold War' (Gough, 2003: 1). Gough locates the Bush administration's efforts to 'influence world audiences on a global scale' in combination with notions of strategic influence, defined as

> …the deliberate, conscious coordination or integration of all government informational activities designed to influence opinions, attitudes, and behaviour of foreign groups in ways that will promote US national objectives… (Gough, 2003: 1).

Gough argues that the Bush administration's strategic influence efforts had been hampered by political correctness and, as a result, been bland. Terrorist propaganda, she argues, not only reaches for hearts and minds, but activates envy, fear and anger. Gough argues that strategic influence

> …must go beyond simply informing and educating and must involve the emotions of the target audience…having a competent strategic influence campaign is essential to US victory in the War on Terrorism (Gough, 2003: 37).

This is a prime example of calls for use of persuasive rhetoric in order to counter other uses of persuasive rhetoric, both aimed at garnering support from 'target audiences', the so-called 'Muslim Street'. It also indicates military attitudes towards persuasive communicative acts after September 11 and the significance ascribed to these by the military in order to achieve specific aims.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to outline some of the diversity and historicity of propaganda research and argumentation. As part of this, J. Michael Sproule's important revisionist work updating the history of US mass media research regarding propaganda has also been outlined. Significant arguments such as Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model have been outlined with consideration of the continuing influence of George Orwell on the field. This has been done from the thesis' argument, established in the introduction, that rhetoric cannot be simply categorgized as 'manipulative language'; that the analysis of persuasive language involves power: how power relations are materially formed and maintained or transformed, rather than primarily about ideology. Building on the work of this chapter, Chapter 2 will examine the interrelations between, adjacencies of, and overlaps with propaganda, public relations and advertising, along with the crucial importance of the audiences these forms of power always address. Notions of soft power and its ascribed importance in the 'war on terror' are also described and analysed.

Chapter 2

Us and Them: The Need to Co-opt Audiences

And if nowadays the successors of the rulers, those whose position or ability gives them power, can no longer do what they want without the approval of the masses, they find in propaganda a tool which is increasingly powerful in gaining that approval. Therefore, propaganda is here to stay. It was, of course, the astounding success of propaganda during the war that opened the eyes of the intelligent few in all departments of life to the possibilities of regimenting the public mind.

– Edward L. Bernays (1928: 27).

2.1 Introduction

Public relations is such a ubiquitous part of contemporary cultures that it is hard to imagine the world without it. This chapter will investigate the founding of public relations, particularly as expounded by one of its principal exponents, Sigmund Freud's nephew Edward Bernays, and his profound influence on the field. The impact of other key figures such as Ivy Lee and the organisation theorist Elton Mayo is also considered. The chapter will examine public relations specifically in terms of its influence and impact on war propaganda, which proliferated during World War I. This discussion is also designed to provide the foundation for ensuing chapters, which describe and analyse specific rhetoric in the 'war on terror' and its deployment across different media. Multiple audiences – the targets of both Western and jihadist propaganda – are also investigated. Discussion is further centred on approaches to framings, images and narratives, designed to influence multiple audiences, as these are cascaded through various media.

2.2 Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays: war is sell

Ivy Lee (1877-1934) has been credited as the 'first great PR man' (Carey, 1995: 80). Dubbed 'Poison Ivy' by labour sympathisers for his 'deceptive use of press releases on behalf of American oil magnate John D. Rockefeller's Colorado mine interests', Lee was a 'major force' in the rising field of public relations (Marlin, 2002: 189). This section considers the work of Lee, along with others such as Edward L Bernays and Elton Mayo on public relations, its formative years and subsequent strategies devised to enhance the public standing, message and/or product of clients.

Lee viewed the purpose of PR as to 'create or encourage a favourable image of a company in the public mind' (Marlin, 2002: 189). Lee places great emphasis on disclosure; he sent press releases to newspapers with the aim of influencing editorial content 'so long as the source of the releases was properly identified' (Marlin, 2002: 191). Further, Lee equates lack of disclosure with both 'making a wrong use of propaganda' (Marlin, 2002: 191) and 'the evil of all propaganda' (Marlin, 2002: 192). Lee's argument highlights historical notions of propaganda as both an instrument for public good and potentially the opposite.

Lee is particularly renowned for his transformation of John D. Rockefeller 'in the public mind, from an ogre to a benefactor' (*Fortune*, 1949: 70. In Carey, 1995: 80). Lee's legendary tactics included persuading the press to record 'Rockefeller's eating in the workers' dining hall, swinging a pick ax [sic] in the mine, and having a beer with the workers after hours' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 34). The strategy paid dividends: the company prevented 'the United Mine Workers from gaining a foothold' and led the Rockefeller family to hire Lee 'for a full-scale renovation of the Rockefeller name, badly damaged by the muckrakers who often pictured John D. Rockefeller, Sr., as an exploiter and the king of the greedy capitalists' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 34). Lee sold his skills to many bidders, most notoriously the Nazis (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 34). A congressional hearing 'disclosed that he was working for the Hitler government while being paid by Germany's I. G. Farben chemical firm as a subterfuge in the early 1930s' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 34). Lee's public relations techniques demonstrate the early links between PR, labour

struggles and practices of selling a message and influencing audiences, constituencies and markets. Linkages between development of the PR industry and US labour battles in the late 19th and early 20th centuries will be expanded upon shortly in section 2.5, which outlines a brief history of the public relations industry.

Following Lee, Edward L. Bernays (1891-1995) is often described as the 'father of public relations'. Indeed, he wrote the foreword for the first four editions of the textbook *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics* and was lionised in the fifth edition as a 'legendary figure' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 40). In his incisive analysis of corporate propaganda, Alex Carey describes Bernays as a 'major figure in the new propaganda – public relations field' that developed in the early 20th century (Carey, 1995: 80). Carey, perhaps a sceptical player in as well as later historian of public relations, states Bernays 'developed and dominated' the field for 30 years (Carey, 1995: 80). Bernays was undoubtedly influenced by his involvement with the Committee on Public Information (also known as the Creel Committee), which was formed with the US entry into World War I. Carey encapsulated Bernays' understanding of and role in the embryonic public relations industry as he switched from war to corporate propagandist.[21] As such, Carey notes Bernays states that

> …'every known device of persuasion and suggestion (was employed) to sell our war aims to the American people', who were initially unenthusiastic. Bernays (1952: 71, 75, 74) observed that the Creel Committee's 'reports that the Germans were beasts and Huns were generally accepted. The most fantastic atrocity stories were believed'. The Creel Committee was generally credited with producing 'a revolutionary change in the sentiments of the nation'.[22] Bernays considered that at the end of the war businessmen realized that the public could be harnessed to their cause in the same way that they were harnessed during the war to the national cause. Not surprisingly, when Bernays and others associated with the Creel Committee 'returned to civilian life [they]

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[21] This also intersects with pioneering propaganda analyst Harold Lasswell's career and interest in political psychology. Both Bernays groundbreaking (1928) *Propaganda* and Lasswell's (1927) *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, released within a short time of each other, registered differently positioned interest in the emerging fields of public relations and propaganda.

[22] Neither Bernays, nor Carey, in citing this statement, provides specific empirical evidence to support this claim. However, Fosdick's (1932) recollection of a specific meeting – outlined in Chapter 1 – where an enraged American crowd, whipped up by propaganda, screamed its hysterical approval of suggestions that the Kaiser be boiled in oil, supports the claim of the effectiveness of the propaganda.

applied (on behalf of business) the publicity methods they had learned during the war' (Bernays, 1952: 78. In Carey, 1995: 80-81).

Bernays, it should be stressed, had no qualms whatsoever about transferring his ability to market government war aims to advocating for corporate clients. In fact, Bernays equated propaganda with a type of quasi democracy. Bernays' (1928) *Propaganda*, written in the inter-war period, is worth considering at length, not only for how the author foreshadows many techniques that are now commonplace, but also for its elitist and instrumentalist views on the use of persuasive visual and written rhetoric. Bernays opens his book by stating without a hint of irony that: 'The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society' (Bernays, 1928: 9). This is arguably a populist-democratic reduction of the provision of knowledge to older senses of propaganda as propagation, as well as being bound up with notions of 'mass society' and 'mass culture' and 'the public'. Bernays' opportunism is further illustrated in his landmark book *Propaganda* by his view that 'society' *effectively gave permission* for propaganda to be disseminated

> …society consents to have its choice narrowed to ideas and objects brought to its attention through propaganda of all kinds. There is consequently a vast and continuous effort going on to capture our minds in the interest of some policy or commodity or idea (Bernays, 1928: 10).

Just in case his readers missed the point, Bernays, similar to Chomsky on 'consent', argues 'society' had 'consented to permit free competition to be organized by leadership and propaganda' (Bernays, 1928: 12). The minority, Bernays argues, have

> …discovered a powerful help in influencing majorities. *It has been found possible so to mold the mind of the masses that they will throw their newly gained strength in the desired direction*' (Bernays, 1928: 19. My emphasis).[23]

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[23] In considering Bernays' statement about the minority influencing majorities, we can note the correlation with Latour's argument on 'drawing together' that 'the weakest, by manipulating inscriptions of all sorts…become the strongest' (Latour, 1990: 60). This is also akin to how 'the masses' are presented in Leni Riefenstahl's film *Triumph of the Will,* which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

That this would appear to contradict his earlier statement about 'society' issuing some form of consent related to propaganda did not faze Bernays. In fact, his view of propaganda was so instrumentalist that he ultimately likened it to 'the executive arm of the invisible government' (Bernays, 1928: 20). Reflecting on his wartime experience, Bernays saw propaganda as a 'consistent effort to *create or shape events* to influence the relations of the public to an enterprise, idea or group' (Bernays, 1928: 25. My emphasis). He notes the value of arousing national loyalty during the war as being that

> …the manipulators of patriotic opinion made use of the mental cliches and the emotional habits of the public to produce mass reactions against the alleged atrocities, the terror and the tyranny of the enemy (Bernays, 1928: 28).

As we shall see in Chapter 3, the atrocity stories levelled at Saddam Hussein differed only in media form from those deployed by allied governments to garner support for the war against Germany in World War I.

Bernays developed his skill 'to create or shape events' to enhance and influence the relationship between the public and 'an enterprise, idea or group' over a broad range of campaigns. Some of the most notorious included promoting smoking among women. Wilcox, Ault and Agee record that Bernays consulted a psychoanalyst, who advised that cigarettes might be perceived as 'torches of freedom'. Bernays 'helped break down the barrier [to women smoking] by inducing ten debutantes to ''light up'' while strolling in New York's Easter parade' in the late 1920s (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 41). As one critic noted, 'anyone criticising the idea of women smoking would now appear to be against freedom, and the numbers of women taking up the habit shot through the roof' (Shepherd, n.d.). To assist Procter and Gamble sell soap, Bernays 'attracted the attention of children and their parents to cleanliness by developing a nationwide interest in soap sculpture' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 41).

Unsurprisingly, Wilcox, Ault and Agee's public relations textbook does not mention Bernays' role in the overthrow of the elected government of Guatemala in 1954. In their review of Larry Tye's (2001) biography of Bernays, Rampton and Stauber

(1999) note that the term 'banana republic' originally referred to US company United Fruit's domination of corrupt governments throughout South America:

> When a mildly reformist Guatemala government attempted to reign in the company's power, Bernays whipped up media and political sentiment against it in the commie-crazed 1950s (Rampton and Stauber, 1999).

Tye notes how articles, instigated by Bernays, began appearing in a range of publications 'all discussing the growing influence of Guatemala's Communists' (Tye, 2001: 168). Bernays was particularly gratified 'that liberal journals like *The Nation* were coming around', particularly as he believed 'that winning the liberals over was essential to winning America over' (Tye, 2001: 168). In his dealings on the matter with the *New York Times*, Bernays exploited family ties to the publisher, Arthur Hays Sulzberger (his wife was a relative). Bernays 'tried to influence the assignment of reporters, ensuring they were sympathetic to his cause and complaining when they weren't' (Tye, 2001: 168). Tye's analysis found that 'in what may have been his boldest bid ever to orchestrate press coverage', Bernays won over reporters 'while convincing them he was merely an honest broker of facts' (Tye, 2001: 172). The result was the overthrow of the government in 1954 by an army officer living in exile with 200 men trained by the CIA – dubbed by Bernays as an 'army of liberation' (Tye, 2001: 176). Tye argues that Bernays' formula of masterful propaganda stirring public opinion, wealthy self interested private sponsors and the toppling of foreign governments provided a potent and alluring mix for those who followed: '…so it seemed to policy makers who would repeat the recipe in Cuba, Nicaragua, and elsewhere across Latin America and around the globe' (Tye, 2001: 178).

Bernays pioneered many of the PR techniques that are now standard in the industry: the use of front groups to push causes, stunts and selective use of information to name a few. Interviewed by Bill Moyers in 1984 for the American PBS program, the interviewer stated that Bernays' successful campaigns, including getting women to smoke in public, amounted to power rather than influence. Bernays never thought or treated it as power, speciously stating: 'People want to go where they want to be led' (In Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 42). Presumably, this included the overthrow of an elected government in Guatemala. In an equally facile comment, Bernays states that

while what he did was propaganda, he 'hoped it was proper-ganda and not improper-ganda' (In Rampton and Stauber, 1999).

Consideration of Bernays' influence and his works indicates the formation of public relations, its early strategies and its linkages to the developing operation of wartime propaganda. The arguments of another founder of this discipline, Elton Mayo, are highlighted to consider the history of advertising, marketing and public relations becoming part of strategic planning and implementation of public policy (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 12).

Mayo, who became renowned in the area of industrial psychology, conceptualises what he termed as the 'ad man' within a highly positive framework. In 1920, he told the Second Advertising Men's Conference:

> The ad expert is an educator in the broadest and highest sense of the term. His task is the persuasion of the people to be civilized…It is not the slightest use meeting Satanism or Bolshevism by organized rage or hate. Your only chance of dealing with these things is by research, by discovering first and foremost the cause of this mental condition (In Braverman, 1974: 144-145. In Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 11).

In summarising Mayo's position, Balnaves and O'Regan note that the 'ad man' was taken to be a 'promoter of public education, civility…philanthropy and a developer of social understanding on important matters' (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 11). Balnaves and O'Regan note that just less than forty years later the common perception of the advertising man was one of a con man and cynical huckster (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 11). Yet for Mayo, the 'ad man' had an essential and higher purpose. Balnaves and O'Regan argue that Mayo

> …anticipated the complex role advertising and marketing plays in contemporary society. Advertising and marketing are not simply part of a merchandising and management cycle, but are an essential part of a 'governance' cycle. Research about audiences has to be seen to be legitimate and an accurate representation of the interests of the audiences concerned. Mayo believed that government of audiences involved a sense of co-creation. If that governance is seen to be

manipulation, then it is no longer regarded as legitimate – it lacks
'understanding' and will fail (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 12).

Further extrapolating from Mayo's argument, Balnaves and O'Regan argue that in
dealing with social evils, governments need non manipulative tools; this implied
consent, representation, representativeness, accountability and transparency (Balnaves
and O'Regan, 2002: 12). Balnaves and O'Regan argue that this 'governance
relationship' – that advertising, marketing and public relations has become part of the
implementation of public policy – is particularly evident in anti-smoking campaigns
in English-speaking countries (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 12). It is useful to
consider this in some detail given its significance as an indicator of the shifting
applications of public relations and advertising techniques and the counterpoint it
provides to Bernays' infamous 1929 pro smoking campaign, which was outlined
earlier. In addition this also enables tabling of Balnaves and O'Regan's generative
account of public relations and advertising as formative of audience dispositions in
diverse and mundane social policy campaigns and arenas.

The 1998 Quit campaign in Australia was specifically targeted at changing the
behaviour of the 19-39 age group who smoked (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 13-14).
Governmental authorities took this action after Health Department research found 'the
decline in the proportion of Australians who smoked had noticeably slowed'
(Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 13). In terms of the specificity of the target group, the
19 to 39 year olds were chosen as they were identified as being at significant risk
from smoking-related illnesses and addiction. Outsourced to advertising and
marketing agencies, the 'Every Cigarette is Doing you Damage' campaign was the
result (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 14). Research and feedback was considered
imperative with the Institute of Health and Welfare Research evaluating the effects of
the campaign while help lines and counselling were designed to assist both smokers
and non smokers. This was also designed to gain feedback from the audience about
the campaign (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 14-15).

In considering the Australian audience and its attitude towards government health
directives and campaigns, Balnaves and O'Regan argue it is

> …generally well disposed towards them, seeing them as life affirming and as optimising social well-being. It is through such interventions that the public understands the role it has to play in governance (and is trained into that role). Members of the public are not only trained to use the medium in particular ways to particular ends, but are also trained in the processes and logics of government… (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 17).

Thus, the audience is

> …trained into social cause marketing messages as a way of ''participating'' in imagined publics and imagined communities. Smoking is portrayed as simultaneously a social and environmental concern – articulating the personal and public horizon and the social (intergroup) and public horizon simultaneously (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 17).

The persuasive strategies of both Bernays' pro smoking effort and the social cause marketing of the Quit campaign provide much to consider. Both involved much research targeted at specific audiences with the former drawing on notions of 'freedom' directed at women while the latter was aimed at 19 to 39 year olds interlaced with a strident message about the deleterious effects of smoking. They also crucially indicate that the tools of advertising and public relations can be used to formulate diametrically opposed campaigns at diverse audiences regarding the same product (tobacco). Additionally, it can be argued the rhetorical agency of 'freedom' was recalibrated significantly for each individual campaign. In Bernays' 1929 effort, women would have the *freedom to smoke* in public whereas in the Quit campaign 19 to 39 year olds would gain *freedom from the harmful effects of smoking*. This serves to identify the shifting compositional flexibility of public relations and advertising techniques and the use of specific rhetorical artefacts – words, phrases, images and so forth – for different purposes at different times. For all Shepherd's account that the 'numbers of women taking up the habit of smoking shot through the roof' following Bernays' 1929 publicity exercise and official Australian governmental reportage that up to 190,000 smokers stopped the habit during the 1998 Quit campaign (Hill and Hassard, 1988: 5), such campaign strategies and rhetoric amount to what Greenfield and Williams have termed 'a gamble of communication'. The 'gamble' refers to 'the practical calculations involved in communicative transactions, as material sites of

both possibility and risk' (Greenfield and Williams, 1994: 21) and these calculations by composers and users can never *guarantee* outcomes because of the diverse sense-making work of the audiences, constituencies and markets involved. These points depart from the Sender→Message→Receiver model of communication and avoid resorting to 'another all-purpose model or theory' (Greenfield and Williams, 1994: 19), attending instead to the contingency and occasion-specific aspect of communicative struggles. These points about the gamble of communication will be used to ground consideration of specific instances of rhetoric in the next chapter.

Finally, a difference between the assumptions underlying the Bernays and Quit campaign approaches requires brief elaboration. Bernays' conjecture of propaganda-dispensing elite contrasts sharply with Mayo's relatively less malign postulation of a non manipulative form of co-creation, at least as presented by Balnaves and O'Regan. These positions indicate some variation over what constitutes 'propaganda' and its utility when considered in terms of the mediatised justifications of violence in the 'war on terror' and previous justifications. Building on these discussions regarding public relations, advertising, governmental policy and its complex linkages to propaganda, the next section examines the Howard's government's controversial 'border security' policy, as disseminated through a television program.

2.3 Border Security: selling refugee policy

Heated and protracted argument over the Howard Government's contentious refugee policy surrounded the 2001 Australian federal election (Slattery, 2003; Klocker and Dunn, 2003). In his analysis, Bob Burton (2007) locates the Howard Government's promulgation of its refugee policy aims firmly within a public relations framework. This is one of multifarious contemporary political uses of public relations to disseminate and market policy. Burton argues and demonstrates the former Howard Government made calculated use of the Channel 7 reality television ratings success *Border Security* to deploy what in effect constitutes government propaganda. The program was screened after the 2001 federal election, which was largely fought on the Howard Government's tough stance on immigration and terrorism with terms like

'border protection' and 'border security' becoming inscribed as part of the dominant political lexicon (Burton, 2007: 193). While several networks put forward proposals for the program, Burton found that 'the deciding factor in Seven's favour was that it offered Customs a veto over what aired' (Burton, 2007: 193). Moreover, Burton argues that the program effectively comforted its audience as to the merit of the government's immigration and refugee policy:

> For the government and agencies involved, the program works better than an advertising campaign in selling reassurance. The success of Border Security on an issue as politically controversial as immigration policy also confers a substantial benefit to the government in helping marginalise dissenting points of view in the lower rating news and current affairs programs (Burton, 2007: 195).

The Howard Government's circulation of its policy rationale for its refugee policy was not uncontested. For example, Starr's film (2004) *Through The Wire* features activists protesting against the mandatory detention of asylum seekers and helping to stage a mass breakout at the notorious Woomera detention centre in 2002. *Through The Wire* was included in the scathing anti Howard polemical collection of short films titled *Time To Go John: The Awful Truth About John Howard* (Gough-Brady et al, 2004), released prior to the 2004 election with the specific aim of persuading voters it was 'Time To Go John'.[24] These films will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7, but *Through The Wire* is mentioned here to demonstrate the contested nature of persuasive rhetoric related to the issue of asylum seekers.

Klocker and Dunn (2003) draw on Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model in their assessment of the asylum seeker debate. They conclude that their findings support Herman and Chomsky's theory (Klocker and Dunn, 2003: 89). In a content analysis of official Government press releases between August 2001, and January 2002, they found the Government's tenor was negative with construction of asylum seekers in terms of 'threat', 'other', 'illegality' and 'burden'. Based on their research after reviewing media texts in Adelaide's *The Advertiser* and its stable mate, *The*

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[24] Greg Barns (2005) provides a comprehensive outline of Australian Government media and public relations strategies ranging from the Whitlam to Howard era. Strategies assessed include use of music, such as the (Liberal-National) Coalition Government's employment of Joe Cocker's *Unchain My Heart* in 1998 as part of an extensive advertising and marketing campaign to sell the introduction of a Goods and Services Tax. The use of the well known actor Bill Hunter for the Keating Government's Working Nation advertising campaign is also discussed.

Sunday Mail, Klocker and Dunn argue 'there is evidence of exchange of meaning between government and media at the thematic level, and with respect to the specific vocabulary adopted to describe asylum seekers' (Klocker and Dunn, 2003: 89). This suggests Herman and Chomsky's argument, outlined in the previous chapter, regarding the third filter of their propaganda model whereby the media have a 'reliance…on information provided by government, business, and ''experts'' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power' (Flew, 2007: 32). However, Klocker and Dunn also found that the media depart from the 'government line' when 'media workers' access to information was threatened, or in response to extreme events' such as a drowning tragedy involving asylum seekers (Klocker and Dunn, 2003: 89). They argue disruptions to a hierarchical 'exchange of meaning' between government and media are rare, but did highlight the potential for 'establishing more balanced media representations of asylum seekers, even in the face of a government's unrelenting negativity' (Klocker and Dunn, 2003: 89). Regarding the source of this 'disruption', Klocker and Dunn found that

> …17 per cent of *The Advertiser* reports published sympathetic voices, such as those of refugee advocates or community groups. The proportion in *The Sunday Mail* was…8 per cent (Klocker and Dunn, 2003: 85).

While Klocker and Dunn found 'the prominence in ''official sources''…is indicative of the media's reliance on the government for its understanding of asylum issues' (Klocker and Dunn, 2003: 86-88) the contestations, outlined above, allude to both the communicative risk and the diverse sense-making work of varied audiences, constituencies and markets.

2.4 'Information operations': targeting audiences

The battles at Fallujah, Iraq, in 2004 highlight a contemporary military use of public relations, this time with a focus on the strategies of what the US Department of Defense terms 'information operations':

> The integrated employment of electronic warfare, computer network operations, psychological operations, military deception, and operations security, in concert

with specified supporting and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decision making while protecting our own (Department of Defense, 2006).

UK journalist Nick Davies examines notions of information operations and the importance of specific audiences related to the battles at Fallujah (Davies, 2008: 249-254). In an eerie parallel with the Nazi reaction to Germany's World War I defeat (see Chapter 2, section 2.7), Davies notes that American military officials viewed their failed attempt to take Fallujah in April, 2004, as 'a military defeat inflicted not by the enemy's superior force but by the mass media' (Davies, 2008: 249). This is similar to US assessments of failures in Vietnam (Shah, 2003). Davies concludes that the marines April assault against Fallujah 'had been stopped in its tracks by a barrage of protest from the interim Iraqi government and world public opinion' (Davies, 2008: 249). US General Tom Metz subsequently set out 'to prevent the worldwide media clamour and international public condemnation that would negatively impact operations' (Metz, 2006. In Davies, 2008: 249). Metz's comments suggest the importance of a widely circulated negative inscription concerning the war effort, its perceived potential impact on audiences and the significance of countering it. Metz set out on a deliberate media strategy: stories about 'insurgent' atrocities were emphasised and actions were taken to restrict enemy access to the media. Metz argues, regarding the earlier failure, that insurgents had 'used the main Fallujah hospital to generate hostile media coverage of dead and injured civilians' (Metz, 2006. In Davies, 2008: 251). But in the subsequent November battle, Metz sent troops to take the hospital at an early stage, describing this as 'decisive to winning the Information Operations battle' as 'without this portal, the enemy had a much weaker voice' (Metz, 2006. In Davies, 2008: 251).

Metz and his colleagues significantly enhanced and refined the techniques developed by Lee, Bernays and their peers many decades earlier. Yet the fundamentals remained the same: highly selective use of information targeted at specific audiences. The communication was one-sided and designed to garner support from Western, particularly US, audiences while weakening the potential backing for the enemy. Mass mediated visual and textual rhetoric played a pivotal role, particularly specific terminology, which will be examined at length in the next chapter. Metz himself

observed that 'the capabilities to move information not only around the battlefield but also around the world have grown exponentially. Information Operations' importance grows daily' (Metz, 2006. In Davies, 2008: 254). Highlighting Metz's tactics demonstrates a contemporary application of a public relations strategy in the 'war on terror'. It has further allowed consideration of communicative manoeuvres as pivotal to and interwoven with military campaigns, at least since the beginning of the 20th century. Crucially, this endorses the thesis' core argument that rhetorical analysis is ultimately about power relations – here, those between senior politico-military figures, governmental figures in allied nations and media audiences in the US and those of allied countries – rather than 'ideology'. This is foreshadowed briefly now prior to an analysis of specific rhetoric and power relations involving 'war on terror' supporters and authority figures in Chapter 3. This chapter has so far considered early public relations figures such as Lee and Bernays along with examples of historical and contemporary applications. This will now be supplemented by consideration of the shifting tactics of public relations and its links to 'free market' rhetoric and deregulation.

2.5 Public relations: shifting tactics and business links

Wilcox, Ault and Agee identify three changing tactics within the formation of public relations: press agentry, publicity and what they term 'counseling'. This section will consider these shifting tactics before analysing the application of these during World War I. Press agentry is taken to mean 'hyping' and involves 'the promotion of movie and television stars, books, magazines, and so on *through shrewd use of the media and other devices*' with the press agent 'at the center of hyping' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 25. My emphasis). An aspect of this involves 'the pseudoevent, the planned happening that occurs primarily for the purpose of being reported – a part of today's public relations activities' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 26).[25] In their

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[25] Daniel Boorstin examines pseudo events in the US. Boorstin defines the pseudo event as 'not spontaneous, but comes about because someone has planned, planted or incited it' (Boorstin, 1971: 11). Further, Boorstin argues the pseudo event was primarily designed for the purpose of being reported or reproduced (Boorstin, 1972: 11). Boorstin situates the news leak as a pseudo event par excellence (Boorstin, 1972: 31).

discussion of publicity, Wilcox, Ault and Agee note that it consists of the 'issuing of news releases to the media about the activities of an organization or an individual' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 27). Miller and Dinan state that 'public relations is generally agreed to have originated in the US at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20 century' (Miller and Dinan, 2000: 5). The first publicity agency, known as the Publicity Bureau, was established in Boston in 1900. George F. Parker and Ivy Lee started a publicity office in New York City in 1904. Highlighting the genealogy of public relations, Wilcox, Ault and Agee hail Henry Ford as the first major industrialist to utilise the basic public relations concepts of 'positioning – the idea that credit and publicity always go to those who do something first' and 'ready accessibility to the press' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 30).

The third component of public relations – 'counseling' – grew out of the US labour battles in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; the work of 'muckrakers' such as Ida Tarbell, was seen to pose a 'serious threat to business' (Wilcox, Ault and Agee, 1998: 32). Carey notes that Upton Sinclair and other muckrakers 'effectively exposed the exploitation and brutality of American industry' (Carey, 1995: 80). Carey surmises that American business corporations' subsequent discovery of the pivotal importance of public opinion led to 'the development of a profession of specialists in public relations whose task it was to ensure that public beliefs about industry were such as to keep both industry and the public happy' (Carey, 1995: 80). Miller and Dinan cite Cutlip's argument that the development of public relations was a response to popular protest and demands for reform: 'These attacks created the need for institutions and industries under attack to defend themselves in the court of public opinion' (Cutlip, 1994: 3. In Miller and Dinan, 2000: 7). This reprises Ivy Lee's transformation of John D. Rockefeller from an ogre to a benefactor, discussed previously. In terms of the British experience, Miller and Dinan note that the

> …inauguration of PR capacity in Britain has tended to follow particular crises for organizations involved. In the first half of the 20th century this generally involved war, rebellion in colonies or the rise of organized labour and other democratizing tendencies (Miller, 1998. p.unknown. In Miller and Dinan, 2000: 7-8).

Corporate public relations developed in the UK during the 1940s and 1950s 'in response to pressure for nationalization', however, 'the nature of the post-1945 settlement in Britain was such that there was less scope for the rise of PR until 1979' (Miller and Dinan, 2000: 8). Public relations in the UK was 'well established in both government and industry' by the 1980s (Miller and Dinan, 2000: 8).

The history of public relations is one of shifting and growing links between business and public relations practitioners. This is particularly clear in the case of the dissemination of 'free market' rhetoric within some Western countries. For example, Millar and Dinan argue that public relations was intrinsically linked not only to business, but free market ideology. Their research found that

> …the three countries with the biggest PR industries are the three which engaged in the most marked privatization/deregulation in the 1980s – the US, the UK and Japan. By contrast, countries such as France and Germany, which retained significant elements of consensus and state investment in industry, have much smaller PR industries (Miller and Dinan, 2000: 8).

Miller and Dinan nominate lobbying for deregulation and privatisation of national assets as a key activity of public relations firms. Further, they examine close linkages between Conservative UK politicians, public relations firms and clients who stood to gain financially from contracting out (Miller and Dinan, 2000: 14). Among others, they allude to Neville Trotter MP, who became a consultant to a public relations firm that advised potential contractors. The success of the lobbying campaign was based on 'telling the [Conservative] government something it wanted to hear' (Ascher, 1987: 75. In Miller and Dinan, 2000: 14). Miller and Dinan argue that the campaign relating to the privatisation of British Telecom involved public relations, advertising, market research and design professionals (Miller and Dinan, 2000: 16). Briefly, a 'pre-marketing' campaign positioned British Telecom as having become a 'thrusting dynamic and commercially orientated public limited company' after having disposed of an inefficient 'Civil Service ethos' (British Telecom Corporate Relations Department, 1985: 4. In Miller and Dinan, 2000: 14). Television advertisements were deployed to persuade the British constituency that 'Telecom is not a boring old utility but…actually a high tech, gee-whiz, growth stock' (*The Guardian*, 1984. In Newman, 1986: 118. In Miller and Dinan, 2000: 16). In these ways, the persuasive public

relations campaigns involved framing the public flotation of British Telecom as a vibrant denationalised firm throwing off the shackles in a dynamic, deregulated business environment.

Miller and Dinan conclude that public relations and public affairs have 'seeped into the very fabric of policy and decision-making in Britain and in the European political arena' (Miller and Dinan, 2000: 27) and that public relations has an 'elective affinity with market ideology' (Miller and Dinan, 2000: 28). They argue that the public relations industry is not just a servant of capital, but

> …enabled deregulation and privatization and the huge redistribution of wealth which has been seen in Britain in the past 20 years. Without PR consultancies, both government and business would have had much more difficulty than they actually experienced (Miller and Dinan, 2000: 29).

Once again, this indicates the strong linkages between business, its strategic goals and the deployment of public relations tactics to achieve specific aims. This contributes to the thesis' argument that analysing the rhetoric used in public relations work needs to be alive to not simply 'ideas' that are propagated but to social relations of power – for example, between employers/management, employees and markets – and where the rhetoric is used.

2.6 World War I: the formation of military and business propaganda

World War I marked a major turning point for propaganda – not only in terms of its widespread and effective use during the conflict, but also the subsequent development of the field of propaganda analysis led by Lasswell. As indicated earlier in the chapter, major public relations figures such as Bernays were imbued with and inspired by the successful marriage of advertising and public relations techniques and wartime propaganda. This section builds on this in order to develop a more detailed understanding of 'propaganda' and its progression from an ecclesiastical foundation to a largely pejorative wartime device.

Wells describes World War I as a 'watershed' in the development of modern propaganda:

> The world's first experience with total war became wedded with the nation's [that is, the United States'] first systematic and institutionalized national program of propaganda (Wells, 2002: 1).[26]

Harold Lasswell, who as noted earlier pioneered propaganda studies, wrote eloquently that the Great War

> …led to the discovery of propaganda by both the man in the street and the man in the study. The discovery was far more startling to the former than the latter, because the man in the study had predecessors who had laid firm foundations for his efforts to understand propaganda. The layman had previously lived in a world where there was no common name for the deliberate forming of attitudes by the manipulation of words (Lasswell, 1938: v. Cited by Wells, 2002: 1-2).

Lasswell's analysis indicates that the widespread use of persuasive rhetorical devices to galvanise audiences in a wartime context was unknown prior to the Great War. It should also be noted that technical developments played a vital role in the diffusion of propaganda. As Squires wrote in his analysis of World War I propaganda in Britain and the US:

> The telegraph, the oceanic cable, the telephone, the typewriter and multigraph machine, the linotype, enormously improved rotary printing presses, the moving picture, the radio…an advertising technique hitherto not even dreamed of, world-wide agencies for the collection of news or alleged news and the instant transmission thereof to all parts of the world – these were some of the results of inventive ingenuity whose implications for the propagandist were immense (Squires, 1935: 13).

Scepticism regarding 'alleged news' aside, Squires goes on to make valuable points about the importance of the role expanded education played in enabling propagandists

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[26] Total war is taken here to mean a military conflict in which the participants marshal all civilian and military resources in order to obtain a complete victory. It is distinguished from the partial commitment of lives and resources in limited war. World Wars I and II are usually regarded as total wars (Total War. At www.thefreedictionary.com)

to potentially influence mass audiences by repeating rhetoric and attempting to 'conscript' constituencies, in Latour's sense of the term conscription. Squires argues that systems of universal education within Western countries provided enormous succour for propagandists:

> Prior to the French revolution, public opinion, of course, had been inevitably slow to form because of the very small size of the literacy base on which it rested. But nineteenth century democracy and nationalism, in their erection of huge systems of state education, changed all that. By 1914 the number of persons in any of the Great Powers of the West to whom the propagandist could appeal closely approximated the total population of that nation (Squires, 1935: 13).

But despite Squires stress on literacy, propaganda did not solely take linguistic forms, but also (then silent) cinema, posters and newspaper cartoons. The latter were particularly important as persuasive rhetorical devices during the Great War and these are examined in detail in the next chapter through the work of renowned Australian cartoonist Will Dyson. Dyson's work, ostensibly that of a pacifist, was recalibrated as crude anti German propaganda. Dyson's work and its subsequent wartime deployment involves considering both the gamble of communication and the complexity of sense-making enabled by rhetorical devices.

Goldfarb Marquis, like Squires, concludes that propagandists gained enormously from educational advances and hence greater literacy:

> The first effective channels for mass propaganda developed during the nineteenth century, with the approach of mass literacy and the proliferation of the printed word. What came to be called the ''yellow press'' developed rapidly during the 1880s and 1890s (Goldfarb Marquis, 1978: 468).

She further notes that newspaper circulations rose sharply in both England and the United States between 1890 and 1910 before levelling off in the 1920s. Goldfarb Marquis places the responsibility for the change in perception of propaganda – specifically the suggestion it was nefarious – with those involved with deploying such sorts of rhetoric in World War I:

Along with this growth of the popular press went the notion that the public's thinking could be moulded and channelled through the printed word. Dissemination of wire-service news from one centralized source to hundreds of newspapers in widely scattered places provided an irresistible temptation for centralized control of press information. Thus the era in which propaganda acquired its modern definition and its evil connotation clearly lies in the first two decades of the twentieth century, and more specifically in the accelerated manipulation of mass opinion and the press during the first world war (Goldfarb Marquis, 1978: 468).

This establishes a pivotal turning point in perceptions of propaganda. As Goldfarb Marquis notes, those responsible for shifting understandings of 'propaganda' had a view that it could be disseminated to shape public opinion, much as Bernays had argued. This highlights the formative linkages between propaganda and public relations and how these negative senses of propaganda differed markedly from earlier, less belligerent senses of the propagation of knowledge and doctrines by the Catholic Church and the Jesuits in particular. This underscores the inherent discursive tensions over understandings of 'propaganda'.

Taylor cites the development of mass communication and improvements in press, radio and film as being of primary importance in strengthening the impact of propaganda: 'It was the convergence of total war and the mass media that gave modern war propaganda its significance and impact in the twentieth century' (Taylor, 1990: 161-162). Enunciating a similar view, the historian of communication Mattelart writes: 'A close relationship can be observed between the rapid growth of communication technologies and the armed conflicts that broke out during the latter half of the nineteenth century' (Mattelart, 2000: 13).

Mattelart specifically cites how the first cable was laid across the Black Sea during the Crimean War (1853-56); further, he notes how the 'usefulness of the electronic telegraph in military operations and in the transmission of news' was established during the US invasion of Mexico in 1846 (Mattelart, 2000: 13). Both Taylor and Mattelart document the linkages between the formative diffusion of wartime propaganda and technological advances.

2.7 Formative perceptions of state power and propaganda

The argument that a state's power can be partially based on propaganda has been pervasive. This section builds on the earlier discussion of how relatively less belligerent senses of *propagation* of knowledge shifted to more deprecatory notions of a perversely manipulative *propaganda* and became interwoven with state power. Considering these changing deployments and ways of making sense of propaganda will highlight the growing pejorative sense of 'propaganda'. For instance, writing in the interwar period, Squires theorises propaganda as all powerful and supposedly uniting national audiences: 'The one force which was to hold the far-flung millions together, which was to channel their individual energies into an immense river of national power, was propaganda' (Squires, 1935: 14). Furthermore, Squires argues that British propaganda was 'a real force' in winning World War I and 'kept the home masses docilely patriotic. It gained, or mightily helped to gain, powerful allies' (Squires, 1935: 82).

Wilson, writing during World War II, concurs with this view of propaganda as a basis for state power. He bluntly states that propaganda was 'the new Machiavellianism of those who regard themselves above ordinary brutality' and its basic appeals 'tend to become increasingly primitive, uncivilized and irresponsible' (Wilson, 1943: 391). Propaganda, Wilson argues, was 'a power in the state' (Wilson, 1943: 395) and provided 'a technique for attaining or retaining power' (Wilson, 1943: 396).

The Nazis' conceptualisation of propaganda as a basis for state power grew out of their observations of persuasive Allied rhetoric during World War I. For example, the Australian academic Lynette Finch notes that Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels made himself familiar with Lasswell's *Propaganda Technique in World War I* (Finch: 2000: 368). Finch writes that Lasswell's book and the American political scientist Leonard Doob's (1935) *Propaganda: Its Psychology and Technique* 'were carefully read and applied in Germany during the 1930s' (Finch: 2000: 368). German leaders subsequently came to acknowledge they had lost the propaganda battle during World War I. Writing shortly before the outbreak of World War II and in

a technological determinist manner, Bruntz registered this attitude when citing the final issue of a German propaganda publication:

> In the sphere of leaflet propaganda the enemy has defeated us. We realized that in this struggle of life and death, it was necessary to use the enemy's own methods. But the spirit of the enemy leaflets will not permit itself to be killed…The enemy has defeated not as a man against man in the field of battle, bayonet against bayonet. No! Bad contents in poor printing on poor paper has made our arm lame (*Nachrichtenblatt der 18 Armee*, No. 21. In Bruntz, 1938: 69).

The Nazi propaganda theorist Hadamovsky was another advocate of the propaganda equals state power hypothesis. Hadamovsky drew on Lasswell's work in order to further his conceptualisations (Finch, 2000: 373). Writing in *Propaganda and National Power*, Hadamovsky firmly put the German defeat in World War I down to inadequate German rhetoric (Hadamovsky, 1972: 8-9. In Finch, 2000: 373). Echoing Hitler's assessment of persuasive rhetoric, Hadamovsky states that propaganda is simply 'the will to power and an instrument with which at last we will again dominate the mind' (In Eliasberg, 1942: 197. In Finch, 1999: 102). Further, Hadamovsky states the aim of propaganda was 'the elimination of all serious resistance in the masses, in order that they may be provided with bread on the basis of the national will of the masses devoted to the cause' (In Herma, 1945: 202. In Finch, 1999: 102). Hadamovsky's understanding of crude propaganda concerned its substance and application during the World War I era; atrocity propaganda was deployed extensively through radio and leaflets. For example, in his analysis of World War I propaganda films, Wells states that 'the crude anti-German war film turned out to be standard fare during the war years' which

> …often attempted to depict German soldiers as uncivilized brutes committing the most horrendous kinds of atrocities. One such movie had the memorable scene of a menacing-looking German officer throwing a baby out the window just before the officer then turns his attention to violating the nurse who had been caring for the infant. The major effect of all these types of movies is to fuel the audience's contempt and hatred for the enemy (Wells, 2002: 19).

Such apparently successful propaganda informed Nazi calculations about what constitutes persuasive rhetoric. Bruntz argues that it was undeniable that the Allies' propaganda, especially the use of aerially delivered leaflets, 'hit the German armies very hard' during World War I (Bruntz, 1938: 75). Further, Bruntz argues:

> Allied authorities were generally agreed that, sooner or later, Germany would be defeated, but even the most authoritative people thought that this defeat could not be accomplished before August 1919. Thus propaganda probably helped to hasten the end of the war (Bruntz, 1938: 75).

While attrition or military defeats could not be discounted either, the *London Times* reckoned that 'good propaganda probably saved a year of war' and hence 'meant the saving of thousands of millions in money and probably at least a million lives' (*London Times*, October 31, 1918: p.unknown. In Bruntz. 1938: 69).

These examples indicate the consolidation of 'propaganda' as a largely pernicious tool on which state power could be built and maintained. Assessing the change, the propaganda scholar Philip Taylor notes that since 1911 the Encyclopaedia Britannica had described propaganda 'as an activity relating largely to religious persuasion' (Taylor, 1990: 179). But he adds the 'popularity and virulence of wartime atrocity propaganda…led to a different meaning being assigned to the term' (Taylor, 1990: 179). The virulent deployment of persuasive rhetorical devices in the Great War irrevocably altered the earlier religious notions of propaganda. While Ellul and others would broaden conceptions of persuasive rhetoric, it has never quite recovered from the negative connotations that first arose in the post World War I period. The next section examines violence as a form of rhetoric along with the coterminous aim of targeted, specific audiences.

2.8 Terrorism and audiences: propaganda of the deed

The definitional disputes over 'terrorism' have long been documented with Herman (1982) being among the first to contest it as a disingenuous rhetorical device. In his early work critiquing terrorism and propaganda, Herman outlines a formative

hypothesis that would later inform the renowned Propaganda Model: 'The mass media of the United States are part of the national power structure and they therefore reflect its biases and mobilize popular opinion to serve its interests' (Herman, 1982: 139).

Herman's analysis was at a time of the heightening of the Cold War by the Reagan administration and its allies when typically the term 'terrorist' was applied to Communist Governments. Other scholars such as Hocking (2004), whose work will be considered shortly, have drawn on a combination of Orwellian notions of manipulative language and elements of the Propaganda Model to interrogate the category of 'terrorism'. In acknowledgement of these debates, this section considers the complex linkages between propaganda, audiences and terrorism; the rhetorical agency of and contestations involving terrorism are also dealt with. This section considers terrorist inspired rhetorical devices and the importance of recognising that media audiences are not homogenous.

As mentioned, Hocking draws on both Orwellian notions and Chomskyian theory in examining Australia's anti terror laws. For example, Hocking posits that the George W. Bush Administration used manipulative 'all-or-nothing…dichotomies' such as 'good/evil, good guys/bad guys, evil empire/freedom lovers' (Hocking, 2004: 7). She references phrases such as waging war reconfigured as 'preserving peace' and cites Slaughter in asserting that the war on terror is 'all about language' (Slaughter, 2002. In Hocking, 2004: 7). The similarity between Slaughter's argument and Lewis's emphasis on 'language' in Chapter 1 section 1.4, particularly Lewis's argument that the media is a key player in 'language wars' as a 'substantive contributor to their shape, direction and force of impact' (Lewis, 2005: 5), is acknowledged. Hocking argues that the key term 'terrorism' is ambiguous, its meaning

> …culturally and politically determined and…[changing]…over time, allowing one-time ''terrorists'' such as Nelson Mandela, Xanana Gusmao and Menachem Begin, to later shift into positions of legitimate power' (Hocking, 2004: 2).

Drawing on Herman and Chomsky, Hocking argues that an immediate manifestation of the use of 'terrorism' involves

…the labelling of particular acts as ''terrorism'', not on the basis of the nature of those acts, but on the basis of the political nature of those groups or regimes which enacted them' (Hocking, 2004: 3).

Thus, the Castro regime in Cuba and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua can be designated as terrorists while those backed by the US such as the Somoza and Indonesian military regimes were not (Hocking, 2004: 3). Hocking argues that the Howard Government's post September 11 terror laws, designed to counter the threat of 'terrorism', were 'unprecedented and dangerous' (Hocking, 2004: 11), underpinning her assessment with the argument that 'terrorism' is a 'politicised term, and the ability to determine the circumstances of its application – to label the enemy – is a potent political weapon' (Hocking, 2004: 4). Hocking's work provides insights into the fluidity of propagandistic terminology and also the reinvention of its objects, whereby one time 'terrorists' such as Mandela can become subsequently hailed as state leaders. Yet Hocking pays little attention to the potential diversity of audiences, positioning them as relatively passive receivers, particularly with regard to what she terms as the 'easy elision' between 'terrorists' and 'asylum seekers' (Hocking, 2004: 9) in Australia after September 11. This aspect of Hocking's argument lacks detailed empirical evidence and the fixation on 'manipulative language' alludes to a nefarious government promulgating a 'big lie'. This also connotes lack of attention to potential sites of resistance.[27] The communicative dimensions of terrorism and historical instances of these are now considered.

Schmid and de Graaf were among the first to highlight and analyse the rhetorical aspects of terrorism:

> Most of the news of the nineteenth-century establishment press was dedicated to the actions of the powerful in society. Yet by affecting the lives of the powerful

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[27] Reviews for Hocking's book were mixed. Smith, writing for the Australian Public Intellectual Network, praised the work for its potential to enable citizens to 'form a critical appreciation' of governmental rhetoric (Smith, 2004). However, the journalist Tony Parkinson took Hocking to task following the bombing of the Red Cross offices in Baghdad in October, 2003, contending her argument about 'terrorism', particularly its Chomskyian basis, was 'not only circular but surreal'. Parkinson argues that Hocking's work provides a summation of a relativist approach, which he connotes as premised on a specious debate wherein the war on terror was 'all about language' (Parkinson, 2003). This is usually a conservative dismissal of certain sorts of argument. In his account, Wilson argues that conservatives take relativism to mean that leftist opponents view '*all* truth is relative' (Wilson, 1995: xi. Wilson's emphasis) and link this with derogatory and dismissive notions of 'political correctness'.

the powerless could also enter the pages of the press and thereby shape public opinion…the goal was to reach public opinion, to send a message that made all the powerful tremble and gave the powerless hope (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 12).

Schmid and de Graaf examine the diffusion of propaganda by revolutionaries, including Russians, in the 19th century. Disseminating ideas through pamphlets was considered problematic due to distribution difficulties and a lack of literacy. The revolutionaries, who as noted aimed to influence public opinion, conceived propaganda of the deed as 'deeds that would speak for themselves' (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 12). Schmid and de Graaf cite Paul Brousse, an early proponent of this tactic, defining an 'exemplary example' as showing the masses 'that which they were unable to read, to teach them socialism in practice, to make it visible, tangible, concrete' (In Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 12).[28] Thus, violence itself came to be understood as a legitimate communicative form when advancing a wider argument to an audience. The Russian anarchist revolutionaries of the late 1870s placed emphasis on communicative practices when developing their theory of terrorism; the killing of high government officials was given prominence so 'that the message was clear' (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 13).

Instancing this theory of violence as communication, the Russian anarchist revolutionaries of the late nineteenth century construed that 'bombing was a form of language' (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 176):

> Their bombs were means of expressing their dissent with the inhuman social order in which they found themselves, an autocratic order that granted no freedom of the press (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 176).

In considering their communicative strategies, the revolutionaries worked out they would no longer have to rely on small-circulation pamphlets, but their message would rather

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[28] Paul Brousse (1844-1912) was a French socialist, who edited newspapers and published articles legitimising propaganda of the deed.

…be taken over by the official bourgeois press and to those who could not read, word-of-mouth accounts of the successful killing of a king or minister would provide communication' (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 13).

Within this schema:

The national press and the international news agencies, aided by the telegraph, could carry the news of violent deeds to remote regions and countries, thereby providing a free and fast external communication network for the terrorists (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 13).

Schmid and de Graaf consider Boorstin's theory of pseudo events when arguing that many, but not all, acts of insurgent terrorism were not staged 'for their local effects but for their mediated effects' (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 219). It is this notion of terrorism as a form of mass mediated rhetoric – directed at specific constituencies – that primarily underscores their argument. They cite the attack by members of the Black September group against Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games at Munich as an example. In terms of the potential audience for the mass mediated violence, they note the perpetrators 'captured the attention of an estimated 800 million spectators' (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 30). Indeed, a key goal had been to 'echo with the international press' (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 30). Schmid and de Graaf argue that the technique of capturing and thus drawing attention to the cause of recognition of Palestinian rights and land dispossession was achieved through the mediatised 'bloody spectacle unfolding in the Olympic village' with 'ski-hooded terrorists' (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 31).

Schmid and de Graaf invoke notions of public relations – not defined but presumably involving the successful assertion of persuasive rhetoric – to an international audience. Schmid and de Graaf conclude that heightened awareness of the Palestinian cause and increased potential recruits demonstrate the communicative facets of brutal action:

In the Arab world Black September met widespread understanding and even approval for its action. Thousands of Palestinians joined the terrorist organizations in the wake of this *public relations success*…millions of people who had up till then never taken any notice of the Palestinian cause were

alerted. While part of the world reacted with unreserved condemnation, others argued that if Palestinians were so dedicated that they sacrificed themselves for their cause, there had to be something worthwhile about it (Schmid and de Graaf, 1982: 31. My emphasis).[29]

This example shows how violence can have rhetorical facets.[30] Schmid and de Graaf's account also indicates the different audiences involved. Part of the audience, they argue, denounced the violent action while another was conscripted to its merits. The mention of public relations, while not elaborated, draws attention to it as a cognate activity.

Nacos' (2007) analysis continues an examination of the linkages between terrorism, propaganda and the commercial mass media across a range of instances including the September 11 attacks and the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, to name two. Nacos argues that the mass media's fixation with accumulating larger audiences and revenue plays an important role in the terrorists' messages being deployed via various media. She argues that combined with the intoxicating nature of infotainment, this makes for an irresistible cocktail

> …as the media move from news as information to news-as-entertainment continues, especially on television, media organizations seem increasingly inclined to exploit terrorism as infotainment for their own imperatives (ie, ratings and circulation). More than ever before, terrorists and the media are in a quasi symbiotic relationship (Nacos, 2007: 29).

In these ways, the deployment of terrorist rhetoric is seen to be interwoven with quests for larger audiences and hence potential increased revenues. Tuman reaches a similar conclusion to that of Nacos, arguing that terrorists and the mass media share a symbiotic relationship: 'Media benefit from this relationship, for terrorist activities

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[29] Schmid and de Graaf cite Hacker as a basis for their claim that thousands of Palestinians joined like minded groups in the wake of the Black September attack (Hacker, 1975: 168).

[30] US President George W. Bush directly acknowledged communicative dimensions of violence in 2004. Speaking after a series of car bombings in Iraq, Bush stated: 'Car bombs that destroy young children or car bombs that indiscriminately bomb in religious sites are effective propaganda tools' (Edinburgh Evening News, 2004). Bush did not define 'propaganda' per se, but clearly viewed it within a persuasive framework, linking the bombings and other violence to its potential to dissuade Americans from supporting the US-led conflict in Iraq.

also help generate viewer and reader interest, ensuring an even bigger audience' (Tuman, 2003: 120).

Nacos' argument is that the mass media's commercial basis – her analysis predominantly deals with US media – and its revenue driven structure contributes to the circulation of quotations of terrorist propaganda. She argues that in their

> …perennial hunt for larger audiences, advertising dollars, and ultimately profits, corporate media institutions dictate that special attention is paid to those events and developments that are most prone to fit the infotainment genre and believed to attract large audiences (Nacos, 2007: 99).

Nacos's argument, while provocative, is problematic given its level of generality. Her assertion that all corporate media – and hence media formats and framings – focus on those incidents that interlock with the infotainment genre treats all media as necessarily the same.

Significantly, Nacos diverges from the Chomskyian view of the media as interlocked with special interests that dictate the state and private activity. Nacos cites media coverage of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing as an exemplar of demonstrated terrorist propaganda. Briefly, the bombing was carried out by Timothy McVeigh on the Alfred P Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. McVeigh exploded an explosive filled truck in front of the building; 168 lives were lost. McVeigh was motivated by his hatred of the federal government and what he perceived to be its mishandling of a siege at Waco, Texas, in 1993, which led to the loss of seventy six lives. Nacos situates McVeigh as a domestic terrorist who had a 'media centered plan' (Nacos, 2007: 168).

She argues that the date alone of the bombing – the second anniversary of the FBI's raid on the Branch Davidian sect's compound at Waco, Texas – enabled the media to go with the 'clues he left': 'McVeigh made sure that the mass media would dig into his and like-minded people's causes and grievances against the Federal Government' (Nacos, 2007: 168). Yet more important for McVeigh and his fellow travellers was the potential to influence public attitudes through mass mediated violence

…as the news devoted a great deal of attention to the incident at Waco and the sentiments of right-wing extremists opposed to the Federal Government's alleged abuse of power, the public was reminded daily of the Waco nightmare that many Americans had probably forgotten. The result was a dramatic change in public attitudes toward Federal agents' actions during the Waco incident. Shortly after the Oklahoma City bombing in April 1995, nearly three in four Americans approved of the actions of the FBI in Waco, but three months later, after an intensive mass mediated debate of Waco and Oklahoma City, two in four Americans disapproved of the way the FBI and other Federal agencies handled the Waco situation (Nacos, 2007: 168).

Nacos places the specific politico-cultural situation of the Oklahoma bombing within the paradigm of communicative violence. However, Herman and Chomsky argue that the media permit and encourage 'spirited debate, criticism, and dissent, as long as these remain faithfully within the system of presuppositions and principles that encourage an elite consensus' (Herman and Chomsky, 1994: 302). Yet this subsequent robust media coverage calls into question the utility of Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model. The media, in this instance, are not simply passive vehicles aligned with governmental elites given their highlighting of grievances and vigorous revisitation of the disastrous Waco siege.

In conclusion, this section has considered violence as a persuasive rhetorical device, both in terms of its historical and contemporary application. This is to concur with Tuman's argument that the

> …real goal of the communicated message in terrorism may be considered persuasion: to persuade audience members…*to pay attention to an issue they have ignored* or to persuade them to do something they might not otherwise do – such as persuading our government to rethink its support for Israel in the Middle East (Tuman, 2003: 23. My emphasis).

This persuasion of governmental authorities may occur through voting. However, audiences are not homogenous and contestations over terrorist rhetoric, even the term 'terrorism' itself, are intense and longstanding, as evinced by the examples cited

earlier. Building on these debates, specific devices and mediums employed for the dissemination of violent propaganda are now considered.

2.9 Choreography of the bloodbath: new media and cascading images

Media technologies have grown exponentially since early proponents of propaganda of the deed attempted to galvanise and persuade audiences. This section considers the use of new media for the diffusion of propaganda aimed at multiple audiences. Hoffman argues that the weapons of terrorism have been expanded to include the mini cam, video tape, editing suite and production facilities along with lap top and desk top computers, CD burners and email accounts (Hoffman, 2006: 1).[31] Hoffman argues that terrorist communication has evolved to the point that terrorists are now controlling the entire production process, 'determining the content, context and medium over which their message is projected; and towards precisely the audience (or multiple audiences) they seek to reach' (Hoffman, 2006: 1).

Hoffman argues that this enables terrorists to challenge 'the monopoly over mass communication' on their rhetoric 'long exercised by commercial and state-owned broadcasting outlets'. The new media effectively empowers terrorist movements 'with the ability to shape and disseminate their own message in their own way: enabling them to bypass completely traditional, established media outlets' (Hoffman, 2006: 1). Other political and social groups have also been able to produce materials and arguments taken up by major media. The anti globalisation protest at Seattle in 1999 is but one example of this. Reflecting on this violent demonstration as a media event, Nacos posits that it 'resulted in news reporting that put the perpetrators' causes and grievances in front of the general public and decision makers alike' (Nacos, 2007: 73). Keane examines the impact of these types of actions by minorities in his article regarding 'monitory democracy', which is defined by the 'rapid growth of many

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[31] Hoffman completed his research on behalf of the RAND Corporation, a not for profit policy think tank that grew out of the Douglas Aircraft Company in America in 1945. It was first formed to offer research and analysis to US armed forces. Founders defined its broad purpose in 1948 as to 'further and promote scientific, educational, and charitable purposes, all for the public welfare and security of the United States' (RAND Corporation, 2010).

different kinds of extra-parliamentary, power-scrutinising mechanisms' (Keane, 2009). Briefly, Keane argues that some monitory groups are 'remarkable for their evanescence; in a fast-changing world, they come on the scene, stir the pot, then move on like nomads, or dissolve into thin air'. Keane argues this form of power monitoring could make 'room for opinions and ways of life that people feel strongly about, despite their neglect or suppression by parties, parliaments and governments'. This, in turn, had the 'combined effect of raising the level and quality of public monitoring of power' (Keane, 2009), by those such as the protestors at Seattle. Keane alludes to the potential impact of monitory democracy on power relations with his argument that its mechanisms including 'surveys, focus groups, deliberative polling, online petitions and audience and customer voting' has the 'effect of interrupting and often silencing the soliloquies of parties, politicians and parliaments' (Keane, 2009). Keane's argument provides an alternative to the SMR model of communication; crucially, he considers relative 'minority' actors disseminating 'opinions' or rhetoric to contest that which is promulgated by governmental elites. The Seattle protestors risked the possibility of universal damnation, yet there was also the possibility some of their complaints may be circulated. The protestors did not disseminate 'their own message in their own way', however, still managed to get their points across to audiences through the mainstream media. These are precisely intense struggles and contestations over rhetorical artefacts and practices – involving dissemination of phraseology and imagery along with means of dissemination such as use of mobile phone cameras – embedded in the power relations between the actors involved.

Hoffman also notes attempts by al Qaeda to galvanise potential recruits through propagandistic rhetoric on the al Neda website. The site features 'exhortations to Muslims that Islam involves a commitment to spread the faith by the sword'. Other persuasive rhetorical elements of the site include accounts of fighting with US and allied forces, suggested readings, justification for the September 11 attacks along with video clips and messages praising the operation. Poetry was also deployed to 'glorify the sacrifices of the martyrs and the importance of unrelenting struggle against Islam's enemies' (Hoffman, 2003: 10-11). In terms of the audience, Hoffman argues that al Qaeda's persuasive rhetoric was designed to recruit, mobilise and animate 'would-be fighters, supporters and sympathizers' (Hoffman, 2003: 9). Hoffman identifies five potential audiences for rhetoric disseminated through the internet by

what he terms 'Islamic extremists'. Firstly, the rhetoric can be 'designed to inform, educate, solicit support…and ultimately rally the masses behind the insurgents or terrorists'. Secondly, it can be a 'vehicle for recruitment'. Thirdly, it can be 'conceived to promote or ensure compliance through threat or blandishment'. Fourthly, the rhetoric can seek to 'undermine popular confidence in government and security forces inability to provide effective defense or protection'. Finally, it could also be directed internally 'towards members of the terrorist group…to strengthen morale, dampen dissent or justify and legitimize or explain particularly controversial decisions or operations' (Hoffman, 2006: 3). This underscores the multiple meanings potentially attributable and the diversity of audiences. As Hoffman summarises, this rhetoric can be directed at

> …an uncommitted audience to win sympathy and support…[and] the terrorists' or insurgents' actual or would-be constituents, the public at large, the enemy government…or even inwardly at the underground fighters themselves as a means to promote and enhance internal cohesion and morale (Hoffman, 2006: 3).

This demonstrates the potential power relations between individuals, propagating persuasive rhetoric on behalf of groups such as al Qaeda, governments, media organisations and diverse audiences. The Dutch-born former Middle East correspondent Joris Luyendijk, in his memoirs, examines the complexity of both 'Arab' and 'Muslim' audiences and al Qaeda's rhetoric. Luyendijk is cited at length given his significant attention to the intricacies involving these matters. On the former, Luyendijk notes there are 'enormous differences between people' in individual Arab countries (Luyendijk, 2009: 40). For example, Palestinians ridicule the inhabitants of Hebron as 'stupid and old-fashioned' (Luyendijk, 2009: 40). In his assessment of Arabic diversity, Luyendijk draws attention to the 'millions of Christian Arabs' and 'Arab Jews who used to live all over the Middle East until the creation of Israel' (Luyendijk, 2009: 41). Luyendijk also highlights a key constituency, non violent Islamic conservatives, who remained 'almost invisible' in Western media after September 11. Briefly, Luyendijk defines this group as

> …the non violent faction of political Islam – those Muslims who say they want to express and promote their conservative or fundamentalist interpretations of Islam without violence…there are underlying conflicts, a wide range of

opinions and interpretations, and enormous differences between Islamic fundamentalists (Luyendijk, 2009: 106-107).

Luyendijk highlights a key argument of the thesis, specifically, that audiences are non homogenous, and demonstrates the diversity of audiences within Arab countries. Similar to Hoffman, Luyendijk also examines the meanings attributable to al Qaeda's persuasive rhetoric. Yet Luyendijk examines another narrative promulgated by bin Laden, namely that 'Western governments had been supporting the most important Arab dictatorships…with money, weapons and intelligence for decades' (Luyendijk, 2009: 105). Summarising bin Laden's argument, Luyendijk states that the al Qaeda leader views Western governmental support for Arab dictators as 'interference' and argues:

> Muslims are poor and weak because they are repressed and exploited by dictators. You Westerners support the dictators. If we attack you, we'll drive a wedge between you and the dictators. In any case, we'll draw the attention of ordinary Muslims to the support that their repressors are getting from the West (Luyendijk, 2009: 105).

Examining the meaning that could be attributed to this, Luyendijk argues that bin Laden was aiming to present his 'programme as one of self defence' (Luyendijk, 2009: 105). Luyendijk starkly demonstrates the diversity and breadth of potential audiences with his paraphrased assessment of bin Laden's 'Muslims are weak' rhetoric: potential recruits and sympathisers; Westerners (to desist their support of Arab dictators); and Arab dictators (to desist from repressing Muslims on the basis of support from Western governments). This is not to suggest jihadist rhetoric is uncontested, including within different Islamic cultural groups and religious practices including those of interpretations of the Koran, with the US using multifarious mediums to circulate its viewpoints. Briefly, Iraqi newspapers were paid in 2005 by American contractors, the Lincoln Group, to run positive articles with headlines like 'MORE MONEY GOES TO IRAQ'S DEVELOPMENT' and 'THE SANDS ARE BLOWING TOWARD A DEMOCRATIC IRAQ' (Goodman and Goodman, 2006: 63). Iraqex, a forerunner to the Lincoln Group, won a $6 million Pentagon contract in mid 2004 to design and execute 'an aggressive advertising and PR campaign that will

accurately inform the Iraqi people of the Coalition's goals and gain their support' (Goodman and Goodman, 2006: 64).[32]

The International Crisis Group, an independent, non profit, non governmental organisation committed to preventing and resolving deadly conflict, has carried out research on the shifting propaganda techniques of insurgent groups in the Iraq conflict. The analysis found the insurgent groups initially circulated crude leaflets before enhancing their methods to include sophisticated compact discs replete with elaborate soundtracks and scenes borrowed from Arab television (International Crisis Group, 2006: 7). Propaganda of the deed was a bloody rhetorical feature with insurgent groups making their videos

> …highly professional…to make their case and highlight their deeds. Among these, the most notable and highly valued because of their high media return were the meticulously staged executions of foreigners (International Crisis Group, 2006: 7).

This registers the shifting media strategies of insurgent groups in the Iraq conflict. There are different connotations for discrete audiences at whom the execution videos are targeted. For potential sympathisers and/or recruits, there is the implication of galvanising for a righteous cause while vanquishing a humiliated invader and its representatives; for audiences in the West whose governments support the invasion, the videos mobilise strategies to sway opinion by presenting these constituencies with a 'different picture' such as the 'depth of the coalition's quagmire' (International Crisis Group, 2006: 22-23).

Further in this connection, Weimann has written extensively on terrorism and the mass media. In his analysis, Weimann identifies three distinct audiences targeted by terrorist websites – current and potential supporters, international public opinion and

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[32] Buncombe provides an extensive overview of the Lincoln Group's operations and a comparison between its supplied articles and actual events. Buncombe, in his reportage-style analysis, notes that an internal Pentagon investigation cleared Lincoln of breaching military rules by planting stories as the news reports 'did not constitute propaganda because they were factually correct'. Buncombe quotes John Pike, director of GlobalSecurity.org, a Washington-based defence think tank, situating the Lincoln Group product as blatant propaganda while deriding it as cheesy and embarrassing, partly due to its 'cartoonish' vignettes of the putative bravery of Iraqi Security Forces (Buncombe, 2006). Buncombe's analysis highlights the fiercely contested notion of what constitutes 'propaganda'.

enemy publics (Weimann, 2004: 1). He argues that groups employing terror tactics use the internet to disseminate persuasive rhetoric in order to communicate with supporters, foster public awareness of and sympathy for their causes and even execute operations (Weimann, 2004: 1). In his analysis, Weimann identifies three rhetorical strategies employed by terrorists to justify violence. Firstly, they argue there is no choice 'other than to turn to violence' in order to respond to an oppressive enemy while

> …the forceful actions of the governments and regimes that combat the terrorists are heavily emphasized and characterized with terms such as 'slaughter', 'murder' and 'genocide'. The terrorist organization is depicted as constantly persecuted, its leaders subject to assassination attempts and its supporters massacred (Weimann, 2004: 6).

Secondly, the enemy is demonised and members of the terrorist group presented as freedom fighters with responsibility for violence shifted from the terrorist to the adversary, which is accused of 'brutality, inhumanity and immorality'. Thirdly, terrorist websites 'make extensive use of the language of nonviolence' to counter their violent image and argue that their ultimate aim is a diplomatic solution (Weimann, 2004: 6).[33] This marks an attempt to explain particular courses of action in particular struggles.

Weimann's research demonstrates the persuasive strategies – never uncontested – of terrorist groups. These groups seek to sway multiple audiences with cascading inscriptions, essentially accelerated iterations, to demonise foes while mustering, increasing or ensuring the 'fidelity of new allies' (Latour, 1990: 24). Thus, they seek to circulate the notion of violence as justifiable and inevitable to multifarious audiences while conscripting potential adherents. Contestations to this rhetoric through the emerging concept of 'soft power' are now examined.

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[33] This is not to assume that 'terrorist' insurgents in Iraq are monolithic and unified. In its analysis, the International Crisis Group identifies four main groups – al Qaeda's Organisation in Mesopotamia, Partisans of the Sunna Army, the Islamic Army in Iraq and the Islamic Front of the Iraqi Resistance – as well as at least nine other groups (International Crisis Group, 2006: 1-3). The International Crisis Group found that the insurgents had converged around a 'predominantly Sunni Arab identity' with virtually all adhering 'to a blend of Salafism and patriotism' (p.1).

2.10 The hard currency of soft power

Soft power – as opposed to hard, military, power – is increasingly being considered pivotal as a powerful tool in the 'war on terror'. This section considers the use of soft power as a propagandistic rhetorical set of practices, primarily but not solely used by the US, to contest anti Western arguments and rhetoric, some of which was previously outlined. Joseph Nye coined the term soft power and defined it as

> …the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced (Nye, 2004: x).

Nye cites examples of soft power as young people behind the Iron Curtain listening to American music or news on Radio Free Europe, Chinese students symbolising their protests in Tiananmen Square by recreating a replica of the Statue of Liberty and Afghans since the US led invasion in 2001 asking for copies of the US Bill of Rights (Nye, 2004: x). Primarily, Nye locates soft power within a framework that would potentially lead to reduced military spending and other payments: 'When you get others to admire your ideals and to want what you want, you don't have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction' (Nye, 2004: x). Thus, soft power names the use of persuasion of various sorts designed to conscript potential audiences to the merits of US political ideals and policies. Soft power includes Hollywood films, associated merchandise and other consumer goods.[34] Nye's argument is summarised as a prelude to examining the deployment of soft power within the 'war on terror'. Nye correctly notes that public diplomacy had a long history as a means of promoting a country's soft power (Nye, 2009: 607). Public diplomacy, considered by some as a euphemism for propaganda (Waller, 2007: 332,

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[34] Leaked diplomatic cables show the US government highly focused on US television programs as a form of soft power in Saudi Arabia and a means of combating extremism. A cable headed 'Ideological and Ownership Trends in the Saudi Media' quotes unnamed Saudi editors and television managers extolling the popularity of US programs such as *Letterman, Desperate Housewives* and *Friends*. The cable quotes an unnamed Saudi: 'It's still all about the War of Ideas here, and the American programming…is winning over ordinary Saudis in a way that…other US propaganda never could. Saudis are now very interested in the outside world…they are fascinated by US culture in a way they never were before.' The cable also notes that the programming is popular in 'remote, conservative corners of the country' with young people imitating Western dress styles (*The Guardian*, 2010).

334), is taken here to mean governmental efforts to inform or influence public opinion in other countries through publications, motion pictures, cultural exchanges, radio and television (US Department of State, 1987: 85). Thus, both soft power and public diplomacy are designed to galvanise and garner potential allies to a particular nation's policy aims.

Stan Correy, arguably Australia's premier investigative radio journalist, has presented two extensive reports for Australian Broadcasting Corporation's Radio National on how public relations techniques have been deftly enhanced and refined in the battle over narratives and the war of ideas in the 'war on terror'. Congruent with this is the fundamental primacy of garnering allies and influencing audiences and constituencies. There are echoes of Latour's point about conscripting audiences in the American public relations strategist John Rendon's statement about this, cited by Correy

> …it's a war of potential allies. And these allies are individuals and they're citizens, and here is the reason we say that. We say that it's not a war against Islam, and we run the risk that 1.2 billion people will hear that it is. If 1% of them are violent extreme actors bent on attacking and destroying the United States of America, and coalition partners, that's 12 million people. If they come with support networks of 2% to 3%, that's 48 million people. Now no government in the United States, regardless of political party or ideology is going to authorise the construction of a combat operations plan that goes after 48 million people one by one…the threat comes not from the 12 million people, the 1%, the threat comes from the rest, if we don't get them engaged in the nature of this conflict. What we need to do is…turn the street into an active ally and away from being a passive observer (Rendon in Correy, 2006).

While others have noted the importance of audiences, perhaps none have so starkly defined the contours and substance in quantitative terms, as it applies to the 'war on terror', as has Rendon. The public relations guru's use of percentages and figures highlights his estimation of audience numbers and the significance of influencing them for those prosecuting the 'war on terror'. His final sentence effectively sums up a key dilemma for the US and its allies – how to win support from Islamic audiences and constituencies. Apart from the highly generalised and homogenous Islamic

'street', it is clear that Rendon and those with his framework view mustering allies to the policy aims of the US as pivotal to their cause.

In his analysis, Correy cites disputes over casualty figures, faked photographs and premature claims of victory as aspects of the public relations war before connecting public diplomacy with both soft power and propaganda. The former US diplomat John Brown, who resigned over the decision to invade Iraq, drew parallels between public diplomacy and propaganda, yet also maintains a difference while at the same time highlighting the crucial linkage between public diplomacy and public opinion

> …public diplomacy focuses on communication to audiences, often wide audiences. Now public diplomacy is meant to supplement, if you will, traditional diplomacy because I think even the most traditional diplomats, the negotiating types if you will realise that you can't have negotiations between governments any more because of the importance of public opinion, because of the importance of mass communication, *so you have to take into consideration as you negotiate with governments, what publics in different countries think* (Brown in Correy, 2006. My emphasis).

Brown's interpretation contextualises public diplomacy within a framework of persuasion designed to influence particular audiences. In a second investigative piece, Correy further examines notions of soft power while describing the views of the influential Australian military strategist Colonel David Kilcullen.[35] Kilcullen defines both the Taliban and the Mahdi Army, an Iraqi Shiite militia, as 'armed propaganda organisations', arguing that 'because these insurgent groups are good at propaganda, the coalition forces also have to be good at it' (In Correy, 2007). Correy highlights Kilcullen's acuity with regard to media audiences:

> Remember the global audience. One of the biggest differences between the counter-insurgencies our fathers fought and those we face today is the omnipresence of globalised media. Most houses in Iraq have one or more satellite dishes (Kilcullen in Correy, 2007).

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[35] David Kilcullen is an expert on guerrilla warfare who served as a senior advisor to US General David Patraeus in Iraq. He provided the intellectual foundation for the so called troop surge (an increase in the number of US troops) in 2007. His book (2009) *The Accidental Guerilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* surveys war as it is currently fought and contends counterinsurgency and protracted guerrilla warfare are the order of the day rather than 'shock and awe'.

Kilcullen's statement, partly, acknowledges the rise of Al Jazeera, the international news network based in Qatar and which came under furious criticism from members of the Bush administration for allegedly disseminating 'propaganda'.[36] It is Mattelart who digs deeper in his analysis of soft power, arguing it firmly mirrors the 'thinking of the US military establishment' and thus echoing 'an updated notion of ''American national interests'' at a time when US information dominance was becoming obvious' (Mattelart, 2002: 601). Further, Mattelart links this to notions of a specific geo-strategic outlook resulting from the evaporation of the communist bloc – dubbed by proponents 'a revolution in military affairs' (Mattelart, 2002: 601). Mattelart argues that proponents of this view consider

> …wars of agrarian and industrial civilization in the era of information war were a relic of the past, requiring careful doses of intervention and abstention. War, which required legitimacy in the name of humanitarian universalism, thus had a number of targets, *from which America's overriding national interests would choose* (Mattelart, 2002: 601. My emphasis).

Mattelart locates soft power as a major practical component of US and Allied post 1991 discourses, including 'the end of history' rhetoric. Mattelart further notes the linkages between the US military's use of geo-economic criteria for decision making and its promotion of 'an offensive strategy of peaceful enlargement of the world market as a paradigm' (Mattelart, 2002: 601). Consequently, the revolution in military affairs

> …assigned prime importance to extending the realm of free trade, revealing the close links it was developing among the control of information networks, the universalist model of market democracy and the so-called ''global security'' strategy intended to ensure the stability of the planet viewed strictly through the prism of new liberalism (Mattelart, 2002: 601).

Mattelart's analysis considers soft power as a geopolitical strategy that grew out of military thinking, in what was conceptualised as a 'unipolar world' following the

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[36] Jehane Noujaim's documentary (2005) *Control Room* examines contested perceptions of Al Jazeera and allegations of 'propaganda' being disseminated in the Iraq conflict. Then US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, an architect of the Iraq invasion, appears repeatedly in the documentary accusing Al Jazeera of transmitting anti American propaganda. Highlighting the contested nature of what constitutes propaganda, the Iraqi Information Minister (at 2003) Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf is also shown accusing the network of transmitting American propaganda.

implosion of the Soviet Union and its allies and satellites, to serve US national interest by extending free trade and liberalising markets. Thus, soft power is more than simply Hollywood, Coca Cola and McDonald's. Soft power is a set of strategic practices and relations including digitalised media and communication technologies for acquiring envisaged concrete results.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to outline the shifting notions and remarkable development of public relations, particularly noting its early linkages to propagandistic wartime rhetoric. Propaganda is now a long way removed from earlier, more positive notions of religious propagation. The recalibration of rhetorical artefacts, particular groupings of words, sounds and images in attempts to sway specific audiences is part of this. Amongst other things, the chapter highlights the connections between public relations and the diffusion of free market ideology. This involves the related strategies of soft power. Importantly, the chapter contests the notion that audiences are supposedly homogenous. It instead advances the argument that constituencies are distinctly non homogenous, as evidenced by the arguments of Luyendijk (2009) and the International Crisis Group (2006).

The chapter title 'Us and Them' partly alludes to populist and often orientalist arguments of alterity, particularly as addressed by Edward Said. It needs to be noted that the basis for such arguments, specifically Said's reading of Foucault, has been examined by academics such as Dutton and Williams (1993). Briefly, for Said, Orientalism is 'identified as a discursive formation' and further it is,

> …classified as a technology of power, a concept taken from Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979b), and an exemplification of the Foucauldian concept of the nexus between social relations of power and forms of knowledge (Dutton and Williams, 1993: 315).

Dutton and Williams argue that Said's critique of Foucault demonstrates that for Said, power is 'easily reduced, in populist terms, to an assumed commodity form which

some possess and many others lack' (Dutton and Williams, 1993: 318). Against this, they summarise Foucault's argument that

> …power is not simply congruent with war, force, struggle and conflict, but also concerns the designation, specification, classification, inciting and currency of the objects it identifies, from individuals and populations to geographical regions (Foucault, 1981: 253-254). Power, then, consists in legally constituted and socially differentiated ''rights'' or capacities: to know, to classify as well as to be classified (Dutton and Williams, 1993: 319).

In some ways, Foucault's work is a precursor to Latour's work on cascading inscription and indicates ways in which propagandistic rhetoric, for instance, can address and persuade specific audiences. Said's work is further referenced in the following chapter regarding mediatised representations of the former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. Dutton and Williams' analysis demonstrates the linkage between social relations of power and what is taken as knowledge. Building on these discussions, the next chapter will apply both framing theory and Latour's analytical tools to media texts regarding Saddam Hussein.

Chapter 3

Saddam Hussein: A Made to Order Rhetorical Rat

3.1 Introduction

Pejorative presentations of the Arab/Muslim 'other' have been relayed relentlessly across a diversified range of media texts after September 11. This chapter considers these rhetorical repetitions, particularly in the context of the demonisation of the former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. Framings of cascaded repetitions are interrogated along with struggles over presentations and interpretations. Bruno Latour's analytical tools are also applied to specific media texts to identify examples of rhetorical artefacts coalesced to form particular inscriptions. Former US President George W. Bush's recurring use of rhetorical devices, particularly the word 'evil' to demonise enemies and galvanise potential supporters for the 'war on terror', are also examined as part of this analysis. Further, contestations against then dominant conservative inscriptions within the 'war on terror' and challenging notions of US-Australia relations are considered through the provocative work of cartoonists such as Nicholson and to a lesser extent, Leunig.

3.2 The not so new others

There has been a diverse range of critical investigations into notions of the Arab/Muslim 'other'. This section briefly considers these analytical works as a prelude to considering rhetoric in specific media texts. Shaheen's (2008) commentary on Hollywood's portrayal of the Arab/Muslim 'other' after September 11 is one form of contemporary analysis. Shaheen argues negative representation of Arabs has an extensive lineage with malevolent stereotypes 'equating Islam and Arabs with

violence' enduring for more than a century (Shaheen, 2008: xi). Apart from examining specific film texts, Shaheen also argues that television dramas such as *The District, Sleeper Cell, The Agency* and *Threat Matrix*, to name a few, present Arab Americans as 'backward religious radicals who merit profiling, imprisonment, torture, and death' (Shaheen, 2008: 47). Shaheen also examines the notorious television series *24,* which featured actor Kiefer Sutherland as super agent Jack Bauer. Shaheen's analysis found that in three out of six seasons (2003/04, 2004/05 and 2006/07) about half of the programs focus on Bauer bringing down Arab, Arab American and Muslim American rogues including suicide bombers and nuclear terrorists. Bauer frequently tortures and kills numerous Muslim and Arab 'fanatics' (Shaheen, 2008: 49). *Time* magazine argues that *24* 'comes as close as anything has to being Official Cultural Product of the War on Terror' (In Ayres, 2010). In his journalistic commentary, Ayres posits *24* is a 'political statement' that was helpful 'in selling the Bush Administration's response to 9/11 – including the attack of Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq – to the American people' (Ayres, 2010).

There has been important work done by Australian researchers interrogating notions of the 'other' and 'othering' in a themed edition of Media International Australia (2003). Poynting and Noble analyse the former Howard Government's use of 'dog whistle politics' – a sharp message that like a dog whistle calls clearly to those targeted and is unheard by others – in the 2001 federal election. Briefly, they argue the Howard Government used the Tampa crisis and September 11 to 'appeal successfully to popular xenophobia and insecurities' (Poynting and Noble, 2003: 41). They analyse media articles involving three examples – a Muslim women's gym, halal hamburgers and a Muslim man threatened with dismissal for praying in his lunch hour. They conclude that anti Arab and Muslim racism was fuelled by 'populist columnists and opportunist politicians equating terrorism, ethnic crime gangs, Islam, misogynist violent crime, Muslim ethnic-religious leaders, Middle Eastern asylum seekers and other folk devils' presented in media articles (Poynting and Noble, 2003: 47).

In the same Media International Australia edition, Manning examines the inscriptions of 'Arab' and 'Muslim' within articles in two Sydney daily newspapers over two years. Drawing on Said's concept of orientalism, which will be considered shortly,

Manning argues 'a consistency of view' can be found in issues such as the Palestine-Israel conflict, the Lebanese rape trials and the arrival of asylum seekers and that this represents an antipodean development 'of a Western way of seeing the Orient defined by Edward Said as orientalism' (Manning, 2003: 50). Using a combination of content and textual analysis, Manning teases out central themes of coverage and layers of meaning. He argues that the articles link notions of Arabs and Muslims, who are 'seen as violent to the point of terrorism', particularly Palestinians (Manning, 2003: 69). Israel, the US and Australia are conflated as 'us' and thus 'seen to be under attack from such people', who are presented as an external and internal threat. Young Arab men are presented as threatening and wanting 'our' Caucasian women. Those who come to Australia 'illegally' from the Muslim Middle East are presented as tricky, ungrateful, undeserving, often disgusting and barely human (Manning, 2003: 69). Writing prior to September 11, Lowe argues that mediatised portrayals of Muslims often link them with the 'terrorism and the fractious politics of the Middle East despite the fact that their community comprises a raft of nationalities with Middle Easterners in the minority'. Lowe argues Muslims only became a media 'issue' whenever conflict erupts in the Arab world because they were 'somehow seen as remote agents of that violence' (Lowe, 1995: 149-150). These works indicate 'othering' and demonisation of Arabs and Muslims across a range of media instances, both prior to and after September 11. They particularly highlight the longstanding and widespread rhetorical conflation of 'Arab' and 'Muslim' to notions of an aberrant 'other' and violence, particularly 'terrorism'.

It is Edward Said's oft cited analysis that stands as a landmark work in the examination of the Arab and Muslim 'other'. In the third book of the *Orientalism* trilogy, *Covering Islam*, Said identifies what he terms 'the frequent caricatures of Muslims as oil suppliers, as terrorists, and…bloodthirsty mobs' (Said, 2000: 173). Said further notes that

> ''Islam'' seems to engulf all aspects of the diverse Muslim world, reducing them all to a special malevolent and unthinking essence. Instead of analysis and understanding as a result, there can be for the most part only the crudest form of us-versus-them (Said, 2000: 174).

Drawing on the theories of Foucault and Gramsci, Said highlights 19th century notions of the Orient including 'its sensuality, its tendency to despotism, its aberrant mentality, its habits of inaccuracy, its backwardness' (Said: 1995: 205) and he associates this with a tradition of Oriental Studies since the early 18th century. For example, in analysing the French writer Albert Camus's *L'Etranger* (*The Outsider*) and its portrayal of an Arab murdered in French Algiers by the central character Meursault, Said argues that Camus distilled 'the traditions, idioms, and discursive strategies of France's appropriation of Algeria' (Said: 1994: 184). Said argues that both *L'Etranger* and *La Peste* (*The Plague*) are 'about the deaths of Arabs, deaths that highlight and silently inform the French characters' difficulties of conscience and reflection (Said: 1994: 181) and furthermore that the novels

> …narrate the result of a victory won over a pacified, decimated Muslim population whose rights to the land have been severely curtailed. In thus confirming and consolidating French priority, Camus neither disputes nor dissents from the campaign for sovereignty waged against Algerian Muslims for over a hundred years (Said: 1994: 181).

In summarising this argument, Said states that Camus's 'most famous fiction incorporates, intransigently recapitulates, and in many ways depends on a massive French discourse on Algeria' (Said: 1994: 181). Said therefore argues that Camus's writing was informed by a 'colonial sensibility, which enacts an imperial gesture within and by means of a form, the realistic novel' (Said: 1994: 176). Said also analyses Western, particularly US, media portrayals of Palestinians as a dehumanised 'other'. Briefly, in the introduction to his analysis of questionable scholarship regarding Palestinians – co-edited with Christopher Hitchens (whose political shift to the Right will be discussed in Chapter 7) – Said identifies what he terms crude stereotypes of Palestinians disseminated by the 'American television screen, the daily newspaper, the commercial film' (Said, 2001: 3). Typically, Palestinians are presented as the 'mad Islamic zealot, the gratuitously violent killer of innocents, the desperately irrational and savage primitive' (Said, 2001: 3). Said considers this and coterminous rhetoric positioning Palestine as an 'empty' territory pre the creation of modern Israel in 1948 in terms of power relations between Israeli interests, the US government, Western audiences and campaigns to mobilise public favourable towards Israel. Said argues that Western audiences are presented with a binary whereby:

116

On one side stood the gallant Zionists who were like 'us', on the other a mass of undifferentiated natives with whom it was impossible for 'us' to identify. With the Zionists there came to be associated not just the good, the true and the beautiful, but a definite human image of the White settler hewing civilization out of the wilderness, an image that itself drew upon cultural sources in American Puritanism…in the nineteenth century adventure natives by Europeans about Africa and Latin America, and in the great modernist epics of the self-made or self-fashioned hero (Said, 2001: 5-6).

Therefore, Said's landmark work regarding 'Arabs' and 'Muslims' as a homogenous and dehumanised 'other' traces this rhetoric to earlier, White settler discourses. Variations of this discourse, notably marked by overtly racist inferences, are analysed in both Chapter 4 regarding the Vietnam conflict and Chapter 7 in terms of narratives surrounding the rescued 'damsel in distress', US soldier Jessica Lynch. Building on the discussion in this section, analysis of former US President George W. Bush's distinctive rhetoric, particularly its religiosity, is now considered as a prelude to analysis of media presentations of Saddam Hussein.

3.3 Manichaeism in the 21st Century: the cosmology of George W. Bush

George W. Bush's idiosyncratic phraseology has been analysed from a raft of perspectives. Academics, comedians, left wing activists and social commentators among others have analysed Bush's oratory and, in some cases, excoriated him for presenting a simplistic 'good versus evil' binary. This section outlines the range of diverse works critiquing Bush's rhetoric as a prelude to an examination of specific media texts relaying the former US president's phraseology.

Kaplan (2005) examines linkages between the Christian right and Bush in *With God on Their Side: George W Bush and the Christian Right*. Kaplan situates Bush as a right-wing Christian fundamentalist, who along with supporters believed the US was engaged in a holy war and that his presidency was ordained by God (Kaplan, 2005: 10). Describing the religiosity of his rhetoric, Kaplan notes Bush told US church

117

leaders on the eve of the Iraq war that Saddam Hussein was evil. Kellner (2007) draws on Orwellian concepts of manipulative language to argue that after September 11 Bush used cowboy metaphors to deploy a 'Manichean discourse to construct an Evil Other' (Kellner, 2007: 626). Kellner argues that Bush's rhetorical strategy involved 'continual repetition of simplistic slogans aimed to mobilize conservative support and without regard for the truth' (Kellner, 2007: 640). For example, this included Bush repeatedly 'evoking the ''evil'' of terrorists' (Kellner, 2007: 624) and a 'war between good and evil' (Kellner, 2007: 626). Bush also briefly referred to the historically loaded term 'crusade', but dropped it after 'he was advised this…carried offensive historical baggage of earlier wars between Christians and Moslems' Kellner, 2007: 626).[37]

In her critique of Bush administration rhetoric, Broinowksi notes that George W. Bush kept 'repeating a mantra of binary choices: good or evil, civilised or uncivilised, with us or against us, freedom-justice-progress or terror-fear-destruction' (Broinowksi, 2003: 59-60). This is the rhetoric of Huntington's (1996) 'clash of civilisation' thesis, a simplified version of which posited that the West, essentially the United States, was at war with Islam (see Ali, 2002: 299-301; Kellner, 2007: 623). In his summary of Huntington's thesis, Ali notes that Huntington argues that culture, rather than politics or economics, would 'dominate and divide the world' (Ali, 2002: 299). The US had to deal with threats from those which were the 'most menacing', particularly Islam, which was seen 'as the biggest threat because most of the world's oil is produced in Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia' (Ali, 2002: 299). After the September 11 attacks, Huntington's book became a bestseller and the author was treated as a 'prophet' (Ali, 2002: 299).

Kellner notes that former Reagan administration figure and UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick appeared on Fox News immediately after the September 11 attacks. Kellner, in summarising Kirkpatrick's use of the 'clash of civilisations' thesis, states she argued 'we were at war with Islam and should defend the West' (Kellner, 2007:

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[37] Studies by Ivie and Giner (2007), Ivie (2004), Gunn (2004) and Chang and Mehan (2006) underscore the religiosity of the rhetoric used by Bush and his supporters to demonise opponents such as bin Laden and Hussein while simultaneously galvanising potential adherents.

623).[38] This highlights one of the significant and important rhetorical strands underpinning the Bush administration 'good' versus 'evil' and 'us' versus 'them' binary after September 11.

In concluding this section, there has also been a raft of non academic books primarily equating Bush's rhetoric with 'lies' – that is, manipulative language. Amongst these are Wilson's (2005) *The Politics of Truth* and Corn's (2004) *The Lies of George W. Bush: Mastering the Politics of Deception,* to name two. The initial demonisation of Saddam Hussein as an evil 'other' in the first Gulf War in 1991 is now examined.

3.4 From babies in incubators to weapons of mass destruction

Atrocity stories such as the raping of nuns by republican forces during the 1930s Spanish civil war (Carr, 2003: ix) or Germans as barbarians who cut off the hands of Belgian children in World War I (see Chapter 1) have long been a staple of persuasive wartime rhetoric. This section briefly examines the notorious 'babies ripped from incubators' story that was used to muster supporters for the US-led action against Saddam Hussein in the first Gulf War. This was an earlier successful strategy demonising Saddam Hussein and as shall be demonstrated, enabled the US and its supporters to reiterate and build on widely disseminated rhetoric to galvanise and muster audiences for the subsequent 2003 US led invasion of Iraq. The 'babies ripped from incubators' rhetoric – that Iraqi soldiers took babies from Kuwaiti hospitals and left them on the floor to die – is an atrocity story. The story gained currency particularly after a 15-year-old Kuwaiti girl, only identified as Nayirah, sobbed as she spoke before the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus in October, 1990, and graphically described babies being thrown out of incubators and left to die. In their journalistic analysis, Rampton and Stauber (2003) note the relentless reiterations of the story including its use by President Bush snr:

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[38] Chomsky dismisses the 'clash of civilisations' thesis as 'fashionable talk', which made 'little sense' (Chomsky, 2002: 78). As a riposte to what he termed the 'civilisation mongers', Ali convincingly argues that Islam could not be viewed as a homogenous entity, stating: 'The social and cultural differences between Senegalese, Chinese, Indonesian, Arab and South Asian Muslims are far greater than the similarities they share with non-Muslim members of the same nationality' (Ali, 2002: 300).

Three months passed between Nayirah's testimony and the start of the war. During those months, the story of babies torn from their incubators was repeated over and over. President Bush [Senior] told the story. It was recited as fact in congressional testimony, on TV and radio talk shows, and at the UN Security Council. Amnesty International repeated the claim in a December 1990 human rights report (Rampton and Stauber, 2003: 72).

In Latourian terms, the 'babies torn from incubators' story was an inscribed 'hard fact', which rhetorically recruited credible allies such as President Bush snr through its repetition through radio, television and print media. The conscription of authoritative figures such as Bush snr was significant with Docherty noting the then US president repeated the story 'six times in his verbal war on Saddam' (Docherty, 1992). This story also circulated in Australian newspapers, to which we can now turn, noting selection of articles has been based on potential to identify cascaded persuasive rhetoric and associated frames. *The Sun* newspaper (Melbourne) first reported a version of the story in early September, 1990. Based on material from wire services Reuters and AP, the page 25 article carried the headline 'Wives tell of brutality'. Van Dijk's oft cited analysis argues that topics 'may be expressed and signalled by headlines, which apparently act as summaries of the news text' (van Dijk, 1988: 35-36). As such, the headline forms a rhetorical linkage between the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and violent cruelty. The article uncritically quotes women and one man describing dire conditions in Kuwait and the 'brutal behaviour' of Iraqis. An unnamed woman is quoted as stating:

Iraqis are beating people, bombing and shooting. They are taking all hospital equipment, babies out of incubators. Life support systems are turned off…they are even removing traffic lights (Reuters and AP, 1990: 25).

While Saddam Hussein is notably unmentioned in the article, its overall rhetorical texture conveys notions of Iraqi inhumanity and shameful, degrading behaviour. Further, van Dijk argues:

Quotations not only make the news report livelier but are direct indications of what was actually said and hence true-as-verbal-act. Introducing participants as speakers conveys both the human and the dramatic dimension of news events' (van Dijk, 1988: 87).

120

The quotations within the article help dramatise a callous and lawless invading army pillaging its neighbour, producing an effect of factuality, without mentioning Iraqi rationales for invasion. Drawing on World War I propaganda, the linguistic notations of the most vulnerable such as babies, women and the ill being abused underscores the persuasive rhetoric framing the Iraqis as fiendish and immoral.

Versions of this rhetorical strategy and thus the need for US led action were circulated in and across media texts significantly in the ensuing months, increasingly by authoritative figures. An article headlined 'Biological warfare new Iraqi threat' in the then broadsheet *Sunday Herald* on page 11 linked notions of Saddam Hussein, the threat of Iraq using biological weapons, the babies taken from incubators story, Iraqi brutality and a 'timetable for military action' (O'Neill, 1990: 11). Notably, all major assertions in the article were uncontested and there was a reliance on official sources – the chairman of the US congressional Armed Service Committee Les Aspin, National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, the Emir of Kuwait Sheik Jaber al-Ahmed al-Sabah, President Bush snr and US Secretary of State James Baker.[39] This correlates with Sigal's (1973) much cited early research arguing that media has an inclination to cover news from the viewpoint of official sources. Aspin was quoted at length in the article citing an unspecified 'intelligence report' that Hussein was expected to have a stockpile of biological weapons ready for war against the US as adding a new ingredient to the timetable for any military action. Threat and menace were relayed with Aspin stating the biological program was 'more important and more serious' than the chemical threat. Aspin also relayed fears that 'biological weapons can be delivered with little chance of detection and linger in the atmosphere for years, unlike chemical agents'. The journalist stated as fact that Iraq had anthrax 'as the main component in its biological arsenal'. The article also referred to a meeting between the Emir of Kuwait and President Bush snr. Scowcroft was quoted as saying the Emir gave Bush an account of the 'terrifying conditions' in Kuwait while the Emir was paraphrased as stating that Iraqi troops 'had taken babies out of incubators'. Other unattributed comments referred to, amongst other things, the forcible relocation of Kuwaitis, thereby connoting Iraqi inhumanity. Bush was quoted

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[39] All major assertions in the article were uncontested. The only hint of criticism came from Crown Prince Hassan, who was mentioned briefly in the final two paragraphs. In the final paragraph he was quoted as saying Jordan should not commit economic suicide by observing a trade embargo on Iraq. See O'Neill, 1990: 11.

after his meeting with the Emir as reiterating key aspects of the persuasive rhetoric: 'Iraqi aggression has ransacked and pillaged a once peaceful and secure country; its population assaulted, incarcerated, intimidated and even murdered.' Thus, authoritative figures with substantial gravitas coalesced persuasive rhetoric, which comprise the inscription *'barbaric and inhuman'*. Teased out, this inscription serves to economically suggest that 'Saddam Hussein and his Iraqi army are subhuman and nefarious barbarians who must be stopped from their rape and pillage of defenceless Kuwait.' While there are too many other examples to detail, other newspaper articles including 'IRAQIS ''KILL'' BABIES: Fifty slain in cots, says doctor' (AP: 1990a: 5), 'Iraqis ''killing prem babies'' '(AP, 1990b: 28) and 'Witnesses tell of murder, rape' (Reuters, 1990: 21) all link uncritical versions of the babies taken from incubators story with notions of extreme Iraqi violence and inhumanity.[40] Indicating the accelerated repetition of the persuasive rhetoric and need to muster and gather credible allies, the final article cited refers to what amount to the rhetorical artefacts being presented to the UN Security Council. Thus, by telling 'hair-raising stories of murder and rape by Iraqi soldiers', Kuwaiti witnesses were reputedly laying 'the groundwork today for an expected UN Security Council vote authorising the use of force in the Gulf' (Reuters, 1990: 21). This statement by an unnamed journalist sums up the rhetoric's currency. It has been relayed to multifarious audiences and reiterated by authoritative official sources in preparation for potentially persuading members of the UN Security Council. Notably, another slightly recalibrated version of the presentation to the UN Security Council story – again relaying notions of rape, brutality, torture and the incubator story – referred obliquely to the components of the rhetoric (Reid, 1990: 17). Accompanied by a photograph of Kuwaiti refugees weeping while speaking of 'atrocities committed by invading Iraqi troops', the article concludes with the unattributed statement: 'The Kuwaiti government in exile hired an American public relations company to put together its gruesome presentation' (Reid, 1990: 17). This brief reference, in the aforementioned article, to the persuasive nature of the presentation to the UN Security Council is worth considering in more detail.

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[40] The use of whole capitals in one of the headlines ('IRAQIS "KILL" BABIES') reflects the actuality of how the headline was originally printed. Given the thesis' focus on mediatised propaganda, headlines originally printed in capitals are similarly referenced in the thesis – rather than standardising all headlines to a single referencing style.

Following their discussion of Mayo's positive conceptualisation of advertising, Balnaves and O'Regan situate the public relations company Hill and Knowlton's first Gulf War rhetorical campaign firmly within notions of public policy formation (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 18). Funded by the Kuwaiti government, the public relations firm

> …undertook a multi-million dollar global 'campaign' to gain US public support for the American government's military intervention in the Kuwait/Iraq War. The campaign organisers acknowledged the radical nature of the Kuwait assignment, and especially the role of Hill and Knowlton in effectively formulating and implementing aspects of foreign policy (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 18).

Further, Balnaves and O'Regan note the importance of potentially conscripting American audiences to the cause of military action against Iraq. They argue that American audiences did not see themselves initially as part of the battle, but the public relations strategy was designed to 'signal to American audiences that they were in fact part of the conflict' (Balnaves and O'Regan, 2002: 18). This demonstrates the persuasive public relations tactics directed at specific audiences to successfully achieve foreign policy outcomes – in this case, military action against Iraq. This also contributes to the thesis' concern to identify the power relations that rhetorical analysis must deal with if it is to be of value, here, power relations between national representatives on the UN Security Council, the US Government, the governments of potential allies, and, in wider media campaigns to mobilise public opinion, diverse audiences as well as power relations within and between competing news organisations concerning newsworthy materials.

As foreshadowed in the introduction, the interdisciplinary approach of the thesis employs Cottle and Rai's news framing approach to identify particular techniques and presentations used in the newspaper articles cited. The 1990 newspaper articles cited above largely fall within what Cottle and Rai define as the 'classic' reporting frame while also using elements of the dominant frame. The former grounds journalism's

> …professional mission ''to inform'' as well as lend some factual support to ideas about accuracy and even objectivity, but deliver at best thin accounts of

events, which are often presented as occurrences without context, background or competing definitions and accounts' (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 172).

The articles 'Wives tell of brutality' (Reuters and AP, 1990: 25), 'Biological warfare new Iraqi threat' (O'Neill, 1990: 11), 'IRAQIS 'KILL' BABIES: Fifty slain in cots, says doctor' (AP: 1990a: 5), 'Iraqis ''killing prem babies'' ' (AP, 1990b: 28) and 'Witnesses tell of murder, rape' (Reuters, 1990: 21) all use this frame with their emphasis on informing, without crucial 'context' and 'background'. The articles cited notably lack competing definitions and accounts. The dominant frame also partially demonstrates devices, used to present news in particular ways to particular audiences, in the news texts. Cottle and Rai define the frame as referring to

> …news stories that are clearly dominated and defined by a single external news source. This source may derive from authority, challenger or any groups within the social hierarchy, but it is their perspective or views which clearly 'dominate' the communicative frame and which either remain unopposed or receive, at most, marginal challenge (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 172).

Cottle and Rai's framing approach along with Latour's theory about inscription attends to the intricacies involving communicative acts. Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model, outlined in Chapter 1, would take the articles discussed to be demonstrative of their core argument that the dominant mass media are interlocked with corporate and governmental aims. There is *some* overlap with the dominant frame, however, the overall framing approach is theoretically more flexible and hence enables greater analytical outcomes. As Cottle notes, the Propaganda Model is 'unnerving' in that it appears 'all-encompassing' and 'ideologically functional' (Cottle, 2006: 17). However, Cottle convincingly argues:

> The alleged synergy of interests and outlooks between state, corporate and media operations permits little sense of the historical dynamics, contests of interest and even contradictions, both economic and political, which exist within and between different centres of power and how these can change through time. Both state and media are depicted in monolithic and relatively ahistorical terms, with the logic of capitalism and elite power seemingly cementing together their respective fates for all times (Cottle, 2006: 16- 17).

The framing approach posited by Cottle and Rai eschews the Propaganda Model's 'one size fits all' approach to enable consideration of the contestations and struggles involved with propagandistic rhetoric as it is disseminated to beckon distinct audiences. The articles cited (Reuters and AP, 1990: 25; O'Neill, 1990: 11; AP: 1990a: 5; AP, 1990b: 28; and Reuters, 1990: 21) are not dominated by a *single* news source, however, the similarity of the views (Saddam Hussein is an evil, barbaric baby killer who must be confronted with military action) and their relatively homogenous nature is striking. This is exemplified by O'Neill's 'Biological warfare new Iraqi threat' article with the primary news sources including Bush snr, Sheik al-Sabah and General Brent Scowcroft conveying uncontested rhetoric highlighting Iraqi brutality and the need for US action. The presentation to UN Security Council stories carried accounts from multiple news sources such as Kuwaiti refugees and doctors, yet all displayed a rhetorical uniformity whereby the same the rationalities were conveyed to the influential UN Security Council audience.

While Cottle and Rai's news framing approach is salient in the instance of the cited 1990 articles, it can be augmented by Latour's argument that inscriptions – presented to varied audiences – can muster, increase, or ensure the 'fidelity of new allies' (Latour, 1990: 24) by contributing to contestations of what counts as knowledge. The Kuwaiti government through its public relations strategy successfully deployed the inscription *'barbaric and inhuman'* to garner allies including the powerful Bush administration. Latour's theory of cascaded inscription – that is, accelerated repetitions – concerns how they enable 'the weakest, by manipulating inscriptions of all sorts…[to] become the strongest' (Latour, 1990: 60). Initially weak in exile, the Kuwaiti government fruitfully manipulated highly persuasive inscriptions to varied audiences to 'take up a statement [in this case, the barbarity of Saddam Hussein and hence the need for military action], to pass it along, to make it more of a fact' (Latour, 1990: 24).

In concluding this section, it is important to note elements of the rhetoric, particularly the babies taken from incubators story, were later demonstrated to be patently false. Nayirah, who spoke so emotionally before the Human Rights Caucus, was in fact a member of the Kuwaiti Royal Family; further, she was coached in her testimony by Hill and Knowlton (Rampton and Stauber, 2003: 73). Rampton and Stauber question

why the incubator story was invented when Hussein's regime offered many *real* examples of brutality. 'One explanation might be that stories about baby killers are a staple of war propaganda,' they argue, citing an example of similar rhetoric used by the French and British that German soldiers had bayoneted a two year old child during World War I (Rampton and Stauber, 2003: 75). Andersen digs deeper in her analysis, noting that Hill and Knowlton commissioned polls through the Republican consulting firm Wirthlin, which 'showed a lack of support for intervention' (Andersen, 2006: 170). Wirthlin subsequently conducted focus groups to determine a strategy that could change public opinion and found 'atrocity stories stirred anger and encouraged sentiments in favour of war' (Andersen, 2006: 170). Thus, public relations techniques ranging from polling to persuasive rhetoric underpinned the campaign to galvanise support for the US-led action in Iraq. Indicating the importance of mustering support from the American constituency for US-led military intervention in Kuwait, the then president of Hill and Knowlton, Robert Dilenschneider, stated after the conflict:

> I believe we were able to target very precise audiences for a very precise message, and I think launch a communications campaign with an efficiency and economy that has never before been witnessed in the western world (In Andersen, 2006: 171).

Building on the preceding analysis and discussion relating to Latourian and framing approaches, dehumanisation of Hussein during the first Gulf War, depreciatory mediatised portrayals of the Arab/Muslim 'other' and the religiosity of George W. Bush's rhetoric, rhetoric within newspaper media texts during the 2003 US led invasion of Iraq are now examined.

3.5 A 'rat' trapped in his 'lair'

The 2003 US led invasion of Iraq by the Coalition of the Willing saw contestations over a torrent of mediatised rhetorical inscriptions diffused to multifarious audiences. This section examines a selection of accelerated repetitions of the words, such as 'rat', to demonstrate their rhetorical currency and consider struggles over presentation and interpretation of events and/or individuals. Furthermore, the section considers the

inscriptions as cascaded through media texts to muster or galvanise credible allies in distinct constituencies. Attention is also paid to frames used in selected rhetorical examples, which will be analysed in more detail.

Prior to examining a variety of examples, Foucault's important work on the 'rarity of statements' is worth considering. As foreshadowed in the previous chapter, contributing to Latour's account of inscriptions is Foucault's work on the historical production and circulation of discourses (in Foucault's definition, material power-knowledge relations), and the rarity (rather than what's usually asserted as a plethora) of available statements in any one historical period is constructive for thinking about the repetition that establishes an inscription. To briefly rehearse these points, Greenfield's account of how the currency of discursive objects, or what are tantamount to inscriptions, is useful and worth quoting at some length. As Greenfield notes

> …the *currency* of a discursive object, its current value, can be formulated as consisting in its place and circulation in the fields of discourse…discursive objects, or the statements in which they are formed, are caught up in a discursive ensemble in particular ways: they are repeated, borrowed, exchanged: they may, for example, be adapted as metaphors in one discourse, inscribed as absences in another, and taken as principles of coherence in another; in their various mobilizations they may link previously discontinuous knowledges and transform the relations between others (Greenfield, 1983: 53).

As Foucault, cited by Greenfield, states, they have:

> A value that is not defined by their truth, that is not gauged by the presence of a secret content; but which characterizes their place, their capacity for circulation and exchange, their possibility of transformation, not only in the economy of discourse, but, more generally, in the administration of scarce resources (Foucault, 1972: 120).

Therefore, the value of a statement

> …comes from the limited number of things that can, at any time, be said according to the particular system or 'stock' of statements. Its value, therefore, derives from its place in the particular stock of statements. This principle of rarity shifts analysis of a discourse from the endless task of interpretation. The

analysis of a discourse is not the production of meanings but the delimitation and detailing of the particular resources (statements) marshalled in their various relations (Greenfield, 1983: 54).

Foucault's identification of the rarity of statements is significant when considering the repetitions that help to form potential inscriptions. The example we have been considering of slightly recalibrated versions of wartime propagandistic 'baby killer' rhetoric and the similarity of reiterated notations in historical periods can be located in terms of power-knowledge relations. For example, power-knowledge relations between the US Government, domestic and international audiences, potential international governmental allies and media strategies to galvanise public opinion in favour of specific US aims regarding Saddam Hussein. That is, the potential to conscript, using Latour's term, or beckon audiences to adopt the 'hard fact' that Saddam Hussein is a nefarious baby killer who must be militarily confronted. This is not to assume the effectiveness of inscriptions, but rather note the opening of a heuristic space enabling consideration that these rhetorical repetitions and hence inscriptions *may* move audiences and constituencies to adopt particular rationalities. Specific examples of the diffusion of mediatised rhetoric related to Saddam Hussein during the 2003 invasion of Iraq are now examined.

As outlined earlier in the chapter, the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein had already been demonised as a pernicious baby killer and Arab 'other' prior to the 2003 conflict. De Luca and Buell have written that demonisation

> …relies on imputation of moral or spiritual failure, or deviance, or extreme incompetence (that is, moral failure for having illicitly assumed leadership). Thus, whether levelled against another culture, group or individual, it always has a characterological component (De Luca and Buell, 2005: 7).

One way in which this demonisation occurs is through rhetoric describing Saddam Hussein as a rat, which is defined as both a rodent and a person 'considered as wretched or despicable' (Macquarie Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1992: 786). This rhetoric was ubiquitous after the former Iraqi leader's capture in December, 2003.[41]

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[41] The CIA considered a range of propagandistic schemes in the lead up to the US-led invasion including a gay sex tape. Harris reported that some CIA operatives believed 'shooting a fake video of Saddam cavorting with a teenage boy might destabilise his regime' in the lead up to the conflict. See

Articles in the tabloid *Herald Sun* newspaper relayed the rhetoric, yet notably also referred to contestations of Saddam's fate, such as debate on whether he should face the death penalty, and the subsequent deaths of pro Saddam protesters shot by US soldiers.

An article with a smaller headline 'Operation Red Dawn catches despot' above a larger headline 'Caught like a rat in a hole' outlines the nature of Hussein's capture (Agencies, 2003a: 5). The article quotes British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer and Prime Minister John Howard; indicating his closeness to the American administration, the latter notably congratulates 'those elements of the US military responsible for his [Hussein's] capture'. The main headline was based on a quote attributed to the head of Iraq's Constitutional Monarchy Movement, al-Sharif Ali bin al-Hussein: 'The US soldiers dragged him from under vegetables. He did not resist. He was hiding like a rat under vegetables.' Two photographs accompanied the article: one of a clean cut Hussein as he appeared as the 'ace of spades' (captioned 'Most wanted: Saddam Hussein') in the notorious pack of cards handed out to US soldiers in Iraq; and the other showing Hussein in military garb about to fire what appears to be a rocket propelled grenade (captioned 'Violent: Saddam Hussein with a bazooka'). None of the major assertions or quotations in the article were contested, however, one paragraph referred to the overall volatility within Iraq as a car bomb attack had left 20 people dead and 32 wounded outside a police station west of Baghdad (Agencies, 2003a: 5).[42] Of the six people quoted in the article, five are official sources (Blair, Downer, Howard, al-Sharif Ali bin al-Hussein and an unidentified spokesman for Iraq's interim leader Abdul Aziz al-Hakim); the only other person quoted was described as a Kirkuk resident, Mustapha Sheriff, who stated: 'We are celebrating like it's a wedding' (In Agencies, 2003a: 5). Sheriff is positioned as an Iraqi 'everyman' whose triumphant mood to largely taken to be reflective of the Iraqi people and their supporters in the Coalition of the Willing.

Harris, 2010: 11. While the ploy did not go ahead, it illustrates the range of rhetoric considered in efforts to unseat Hussein.

[42] The byline on this story indicates it was produced as the result of material solely supplied by agencies. In his analysis of news discourse, van Dijk cites a University of Amsterdam study that found agency material reproduced in a regional newspaper was 'copied without any changes in the six articles that resulted from the dispatches' apart from minor style changes (van Dijk, 1988: 130). This indicates routine syndication of material.

Other immediate post capture articles in the *Herald Sun* largely followed this format with a reliance on official sources; statements asserting Hussein was a nefarious, demonic 'rat' were unchallenged and any contestations were largely muted and related to peripheral issues.[43] An article headlined 'Saddam trapped in his own web of evil' (Ferguson and Cock, 2003: 7) connotes Hussein as a spider, a variation on the dehumanising rhetoric. Conspicuously, the sole source of the article was Major General Ray Odierno, who was featured in a large photograph speaking at a press conference. A smaller photograph depicted a group of US soldiers beside a building with the caption indicating they were 'from the 4th infantry division that captured Saddam in Baquba, central Iraq, yesterday'. While most of the article details the intricacies of Hussein's capture, the journalists variously describe the former leader as a 'murderous dictator' and a 'dispirited despot' whose detainment 'exposed the world to the pathetic nature' of his post-invasion life. Odierno was quoted in the fifth paragraph relaying the rhetoric of Hussein as an inhuman rodent: 'He was caught like a rat.' To further underscore the Iraqi leader as uncivilised, the journalists also paraphrase Odierno as stating Hussein was dirty, thin and untidy when captured. Odierno's quote is significant, particularly given that it adroitly sums up the prevailing rhetoric: Hussein is taken to be pathetic, dishevelled, without honour, vanquished and the 'other'; he is unquestionably unlike 'us'. Furthermore, the rhetorical currency of Odierno's quote can be found in its global repetition; versions of the quotation were intertwined – in ways similar to the *Herald Sun* article's usage – and relayed along with an emphasis on US military intelligence gathering prowess and its hardware. These include 'Fugitive former dictator was ''caught like a rat'',' in

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[43] For instance, a lengthy article in the *Herald Sun* headlined 'He's a broken man' printed two days after Hussein's capture portrayed the former Iraqi leader as demoralised with the journalists stating he had 'lost all the swagger and bluster he evinced when in power' (Coorey and Dunn, 2003: 7). Three photographs were included on the page: the largest depicting smiling US soldiers joking at the entrance to Hussein's farm hideout; another close up of an unkempt Hussein after his capture; and a third showing a soldier lifting a mat that covered Hussein's underground hideout. Hussein's daughter, Raghad, was quoted as saying the family wanted an 'international, fair and legal trial' for Hussein. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was quoted as expressing joy over the arrest of the 'bloodthirsty wolf' Hussein, but added that George W. Bush and then Israeli leader Ariel Sharon should suffer the same fate. Three paragraphs towards the end of the article refer to US soldiers shooting dead protesters at pro Saddam demonstrations. These relatively minor diversions did not alter the overall rhetorical tenor of the article – that Hussein was a nefarious, subhuman 'other'.

the *Baltimore Sun* (Bowman, 2003) and 'Saddam: We got him – The beast's pit', in *The Sun* (UK) (Parker, 2003: 4), just to name two.[44]

The 'Caught like a rat in a hole' article falls within Cottle and Rai's 'reporting' frame; the 'up to date information' is that the 'rat' Hussein has been captured and there is no 'context, background or competing definitions or accounts' (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 172). In a way this is a highly limited contextualisation of these matters, however, some context connotes American racial and military prowess. The second article 'Saddam trapped in his own web of evil' uses the 'dominant' frame, particularly given Mayor General Raymond Odierno's views and outline of the situation are the only ones relayed in the piece; his views dominate the communicative frame and remain unopposed. From a Latourian perspective, both articles reiterate the 'hard facts' of Saddam as a pernicious, subhuman rodent and further cascade the inscription *'Saddam is a rat'*. Teased out, this economically connotes 'Saddam Hussein is a subhuman other'. Sense making stemming from the rhetoric also connotes the justness and righteousness of the US-led action to remove from power and capture the rodent 'other'. The repetition of the inscription repeatedly relaying non human metaphors by various political and military figures exemplifies Latour's argument that this demonstrates how 'someone convinces someone else to take up a statement, to pass it along, to make it more of a fact' (Latour, 1990: 24).

Letter writers in the *Herald Sun* newspaper both adopted and contested the rhetoric. The majority echoed notions of Hussein as a pernicious rodent. For example, Rita Franklin argues that Hussein should be imprisoned 'in his rat hole for the rest of his life' (Franklin, 2003: 85); Fiona Quinten contends that to 'kill this lunatic would be far too easy' (Quinten, 2003: 85)'; and Jade Riley argues that Hussein 'should have been left buried where they found him' (Riley, 2003: 85). Other letter writers conveyed notions of patriotism, pride and courage. Troy Anderson congratulates the Americans and urge them to aim for bin Laden (Anderson, 2003: 85) while a writer

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[44] The 'we got him' part of the headline on Parker's story refers to the statement made by L. Paul Bremer III, who served as America's proconsul in Iraq from May, 2003, to June, 2004. Bremer made the statement, which was met with whoops and cheers, at a press conference where he announced the capture of Hussein (Brockbank, 2003). In his memoirs, Bremer acknowledges using the 'we got him' phrase – at the urging of a press aide – as part of what a colleague describes as an 'aggressive and well designed Information Operation' (Bremer, 2006: 251). Bremer connotes use of the rhetoric as being part of a persuasive campaign to convince varied audiences as to the virtue of US-led policy and action in Iraq (see Bremer, 2006: 251-255).

only identified as Scott praises Bush, Blair and Howard for having the 'moral fortitude' to remove the 'monster' (Scott, 2003: 85). However, another two letter writers disputed the rhetoric. A writer only identified as Herman ponders whether Bush, Blair and Howard had considered the lost lives and the 'billions of taxpayers' money' spent in achieving their objective (Herman, 2003: 85) while another urges readers not to forget the role played by the UK, France, Russia and the US in supporting Hussein in the 1980s 'when he committed most of his atrocities' (Rivers, 2003: 85). Despite its widespread dissemination, the 'nefarious rat' rhetoric was not uncontested. Reported statements from Cardinal Renato Martino, a Vatican official, expressed pity for Hussein and concern he was being treated as if 'he were a cow' when video footage was released of the former dictator having his head and teeth being checked after being captured by a US soldier (Reuters, 2003a: 7). Many major Australian newspapers did not report Martino's comments while a handful did so briefly or alternatively ridiculed the cardinal.[45] In a lengthy article in the *Australian Financial Review*, the satirical opinion columnist Ruehl argues there had been 'a lot of stink about Martino', who is 'just a clergyman who's strayed into politics'. Ruehl rhetorically likens Martino to 'religious nuts' and the violent irrationality of the Inquisition (Ruehl, 2003: 2).

The demonisation of Hussein as a subhuman beast is relayed as so incontestable that those who challenge it are taken to be intellectually defective. Ruehl's rhetoric also underscores notions of Hussein as a demonic 'other'; while Martino is not an 'other', his apparent sympathy is taken as being unsophisticated concerning the practicalities of politics and reflective of both major mental deficiency (he is a 'nut') and religious intolerance. Ruehl's commentary confirms van Dijk's analysis of portrayal of enemies that 'those of Us who are too friendly towards our enemies do not fully realize what they are doing, and hence they may be advised to mend their ways' (van Dijk, 1997: 58). Hence, Martino and the institution he represents are rhetorically challenged while being advised to change their tune.[46]

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[45] Eleven major newspapers in Australia did not report the comments. Two exceptionally brief articles referred to the matter. See Reuters, 2003a: 7 and *Courier Mail*, 2003: 5.

[46] The conservative columnist Miranda Devine similarly ridicules Martino while at the same time pejoratively dismissing those who would question aspects of the rationale for the invasion of Iraq. Referring to a letter from former senior Liberal Party official John Valder inferring that George W. Bush should be arrested for the invasion, Devine angrily rejoins: 'It is awe-inspiring how many ways

As a dehumanised enemy, Hussein was repeatedly portrayed in Western media both before and after his capture as living in a 'lair', a word defined as 'the den or resting place of a wild beast' (*Macquarie Encyclopedic Dictionary*, 1992: 523). Two articles from the tabloid *Herald Sun* newspaper exemplify the use of 'lair' in front page headlines. These demonstrate the salience of 'lair' and associated rhetorical tropes. The front page of the *Sunday Herald Sun* on April 6, 2003, features an image of a US army tank with soldiers at the ready walking beside it; the image dominates the page, covering its entire width and most of its depth. A small headline 'WAR WITH IRAQ' was placed above the masthead; small images of a fighter plane and the Australian flag were placed either side of this headline. The main headline 'INTO THE LAIR' was placed beneath the tracks of the army tank. A smaller mug-shot style photograph of a jovial Hussein, apparently laughing, dressed in military garb, was placed directly below the feet of the US soldiers walking beside the tank. Two brief sentences accompanied the headline: 'An American armoured column punched into the centre of Baghdad last night. The daring thrust into the heart of Saddam Hussein's regime sparking heavy fighting with Iraqi forces. REPORTS, Pages 5-15' (*Sunday Herald Sun*, 2003a: 1). The headline immediately delineates Hussein as a beast. The use of the Australian flag is significant, suggesting national pride and a linkage with the Americans in their audacious and brave attempt to slay the inhuman fiend Hussein; the Iraqi leader appears both crushed and delusional. The placement of the laughing Hussein underneath the boots of the US soldiers indicates he is unwilling to face the reality of being pulverised by the Americans and their loyal allies, the Australians. This rhetorical assemblage suggests valiant allies boldly moving to destroy the nefarious monster. The layout or design of the page can also be taken as beckoning the *Herald Sun* readership to the drama of the conflict.

Another front page article headlined 'ALLIES IN HIS EVIL LAIR' underscores the rhetoric demarcating Hussein as a reprehensible, subhuman beast (*Herald Sun*, 2003a: 1). Notably, a small circular graphic featuring the Australian flag and the text 'WE SUPPORT OUR TROOPS' was placed beside the masthead. A photograph of a serious looking Hussein in military uniform was placed beside the words 'EVIL

the anti-Bush, anti-Howard, anti-war crowd can spin bad news. No matter what happens in Iraq, they moan about petrol queues. Saddam is caught and they focus on car bombings' (Devine, 2003:17).

LAIR' in the headline. Reiterating and further cascading the rhetoric in the previously discussed article, the 'ALLIES IN HIS EVIL LAIR' front page article states that US soldiers had 'marched into Saddam Hussein's lair' in an 'audacious assault'. An unnamed US soldier is quoted as stating 'We own Baghdad.' Contestations over the American battlefield success are provided with quotations from Iraqi Information Minister Mohammed Saeed al Sahhaf. Yet the quotations are proceeded by a commentary from the unnamed journalist framing the Iraqi minister's statements refuting American triumphs as patently ridiculous: 'Mohammed Saeed al Sahhaf, *ignoring US tanks a few hundred metres away*, denied Americans had captured the palaces and *claimed* Iraqi forces were slaughtering the enemy' (*Herald Sun*, 2003a: 1. My emphasis).[47] Thus, Mohammed Saeed al Sahhaf like Hussein in the preceding article is positioned as a delusional fool and in denial of reality. This exemplifies van Dijk's assessment that pejorative rhetoric 'may be taken from the repertoire of mental health' and ascribed to opponents (van Dijk, 1997: 59-60).

The use of the graphic suggesting patriotism through support for Australian troops is contentious, particularly as polls showed many Australians were strongly opposed to the war without UN support. A Newspoll in late March, 2003 – shortly before the war began – found support for a war against Iraq with UN support at 61 per cent. Only 25 per cent of those surveyed supported a war without UN backing (AP, AFP, NZPA: 2003). Domestic public opinion consistently reflected widespread opposition to war with Iraq within Australia, particularly in Victoria. A poll conducted for the *Herald Sun* newspaper in February, 2003, found that fewer than one in seven Victorians backed Australia going to war without UN approval (Wallace, 2003a: 1). Opposition was also significant overseas in France (60 per cent), Russia (59 per cent) and Germany (50 per cent) (Wallace, 2003b: 8). Resistance was high in the UK, where a poll two months before the conflict found nine out of 10 Britons were against any war with Iraq without UN approval (Wilson, 2003: 6).[48] An ACNielsen AgePoll taken in December, 2003, (nine months after the war started) also reflected deep divisions within Australia with 45 per cent of those polled agreeing with then Labor leader

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[47] Susanne Davies argues that the *Herald Sun* used 'loaded terminology' (Davies, 2004: 49) in its Shine On Memorial, a campaign to mark the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks, and fostered both 'public allegiance to a new American Empire' and engaged in 'propagandist style campaigning' (Davies, 2004: 44).

[48] For further polls reflecting Australian opposition, see also *Herald Sun*, 2002: 5 and Harvey, 2002: 2.

Mark Latham's assertion that George W. Bush was 'incompetent and dangerous'; 52 per cent disagreed. It further found that 51 per cent of Australians believed Labor was right to oppose Australia's involvement in the Iraq war, while 45 per cent said it was wrong. (Colebatch, 2003: 1). This demonstrates the diversity of audiences and their varied sense-making practices – regardless of the rhetoric of the 'ALLIES IN HIS EVIL LAIR' article, headline and graphic instating the notion of a unified, patriotic nation rallying behind the troops engaged in a heroic battle against an evil beast despite a majority opposition opposed to the actual invasion as distinct from concern for Australian troops.[49]

As foreshadowed in chapter 1, there is overlap regarding the analysis of rhetorical tropes within the 'war on terror' between Lewis's (2005) *Language Wars* and this thesis. However, Lewis's analysis of Bush administration rhetoric in the lead up to the Iraq invasion is too broad. For example, his assertion that with 'arachnid proficiency, the discourse of belligerent politics surrounded and entrapped Saddam and his regime into the web of terror' (p.131) – an allusion to Hussein's inclusion in the 'Axis of Evil' – lacks specificity and requisite detail. Similarly, his assertion in considering the Iraq invasion that the 'US appears to be seeking to establish a form of world government over which it alone presides' (p167) lacks empirical support. His argument that 'world publics became mesmerized by the [pro US] narrative of the war' (p.136) posits audiences as excessively passive and lacks attention to distinct audiences.

Notions of a 'satanic' enemy are now examined as a prelude to applying news framing approaches and Latourian theory to the examples cited earlier. With the rodent 'other' Hussein captured in December, 2003, the US and its allies subsequently found themselves caught up in an increasingly bloody insurgency during 2004. A series of incidents at Fallujah including the deaths of four US contractors and a subsequent siege by US forces (see Chapter 2) set the scene for a bloody conflict. In play here was a Manichean good versus evil binary – versions of which were diffused

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[49] A further article in the *Herald Sun* newspaper conflated linked notions of Hussein, 'lair' and the Nazi leader Hitler. Headlined 'Inside Saddam's lair' with the sub headline 'Dictator hides in Hitler-style bunker', Shepherd's article outlines details of Hussein's 'Hitler-style bunker' and the strategy and bombs to penetrate such (Shepherd, 2003: 3). As van Dijk notes, media discourse commonly compares a 'target enemy' to 'another certified enemy'. For example, 'Gadhafi with Saddam Hussein, and Saddam Hussein with Hitler, and all of them with devils and demons' (Van Dijk, 1997: 59-60).

to multifarious audiences during both Gulf wars regarding Saddam Hussein – as it was infused with the final US-led assault on Fallujah. A *Herald Sun* article headlined 'Bombs rain on city of rebels' (Dunn and agencies, 2004: 4-5) exemplifies this binary. Dunn's article ran over page 5 with three photographs; a large, accompanying graphic headlined 'OPERATION VIGILANT RESOLVE' took out the bulk of the editorial space on page 4 with a small article underneath it stating that Australian units would not be involved in the attack on Fallujah (*Herald Sun*, 2004: 4).[50] Dunn's lead article, an overview of the imminent attack on Fallujah, features direct quotations from Marines spokesman Major Todd Desgrosseilliers, Sergeant-Major Carlton Kent and Lieutenant-Colonel Gareth Brandl. Unnamed US troops were also quoted issuing orders, through loudspeakers, to Fallujah residents; Iraq's interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi was quoted briefly on the closure of borders and capture of Fallujah's main hospital; and an unnamed medical clinic was quoted ('a local medical clinic said') stating 12 people were killed by 'US air strikes and ground fire' in Fallujah. Two of the last three paragraphs were paraphrased, qualified statements attributed to unidentified insurgents and therefore unsourced – the first a *claim* regarding the insurgents' military preparedness and the second an invitation to 'Western media outlets to embed reporters in their own fighting units'. The main photograph with Dunn's article features a large US tank with smoke billowing from Fallujah in the background; another depicts US soldiers crouching behind a dirt mound while looking through telescopic sights on their rifles; the smallest photograph shows soldiers standing guard over men, whose hands were bound behind their backs as they lay on the floor in Fallujah's main hospital. Addressing 2500 soldiers prior to the attack, Sergeant-Major Carlton Kent frames the conflict within the narrative of a historic mission, urging the troops to compare the fight to the flag-raising victory at Iwo Jima or the battle against the North Vietnamese at Hue at the 1968 Tet offensive. Similarly addressing troops, Lieutenant-Colonel Gareth Brandl presents the enemy as the epitome of all moral depravity: '[t]he enemy has got a face. He's called Satan. He lives in Fallujah and we're going to destroy him.' Brandl's quote was used in the main text of the story, but also relayed in large type across both pages 4 and 5 above the

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[50] The huge graphic features a bewildering array of information ranging from an 'emergency decree' by Iraqi's interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, details about the strength of 'the adversaries' – the insurgents and US troops, their weaponry, details about the civilian population, and a map of the city featuring arrows and flags denoting US positions and their movements. Images of a helicopter, plane and tank were layered into the graphic. The graphic presents a highly sanitised view of the battle with insurgents and an emphasis on superior US weaponry.

headline. Brandl's quotation was stated as fact and no aspect of it was challenged in the *Herald Sun* article.

The US military's strategic presentation and dissemination of information during the Iraq conflict was based at the Central Command, abbreviated by some as CENTCOM, headquarters at Doha, Qatar. The headquarters included a 'multi-million-dollar press centre' where 'military spokesmen would put everything into context and paint the broader picture' (Knightley, 2003: 534). It was designed to complement a strategy whereby reporters embedded with military units offered a 'narrow, on-the-ground perspective of the war'. Knightley argues convincingly that correspondents assembled at the Doha press briefings were

> …merely extras in a piece of theatre. The system was designed not to inform journalists but to play over their heads toward an international TV audience, which soon accorded the briefing officers the status of soap stars (Knightley, 2003: 535).

Payne in his analysis argues that the 'big picture' presentations at Central Command diverted attention from critical issues including 'Special Forces operations, or about coalition battle damage assessments – how many tanks were destroyed by the coalition, what proportion of missiles missed their targets' (Payne, 2005: 88). Knightley went further, arguing that the military briefers had a 'list of topics to be avoided at all costs', known as a 'poo list', including issues such as 'depleted uranium and the bombing of a Baghdad marketplace'. Furthermore, as part of the strategy: 'Questions were rationed, follow-up questions were frowned upon and answers were often evasive' (Knightley, 2003: 535).[51] The analysis of Knightley (2003), Payne (2005), along with Schulman (2006), highlights the importance and centrality of military spokesmen in disseminating the 'official' version of events during wartime conflicts. Furthermore, they demonstrate the significance US military and political figures placed on relaying a dominant frame cohering their pro war rhetoric to global

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[51] In a notorious exchange, *New York* magazine's correspondent Michael Wolff drew applause from fellow journalists after he complained bitterly during a press briefing at Central Command: 'Why should we stay? What's the value to us for what we learn at this million-dollar press center?' In response, Brigadier General Vincent Brooks said that reporters 'should try to gather the ''entire mosaic'' of information. He…added that the Central Command briefings were an important part of the big picture' (In Payne, 2005: 87). Wolff's complaint highlights the role some media representatives felt the centralised press briefings played in deliberate obfuscation during the Iraq conflict.

audiences. The centralised military organised dissemination of reportable material to journalists was a means of achieving this whereby, to draw on Latour's tools, 'official' rhetoric espoused by military figures with gravitas was repeated and cascaded through the media to global audiences.

For example, Brandl's statement cited earlier was cascaded through syndicated global media. For instance, BBC journalist Paul Wood also reported Brandl's statement in two separate articles. One, which refers to Wood as 'embedded with US Marines' near Fallujah, describes Brandl as a 'charismatic young officer' (Wood, 2004a). Wood comments directly on the marines' high morale, their 'genuine concern for the civilians' of Fallujah and their 'competence and compassion'. There is also a quote from deputy commanding general Denis Hajlik ('we're gonna whack em'), which Wood immediately qualifies with the statement: 'This is not bloodlust. The marines know better than anyone the reality of combat.' An unnamed 'wiry, tough-looking' staff sergeant is quoted telling marines: 'We're not going into Falluja to give out fuzzy bears and warm hugs.' In this online version of Wood's article, Brandl's enemy as satan quote is preceded by rhetoric underscoring the heroism and nobility of the marines: 'But for the highly-professional marines, Falluja is also a return to the simplicity of combat after the complexities of peacekeeping and an enemy that never shows itself.' Similar to the *Herald Sun* article, Brandl's satanic enemy quote is highlighted; in Wood's version, the quote is used both in the last paragraph of the text and placed in bold within a box after the sixth paragraph. Interestingly, another version of Wood's article, included in *The Times Online*, firmly contextualises the marines' actions within a religious framework. In this second version, Brandl's satanic enemy quote was preceded by the statement: 'Many marines, too, have a deep faith. Religious services have been held on the base all day. Chaplains tell them they will be going into Falluja with right, and God, on their side' (Wood, 2004b). This version of Wood's article makes no mention of the reporter being embedded. The overarching rhetorical structure is the same, yet there is clear indication of the religious dimension – US soldiers with God on their side versus 'a small group of

Islamic fanatics who believe they are about to attain martyrdom in a holy war'
(Wood, 2004b).[52]

In Latourian terms, the assemblage of 'hard facts', presented as components of a
rationality, are 'Saddam is a rat', 'Saddam is a monster', 'Saddam is a tyrant', 'the
enemy is the personification of moral degradation' and 'the marines faith is deep'.
These coalesce to present the inscription of a crusade – an army infused with
patriotism, heroism, religion and seized by the conviction of the enemy as inhuman.
The inscription of a 'crusade' is rhetorically intertwined with President George W.
Bush's notorious comment initially describing the 'war on terror' as such. Bush
moved to retract the comment after 'he was advised that this term carried offensive
historical baggage of earlier wars between Christians and Moslems' (Kellner, 2007:
626). Moving to a different cultural form, the next section examines contestation of
rhetoric by cartoonists.[53]

3.6 An art of representation: cartoonists, comics, heroes and enemies

In her compelling argument that cartoonists fill the role of public intellectuals, Roe
argues that caricaturists have 'contributed to debates concerning international

[52] Brandl's 'satanic enemy' rhetoric was contested in media outlets as diverse as Asia Times Online
(Escobar, 2004), *The Belfast Telegraph* (O'Doherty, 2004) and Al-Jazeerah (Heard, 2004). *The Age*
newspaper reprinted an article from *The Guardian* (UK) by columnist Madeleine Bunting in which she
examines persuasive rhetoric delineating Fallujah as a 'militants' stronghold' and 'insurgents' redoubt'.
Bunting highlights the 'questionable assumptions and make believe' that journalists embedded with the
US forces were reporting: 'Every night, the tone gets a little more breathless and excited as the
propaganda operation to gear the troops up for battle co-opts the reporters into its collective
psychology' (Bunting, 2004: 17). Brandl's rhetoric was also contested by left wing websites such as
www.antiwar.com, www.altnet.org and the World Socialist Website www.wsws.org. See Jamail, 2004;
Solomon, 2004; and Cogan, 2004.
[53] The cultural-politico work of playwrights Hannie Rayson and Stephen Sewell also contests
prevailing and widely circulated 'war on terror' inscriptions. Rayson's (2005) *Two Brothers* and
Sewell's searing (2003) *Myth, Propaganda and Disaster in Nazi Germany and Contemporary America*
challenge and deconstruct rhetoric related to the 'war on terror'. Rayson also drew on the SIEV X
incident, which saw 353 asylum seekers drown on an overcrowded fishing boat between Indonesia and
Australia in October, 2001. The play drew a furious response in 2005 amid charges that it was
'bleeding-heart propaganda' that pandered to 'leftist sentiment' (Hyland, 2005: 9). In a blistering
critique, Rayson highlights 'war on terror' tropes infused with Howard Government's demonisation of
asylum seekers. The conservative newspaper columnist Andrew Bolt took a verbal blow torch to
Rayson in what one critic termed 'two violent diatribes against the play and against Rayson personally'
(Kevin, 2005: xiv). The two columns regarding Rayson and *Two Brothers* were 'Shameful saga of
hate' (Bolt, 2005a: 21), followed up by a much longer piece 'Hannie's evil brew' (Bolt, 2005b: 23).
The work of Rayson and Sewell again highlights the communicative struggles regarding propagandistic
inscriptions.

insecurity in public life since 2001' (Roe, 2004: 55). This section considers the analytical work of both Roe and Keen (1987) in order to develop an approach to the rhetoric inscribed in cartoons. It also considers comic book presentations featuring the figure of Saddam Hussein to non Western audiences to further examine contestations of persuasive imagery. It is important to consider cartoons, particularly given their prominence in newspapers generally and op-ed pages specifically. The section advances the argument that cartoonists cannot be considered as a homogenous group promulgating either a pro or anti 'war on terror' view.

Dorfman and Mattelart's (1975) *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* stands as a landmark work in its examination of comics and cartoons as persuasive politico-cultural product. Dorfman and Mattelart grounded their critique in a Marxist approach, aiming to

> …demonstrate the imperialist nature of the values ''concealed'' behind the innocent, wholesome façade of the world of Walt Disney. The Disney comic is taken to be a powerful ideological tool of American imperialism, precisely because it presents itself as harmless fun for consumption by children (Tomlinson, 1991: 41).

The book was written in Chile and subsequently burned publicly in that country after the Augusto Pinochet's military junta came to power; the English translation was also banned in America 'for a time' (Tomlinson, 1991: 41). *How to Read Donald Duck* was lauded by critics such as Berger as a 'handbook for de-colonialization' (In Tomlinson, 1991: 41), however, others argue it lacks academic rigour and was notably 'polemical' with a 'self consciously political aim' (Tomlinson, 1991: 42). Dorfman and Mattelart's work is a historical examination of comics and cartoons as persuasive rhetoric.

In her contemporary analysis, Roe argues that media proprietors such as Rupert Murdoch and Kerry Packer are 'often seen as having cosy relationships with the federal government of the day, which in this case is seen as having a very cosy relationship with the current US administration' (Roe, 2004: 60). Further, she argues

> …Murdoch's pro-war stance…regarding the Iraq conflict was a given, and many of the journalists in his employ duly parroted the jingoistic propaganda

that passed for war reporting. Yet there on the op/ed page of his national daily (*The Australian*), and usually alongside editorials supporting the war, were Bill Leak's or Peter Nicholson's graphically unambiguous anti-war, anti-Bush and anti-Howard deconstructions of the official version of the day's events…the role of challenger or difficult presence has been crucial – especially when what the cartoonists are challenging is often the veracity of their own newspaper's version of events (Roe, 2004: 60).

Roe's argument points to a key rhetorical practice that has been used to challenge and deconstruct dominant frames and inscriptions of the 'war on terror'. Two Nicholson cartoons make this point. In the first, titled 'Pre deployment of Australian troops in gulf', published shortly before the 2003 Iraq conflict, caricatures of Bush and Howard are shown shaking hands; Bush appears both taller, superior and in the dominant position. In the first frame, Bush says 'It's great you've already deployed your troops in the gulf', to which Howard responds 'Can't we say pre-deployed'. The image in the second frame is identical with only the text changed. Bush says 'And I reckon we'll pull this war off without too many civilian deaths' followed by Howard's response 'Can't we say pre-civilians' (Nicholson, 2003). In Nicholson's caustic critique, Australia through Howard is acquiescent to the over confident, militaristic aims of Bush; furthermore, Howard is seen to be fixated with his discursive strategies such as masking intent ('pre-deployment') and sanitisation ('pre-civilians'). Another Nicholson pre 2003 war cartoon titled 'Howard, Bush, Downer at Echo Point' parodies the similarity of the rhetoric espoused by Bush, Howard and then Foreign Minister Alexander Downer. Bush is again depicted in an influential position, standing on the ledge of a cliff in front of a sign bearing the words 'Echo Point'. Holding a US flag in one hand, Bush yells stridently 'Saddam is lying'. Lower down and on the opposite side of the crevasse, Howard and Downer are shown on a much smaller ledge, bellowing the same line; Howard appears tiny and comical as he bends himself back to shout out the accusation while Downer is behind his leader mouthing the same words (Nicholson, 2002). The cartoonist less than subtly makes the point that Howard and his senior ministers uncritically relayed Iraq war rhetoric – the suggestion that Hussein was lying about weapons of mass destruction. Nicholson also

alludes to an uneven relationship in the Australia-US alliance where Australia is patently a junior partner at best and one that is subservient to US interests.[54] While Roe does not state this explicitly, based on her article one could be forgiven for thinking that all cartoonists are anti war. To the contrary, in certain conjunctures cartoons can be pro-war, as Sam Keen notes in his much cited 1987 work 'Faces of the Enemy', which examines images produced by both governments and cartoonists

> …all nations use basically the same visual metaphors, the same hostile cliches to characterise and dehumanise their enemies. It's as if all these propaganda artists had gone to the same art school. The enemy is always a demon, a barbarian, the aggressor, a liar, a madman or some vile animal that can be exterminated without regret. Before we make war, even before we make weapons, we make the idea of the enemy (Keen, 1987).[55]

Confirming Keen's argument is Knight's depiction, published in the *Herald Sun* newspaper, of Al-Qaeda as a multi headed monster (Knight, 2009: 35). The cartoon depicts a medieval knight, standing in a cave, who has just cut off the head of a monster, which is labelled 'Noordin Top' – the key figure in an Indonesian-based group allied with Al-Qaeda. Above the knight's head is the text – attributed to unidentified figure outside the cave – 'Hooray … the monster is dead!' Yet the knight is shown nervously looking over his left shoulder at the green beast, which still has two other monstrous heads bearing sharp teeth. Across the beast's belly are the words 'Al-Qaeda'. This uses mythic framing to persuade audiences familiar with such images across cultural and media forms. Al-Qaeda is presented rhetorically as a threatening, hydra-like inhuman beast 'that can be exterminated without regret'

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[54] The renowned cartoonist Leunig has satirised both the gravitas of senior conservative political figures and their rhetoric. A cartoon published in early 2004 titled 'Australian War Memorials' displayed two identically shaped memorials; the first included the text '1914-18' and atop depicted a small digger blowing a tiny bugle while the second featured the text 'Iraq' and atop showed Howard blowing a ridiculously oversized bugle. Thus, Howard is depicted as having usurped the position of Australian troops and made a monument to himself – blowing his own trumpet, as it were (Leunig, 2004). In another published in 2010, Leunig appropriated the 'enemy rat' rhetoric, depicting Howard as a rodent standing before two intertwined paths; one ultimately led to the International Cricket Council (Howard was then seeking a senior position with the organisation) while the other led to the International Court of Justice. The cartoonist infers Howard is problematic, a figure who could just as easily end up facing a war crimes tribunal (for his role backing the invasion of Iraq) as he could finish up at the International Cricket Council (Leunig, 2010). Leunig's work further illustrates Roe's argument about the difficult presence of the cartoonist.
[55] Keen initially wrote the book (1986) *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination* before it was subsequently made into a (1987) documentary. For the purposes of accuracy, Keen's quotations cited in this thesis are taken from the documentary.

(Keen, 1987). This supplements other 'war on terror' rhetoric already discussed to present inscriptions of a good versus evil binary involving a conflict against nefarious enemies to multifarious audiences.

Spooner's depiction of the militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (Spooner, 2006: 5) and the accompanying journalistic feature by McGeough points to somewhat greater complexity again. Spooner's huge cartoon, published in *The Age* shortly after Zarqawi's death, depicts the militant as a dying cockroach. The cockroach body is on its back, dysfunctional with its legs in the air; the head, clearly Zarqawi's, faces the reader with its eyes and mouth half open. The figure is portrayed as being in its death throes. In Keen's terms, Spooner's cartoon represents an 'enemy image'. McGeough's adjacent feature article posits that Zarqawi was a thug, tyrant and zealot, who had been 'enhanced by US propaganda' (McGeough, 2006: 5). In his lengthy feature, McGeough delves into the bloody sectarian violence in Iraq and cites arguments from terrorism analyst Anthony Cordesman that 'the impact of Zarqawi's death will be limited'. McGeough also outlines a dispirited Iraqi political situation and the tumultuous machinations of the players involved in the insurgency. While the rhetoric conveyed in Spooner's cartoon is comparatively straight forward, McGeough's text paints a much more complex picture. In some ways, the rhetoric in the text and cartoon can be seen to contrast with each other. The former describes the intricacies of the insurgency and questions what, if any, impact the death of Zarqawi will have on such while the latter can be read as a classic piece of dehumanisation. This is an example of how different propositions jostle alongside each other, requiring audiences to exercise techniques of comparison and contrast. This exemplifies the argument that which proposition will persuade which audience is a gamble.

Keen's argument considered alongside Roe's analysis enables consideration and analysis of the highly contested nature of 'war on terror' inscriptions as they are cascaded, repeated, recycled and challenged through various media and made sense of by disparate audiences. The pro war rhetorical inscriptions were dominant, based on 'hard facts', powerfully agreed on in certain organisations and institutions. Therefore, the cartoons such as those created by Nicholson and Leunig constitute the work of what Latour refers to as a 'dissenter' (Latour, 1990: 42, 44). While the dissenters *do* challenge and contest the 'hard facts' with their rhetorical counterpoint – that

143

'Howard is a US dupe', 'Howard unquestioningly conveys US propaganda' and 'the war in Iraq is illegal' – their dissension did not receive the same standing as the pro 'war on terror' inscriptions. The role of the dissenter is further discussed in Chapter 6, section 6.4, particularly regarding deconstruction of the mythology surrounding the putative 'heroism' and 'rescue' of US soldier Jessica Lynch.

Cartoons must not be considered in isolation, but rather as elements of the rhetorical flux buffeted at the centre of often conflicting and disputed inscription. Roe's analysis, backed by empirical data, that the 'difficult presence' of cartoonists, particularly in terms of 'war on terror' media coverage, 'demonstrates to those in power that not everyone agrees with them' (Roe, 2004: 64) is a forceful argument that cannot be overlooked. Roe presents a challenging assertion that the cartoonist is more than an illustrator and instead a 'public intellectual'. Analysis must focus on the aggregation of rhetorical tropes across various media including cartoons and their place – whether it be ambiguous, solidifying or contesting the rhetoric espoused by those in power. Building on these discussions, the complexity of propaganda via cartoons is now examined through the work of Will Dyson, whose anti militarism cartoons were used as rank propaganda to demonise Germans during World War I.

3.6.1 Will Dyson: the complexity of propaganda

The Australian-born political cartoonist Will Dyson (1880-1938) was many things: an ardent nationalist, idealist, satirist, pacifist and socialist. Working in the pre Great War period before overwhelmingly derogatory connotations were associated with the term 'propaganda', Dyson saw his cartoons as a vehicle for stirring workers into action against the exploitative evils of capitalism. This sub section interrogates how Dyson's witty and sophisticated 'Kultur' cartoons came to be deployed as propaganda in an attempt to persuade specific audiences of the just nature of the Allies' military campaign against Germany. This highlights the ambiguities and contingencies involved in persuasive rhetoric and sense-making stemming from it, and the intricacy of what can come to be designated as 'propaganda'.

Dyson, a cartoonist of considerable skill, produced work for the *Herald* in London, which featured 'boldly drawn figures representing clear symbols of the noble, wronged worker versus the brutal, evil Fat' (McMullin, 2006: 86). Dyson saw his cartoons as a vehicle for stirring 'wage slaves' into action against a bloated and abusive capitalist system, as caricatured in the figure of 'Fat'. His cartoons were complemented with a distinctive style of caption featuring a sardonic sting. As McMullin notes:

> He devised a uniquely wordy style, incorporating sometimes a background commentary, sometimes a dialogue for his drawn characters, and often both commentary and dialogue (McMullin, 2006: 86).

As the Great War loomed, Dyson attacked armament manufacturers and profiteers; he 'detested war unreservedly' (McMullin, 2006: 135). McMullin, in presenting his account of Dyson's position, notes that after the conflict broke out, the cartoonist – in line with his socialist approach and the then non derogatory notion of propaganda – argued

> …the war was not without its redeeming features. *It provided fruitful opportunities for education and propaganda*. Drastic steps had been taken in the emergency that were, in effect, socialist measures (McMullin, 2006: 136-137. My emphasis).

These measures included the nationalisation of railways; Dyson was also pleased with the threat of action against food speculators and war profiteers. McMullin also makes clear, as indicated by the quote above, that Dyson held to earlier senses of a *propagation* of knowledge and argument rather than *propaganda* as a manipulative rhetorical device. It was this growing disjunction between propagation and propaganda, particularly through the deployment of his famous 'Kultur' cartoons, which would cause enormous difficulty and heartache for Dyson. The Kultur cartoons were intended to critique and attack the militarism, particularly German militarism, which Dyson regarded as rampant in his day. Of the Kultur cartoons, McMullin notes:

> They expressed a universal message set in a more immediate context where the figures representing evil wore upturned moustaches and were recognisably Prussian – properly so, to Dyson, in view of his assessment that there lay the largest single share of blame. But his choice of image, to his later regret,

resulted in these cartoons being used for propaganda purposes by individuals and interests incompatible with the pre-war Dyson of the *Daily Herald*. These new admirers of the cartoonist tended to focus on the immediate message only and were unable to perceive – or chose not to – the more universal statement[56] (McMullin, 2006: 138-139).

This exemplifies not only the recalibration and flexibility of rhetorical devices such as cartoons, but also the then shifting sense from propagation to propaganda. The notion of co-opting audiences is also pivotal. The 'new admirers' sought to galvanise anti German sentiment. In fact, the British-American committee promoted a book featuring the Kultur cartoons vigorously through the US because they regarded it as 'first class propaganda' (McMullin, 2006: 154). Despite finding aspects of the cartoons disconcerting

> …many of the ardent, vociferous demagogues demanding that Germany be crushed…could still accept them because their message placed the artist on their ''side'' in this war, irrespective of his pre-war attitudes (McMullin, 2006: 143).

Dyson clearly hoped audiences would gain a radically different meaning from his works. His *Kultur Cartoons*, published in early 1915, featured savage and incisive satire. One of the cartoons titled 'Wonders of Science!' depicts an aeroplane with two German-helmeted apes, one holding the controls and the other hanging from the undercarriage about to drop a bomb (McMullin, 2006: 141). Another, 'Kultur Protector', depicts Goethe, Beethoven and Wagner grovelling before the armament manufacturer Krupp seated on a throne of guns. Dyson's caption had the 'minor Germans' hailing their 'saviour' (McMullin, 2006: 143). That is, Dyson's satire could be made sense of in nationalist and culturally racist ways.

That the biting satirical work of an anti war pacifist could be deployed as base propaganda demonstrates the suppleness of and contestations over 'propaganda'. The gambles of communication, as mentioned earlier, are also evident. Dyson had wanted his visual and linguistic rhetoric to be aimed at firmly framing an anti militarist

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[56] McMullin lists the new admirers of Dyson's work including the British newspaper magnate Lord Northcliffe, whose 'Establishment organ' *The Times* featured a highly positive review of the Kultur cartoons (McMullin, 2006: 143).

argument to solidify a sympathetic audience. Yet those promulgating a 'Germans as barbarians' line quickly stripped away that narrative and complexity in an attempt to elicit a diametrically opposed interpretation from his work. Thus, rhetoric should not be considered to flow in an uncontested linear fashion from its source. Further contestations and communicative struggles are now briefly considered through another form of graphic art, namely comic books, particularly in terms of presentations taking an oppositional stance to those outlined earlier depicting Saddam Hussein as an uncivilised 'other'.

3.6.2 Saddam Hussein: the hero

Another form of contestation is exemplified by comics presenting Saddam Hussein as an Arab hero. Stromberg (2010) points to the widespread use of comics as tools of propaganda, further noting that numerous surveys have shown the most well-read part of any newspaper to be the comics section. Some constituencies viewed Hussein not as a demonic barbarian, but rather as a 'fearless leader who was true to his Arab roots, and in the end was brought down illegally by America' (Stromberg, 2010: 56).[57] For example, Stromberg examines a comic presented to the Indian Muslim media audiences published before Hussein's trial and subsequent execution; the comic relayed notions of Hussein as a 'hero of his people, born from devout Muslim parents and a natural leader' (Stromberg, 2010: 56-57). It features images of a smiling American soldier defiling an Iraqi woman by lifting her veil; the American is then killed by an Iraqi solider. A subsequent scene shows a heroic and resolute Saddam Hussein leading the defence of Iraq. Another part of the comic contests the 'weapons of mass destruction' rhetoric, depicting vindictive UN inspectors twisting information so Iraq is falsely accused of possessing the destructive weapons. Finally attacked by overwhelming forces, Saddam is shown 'fighting heroically until the bitter end'. Subsequently captured, Hussein is presented as a holy man with a light shining out of

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[57] Highlighting the seriousness with which some governments view comics, the former Mubarak regime in Egypt banned the comic book, *Metro*, by the writer Magdy El Shafee. The comic book was banned after it depicted what El Shafee termed 'easily recognisable' political and business figures, who were 'very corrupt and disgusting people who rule Egypt' (Shafee in Koutsoukis, 2009: 20). Shafee's comic book was the first of its type to be banned in Egypt because it 'infringed public decency' (Koutsoukis, 2009: 20).

him. Conversely, George W. Bush is depicted as a warmonger 'backed up by his bombs and a smiling soldier' (Stromberg, 2010: 57). The rhetoric in this pro Saddam Hussein comic is diametrically opposed to that disseminated to Western audiences, such as the readership of the *Herald Sun* in articles previously examined, presenting the Iraqi leader as evil and uncivilised. It highlights how inscriptions, in this case 'Saddam the Arab hero', are targeted at specific audiences. It also demonstrates the diversity of discursive spaces as inscriptions are disseminated, repeated and contested.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to develop an understanding of the complexities surrounding the rhetorical contestations regarding propagandistic repetitions. The use of rhetoric such as 'rat', 'lair' and 'evil', to name a few, can be seen to exemplify the thesis' definition that propaganda is 'the repetition of unelaborated certitudes directed towards particular audiences' and is based on a 'reliance on simplifications and slogans' (Greenfield, Tatman and Williams, 2005: 63). However, this was not unresisted, as demonstrated by the cartoons and comic discussed. Cottle's argument in his consideration of oppositional documentaries such as Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11,* which will be examined in Chapter 7, can also be taken to apply to the cartoonists, whereby their work points 'to the existence of meaningful [or alternative] media spaces that can still be found and won within today's increasingly commercialized media sphere' (Cottle, 2006: 164). This is not to equate *all* rhetoric with 'propaganda', but rather argue that analysis must be situational. That is, attending to the arguments and evidence that these heterogeneous positions instate. As Cottle argues, 'there is often more contention and more complexity in play than the [Herman and Chomsky] manufacturing consent thesis seems capable of predicting or theoretically accommodating' (Cottle, 2006: 19). This is also to acknowledge Cottle's argument that the 'struggles over images and ideas conducted in the media today take place in an increasingly complex global media ecology' (Cottle, 2006: 164). Both Cottle and Rai's framing approach and Latour's argument about inscription attend to the complexities of outcomes – precisely not working with a pre-determined script of the media. There is no single 'answer' over what things mean, and what gets done

with the meanings that are established. However, there are struggles and negotiations, and contentions, among journalists, public relations practitioners, other media organisation personnel and multifarious audiences. The next chapter considers the highly ubiquitous 'only language they understand is violence' phrase and its derivatives, as relayed within the 'war on terror' and other conflicts.

Chapter 4

In Propagandem: The Only Language they Understand

4.1 Introduction

The phrase 'violence is the only language they understand' has rebounded and cascaded through history and innumerable conflicts, its use seemingly de rigueur for those demonising enemies and propagating the rhetorical architecture necessary to either build a case for conflict or justify it 'after the event'. To dismiss it as shallow rhetoric or discursively degenerate is to underestimate its texture and richness; its flexibility in being able to communicate a multiplicity of messages at the one time to varying audiences; and its fundamental durability. Put simply, the phrases 'they (enemy/enemy leader) only understand the language of force' and derivatives such as 'they only understand the language of violence' are propaganda *par excellence*. This chapter aims to examine why this rhetoric is so seductive, why it has been used repeatedly and what precisely it entails. Further, the chapter examines the phrase as a euphemism, a rallying call and rhetorical device by which to identify the 'other'. As the analysis will demonstrate, it is almost as if the phrase and its derivatives are essential to a wartime propaganda campaign; its use so commonplace as to be deployed by a plethora of leaders across a range of nations and groups and repeated often unquestioningly through various news media. At the outset, it is stressed that the chapter is not designed to provide a genealogy or history of the phrase. That would be beyond the scope of this research project and could be the subject of a thesis in itself. Rather, it aims to tease out the meanings and multifarious uses and dimensions applied to it as deployed throughout the various media. Texts were selected from a range of media (books, television, online and newspapers) based on their use of the rhetoric in order to compare and contrast its employment in a variety of situations. As foreshadowed in the thesis introduction, the chapter develops further

Graham Greene's questioning of democratic rhetoric contrasted with brutal, racist action within the Vietnam conflict in his novel (1955) *The Quiet American*.

4.2 An early study: the work of Jake Sexton

It is important to acknowledge at the outset the work of Jake Sexton (1999), whose brief online study is the only one found that specifically examines the phrase 'the only language they understand is violence' and its various permutations. Sexton confines his analysis almost exclusively to use of the phrase as it was applied to the Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic during the 1999 conflict in the then Yugoslavia:

> A frequent rationale used by politicians to justify war plans is that violence is the only option. In recent years, the preferred way to phrase this is to claim that 'the only language (enemy leader name) understands is force'. With the current assault on Yugoslavia, I thought that we might see this line appearing frequently. I was right (Sexton, 1999).

While Sexton demonstrates that the phrase was deployed numerous times in relation to Milosevic, his inference that its use had become commonplace 'in recent years' is too modest a claim. As will be demonstrated, the phrase has been repeated by leaders and combatants in a multitude of conflicts historically. Further, it will be shown that it has been recalibrated in a fictional conflict in a television drama. Further highlighting the delimited nature of his research, Sexton confines his analysis to news articles sourced from the Lexis-Nexis database:

> I did a search for various permutations of this phrase in the 90 days prior to March 29. In those three months, this family of phrases came up 85 times in 52 different news outlets (however, nine of these 'news reports' were from US government news services, so they don't exactly count.) Two referred to 'terrorists' in Chechnya, one to Saddam Hussein, and one to 'Arabs'. This focus and repetition is impressive. The press claimed that Milosevic understood only force, in those specific terms, 72 times in 90 days (Sexton, 1999).

The significance of this reiteration concerns both its centrality to cascading inscription and its ability to generate and solidify frames, both of which will be addressed later in the chapter. Sexton found a myriad of variant twists on the phrase ranging from the standard 'force is the only language he appears to understand' to others apportioning the need to take action: 'diplomats have always said the only thing Slobodan Milosevic understands is force', 'we have calculated that military force is the only language that Milosevic understands' and 'NATO decided to communicate with Milosevic in the only language he understands' (Sexton, 1999). In each of the last three examples, the *need* to take violent action is attributed to collective actors – 'diplomats', 'we' and 'NATO'. This is a crucial aspect of the avoidance and distancing of responsibility for the sake of the nation or examination of populations from responsibility whereby members of nation states and the supporters of armed groups are distanced from the consequences of actions effectively taken on their behalf. The phrase builds on this distancing by underscoring the difference between the combatants, particularly by directly inferring the enemy is so uncivilised as to not understand normal methods of communication, but rather *only understand force* as a form of communication. By contrast, the phrase infers that members of the other 'side' have more human qualities such as the ability to comprehend rational logic. Thus, while not containing non human animal metaphors such as 'vermin' and 'rat', the phrase alludes to the highly uncivilised nature of the opponent and contains traces of the rhetoric of dehumanisation. It is this pervasive and corrosive rhetoric that is now examined.

4.3 The untermenschen: the phrase as a tool for dehumanisation

> The officer…said part of the problem was that American troops viewed Iraqis
> as untermenschen – the Nazi expression for 'sub-humans'.
> – In Rayment, 2004.

> They don't understand being nice…We spent so long here working with kid
> gloves, but the average Iraqi guy will tell us ''The only thing people respect is
> violence…they only understand being shot at, being killed. That's the
> culture''…nice guys do finish last here.
> – Col Joe Anderson in McDonnell, 2003.

Dehumanising the enemy and thus creating a distance for soldiers and publics from the consequences of actions taken against said enemy constitutes a crucial basis of war propaganda. A wide range of US officials and senior military figures used the rhetoric that Iraqis as a whole 'only understand force' before the Abu Ghraib prison scandal came to light. That Iraqis were subhuman and critically different to 'us' came to be stated as fact and disseminated repeatedly by US soldiers. This section analyses several examples of the 'only understand force' rhetoric contained in news articles, unchallenged, used by US military figures and applied to Iraqis and/or 'Arabs'. This allows contrasting of similarities and differences in the rhetoric as used within the 'war on terror' to dehumanise designated enemies.

In a news article by the reporter Dexter Filkins about US military tactics in Iraq for the *New York Times* in December 2003, Captain Todd Brown, a company commander with the 4th infantry division, was quoted as divining an understanding of the entire Arab mindset: 'You have to understand the Arab mind. The only thing they understand is force – force, pride and saving face' (In Filkins, 2003). In the same article, Lt Col Nathan Sassaman was quoted using slightly recalibrated rhetoric: 'With a heavy dose of fear and violence, and a lot of money for projects, I think we can convince these people that we are here to help them' (In Filkins, 2003). In the former statement, the connotation is that all Arabs primarily only understand force, but also

153

notions of pride and saving face. Brown directly implies that the three are linked and that if force is used as a lever, then pressure can be brought on pride and saving face to achieve a desired outcome. Brown's rhetoric craftily implies that Arabs as an entire 'race' are subhuman or at least uncivilised without overtly stating as much; they are taken to be subhuman given they *only understand force* and violence and therefore any form of rational communication is initially pointless. Sassaman's rhetoric employs a carrot and stick approach, as it were. The persuasive and communicative dimensions of violence are predominant in his rhetoric, but the need for financial inducement is highlighted to reinforce and supplement the message. This rhetoric in Filkins' article is unchallenged and stated as fact. However, Filkins allows for minor complexity and contestation at the end of the article with two Iraqis quoted briefly expressing disapproval of tactics, specifically the use of checkpoints and barbed wire placed around villages, employed by the American soldiers. Overall, the extreme brevity and placement of these comments does not detract from notions of the Iraqis as subhuman, uncivilised and/or needing assistance from the firm hand of the Americans.

Underscoring the pervasive use of the 'only understand force' rhetoric, the veteran US investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, in a lengthy piece for *The New Yorker* in May 2004 about the origins about the Abu Ghraib prison scandal, found that American neo conservative leaders had been heavily influenced by the views and sweeping generalisations used by soldiers such as Brown and Sassaman. Specifically, Hersh's research found that the neo conservatives subscribed to the view that 'Arabs only understand force' and secondly, that 'the biggest weakness of Arabs is shame and humiliation' (Hersh, 2004). Hersh's research demonstrates how the persistent rhetoric came to be disseminated among authority figures and, to use Latour's terms, subsequently passed along and taken to be more of a fact, rather than illogical, racist conjecture.

The recollections of Janis Karpinski, the US commander of the Abu Ghraib prison, are cited from a 2004 BBC interview, relayed by ABC Radio's *AM* program, to demonstrate the virulent repetition of dehumanising rhetoric, particularly used by senior military figures, as applied to Iraqis. Karpinski made it clear that the orders creating the climate that lead to prisoners being abused came from above. Karpinski

states that Major General Geoffrey Miller, who then ran the prisons in Iraq and formerly commanded Guantanamo Bay, said: '[t]hey are like dogs and if you allow them to believe at any point that they are more than a dog then you've lost control of them' (In Kelly, 2004). In Miller's view, the Iraqis are so subhuman that they are ascribed a bestial form, thus legitimising abuse and creating a distance between the soldiers and notions of the prisoners as humans with rights. Miller's use of the rhetoric cements and justifies power relations between dehumanised Iraqis and the guards who keep them, like dogs, restrained, in check and behaving appropriately.

Similar and no less dehumanising rhetoric was repeated in another news article, written by Suleiman al-Khalidi for the wire service Reuters in May 2004, about battles between US forces and militia loyal to Shi'ite Muslim cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, among other related issues. An unnamed former military police officer states that his company had killed at least four Iraqis at the Abu Ghraib prison, adding: 'You've got to understand, although it seems harsh, the Iraqis, they only understand force' (In al-Khalidi, 2004). Yet while the phrase went unchallenged in this article, its placement in the second last paragraph and the overall tenor of the article accompanied in this news piece a greater complexity and recognition of the struggles around the sense that gets made of things. Al-Khalidi's wide ranging article presents a broad overview of the then situation in Iraq including battles between US soldiers and militia loyal to al-Sadr, President George W. Bush's apology for the humiliation suffered by Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib, casualty figures for the US and its foes and so forth. Use of the 'only understand force' rhetoric is squarely contextualised within reports of ill treatment of Iraqis, as al-Khalidi reports

> …evidence that the abuse goes much wider than the handful of soldiers facing court martial built up. New pictures emerged of troops tormenting naked Iraqis. And the Red Cross took the rare step of disclosing it had warned Washington repeatedly of shortcomings in its use of Saddam's once notorious Abu Ghraib. One former military police officer told Reuters his company killed at least four Iraqis during chaotic disturbances there. 'You've got to understand, although it seems harsh, the Iraqis, *they only understand force,*' he said. Tales of maltreatment in US custody have been commonplace among released detainees. Stewart Vriesinga of Christian Peacemakers, which has documented hundreds

of cases, said: 'What we're seeing now is probably just the tip of the iceberg' (al-Khalidi, 2004. My emphasis).

Thus, the 'only understand force' phrase is contextualised within discussion and concern highlighting demeaning and abusive behaviour by US soldiers. Furthermore, its use can be taken to *demonstrate* the violent, oppressive and racist conduct of the US military rather than that of the supposed subhuman, irrational and ungrateful Iraqis. While the soldier using the terminology can be taken to mean that Iraqis are subhumans who *only understand force*, the placement of the quote within conjecture regarding the mistreatment of Iraqis and the Abu Ghraib scandal demonstrates the struggles over what gets sedimented and the complexity of potential rhetorical outcomes. The 'only understand force' rhetoric *is* racist, dehumanises Iraqis and is justificatory in terms of US military involvement in Iraq, but the journalist's immediate reference to the mistreatment of Iraqis significantly broadens the sense making whereby readers can potentially consider the chauvinistic and violent dimensions of American involvement in Iraq. This handling of the quoted phrase by the journalist demonstrates the diversity to be found in the news media, as opposed to it being monolithic and aligned with corporate and governmental interests. The journalist briefly relays the position of US neo conservative leaders, as detailed earlier by Hersh, but the overall tenor of al-Khalidi's news article works to present a greater complexity of events and potential serious wrongdoing by members of the US military – in effect, challenging the rhetoric adopted by senior figures in the US administration.

As indicated earlier, the thesis adopts an interdisciplinary approach drawing on the analytical tools of Latour along with Cottle and Rai, among others. Briefly, the Filkins article (2003) conforms to what Cottle and Rai identify as a 'classic' reporting frame given its features of factuality, accuracy and even objectivity with references to Iraqis disgruntled by 'hardline' US tactics. Yet it can also be argued that the overall tenor of the news article falls within a dominant frame given that the views of US military officials clearly dominate the report and opposing opinions receive marginal challenge at best. The news article by al-Khalidi falls within Cottle and Rai's contention frame in which a plurality of voices are represented, thereby illustrating

…something of the complexity of positions and points of view that often inhere within and/or surround particular areas of contention or dispute. The contention frame…also serves to capture the more nuanced and qualifying engagements of different interests and identities which variously debate, criticize or contend… (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 173).

The use of disparate frames in news articles relaying similar 'only understand force' rhetoric highlights Cottle and Rai's attention to the complexities of outcomes rather than working with notions of a pre-determined script of media.

The rhetorical procedure whereby a dehumanised 'other' that can be mistreated, slaughtered and murdered without compunction has precedent in American military history, notably the Vietnam conflict. Chomsky's landmark *American Power and the New Mandarins* (2002), originally published in 1969, was the first to detail the demeaning and euphemistic language, such as the notorious declaration that the US military had to 'destroy the town in order to save it', in the Vietnam conflict. Chomsky also examines other euphemistic military and governmental rhetoric including 'pacification' and 'softening up' the enemy (Chomsky, 2002: 219-220). Differences with Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model notwithstanding, the thesis uses this earlier work as a point of departure.

Permutations of the virulent 'only understand force' rhetoric were evident during the Vietnam conflict of the 1960s and 1970s, with a US army captain telling *The New Yorker's* Jonathan Schell: 'Only the fear of force gets results. It's the Asian mind' (In Turse, 2004). In this version, it is the subhuman Asian who solely comprehends violence as a form of communication; similar to 'Arabs' dehumanised in the Iraq conflict, sweeping racist generalisations are relayed, related to 'Asians' as an entire race. Said notes in his landmark work *Orientalism*, discussed previously, that Orientalism was primarily a 'British and French cultural enterprise' (Said, 2000: 70). However, US 'Indochinese adventures' such as the Vietnam conflict should be 'creating a more sober, more realistic ''Oriental'' awareness' (Said, 2000: 68). Said highlights the conceptualisations that made rhetoric, such as that disseminated by the unnamed US army captain regarding 'Asians', appear normative.

Peter Davis captures soldiers discussing this rhetoric and its corrosive effects in his classic film (1974) *Hearts and Minds*. Quotes from the film are included to exemplify the similarities of dehumanising rhetoric used by US military officials regarding both Iraqis and the Vietnamese. Edward Sowders, an Army deserter, spoke at length in Davis's film about the use of rhetorical classifications and categorisations:

> The Vietnamese were all considered less than humans, inferiors. We called them gooks, slopes. Their lives weren't worth anything to us because we had been taught to believe they were all fanatical and they were all VC or VC sympathisers – even the children (In Davis, 1974).

Notably, Sowders argues US governmental and military leaders had trained the soldiers to

> …kill without question and hate our enemy, the Vietnamese. They concocted such phrases as 'kill ratios', 'search and destroy', 'free fire zones', 'secure areas' and so on to mask the reality of their combat policy in Vietnam (In Davis, 1974).

Sowders' statements show the similarity of the violent, bigoted rhetoric used to dehumanise and annihilate the enemy without compunction in both the Iraq and Vietnam conflicts. Furthermore, Hugh C. Thompson Jr, an Army Chief Warrant Officer in 1968 who put his helicopter down between rampaging US troops and Vietnamese civilians at My Lai, reached a similar conclusion to Sowders. Reflecting on the parallels between Vietnam and Abu Ghraib, Thompson states simply that 'we appear to not have learned much' (In Fleischauer, 2004). Taken literally, this is profoundly incorrect and if anything, the opposite is true. The officials propagating the view that the enemy 'only understands force' keenly grasp its value and ability to both enhance a pro war view and justify military intervention. As Sexton argues succinctly: 'The phrase must be powerful, or it would not be used so often. It subtly states several messages simultaneously, all of which serve the pro-war position' (Sexton, 1999). This highlights what amounts to a tradition and repertoire of familiar propagandistic rhetorical inscriptions.

A number of theorists and writers, notably Frantz Fanon, have dug deeper to examine links between colonialism, racism, rhetoric and violence. Sartre, in his celebrated

preface to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1965), reflects on the author's view that the 'native' was perpetually seen to be a 'sly-boots, a lazybones and a thief, who lives on nothing, and who *understands only violence*' (Sartre in Fanon, 1965: 14. My emphasis). Further ruminating on these links, Sartre notes that the rhetoric of 'evil' was used prevalently by colonisers in regard to the colonised, who were considered to be 'men of evil repute' as well as 'niggers and dirty arabs' (Sartre in Fanon, 1965: 30). Similar to the dehumanising rhetoric used by US military figures in both Iraq and Vietnam, Fanon discerns that the settler had depicted the native as

> …a sort of quintessence of evil…The native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values. He is…the enemy of values, and in this sense he is the absolute evil. He is the corrosive element, destroying all that comes near him; he is the deforming element, destroying all that has to do with beauty or morality; he is the depository of maleficent powers (Fanon, 1965: 32-33).

Fanon's work provides a historical and cultural view of the links between racism, rhetoric and violence, particularly an antecedent to the rhetorical devices employed by US military figures in Vietnam and Iraq. In his salient analysis of Fanon's work, Bhabha notes the crucial importance of rhetorical repetition regarding the 'other':

> Cultures come to be represented by virtue of the process of iteration and translation through which their meanings are very vicariously addressed to – through – an Other (Bhabha, 2004: 83).

Yet Bhabha is not entirely uncritical of Fanon, arguing he is sometimes 'too quick to name the Other, to personalize its presence in the language of colonial racism' (Bhabha, 2004: 86). Nevertheless, Fanon's landmark work provides a strong historical basis on which to consider the rhetoric of the US and its allies in the 'war on terror'.

The next section further explores the use of propagandistic rhetoric, particularly analysing how governmental and insurgent actors have used similar and at times identical rhetorical devices in different situations to dehumanise each other and thus justify and perpetuate violence. The section draws on the work of the US scholar James Der Derian to examine how this rhetoric has been employed in a mimetic

fashion by actors involved in two contemporary conflicts, the 'war on terror' and the Palestinian Arab/Israel conflict.

4.4 Mimetic rhetoric: violence and killing as communication

James Der Derian has written extensively on rhetorical imagery, practices of mobilising constituencies and modes of representation. His landmark work, *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network* (Der Derian, 2001), takes an in-depth examination of the 'convergence of cyborg technologies, video games, media spectacles, war movies, and do-good ideologies that produced a chimera of high-tech, low-risk "virtuous'' wars' (Watson Institute, 2009). Der Derian specifically examines the potential of rhetoric to galvanise audiences and its mimetic nature within the 'war on terror':

> People go to war because of how they see, perceive, picture, imagine and speak of others; that is, how they construct the difference of others as well as the sameness of themselves through representations. From Greek tragedy and Roman Gladiatorial spectacles to futurist art and fascist rallies, the mimetic mix of image and violence has proven to be more powerful than most rational discourse (Der Derian in Booth and Dunne, 2002: 110).

Der Derian's work highlights the methods of depiction, the repetition of stylised conflict situations, the intense importance of propagandistic phraseology in the 'war on terror' and its rhetorical similarity when used by diametrically opposed actors. Der Derian identifies what he terms a war of 'escalating and competing imitative opposition, a mimetic war of images' (Der Derian in Booth and Dunne, 2002: 110). This analysis alludes to the analogous rhetorical devices used by actors in different theatres of the 'war on terror' and these are now briefly examined and discussed.

Two of the Bali bombers, Amrozi and his older brother Mukhlas, used variations of the 'only understand force' rhetoric, cited here from online media reports, to justify violent action against their perceived enemy. During his trial, Amrozi described foreign tourists as a threat to Indonesia's future and stated that violence was the only

160

language they understood (Correspondents in Denpasar, 2003). Amrozi practiced a politics of a base form of persuasion. He expressed remorse for the Indonesians who died, but added: 'For the foreigners, I said, you have learned your lesson.' Amrozi presents 'foreigners' as agents of broadly defined cultural and economic imperialism. In other words, Amrozi is using a particular form of rationality concerning cross cultural and geopolitical practices and relations, however unpalatable and unacceptable this is to Westerners, but akin to rationalities used by Westerners to justify colonisation and invasion of non-western territories and nations. His rhetorical justification also draws a distinction between Indonesians and demonised 'foreigners'. Further building on this justificatory rhetoric, Amrozi told the judges at his trial that the bombed nightclubs were 'dens of vices' set up as part of a US and Jewish plan to destroy religions (AFP, 2003). Underscoring his use of this rhetoric in demonising enemies, Amrozi said the presence of 'foreigners' in Bali threatened religion, lives, dignity, progeny and the property of Indonesians. To highlight this, he added:

> For us, the principle is that it is impossible to shoo them out of Indonesia using the language of diplomacy. Their only language is clearly the language of violence. There is no other way but that of violence (AFP, 2003).

Therefore, in Amrozi's view 'foreigners' can be equated with uncivilised peoples who are so debased as to not comprehend diplomacy and thus can only be *persuaded* to act through brutal force. His list of the 'threats' posed by 'foreigners' also demonstrates his justificatory pretensions, outlining the rhetorical basis for the need for indicatively *communicative* violent action to protect Indonesians. As adherents to a violent jihadist brand of Islam, Mukhlas (In Ferguson, 2004), Osama bin Laden (Correspondents in Dubai, 2004) and his then deputy Ayman Al-Zawahiri (IslamOnline and News Agencies, 2003) all used analogous rhetoric, particularly permutations of the 'only understand force' phraseology.

Highlighting the durability, flexibility and mimetic dimensions of the rhetoric, other key actors within the 'war on terror' used similar phraseology to represent their enemies as being so subhuman as to 'only understand force'. The then Australian Prime Minister John Howard repeatedly used different permutations of the 'only understands force' phrase to justify antipodean military action against the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein (Howard, 2003: 4). In the lead up to the conflict in early 2003,

Howard wrote a lengthy opinion piece highlighting what he argues was Hussein's deceit, deception, trickery; his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the possibility 'terrorists could get hold of these dangerous weapons'; and the need for Iraq's disarmament. Howard also connects the overall sense of threat and the need to take action against Hussein with the 'Bali atrocity'. He further refers favourably to the alliance between Australia and the US. Howard aligns his position with that of 'Australians', who believed 'something ought to be done'. He then states as fact: 'The threat of military force is *the only language* Saddam Hussein understands' (Howard, 2003: 4. My emphasis). Thematically diverse yet seamlessly woven together, Howard's deft use of rhetoric presents a potent pro war argument for the *Herald Sun* readership. Hussein is grossly uncivilised yet mortally dangerous, Australia and the US are as one in standing against the threat posed by the Iraqi leader and/or another Bali-type atrocity caused by terrorists gaining WMDs. Yet the key inscription is that of the need to disarm Iraq, forcibly if necessary, and Australians to galvanise behind such action. Howard's use of the 'only understands force' phrase comes almost immediately after his assertion that Australians believe 'something ought to be done', essentially disseminating the rhetoric that antipodeans agree on the militaristic action that he and the conservative US political leadership espouse, despite large-scale demonstrations against it.

While oppositional actors contesting the 'war on terror' have used analogous rhetorical devices, these formulations are instated and circulated from significantly different positions. That is, Howard's from national leadership and its institutions, while those of Amrozi and his supporters are circulated from ethnic and cultural-religious positions and organisations. Actors involved in the conflict present their rhetoric to multiple constituencies – their own and that of the enemy. For the former constituency, it is a part of the rhetorical skein urging approval and seeking to galvanise support; while for the latter, the rhetoric emphasises the need to desist and comply with demands.

As history has shown, al Qaeda launched a massive attack on the US in 2001 while adherents to its ideology subsequently bombed nightclubs in Bali. The US and its supporters attacked and overthrew governments in both Afghanistan and Iraq. All

actions resulted in significant loss of life. In his analysis, Der Derian saliently argues that the mimetic war sanctioned 'just about every kind of violence', adding:

> A mimetic war is a battle of imitation and representation, in which the relationship of who we are and who they are is played out along a wide spectrum of familiarity and friendliness, indifference and tolerance, estrangement and hostility. It can result in appreciation or denigration, accommodation or separation, assimilation or extermination (Der Derian in Booth and Dunne, 2002: 110).

Der Derian's analysis alludes not solely to the primacy of how actors are depicted contesting the 'war on terror', but also the import ascribed to rhetorical devices in recruiting audiences and potentially achieving representational aims. Further, Der Derian considers how the 'other' is rhetorically formulated in order for actors to legitimise and pursue politico-militaristic imperatives, as well as their representation in infotainment media such as film, television and computer games. In attending to this mimetic rhetoric, some of Latour's analytical tools are also useful. Latour's approach is useful for examining how such rhetoric is passed along and accepted as fact by particular constituencies. In concluding, it is also noted that numerous examples of imitative dehumanising rhetoric, such as the 'only understand force' phraseology, can also be found to be widely circulated by actors involved in or disseminating rhetoric related to the Israel – Palestinian Arab conflict (*The Times*, 1995; *Jerusalem Post*, 2003; Kiley, 2000; Plaut, 2003). This is highlighted by the Israeli Jewish reporter Yoram Binur, who posed as a Palestinian and subsequently wrote about his experiences in his book (1989) *My Enemy, My Self*. During a discussion with Palestinian workers, Binur recognises the rhetorical similarity of the views being espoused:

> After the initial acquaintance, a lively debate broke out in the room with regard to the Jews. Almost all those present agreed that 'Jews are trash and only understand brute force'. The generalisations and strong opinions voiced against the Jews as a group reminded me of Friday evening conversations in the living rooms of some of my Jewish acquaintances, when 'Arabs' was the topic of conversation (Binur, 1989: 55).

Binur's observation highlights the striking similarity of the rhetoric, connoting moral corruption and a profound lack of basic human features, being disseminated by oppositional actors. Thus, it can be concluded that multifarious actors are using this sense-making practice as mimetic rhetorical flourishes are circulated to a range of audiences and constituencies within a diverse range of conflicts. Therefore, within these conflicts there can be identified two competing yet symmetrical inscriptions; each reified by actors supporting and repeating the phraseology; yet also potentially undermined by the existence of a symmetrical yet rival inscription being deployed in parallel and opposition. Politics and communication are reduced to coercion and alterity to a debased yet terrifyingly alluring caricature with all the characteristics of propaganda. That is, a short, widely repeated and memorable rhetorical maxim, euphemistic and otherwise.

The next section builds further on this analysis by examining the dissemination of liberal democratic rhetoric as enmeshed with bigoted and coercive administrative and military action. This incongruity is investigated in relation to the antecedents of the Vietnam war as highlighted in Graham Greene's renowned novel (1955) *The Quiet American*. The sharp contradiction between liberal democratic rhetoric and martial procedures is now considered as part of discussion regarding Greene's work along with the two film versions of his novel.

4.5 Graham Greene: democratic rhetoric and racist warfare

The Quiet American brutally illustrates through the character of American Alden Pyle the stark friction and unease between bloody military practices during the 1950s French war in Vietnam and liberal democratic rhetorical posturing. Ostensibly an economic attache but apparently a CIA agent, Pyle, the 'quiet American' of the novel's title, has based his views on works by the US policy theorist and author York Harding. Greene presents Pyle as overtly idealistic. As the narrator, worldly wise veteran British journalist Thomas Flower, characterises Pyle

> …you gave him money and York Harding's books on the East and said 'Go
> ahead, win the East for democracy.' He never saw anything he hadn't heard in a

lecture, and his writer and his lecturers made a fool of him. When he saw a dead
body he couldn't even see the wounds. A Red menace, a soldier for democracy
(Greene, 1955: 31).

Thus, Pyle is portrayed as being an American who incorporates and uses a form of
rhetorical affectation that masks its bloody consequences and distances the user from
the deadly military practices associated with it. Pyle supports a so-called Third Force,
'free from Communism and the taint of Colonialism – national democracy he called
it' (p.123); is prepared to 'fight for liberty' (p.95); and alludes to a domino theory 'if
Indo-China goes' (p.93). Greene's primary concern is to illustrate the disjunction
between Pyle's pious rhetoric and the horrific consequences of his actions. After his
bombs kill civilians, Pyle states of the victims:

> They were only war casualties. It was a pity, but you can't always hit your
> target. Anyway they died in the right cause…In a way, you could say they died
> for Democracy (Greene, 1955: 177).

Therefore, Greene presents Pyle as using sanctimonious rhetoric while highlighting its
debased, justificatory pretensions interlocked with racist, military practices. Pyle's
racism is evident not solely by his refusal to acknowledge the humanity of the
Vietnamese he has killed, but also through his ambiguous relationship the Vietnamese
woman Phuong. Briefly, Phuong is at the centre of a rivalry between Pyle and Fowler
with the former after one meeting inferring he 'understands' Phuong (p.59) and could
offer her security (p.76). Pyle also characterises Phuong as a delicate flower (p.100).

Pyle was reputedly based on a composite of 'Americans Greene observed in Vietnam'
(Currey, 1988: 196), particularly drawn from the former advertising man turned CIA
advisor Edward G. Lansdale. Currey states that Greene did not like the Americans
including Lansdale used as the basis for Pyle and 'made this fact very clear in his text'
(p.196). Yet he also notes Greene himself dismissed widespread suggestions that
Lansdale provided the basis for Pyle as a 'myth' (p.198). Currey over emphasises
Greene's anti-US disposition and misses the complexity of the narrator's speaking
position. As an aside, it is worthwhile mentioning that Daniel Ellsberg, famous for
leaking the Pentagon Papers outlining the US military-political involvement in

Vietnam, worked at one point as a subordinate to Lansdale.[58] Furthering the view that Lansdale provided the basis for Pyle, Ellsberg states his superior, like Pyle, had a paternalistic view of 'democracy' whereby its exportation should essentially serve US interests:

> Lansdale…was pretty much an imperialist in the mold of the British except in his case…it was [to bring] democracy. He did think it was in the interest of the people he was working with, the Filipinos, the Vietnamese. At the same time he believed it was very much in *their* interest to be in the sphere of American influence…that their interest was to be served…by fostering a kind of nationalism and a relative independence which, however, would need American aid and influence but would be independent. It was a way of extending and ensuring a sphere of American influence for the good of America but also for the good of [other] people and against Communism, which he despised (Ellsberg in Currey, 1988: 297. Emphasis in original).

The extension of American influence was interlinked with geo political aims and strategic reasons including oil and food resources. Therefore, in Lansdale's view, 'democracy' is taken to be subservient to American geo-political aims. Unsurprisingly, Lansdale's concept of 'democracy' did not include the free flow of information related to the American involvement in Vietnam with the CIA agent taking a harsh view of Ellsberg's actions in leaking the Pentagon Papers. Lansdale damned Ellsberg for playing God and being a self appointed martyr who dealt in stolen goods (Currey, 1988: 328).

Two distinctly different films were made based on Greene's book by Mankiewicz (1958) and Noyce (2002). Both films were subject to contestations over their rhetorical positions and presentations telling us something about the hotly and fiercely disputed nature of 'propaganda' at different times. The original 1958 film version featured the decorated World War II US soldier and subsequent film star Audie Murphy, who played an unnamed American based on Greene's Pyle character. The

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[58] In their analysis, Cull, Culbert and Welch argue that the 'early US propaganda effort in Vietnam is inseparable from the career of…Edward Lansdale'. Lansdale 'used psychological operations to undermine the North'. His most notorious campaign was known as 'The Virgin Mary Has Gone South', which 'sought to encourage North Vietnamese Catholics into South Vietnam by alleging that the North planned to persecute Christians' (Cull. Culbert and Welch, 2003: 421).

result was a narrative that supported US aims in Vietnam, rather than challenging them. As Richard Phillips notes in his online comparison of the two films:

> Mankiewicz twisted the story to present Pyle as an innocent but courageous fighter for democracy and dedicated his film to the US-backed South Vietnamese puppet regime…Mankiewicz consulted…Lansdale on the script and told the press that 'anti-Americanism' and Communist footsie-ism' was 'loose in the world' (Phillips, 2002).

The Mankiewicz version is notable for the transformation of Pyle, who is 'discovered not to have been a CIA agent, after all, but an innocent victim of Fowler's, ''Old Europe's'', misconception of the good intentions of the USA' (Evans, 2007: 129). In this version, Pyle is nothing more than an 'innocent apologist of a so called Third Way ''political movement'' and a ''naive moralist'' seeking to rescue both his and Fowler's love interest, Phuong' (Evans, 2007: 125). For his part, Greene damned Mankiewicz's version as a 'propaganda film for America' that appeared to have been 'deliberately made to attack the book and the author' (Phillips, 2002). Greene viewed 'propaganda' pejoratively and furthermore Mankiewicz's film as an attempt to manipulate opinion favourably towards American geo-political interests and outcomes. Raymond Williams figuratively made a similar point in his presentation of a Mankiewicz-like character in his novel *Loyalties* (Williams, 1985).

The Noyce (2002) version notably ran into difficulties due to both the 2001 attacks in America and 'scathing reviews against what was considered its anti-Americanism' (Evans, 2007: 124). Immediately post September 11, the film was considered by principal producer Miramax as 'too risky for exhibition' and its first run was delayed and only agreed for a short period after a 'favourable reception at the 2002 Toronto Film Festival' (Evans, 2007: 124) and subsequent lobbying by Noyce and actor Michael Caine, who played Fowler (Phillips, 2002). Referring to the perceived anti American rhetoric in the film, Miramax co-chairman Harvey Weinstein initially stated

> Noyce's film could not be released because staff and friends had said it was 'unpatriotic' and that 'America has to be cohesive and band together'. Noyce was told privately that his film was 'as good as dead' and would never get a release (In Phillips, 2002).

Noyce's version firmly addresses the 'implications of US involvement in the modern history of Vietnam' (Evans, 2007: 128) and unlike the Mankiewicz film did not alter the Pyle character or the ending. The two versions illuminate much about the gamble of communication, which was foreshadowed earlier, but also the rich recalibrations and contestations involving what gets taken to constitute 'propaganda' for varying audiences. Greene's statements indicate he viewed the Mankiewicz version as propagandistic, in that it muted the author's questioning of official American adherence to 'democracy', while simultaneously relaying rhetoric portraying the US as an innocent, fighting for 'democracy'. This significant reworking of the novel, put bluntly, produced a 'pro' American outcome radically removed from the novel's actual narrative. While Greene took Mankiewicz's version to be rank propaganda, the film maker had a significantly different perspective, viewing his work as a rhetorical riposte to both Communism and alleged anti Americanism. Interestingly, Noyce and Greene were the subject of similar rhetoric with both denounced for anti Americanism. Noyce encountered similar criticisms to those of Greene when his book was released in the 1950s (Phillips, 2002). This illustrates not solely the longevity of counter rhetorical devices, but further their use in relation two separate texts – in this case, film and a novel. It also highlights the seriousness with which rhetorical combatants view varied texts, such as a novel, as exemplified by a 1956 *New York Times* review of Greene's book bemoaning the absence of an 'experienced and intelligent anti-Communist' in the work (In Phillips, 2002). Both the 1958 and 2002 versions of *The Quiet American* were the subject of harsh reviews. Not only did some commentators attack Mankiewicz's version for being 'too wordy…and insufficiently concerned with plot and action' (Evans, 2007: 126), others were particularly uncomplimentary

> …especially over its reformulation of the ending, absolving the American from any involvement as a covert CIA agent in the political fortunes of a country facing a communist challenge to French colonial rule in the early 1950s (Evans, 2007: 123).

Thus, not all audiences were taken with Mankiewicz's reworking of Greene's novel. The Noyce version was released despite contestations, as outlined, with its major theme intact, highlighting the disjunction between putative 'democratic' rhetoric and bloody militaristic practice.

This section has examined the disconnection between violent military practices in the 1950s and liberal democratic rhetorical affectation, particularly through Graham Greene's character Alden Pyle. Two film versions of Greene's work highlight both the longevity of and intense debates over 'propaganda' and its uses. The next section considers a more contemporary battle, specifically the bloody conflict between the US military and insurgents in Haifa St Baghdad in 2007, to further examine rhetorical devices, their reformulation and editing practices. Specifically, the next section examines the differences between official 'propagandistic' versions and the more deliberative opportunities made possible by potential television news reports.

4.6 Haifa St: one story from multiple perspectives

Haifa St in Baghdad, Iraq, was at the centre of a bloody battle between US and allied Iraqi Army forces against insurgents in January, 2007. This section examines several significantly different video reports that outlined aspects of the battle and the contestations that ensued relating to accusations of the reports as 'propaganda'. Specifically, the section considers whether news reports made by those such as the reporter Lara Logan for CBS News and the *New York Times* reporter Damien Cave offer more deliberative possibilities than the official US military presentation.

Elizabeth Losh provides important analysis regarding video reports of the battle for Haifa St by the US military and reporters such as Lara Logan. Losh's analysis of the use of 'official' politico-military funded YouTube videos and the discursive opportunities afforded by video reports by Logan and others draws attention to these materials. The US military issued its own video report titled 'Battle on Haifa Street', which ran at just under three minutes (MNF IRAQ, 2007a). Filmed solely from the position of US marksmen firing from a high rise building, it largely shows the soldiers targeting their enemies and urging each other on. As Losh notes, 'the chaotic urban landscape…is visible through the curtains and windows' and the soldiers 'damage the building in which they are taking cover, and debris periodically rains down on them' as they fire (Losh, 2008: 119). There is no voiceover and towards the end a soldier can be heard shouting 'good job'; it concludes with gunfire and a soldier exclaiming

'you got him' (MNF IRAQ, 2007a). The soldiers appear stoic, professional and the video is shot from what Losh terms an 'intimate soldier-centered vision' (Losh, 2008: 119). That is, an elevated vantage point. The video report contains no contestations to what is, in effect, an 'official' version and did not attempt to give any serious indication of the consequences of the soldiers' continuous firing. As Losh notes, the army-produced video, which was circulated through YouTube, received more than 2000 comments with many positive, but some objecting 'to what they saw as stage-directed propaganda'. Further:

> Some served as detail-oriented 'spoilers' to point out inconsistencies in the footage and to note that the fusillade was destroying the dwellings of non-combatants and risking the lives of civilians. Video responses to the 'Battle' included both pro-military thank-yous, tributes and remixes and anti-military rap videos and films of veterans protesting the war (Losh, 2008: 119).

Thus, while filmed from a specific viewpoint, the video report elicited a multiplicity of responses including the charge that it was selective in terms of point-of-view and designed to act as propaganda to augment the politico-military position justifying intervention in Iraq.

The report made by Lara Logan for CBS television news was filmed from different vantage points including close-up street level imagery, features different commentary and analysis, and thus contradicts official US military accounts of the battle. Logan presents a highly complex picture of a conflict underpinned by warring sectarian militias, raises questions about potential Iraqi-government sponsored violence and its affect on the civilian population. At just over two minutes, Logan's 'Battle for Haifa Street' report is shorter than the US military's video report, yet features a multiplicity of views and images (Logan, 2007a).

Logan's report begins with combatants firing from buildings, but quickly moves from the official line to highlight the highly violent and chaotic urban landscape. Her voiceover, including the words 'It's only a mile and a half from the heavily fortified green zone', alludes to US and allied Iraqi forces being barely in control. An unidentified male resident, filmed from the neck down, vents his frustration: 'Shame on the government that they can't make one street safe.' Logan adroitly moves to the

bloody sectarian dimensions of the conflict, stating: 'This mostly Shi'ite [government] army has paid a heavy price in the fight.' Her voiceover is accompanied by images of government soldiers, who have been shot in the head. The reporter then further reinforces the sectarian violence, referring to accusations that the Iraqi army murdered Sunni residents in Haifa St. Again, the voiceover is accompanied by images of bodies, this time bearing signs of torture. Other images depict distressed residents being rescued from their homes by US troops. A male resident says he and his sons witnessed Iraqi soldiers executing unarmed citizens. In its concluding stages, Logan's report features a masked male resident vehemently blaming the US for the brutal mayhem: 'They told us they would bring democracy. They promised life would be better than it was under Saddam, but they brought us death and killing.' The final images depict wrecked buildings and smoke billowing from explosions (Logan, 2007a).

Logan's report firmly situates the Haifa St battle as not solely stemming from a 'good' US and allied Iraqi army versus 'evil' insurgents binary, but rather provides greater deliberative opportunity with her pointed highlighting of the savage sectarian brutality, the impacts on civilians and their frustrations over promises of 'democracy' in the face of bloody conflict. Further, moving significantly away from US military imagery of stoic American soldiers firing on a faceless enemy without consequence, Logan presents a devastated urban landscape where some Iraqi citizens challenge the official line. The depiction of bodies and Logan's reference to the centrality of Haifa St within Baghdad raises serious questions about the merits of US politico-military strategy, its alliance with local Shi'ite troops accused of atrocities and whether Western-style democracy can be established within Iraq at the barrel of a gun. Thus, the breadth of Logan's albeit brief report provides more deliberative opportunities than 'official' military reports.

Logan's employer, CBS, elected not to air her 'Battle for Haifa Street', which was instead 'relegated to a relatively obscure position on the CBS website' (Losh, 2008: 120). CBS declined to air the report because its 'violent depiction of a trauma culture…could not be assimilated by Americans' and the executive producer felt the images 'were a bit strong' for US audiences (Losh, 2008: 119). The reporter subsequently 'attempted to independently disseminate the video' (Losh, 2008: 120)

171

by using a mass email. In her email, Logan notes the video report had 'not aired on CBS' and adds:

> It is a story that is largely being ignored, even though this is taking place in central Baghdad…It should be seen. And people should know about this…this is not too gruesome to air, but rather too important to ignore (Logan in Losh, 2008: 120).

Logan's email was subsequently highlighted on progressive blogs and 'generated many supportive reader comments' (Losh, 2008: 120). Yet highlighting the vexed and hotly contested nature of what can be taken as 'propaganda', conservative bloggers rhetorically linked Logan to al Qaeda, and, in effect, accused the reporter of being a propagandist for the enemy. Some bloggers argued that Logan's report 'improperly appropriated insurgent cell-phone footage' (Losh, 2008: 120). An online commentator, identified only as zolacolby, accused Logan of airing al Qaeda propaganda and questioned whether CBS had 'enough friendly contact with al Qaeda to get their video and propaganda' (zolacolby, 2007).[59] Thus, conservative supporters of the official government position ignored the deliberative opportunities afforded by Logan's initial report and instead used 'propaganda' as a pejorative label with which to discredit Logan and by extension, her employer, by linking them with the demonised enemy.

Further video reports on the Haifa St battle added to the complexity and potential for more analysis, as well as highlighting the organisational practices of editing. Logan's second report, 'Battle for Haifa St Continues' (Logan, 2007b) departs radically from the overall tenor of her first report. The bodies and sectarian tensions were missing from the second report, which started with credited footage, taken from the first 'official' military video report, of the US marksmen firing from the windows of high rise buildings. While the unidentified male resident stating 'shame on the government' was again briefly broadcast, his comments were significantly edited and can be taken to refer to the Iraqi Government. This was also presented as a comparatively *minor* part of the report, which predominantly highlights the

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[59] An article on the conservative RenewAmerica website outlines this argument at length, accusing CBS of failing to tell viewers that 'al Qaeda propaganda' was incorporated into Logan's report (Huston, 2007).

professionalism and heroism of US soldiers as they disarm an IED or Improvised Explosive Device and detain the insurgent responsible. The overall tone of Logan's second report was highly positive, enabled by editing which moved seamlessly from 'official' images to what Logan describes as 'the ongoing battle…against road side bombs, the number one killer of US soldiers in Iraq'. In these ways, the report eschews the bloody imagery of the first report to present a narrative of competence and skill of the US military.

The US military released a second report, titled 'Battle on Haifa Street Part 2' (MNF IRAQ, 2007b), which was strikingly similar to the first official video report. Soldiers firing weaponry from the windows of high rise buildings were featured along with missile strikes demolishing urban buildings; soldiers could also be heard praising their mission with upbeat comments such as 'cool', 'nice', 'good' and 'this is better than the first time' (MNF IRAQ, 2007b). The vision was shot solely from the soldiers' perspective and smoke rising from buildings hit by missiles appears from some distance.

The airing by CBS of Logan's second report, opposed to the oblique placement of her first report on the network's website, raises serious questions. It can be taken to confirm Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model which regards the media, in this case CBS, being interlocked with the strategies of governmental senior figures, albeit using the rhetoric of acceptability of violence in prime-time news. The marked recurrence of the 'official' line, revised and incorporated into Logan's second report, is notable. Yet it is clear Logan's striking first report, contesting and buffeting the US politico-military sanctioned rhetoric of a 'clean' war fought by heroic American soldiers and their allies, produces a possibly deliberative space. If taken up, this deliberative space might have enabled others to challenge the dominant framing of this episode, encapsulated within the two official reports and Logan's second report.

Serious and disturbing questions about US military strategy and the human cost were raised by a subsequent video report titled 'Return to Haifa Street: The Cost of Battle' by reporter Damien Cave from *The New York Times* (Cave, 2007). Briefly, Cave's video report ostensibly focuses on a joint American-Iraqi mission, led by US Sergeant Hector Leija, to search for insurgents and weapons in the high rise buildings in Haifa

St. It also queries both military tactics and their cost with its portrayal of both a destitute Shi'ite family, seen huddling around a basic 'space heater', and the death of Sgt Leija, who is killed by a sniper. The Iraqi soldiers are shown as enthusiastic, if not jovial as they cheer when kicking the doors into locked Haifa St apartments and rummaging through suitcases; there are images of smashed crockery as they leave apartments. Cave states in his voiceover: 'American officers later praise the Iraqis for being eager to participate.' Immediately afterwards Cave shows the destitute Shi'ite family, who have 'nowhere else to go'. Cave then cuts to the chaotic aftermath as Sgt Leija is shot through a window by a sniper. US soldiers are heard comforting their dying colleague: 'You're good. Come on Sarge. Come on Sarge. Be good, brother.' Sgt Leija is removed on a stretcher and Cave notes his men are 'left alone, shocked, heartbroken'. It is far removed from the gung-ho action of the two official reports and Logan's edited second report. In the concluding stages of his report, Cave notes in a voiceover that the soldiers have been informed of Sgt Leija's death. Cutting to attributed images from the 'official' military video reports of the US soldiers firing from the windows of high rise buildings, Cave pointedly adds:

> It was unclear of what the lasting impact of the operation would be. I was with only one unit and as a whole the military says it was a success, releasing this video to prove how well Iraqis and Americans performed. (Cave's video report then cuts back to the empty and unlocked Haifa St apartments) But after the soldiers leave, the apartments are left open and empty, making it easy for people to return and reignite the cycle of violence all over again. This was at least the third major operation by American and Iraqi troops on Haifa St since 2003. The gains in every case were temporary and as the day ended in Baghdad there was no way of telling whether this week's effort would bring a more lasting peace (Cave, 2007).

Akin to the deliberative space created by Logan's unaired first report, Cave avoids military triumphalism and simplistic rhetorical sloganeering to present a complex and questioning account. Cave's final voiceover and the images preceding it, in effect, provide a contestation of the 'official' military video report. Cave's report questions not solely the human cost, particularly in terms of US service personnel, but also the impact of the conflict on Iraqis. It raises queries as to whether the then current Haifa St operation, like the ones preceding it, would come to nought. While Cave at no

174

point uses the word 'propaganda', it is clear his report and reinterpretation of the 'official' military video imagery is designed to produce a more open account where pertinent questions can be raised of the US politico-military establishment's policies in Iraq. In conclusion, Logan's first report and Cave's account of the violence within the Haifa St area offer more deliberative opportunities than the sanitised and one dimensional video reports produced by the military. Imagery from official reports can, as in the case of Cave's report, be edited and highlighted to contrast with what reporters are observing. 'Official' rhetoric is buffeted, contested and reworked whereby audiences can potentially garner an alternative meaning than those estimated by politico-military authorities – or in the words of Losh, reflecting on the two 'official' reports, one questioning those accounts 'used to support the continuing occupation of the country and moral equations that justified the war' (Losh, 2008: 121).

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to examine the 'only understand force' propaganda, not solely in terms of its pervasive use, but also the communicative struggles wherein its dominant 'othering' deployments can be radically reworked. As has been argued, the 'only understand force' phraseology and rhetoric and its varied permutations are more than a linguistic or metaphoric ornament; it is a quintessential component of propaganda. Yet while the rhetoric can be disseminated to both justify violent action and create a distance between specific constituencies and the 'other', it can also be challenged in familiar news articles through its placement. It is perhaps one of the great paradoxes of the conflicts examined that oppositional actors have been shown to be circulating imitative rhetoric to demonise and distance themselves from the 'other'. Yet buffeting this widely accelerated and, to use Latour's term, cascaded rhetoric, are the more deliberative opportunities afforded by video reports such as those produced by Logan and Cave. The next chapter will further examine rhetoric formulated and circulated by oppositional actors, particularly through the radically differing print media accounts of rationales for and against both the separate Soviet and US-led invasions of Afghanistan. This will provide a more detailed understanding of the

communicative struggles produced from widely disseminated propaganda. Nationalistic and patriotic connotations stemming from such rhetoric will also be discussed and analysed.

Chapter 5

A Tale of Two Invasions: A Comparative Study of the Rhetoric used in the Soviet and US-led invasions of Afghanistan

5.1 Introduction

Following analysis of the divergent contours of the 'only understand force' rhetoric and the related strategies of dehumanisation and galvanising audiences, the thesis now scrutinises propagandistic phraseology and imagery through a comparative study. The separate Soviet Union (1979) and US-led (2001) invasions of Afghanistan provide an opportunity to analyse the intense and at times outraged rhetoric of both proponents and opponents of each conflict. Contestations, rhetorical disjunction and parallels are discussed and examined in connection with the two invasions. In advancing the basis for a comparative study, the chapter adopts Entman's argument that:

> Comparing media narratives of events that could have been reported similarly helps to reveal the critical textual choices that framed the story but would otherwise remain submerged in an undifferentiated text. Unless narratives are compared, frames are difficult to detect fully and reliably, because many of the framing devices can appear as 'natural', unremarkable choices of words or images (Entman, 2006: 28).

Further developing this argument, Rusciano states that 'framing is best understood through comparisons, whether temporal or spatial, where the same events are depicted through different journalistic lenses' (Rusciano, 2003: 159). Therefore, the chapter examines reportage and promotional circulation of rationales related to the two invasions of the same country to compare and contrast the cascaded and accelerated rhetoric disseminated by supporters and adversaries. To achieve this, articles have been selected from several publications – the Sydney-based pro Soviet, Communist

newspaper of the Socialist Party of Australia, *The Socialist*, which uncritically reprinted articles from the official Soviet newspaper *Pravda* ('Truth'), *Time* magazine and the Trotskyite *Socialist Worker Online* (US). Texts have been chosen from the aforementioned publications, directed at specific audiences, to consider the rhetoric that forms the basis of specific frames and to do this uses

> …words and images highly salient in the culture, which is to say *noticeable*, *understandable*, *memorable* and *emotionally charged*. Magnitude taps the *prominence* and *repetition* of the framing words and images (Entman, 2004: 6. Entman's emphasis).

Headlines, phraseology, photographs and graphics will be considered as they form critical elements of hotly contested rhetoric used throughout both invasions. The chapter includes sections examining both *The Socialist's* and *Time* magazine's coverage of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan along with *Time's* and the *Socialist Worker Online's* treatment of the US-led invasion. Building on previous work analysing specific rhetoric, this chapter will delve in detail into the persuasive communicative devices, never uncontested, as they are used to support, justify and detract from bloody violence. Underpinning the need for this work is Entman's salient argument that the public's opinions arise from mass mediated information 'rather than from direct contact with the realities of foreign affairs' (Entman, 2007: 307).

5.2 Brief overview of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

Although the Soviet invasion of its southern neighbour Afghanistan occurred in late December, 1979, it came 'against a backdrop of long-standing Soviet involvement' in that country dating back to the mid 1950s. Briefly, this occurred during the Cold War, the nature of which will be discussed shortly, and involved a 'mutually convenient' aid agreement between Moscow and Kabul (Saikal, 1987: 3). The Soviets were motivated by 'growing concern about the intensified anti-Soviet global stance of the United States, and the American penetration of the Southwest Asian region' (Saikal, 1987: 3). Therefore, the Soviets began military and economic aid to Afghanistan in 1955, which amounted to $2.5 billion to 1979 (Saikal, 1987: 4).

The Soviet backed People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized power in April, 1978 (Saikal, 1987: 6), however, the party was beset by serious internal tensions and lacked 'cohesion, popular support and historical legitimacy'. As Saikal notes:

> It was clear from the start to both the PDPA leadership and the Kremlin that the PDPA rule could not survive for very long without massive Soviet political, economic and military support (Saikal, 1987: 7).

Rival factions jousted for power while president Nur Muhammad Taraki and foreign minister Hafizullah Amin forged a 'Stalinist PDPA-Khalqi clique rule'. Local resistance grew to the Soviet-backed Khalq faction, whose rule became bloodier. In a foreshadowing of the rhetoric directed at opponents of the Soviet invasion, Moscow and its Afghan supporters labelled mujaheedin resistance as an 'imperialist backed' counter revolution (Saikal, 1987: 8). Moscow prevailed upon Taraki to remove Amin, who had assumed the roles of Prime Minister and Defence Minister. The latter 'learned of the plot, killed Taraki and took over the PDPA' (Saikal, 1987: 8). The situation deteriorated further during late 1979 as

> …Amin's supporters ranged against those of Taraki. Insurgency was everywhere; the government could not control individual cities…Afghanistan's economy was in a shambles (Arnold, 1981: 87).

Amin subsequently made overtures to Washington and one group of mujaheedin as a 'way of gaining some leverage against the Soviets' (Saikal, 1987: 9). However, for the Soviets these moves together with

> …the fact that Amin's rule was on the verge of collapse at the hands of the opposition…confronted Soviet policy makers with a very serious crisis in Afghanistan…they had clearly failed to achieve their political objectives of building effective 'mechanisms of Soviet control', it…became all too clear that they had no hope of achieving such objectives as long as Amin headed the PDPA (Saikal, 1987: 9).

The Soviets subsequently invaded Afghanistan between Christmas, 1979, and the New Year holidays 'when the state machineries in the Western world were largely inactive'. Further, the Soviets airlifted to Afghanistan

…some 50,000 heavily equipped mechanised troops, whose number within a year was boosted to…about 120,000, occupying Kabul and certain other strategic places in the country. They immediately killed their former comrade, Amin, and his entourage; accused Amin of being a 'CIA agent' and 'bloodsucker of the Afghan people'; and put in his place their long-standing trusted ally, the Parcham leader, Babrak Karmal (Saikal, 1987: 9-10).

Saikal's authoritative account of these events is attentive to the rhetorical devices deployed by the Soviets and their supporters, specifically the reconfiguration of Amin as both a devious ideological enemy and a vampire-like, that is, subhuman, creature drawing from the life blood of his own people. The Soviets invaded Afghanistan and replaced Amin, having come to regard the former leader 'as at best erratic, at worst ideologically unsound' (Galeotti, 1995: 10).[60]

The Soviet invasion occurred during the Cold War (1946-1991), a period in which rhetorical strategies were considered to be both paramount and intimately entwined with geopolitical aims. As Medhurst defines the Cold War, it is

> …a contest between competing systems as represented…by the Soviet Union and the United States. It is a contest involving such tangibles as geography, markets, spheres of influence, and military alliances, as well as such intangibles as public opinion, attitudes, images, expectations, and beliefs about whatever system is currently in ascendancy (Medhurst, 1990: 19).

Adversaries in this contest placed a premium on persuasive phraseology and imagery directed at specific audiences. In his analysis, Medhurst notes that Cold War weaponry critically involved

> …words, images, symbolic actions, and, on occasion, physical actions undertaken by covert means. For the most part, however, Cold War is a matter of symbolic action, action intended to forward the accomplishment of strategic goals – social, political, economic, military, or diplomatic (Medhurst, 1990: 19).

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[60] More in depth analysis of the internal ructions of the PDPA, its central players, the 1978 Communist takeover in Afghanistan and specifics of the Soviet invasion are outlined in Halliday (2002: 37-38), Saikal (1987: 1-29); Galeotti (1995: 1-21); Cooley (1999: 13-28); and Arnold (1981: 87-96).

The rhetoric stemming from this conflict is indicative of the persuasive strategies used by oppositional actors. Analysis will highlight the specific rhetorical devices actors and their supporters used, repeated and recalibrated, and addressed to audiences.

5.3 *The Socialist's* coverage of the Soviet invasion

The Socialist's front page article of January 16, 1980, foreshadows many of the key narratives and themes that would be repeated in subsequent articles regarding the Soviet action in Afghanistan and its aftermath. A large black and white photograph, run with the article, depicts a girl being hugged while lifted up in the arms of a Soviet soldier. Both appear smiling, relaxed and the pair are surrounded by happy children. The visual rhetoric of the image conveys friendship, protection of the weak by the strong and a child's comfort with the Soviet military. The caption anchoring the image is less than subtle: 'If imperialists would accept the full meaning of peaceful co-existence, there would be more scenes like this. Soviet soldier says goodbye to a little friend before he withdraws from the German Democratic Republic' (*The Socialist*, 1980a: 1). In such ways, *The Socialist* recalibrates an image from a different geopolitical context to convey rhetoric that the Soviets are benevolent and kindly protectors, particularly to those, such as children, who cannot protect themselves. Further, the visual rhetoric suggests the Soviets provide succour for the weak, not solely children, but entire nations. The connotations made possible by the image are that just as in the German Democratic Republic, Soviet soldiers will be a benevolent and welcomed force in Afghanistan. Moreover, the caption proposes that imperialists deliberately fail to comprehend the benign nature of the Soviets and its military and are provocatively inflaming tensions by refusing to live together harmoniously.

The text of the accompanying article headlined 'US threat to peace behind anti-Sovietism' (*The Socialist*, 1980a: 1) ardently configures the Soviets as *peaceful, helpful* and *friendly* neighbours of the Afghan people while those criticising the Soviets are framed variously as *warmongers, imperialists* and *propagandists*. The article assertively dealt with criticism of the Soviets by denouncing the 'current wave of anti Soviet hysteria over Afghanistan', which was due to a 'new and growing threat

to world peace by US imperialism supported by the leadership of China and…by the Fraser Government' (*The Socialist*, 1980a: 1). Further solidifying and framing the Soviets as benevolent and kindly friends, the article adds: 'The Afghan and Soviet Governments have indicated that Soviet troops will leave as soon as the situation which required their assistance ends' (*The Socialist*, 1980: 1). The article also contextualises the new Afghan Government as legitimate and backed by the peaceful Soviets:

> The new Afghanistan Government, headed by Babrak Karmal, has been installed by the popular masses of Afghanistan, and will defend the independence and the revolutionary aims of the country…The Soviet Union, by supporting the Afghanistan Government, is acting in defence of peace, progress and the right of nations to self-determination (*The Socialist*, 1980a: 8).

Against these positive characterisations of the Afghan and Soviet Governments the article opposes outside influences with the Chinese, American and US aligned Fraser Government portrayed as working to both foment discord and obstruct the peaceful and progressive aims of the Soviets and their Afghan partners. Thus, the article states as uncontested fact that the US, through the CIA, and China were arming Afghan rebels and that Soviet backed Afghan forces had captured 'consignments of American, British, Chinese and Pakistani-made weapons' (*The Socialist*, 1980a: 1). Referring to the import of rhetoric and audiences, a separate brief article headlined 'Support for Soviet aid to people's Afghanistan' complains bitterly that a statement issued to mainstream Sydney media by the Socialist Party of Australia had been ignored yet 'the media was full of lies and distortions' regarding Afghanistan (*The Socialist*, 1980a: 8). The article lists the Soviets' supporters, organisations such as the Communist Parties of India, South Africa and France, all condemning US imperialism; in the eyes of *The Socialist*, these constitute credible rhetorical allies. Thus, the article further configures the Soviets as friendly neighbours acting in accord with an 'established treaty' while supported by a purportedly progressive worldwide movement.

The following edition on January 30, 1980, carried eight articles including an editorial on the Soviet action in Afghanistan. The main page one article headlined 'Stop US – China drive for war!' firmly positions the US, UK, Australian and Chinese

Governments as warmongers hell bent on taking the world 'to the brink of nuclear war' (*The Socialist*, 1980b: 1). In highly emotive phraseology and alluding to the intense rhetorical struggles emanating from and involving the key national actors, the article denounces 'imperialist propagandists' while attempting to sediment and solidify rationales for the Soviet action: namely, that the Afghan Government had asked the USSR to help under a 'legitimate treaty' and the US and China had been directing a 'counter revolutionary' army inside Afghanistan since Communists achieved power in 1978. Further, those criticising the USSR were condemned for anti-Sovietism and therefore misleading media audiences with 'threats and lies' (*The Socialist*, 1980b: 1). A large black and white photograph alongside the article depicts a beaming Afghan man, looking directly at the reader, being hugged by another man, who was in tears and appeared overcome with emotion. They are surrounded by other smiling men. The caption reads: 'An Afghan political prisoner just released by the Karmal Government meets his relatives outside the Puli Charkhi jail in Kabul'. The photograph connotes the Soviets as liberatory, *progressive friends* of the Afghan people; the overwrought reaction of the man hugging his relative along with the accompanying text praising Soviet involvement consolidates notions that the new Afghan Government, backed by the Soviets, is working for the betterment of its people despite the attempts by nefarious imperialists and Chinese critics of Soviet politics to cause ructions and deliberately misrepresent Soviet actions.

The January 30, 1980, edition carried an extensive interview, reprinted from *Pravda*, with Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev. The article headlined 'US seeks to revive language of cold war' covered a large part of page 2 and almost all of page 10 (*The Socialist*, 1980b: 2, 10). A large portrait-style photograph of Brezhnev appearing authoritative, serious and statesmanlike accompanied the page 2 text while a smaller photograph of Afghan President Barbrak Karmal and a large picture of a Soviet soldier 'protecting a highway near Kabul' were included on page 10. Brezhnev is quoted as calling critics of the Soviets as 'opponents of peace and detente', who were responsible for 'mountains of lies' and a 'shameless anti-Soviet campaign' (*The Socialist*, 1980b: 2). The interview goes on to cite Brezhnev stating as fact that 'thousands and tens of thousands of insurgents, armed and trained abroad' had been

sent into Afghanistan after Communists achieved power in 1978.[61] Building further

on this argument, Brezhnev states:

> In effect, imperialism together with its accomplices launched an undeclared war
> against revolutionary Afghanistan…Afghanistan persistently demanded an end
> to the aggression…on our part we warned those concerned that if the aggression
> would not be stopped, we would not abandon the Afghan people at a time of
> trial (In *The Socialist*, 1980b: 2).

Brezhnev spoke of fears that Afghanistan

> …would lose its independence and be turned into an imperialist military
> bridgehead on our country's southern border…in other words, the time came
> when we could not but respond to the request of the government of friendly
> Afghanistan (In *The Socialist*, 1980b: 10).

A failure to act, Brezhnev states, would have 'meant to watch passively the

origination on our southern border of a seat of serious danger to the security of the

Soviet State' (*The Socialist*, 1980b: 10). Repeating and relaying the persuasive

phraseology featured in other articles, Brezhnev indicates outrage at what he felt was

deliberately distorted rhetoric misrepresenting the Soviets: 'It is deliberately and

unscrupulously that imperialist and also the Peking propaganda distort the Soviet

Union's role in the Afghan affairs' (sic) (*The Socialist*, 1980b: 10). This *Pravda*

article and particularly this last quote from Brezhnev, correlates with what Mattelart

terms the 'wooden language' of Soviet propaganda (Mattelart, 2000: 50-51) and

Roxburgh describes as the 'dullness and difficulty of its language' (Roxburgh, 1987:

100). Of course, this leaden style does not represent the full breadth of Soviet Union's

persuasive rhetoric. The Soviets had a rich history of producing animated propaganda

films, directed at internal audiences, from the 1920s to the 1980s. It is stressed these

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[61] The Soviets used a variety of mediums and techniques to long maintain that outside influences had
instigated and/or were involved in the Afghan conflict. A documentary style film titled *Afghanistan:
The Revolution Cannot Be Killed* was aired on Soviet television on December 25, 1985. As Ebon notes,
'The program left the impression that the conflict had been instigated by outsiders, and maps with
routes leading from Pakistan and Iran into Afghanistan were shown. Film clips suggested that the
guerrillas were mercenaries. A captured man identified as a Turkish national said he had been sent into
Afghanistan by the CIA. The film ended with music about the Afghan homeland and pro-Soviet troops
being cheered by crowds' (Ebon, 1987: 345). In these sorts of ways, the Soviets disseminated
propagandistic rhetoric relating to the nature and origin of the Afghan conflict.

films represent a section of Soviet media and cultural production and their representations should not be taken as a totality. In the short animated films, 'capitalists' were presented variously as rapacious, dangerous spiders, sharks, warmongers, bloated and uncaring. This was contrasted with heroic imagery associated with the muscle-bound, mighty Soviet worker who vanquishes and repels world capitalism (Vidov, 2006). This highlights the different mediums used by the Soviets to disseminate rhetoric to achieve propaganda aims – in this instance, persuading internal audiences as to the merits of the communist ideology rather than capitalism.

Brezhnev's uncontested rhetoric, relayed in *The Socialist* through *Pravda*, critically frames Soviets as munificent neighbours assisting the Afghans against wicked imperialists and others who would deliberately distort the motives of the USSR by relaying nefarious lies. Brezhnev frames 'propaganda' as a corrupt and mendacious undertaking carried out by the Soviet Union's opponents, particularly dissolute 'imperialists', while suggesting the Soviets are disseminating truth, helping a friend and promoting harmony. While Brezhnev's translated phraseology is clunky and wooden, particularly to Western readers, it is nonetheless emotive and conveys shocked outrage, aggrieved patriotism and justificatory rhetoric outlining the reasoning behind Soviet action. Brezhnev's version of events, including a brief history of Communism in Afghanistan and Soviet 'assistance', is presented at all times as incontrovertible fact.

Other articles in *The Socialist* on January 30, 1980, underscore and sediment key themes being disseminated by the newspaper. An editorial headlined 'Fraser's hawkish line threatens Australia' (p.2) variously frames Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser as a warmonger, irresponsible and hysterical; the article 'Good response to our class stand' about *The Socialist* newspaper seller Ken Rowsthorne uncritically refers to 'the truth' being relayed by *The Socialist* as opposed to 'the filthy lies and deceit of capitalism' (p.2);[62] and the article 'Afghanistan's struggle for

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[62] The Page 2 article strongly infers that *The Socialist's* readership consists of Left wing progressives, who are in agreement with the newspaper's advocacy for the 'principles of socialism' and peace (p.2). There is no inclusion of empirical data to support this. *The Socialist* positions itself as being distinctly different from the 'capitalist press', which was promulgating 'hysterical warmongering…to get the

a better life' sediments rhetoric similar to Brezhnev's version of Communist involvement in Afghanistan, particularly notions of former leader Hafizullah Amin being a CIA agent and opponents such as the US, China, the UK and others backing a 'counter revolutionary army' (p.4). The article 'Debate on Afghan events shows who's who on the left' (p.4) refers to divisions among Left wing parties over events in Afghanistan. The lengthy article focuses on a debate hosted by the Communist Party of Australia at Sydney University. While the article was essentially uncritical of the comments made by representatives from the Trotskysite Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and the Socialist Party of Australia (SPA), its unnamed author derides the position taken by Eric Aarons, the joint national secretary of the Communist Party of Australia. Aarons was critical of the Soviet action and 'upheld the view that the Soviet Union had violated the national sovereignty', yet

> …did not take into account, or did not think, important enough, the fact that there was a revolution in progress in Afghanistan which was being attacked from outside, i.e. by US, China, Pakistan, and that it was actually in real danger of being taken over by right-wing, pro-imperialist elements, who would have transformed the country into a hot-bed of provocations against the Soviet Union and into a threat to world peace (*The Socialist*, 1980b: 4).

Thus, *The Socialist* notes the diversity of views held within the communist Left while simultaneously framing the views of Aarons and that of his party as deviant, without factual basis and profoundly ignorant. Further connoting abnormality, a photograph of Aarons run with the article was crudely etched, most likely from another image, and set against a distinctly black background, leaving the subject to appear as both demonic and deranged. It contrasts radically with similar size, unetched photographs, run higher up the text, of representatives from the SWP and SPA, who appear natural and earnestly engaged in the debate. This blunt contrast, disseminated to the Australian readership of *The Socialist,* emphasises the paper's framing of the Communist Party of Australia's position on the critical issue as both aberrant and untrustworthy.

Australian population to jump into the anti-Soviet wagon' (p.2). In these ways, *The Socialist* argues it is disseminating the 'truth' as opposed to the 'lies' of the 'capitalist press'.

These examples from *The Socialist* indicate its use of highly *memorable* and *emotional* words and images to persuade its Australian supporters of the just, fair and legitimate nature of Soviet action as opposed to the 'imperialists' and the Chinese, presented as liars and saboteurs of peace who wilfully foment conflict and misrepresent the honourable aims of the Soviet Union. 'Propaganda' is presented in the paper as a mendacious and thoroughly deceitful enterprise used by critics and enemies to maliciously invent mistruths about the Soviet Union. The chapter now examines contrasting, indicative examples of *Time's* coverage of the Soviet invasion.

5.4 *Time's* coverage of the Soviet invasion

The US publication *Time* magazine provides instances of the rhetorical devices and phraseology used by senior US government officials to contest and buffet the justificatory terminology deployed by Soviet representatives and supporters. In selecting articles from *Time* for analysis, the thesis adopts Herzstein's argument that the news magazine 'presented a kind of unofficial but definitive version of America's righteous cause during the Cold War' (Herzstein, 2005: xiii). Herzstein, who analyses *Time* co-founder Henry R. Luce's support of US governmental Cold War aims, convincingly argues that *Time* was 'much more than a magazine' for many of its middle class American readers 'eager to learn about the world' (Herzstein, 2005: xiii).

The rhetoric disseminated by US government officials during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan exemplifies the US administration's demonisation of the Soviets as a ruthless, debased and immoral enemy, provides a vehicle through which citizens could 'rally around the flag' and also potentially generated support for increased American spending for militaristic purposes. This section examines this rhetoric, particularly as it was disseminated largely through articles in two editions – January 7, 1980, and January 14, 1980. *Time's* coverage of the Soviet action in the January 7 issue was substantially overshadowed by its naming of Ayatollah Khomeini as the magazine's Man of the Year, featuring an artist's impression of Khomeini on the front cover depicting the Iranian leader as stern and threatening, along with the accompanying articles 'The Mystic Who Lit The Fires of Hatred' (Church, 1980: 7-

15) and 'Portrait of an Ascetic Despot' (Church and Smith, 1980: 16-17). [63] The initial coverage of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was limited to several pages buried deep in the magazine (p.54-56) and disseminates rhetoric that would be solidified in the ensuing editions. The article 'Steel Fist in Kabul', which includes the subheading 'A Soviet coup overthrows Amin and sets a fearsome precedent', frames the Soviets as violent, dangerous and mendacious. The article states:

> It was the most brutal blow from the Soviet Union's steel fist since the Red
> Army's invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968…The Soviets hoped their brazen,
> perhaps desperate, action could help their puppet regime bring a stubborn
> Islamic insurgency under control and thus stabilize a dangerous flash point on
> their southern border (*Time*, 1980a: 54).

The article referred to 'outraged reaction' from US President Jimmy Carter while Peking fumes that 'Afghanistan's independence and sovereignty have become toys in Moscow's hands' (*Time*, 1980a: 54). In a reference to both competing notions of truth and the underlying causes of the Soviet action, the article also notes that the Soviets had quickly broadcast new Afghan leader Babrak Karmal's denunciation of the 'Amin dictatorship as an agent of ''American imperialism'' ' (*Time*, 1980a: 55). Furthermore, the article states:

> Moscow, of course, claimed that it intervened only at the request of the Karmal
> government under the terms of a 20-year friendship treaty signed in December
> 1978. The Russians made no attempt to disguise the fact that the airlift began

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[63] The Soviet invasion occurred during what became known as the Iran hostage crisis, which alerted the US to the politics of the region. As mentioned in the previous section, there are significant geopolitical relations of adjacency between Iran, the Soviet Union and Afghanistan together with Pakistan and China. The Islamic revolutionary leader Ayatollah Khomeini styled the US as 'the Great Satan' and the Soviets as 'the Lesser Satan' (Katz, 2010: 186). Iranian students broke into the US Embassy in Tehran in November, 1979, and held more than 50 diplomats and staff hostage for 444 days before they were released. The students were partially prompted by the former US-backed Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, 'being allowed into the United States for treatment of his cancer' (Axworthy, 2008: 265). Khomeini 'exploited the hostage crisis to preserve a revolutionary fluidity and a sense of crisis that helped him to wrong foot his opponents'. (Axworthy, 2008: 265). The incumbent US President Jimmy Carter announced his intention to seek re-election in 1980 and was subsequently opposed by the 'formidable' Senator Edward 'Ted' Kennedy, who contested the Democratic Party's primary elections (Harris, 2004: 266-277). As the crisis dragged on, Carter bridled at being portrayed as 'weak and passive' by his critics (Harris, 2004: 336). The hostage crisis became a major point of contention between Carter and his Republican challenger, Ronald Reagan, during the 1980 presidential campaign. In a debate between Carter and Reagan in October that year, the latter said 'the whole affair had been a national humiliation and that there ought to be a congressional investigation into how Carter had handled it' (Harris, 2004: 404).

two days before the coup that brought Karmal to power, thus making a mockery of their rationale (*Time*, 1980a: 55).

The terms 'steel fist', 'brutal blow', 'desperate action' and 'puppet regime' connote the Soviets as a cruel and vicious aggressor, which directly contradicts pro-Soviet rhetoric of a benevolent and friendly neighbour, such as used in *The Socialist*. *Time* acknowledges Soviet justification for its action while simultaneously ridiculing it with phraseology such as 'Moscow, of course, claimed' and 'making a mockery of their rationale'. In other words, the article alludes to intense contestations over notions of *credibility*, *truth* and *validation*. These are taken to be important as the key actors attempt to persuade audiences and potentially align allies to the justness and righteousness of their cause while concurrently strengthening the appearance of its *factual* base. The visual rhetoric accompanying the 'Steel Fist in Kabul' article further depicts the Soviets as violent and warlike. A large photograph of Soviet surface to air missiles on multiple trucks highlights Soviet weaponry as threatening (p.54) while a smaller map on the opposite page (p.55) depicts the large USSR border with Afghanistan and Soviet troop divisions on the border with a plane indicating the Soviet troop airlift into Afghanistan. The map, along with the image of surface to air missiles, connotes fearsome Soviet firepower overwhelming smaller Afghanistan. A smaller photograph (p.55) captioned 'Strongman Karmal' depicts the Afghan leader as authoritarian and stern. Thus, the Soviets are presented as a treacherous foe, who had brutally invaded a smaller neighbour.

If *Time's* January 7, 1980 edition was relatively restrained, the following January 14 edition substantially coalesced a variety of highly visible and emotive, persuasive devices to portray the Soviets as enemies of God, civilisation, the American people and Western society. The cover was entirely given over to an artist's illustration of a menacing and shadowy Soviet military figure. The headline 'Moscow's Bold Challenge' ran across the top of the Soviet soldier's helmet, which features a prominent red star. The rim of the helmet shadows the soldier's eyes, adding to the aura of peril and threat. Further, the soldier's nostrils appear to be flaring as if he is about to act aggressively. The lower part of the image cut off just under the nose at the bottom of the page, connoting a fearsome, threatening and extremely menacing adversary. The headline 'Moscow's Bold Challenge' consolidates the persuasive

rhetoric disseminating notions to the American constituency of Soviet inspired danger, violence and peril.

The cover article headlined ''My Opinion of the Russians Has Changed Most Dramatically' ran over seven pages with a variety of linguistic, photographic and illustrative rhetorical devices. The main analysis of the January 14 edition is focused on this article and its accompanying rhetoric. Connoting dire threat and contextualising the Soviet action, and by extension the Soviets themselves, as a form of deadly, inhuman bacteria, US President Jimmy Carter was quoted as stating in a nationwide address:

> 'Aggression unopposed becomes a contagious disease.' He denounced the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as 'a deliberate effort by a powerful atheistic government to subjugate an independent Islamic people' and said that a 'Soviet-occupied Afghanistan threatens both Iran and Pakistan and is a stepping stone to their possible control over much of the world's oil supplies' (In *Time*, 1980b: 4).

As foreshadowed, the Soviets are presented as Godless and nefarious enemies who pose a threat to the world. They are framed as a sickness or ailment which must be staunched, otherwise the 'disease' will spread. In a familiar Cold War narrative, Carter presents a good versus evil binary where the Soviets are firmly linked to the latter and by inference the Americans and their allies are associated with the former. The visual rhetoric underscores notions of menace and peril with a large cartoon of a hulking bear, notable for its sharp claws, advancing into a map of Afghanistan while looking over the border to Iran and its leader Ayatollah Khomeini, who sticks pins in an Uncle Sam-type figure.[64] Drawn starkly in black and white and dominating the first page (p.4) of the cover article, the cartoon connotes the Soviets as a hazard to the region, a formidable adversary and between the Iranians and themselves, undoubtedly the worse of two evils. This is connoted not only through the size of the bear, which dwarfs Ayatollah Khomeini, but also by Carter's reference to the control of the

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[64] The bear is a traditional Russian symbol representing 'national identity and power in the way the bald eagle is to Americans' (Barrington et al, 2009: 421). *Time's* use of this symbol casts the Soviets as menacing and aggressive. As Koschmal argues convincingly in his analysis of negative depictions of the symbolic Russian bear: 'Portraying Russia as a wild animal, whose behaviour is dictated by uncontrolled emotions, debases Russia and makes it appear dangerous' (Koschmal, 2008: 129). *Time's* depiction is diametrically opposed to the friendly, smiling bear Misha, used as a mascot for the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

world's oil supplies and the power that would potentially emanate from this. *Time* again alludes to the fierce rhetorical contestations, mentioning Soviet justifications for involvement in Afghanistan and then immediately dismissing them as a 'lame explanation' (*Time*, 1980b: 6). Further, the article alludes to potential allies, noting that the Soviet invasion was 'condemned not only by Western leaders, but by numbers of Third World countries, including Egypt, Tunisia and the Sudan'. It also lists other opponents including 'Iran's fanatical leaders' (p.6). Thus, *Time* relays rhetoric situating the American outrage and anger as right given the support of both regular Western allies and non regular allies, such as Third World countries.

The visual rhetoric throughout the article underscores the persuasive phraseology. A large photograph, run on the second page of the cover article, features Brezhnev pointing while snow falls on him; it is captioned 'Soviet Leader Leonid Brezhnev gestures to the Defense Minister Dmitri Ustinov while watching a Red Square parade last November' (p.5). In the photograph, Brezhnev appears jovial, even carelessly arrogant. The image presents the Soviet leader as quasi comical, as if he does not have a care in the world. While the caption anchors the image, it jars radically with the overall serious and grave thrust of the article. Thus, *Time* paradoxically presents the Soviet leader as both a figure of ridicule and menace. By contrast, an image on the following page presents Carter and his aides as solemn, concerned and figures of authority (p.6). The photograph is captioned 'Meeting with the National Security Council, Carter is flanked by Secretary of State Vance and Pentagon Chief Brown'. Three of the men seated around Carter are shown to be reading sheets of paper while Carter appears to be speaking. Carter's facial expression is one of concentration and utter seriousness. The dissimilarity between this image and the one on the previous page featuring Brezhnev is clear. The US administration is presented as bearing significant gravitas while the Soviets are shown as comical. Another photograph published with the story was captioned 'Afghan protesters in New York tear up a Brezhnev effigy' (p.8). The image depicts people waving their fists and ripping at a poster that represents the Soviet leader as a horned devil with blood dripping from his lips. In these sorts of ways, Brezhnev is further marginalised and demonised as vile, reprehensible and a threat to the American people and their allies.

These forms of presentation correlate with Ivie's assessment of anti Soviet rhetoric during the Cold War:

> The nation's adversary is characterized as a mortal threat to freedom, a germ infecting the body politic, a plague upon the liberty of humankind, and a barbarian intent on destroying civilization. Freedom is portrayed as weak, fragile, feminine – as vulnerable to disease and rape. The price of freedom is necessary because the alternatives are reduced symbolically to disease and death (Ivie, 1990: 72).

Ivie argues that the metaphor of savagery has played a significant role in constituting the Soviets as a 'hostile and threatening enemy'. US leaders, Ivie notes, spoke of the Soviets

> …as if they were snakes, wolves and other kinds of dangerous predators, and as if they were primitives, brutes, barbarians, mindless machines, criminals, lunatics, fanatics and the enemies of God (Ivie, 1990: 74).

The cover article was also notable for its use of argument related to US military strength and increased spending on this. Stated *Time*:

> Many experts believe that the Soviets have been tempted to become increasingly adventurous in part because the Pentagon has lost its clear-cut global strategic superiority. This has followed from nearly a decade of tight US defense budgets, but the trend is now being reversed with Carter's call for an annual 4.8% real increase in Pentagon spending over the next five years (*Time*, 1980a: 9).

This argument favourably illustrates Morris's analysis and description of what came to be termed, within a section of the US print media, a 'developing consensus' for 'substantially higher military spending' (Morris, 1980: 28). Further, Morris states: 'Wherever readers turned, the awesome dimensions of Moscow's military budget defined the danger, and, of course, justified the need for more Pentagon spending' (Morris, 1980: 28). However, elements of this argument did not go unchallenged. As Morris notes, reporters such as British correspondent Robert Fisk challenged the argument, instead depicting the Soviet military, after the initial invasion, as 'bloodied

and bogged down in a savage guerrilla war'. In a front page report for the *Christian Science Monitor* on March 4, 1980, Fisk wrote of the Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan:

> They look for all the world like action figures from a World War II movie…It has been a harrowing experience for them. And despite their overwhelming technical superiority and their immense fire-power, things are not likely to get any easier (Fisk in Morris, 1980: 29).

While Fisk's reportage provides a counterpoint to the prevailing propagandistic rhetoric, his coverage was 'nearly unique in American journalism' (Morris, 1980: 29). Furthermore, Fisk's 'dispatches left disturbing questions about the sensationalism and shallowness of much American reporting on the invasion' (Morris, 1980: 29). Thus, while Morris highlights the contestations involving depictions of Soviet military strength and hence the need for increased US spending on its armed forces, this was comparatively rare for the US audience. Finally, a further three articles in the January 14, 1980 edition headlined 'A Hell of a Lot of Vodka' (*Time*, 1980a: 10), 'An Interview with Brzezinski' (*Time*, 1980a: 11) and 'How the Soviet Army Crushed Afghanistan' (*Time*, 1980a: 12-14) repeat the rhetoric in the cover article, variously framing the Soviets as ruthless, mendacious and threatening US vital interests.

Subsequent editions of *Time* repeated the higher military spending consensus rhetoric. A cover article in the January 28, 1980 edition headlined 'Squeezing the Soviets' stated as fact that a 'solid plurality believed, for the first time in two decades, that the US is not spending enough money on defense needs'. It also refers to a 'new mood' in Congress that would 'eliminate just about all opposition to a 5% per increase in the Pentagon budget' (*Time*, 1980c: 4). This highlights the persuasive deployment of the military spending rhetoric to the *Time* audience and its presentation as fact. The article also states as 'hard fact' that it was a 'nearly universal conclusion' that the Soviets are 'an aggressor and must be so branded'. Visual rhetoric accompanying the article underscores notions of the Soviets as menacing, threatening and violent. A cartoon with the cover article starkly presents the Soviets, as a nation and a people, solely as an army tank advancing unopposed into the free world (p.4) while a huge graphic illustration on the front cover depicts the Soviets as the savage bear with its huge foot, large sharp claws distinctly out, caught in a trap over Afghanistan. The clear

connotations are of the Soviets as animalistic, barbaric and violent and by implication entrapped in their own version of the Vietnam War.

Another smaller article run alongside the cover article, headlined 'Who Needs Their Vodka?' states as uncontested fact that Americans felt 'injured in their national pride and yearn for tougher action', especially in the post Vietnam context (*Time*, 1980c: 7). Further, the article notes feelings of frustration, impotence and indignation among Americans with airport controller Tony Maimone stating he had refused to guide a Soviet Aeroflot jet to land 'to show the Soviets that we won't get pushed around'. Others spoke of refusing to serve Russian caviar and vodka in American restaurants (*Time*, 1980c: 7). These anecdotes serve to identify the Soviets as enemies who deserve the wrath and hatred of the American people; this dovetails with the assertions about the 'disease' that is the Soviets and the need for action through increased military spending.

In conclusion, *Time* relayed a wide variety of linguistic, photographic and graphic rhetoric that framed the Soviets as uncivilised at best and inhuman bacteria at worst. These connotations by *Time* were coterminous with various precedents in US Cold War characterisations of the Soviets as dangerous predators, enemies of God and so forth. The use of specific phraseology and images was, to use Entman's terms, *noticeable*, *understandable*, *memorable* and *emotionally charged* for the American and allied audiences. The phraseology and imagery was repeated and cascaded through multiple editions and stated as incontrovertible fact. As in *The Socialist*, 'propaganda' was taken to be a pejorative and mendacious action undertaken by the enemy – thus alluding to both competing notions of truth and ongoing rhetorical contestations. In order to further build up the comparative analysis, the chapter now examines brief indicative examples from both the Trotskyite *Socialist Worker Online's* and *Time's* coverage of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, after first establishing the circumstances of these historical events through Lansford and Covarrubias's recent account.

5.5 Brief overview of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan

US President George W. Bush's 'war on terror', including US-led invasions of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), was launched after four US aircraft were hijacked on September 11, 2001, and used as flying missiles by members of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda ('The Base') network. Two planes were deliberately crashed by hijackers into the twin towers of the World Trade Centre and a third into the Pentagon. The fourth plane crashed into the ground in western Pennsylvania after passengers fought for control of the aircraft. A total of 2976 people were killed along with 19 hijackers. As Cottle argues convincingly, on September 11 'potent symbols of US hegemony – economic, political and military – came under attack with devastating, shocking results' (Cottle, 2006: 152). Cottle indentifies two key audiences: firstly, US and Western audiences and secondly, 'followers and would-be recruits of al-Qaeda and other opponents of US and western power'. To the different audiences, the attacks

> …proclaimed that the geopolitical dominance of the US, and Occident more widely, was neither unopposed nor invincible and that western influence and intervention in the Arab world would increasingly be paid for in blood (Cottle, 2006: 153).

This highlights not only the dimensions of what Cottle terms a 'calculated act of political communication' (Cottle, 2006: 153), but also the power relations – in this instance, power relations between the al-Qaeda organisation, potential recruits, enemies such as the US Government and its allies, and mediatised imagery to galvanise public opinion, both in favour of al-Qaeda's violent campaign or alternatively to dissuade support for US involvement in Arab countries.

Reaction to the September 11 attacks culminated in the US-led action in Afghanistan that saw the Taliban regime ousted from power in late 2001, however, academics trace the origins of the 'war on terror' to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the United States' subsequent support for anti Soviet Islamic radicals including Osama bin Laden. Briefly, both US President Jimmy Carter and his successor, Ronald Reagan, authorised military assistance for the anti Soviet, mujahadeen (Lansford and

Covarrubias, 2009: 20). It is estimated that 35,000 Muslims, including 25,000 Arabs, fought as mujahadeen against the Soviets (Lansford and Covarrubias, 2009: 25). The foreign-born mujahadeen 'reflected the growing radicalisation of Islam among certain groups' (Lansford and Covarrubias, 2009: 25). Further, the invasion of Afghanistan

> …a Muslim country, by an atheistic power, the Soviet Union, provided radical
> groups with a cause, and a variety of clerics responded with calls for a jihad
> against the invaders. This turned the insurrection into a holy war for both
> Afghans and Arab recruits (Lansford and Covarrubias, 2009: 26).

The US provided substantial military aid to the mujahadeen, rising from $122 million in 1984 to $250 million in 1985 and from $470 million in 1986 to $630 million in 1987. Further support from the US included Stinger missiles, satellite imagery and intercepted Soviet communications (Lansford and Covarrubias, 2009: 21). Osama bin Laden was

> …one of the Arab Islamic warriors who travelled to Afghanistan bent on
> defending their fellow Muslim brothers from the perils of the Soviet occupation
> (Lansford and Covarrubias, 2009: 28).

Bin Laden, the son of a wealthy Saudi businessman, became a 'conduit for funnelling money from the Middle East into the resistance movement in Afghanistan' (Lansford and Covarrubias, 2009: 28). Furthermore,

> …bin Laden was quickly becoming an important figure in the movement of
> money into the conflict and the training of volunteers in various camps he had
> set up throughout the region (Lansford and Covarrubias, 2009: 28).

As a result, the Afghan conflict with funding supplied by the US for the mujahadeen 'served as a proving ground for Islamic fundamentalists throughout the Middle East' (Lansford and Covarrubias, 2009: 28). Bin Laden subsequently formed al-Qaeda and used the

> …talents he honed in organizing Muslim extremists in order to continue the
> fight of a Muslim holy war…most of the members of the (al Qaeda)
> organisation were the same Arab ''freedom fighters'' that had joined the
> mujahadeen to defeat the Soviets in Afghanistan. These soldiers chose to
> expand the jihad against the West and bin Laden continued to provide the

logistical support and leadership that they needed (Lansford and Covarrubias, 2009: 28-29).

This is to argue while the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 followed the September 11 atrocity, its historical roots can be traced to the 1979 Soviet invasion and subsequent American funding of anti Soviet Islamic fundamentalists. This provides a more historical sense of the origins of the 'war on terror'. Having established this, the chapter now examines firstly, selected articles and imagery from *Time (Australia's)* coverage of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, and an alternative account, namely the Trotskyite *Socialist Worker Online* (US) treatment of the same conflict.

5.6 *Time's* coverage of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan

Time published a special edition on September 24, 2001.[65] This section examines linguistic, graphic and photographic rhetoric, particularly the prominent placement of the US flag, in this. The cover of the edition, which was entirely devoted to the September 11 atrocity including reportage related to the victims, perpetrators and US political and military response, features President George W. Bush standing on the rubble of the World Trade Centre. The photographer took the image from a distinctly lower position than Bush, who appears elevated on the rubble to a degree that the reader has the impression of 'looking up' to him. Bush's right arm is outstretched above his head and his hand holds an American flag. The flag touches the headline 'One Nation, Indivisible' and a smaller headline, placed under the masthead, reads, 'America digs out – and digs in for a war'. The image also features a fireman, close to Bush's left shoulder, looking approvingly at the president while other rescue workers

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[65] *Time* is the world's largest news magazine with more than five million subscribers (Kelly, 2003). *Time's* US audience in 2012 was 17 million with 54% readers male and 46 per cent female; the median age of readers was 48 years (www.timemediakit.com, 2012). In Australia, *Time's* readership dipped slightly under 350,000 in mid 2001 before climbing steadily throughout that year and 2002 to just beneath 450,000 (Levine, Morgan and Tarrant, 2003: 17). Data compiled in 2010 indicated the Australian readership was predominately male (65%) compared to female (35%); the majority of readers were aged 25 to 49 (42%); and 57% of readers were classified as being in 'upper socio groups' (www.soldonapn.co.nz, 2010).

can be seen in the background waving their fists (*Time*, 2001a: 1). The expression on Bush's face is one of stoic resolve. Bush is the central and dominating figure in the photograph and his pose is strikingly similar to that of the Statue of Liberty. In other words, Bush and the flag are rhetorically configured not only as intertwined, but as a beacon and rallying point for the American nation. Combined with the main headline 'One Nation, Indivisible', *Time* relays the nation as united behind Bush as a figure of supreme authority as the United States prepares for violent conflict – as connoted in the subheading, which directly refers to an imminent war.

The prominent placement of such persuasive and culturally laden imagery supports Jamieson and Waldman's assessment that mainstream US media, in the aftermath of September 11, disseminated specific iconic images that transformed 'tragedy into triumph' (Jamieson and Waldman, 2003: 142. In Griffin, 2004: 388). In this instance, the American constituency, connoted in the headlines and through the presence of the emblematic fireman as rallying behind Bush and the flag, is presented as unified and triumphing over the tragedy of the September 11 attacks. Jamieson and Waldman found that, in the immediate aftermath of September 11, major US media repeatedly and prominently conveyed an image of three firemen securing 'an intact US flag to a pole protruding from the rubble of the World Trade Centre'. Furthermore, they note this was particularly 'reminiscent of the one created by servicemen in Joe Rosenthal's Pulitzer Prize-winning World War II photo of Marines raising the flag at the top of Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima, in February 1945' (Jamieson and Waldman, 2003: 142. In Griffin, 2004: 387-388). While the image of Bush holding the American flag is not identical to Rosenthal's Iwo Jima photograph or the 2001 fire fighters at ground zero image, the connotations are remarkably similar: the indomitable US spirit as encapsulated in the flag. In *Time's* reconfiguration of this iconic image, the low angle shot of Bush presents him as an unquestioned leader, to whom the constituency can look for guidance; Bush is the embodiment of the nation's indivisible strength as the country prepares for war. The technique used for the aggrandisement of Bush is similar to that deployed by the filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, as outlined in Chapter 1, through what Cousins termed 'low-angle shooting' (Cousins, 2004: 154). This highlights the thesis' attention to recurrence and longevity of particular rhetorical devices. The significance of *Time's* cover, with its historical and rhetorical roots traceable to Rosenthal's iconic photograph and familiar, similar repetitions, is

indicated by US essayist and theorist Susan Sontag's assessment, though perhaps reliant on an over-unified 'society' which 'thinks', that:

> The familiarity of certain photographs builds our sense of the present and immediate past. Photographs lay down routes of reference, and serve as totems of causes: sentiment is more likely to crystallize around a photograph than around a verbal slogan…Photographs that everyone recognizes are now a constituent part of what a society chooses to think about, or declares that it has chosen to think about (Sontag, 2004: 76).

This is to suggest that *Time's* cover offers the American flag and the leadership of George W. Bush as the president leads the nation to war as points around which domestic reaction can coalesce. Other images run prominently in the September 24, 2001 edition built on and repeated this rhetoric. A large photograph run over pages 4 and 5 depicts two women in silhouette hanging an American flag from the branch of a tree. One woman stands atop a ladder, fastening the flag to the branch, while the other held the base of the ladder. Faceless, the pair can stand for 'every citizen'; they are the American community in anonymity rallying behind the flag. Text placed prominently above an index beside the photograph states:

> Showing the Flag. America's first nights of mourning and fear are giving way to a palpable anger. The entire nation joins New York and Washington in heartrending memorials even as it learns to focus on its latest enemy – and how to strike back. Page 16. (*Time*, 2001b: 5).

Thus, readers are referred to Page 16 and a full page photograph of rescue workers carrying a body, covered in the American flag, on a stretcher. A caption on the facing page reads: 'THE FLAG played its part after the attack; rescue workers draped it over the body bags as they pulled victims from the wreckage' (p.17). The prominence and salience of the flag as a politico-cultural icon, already linked to the leadership of Bush on Page 1 in a depiction referencing historic notions of strength and unity, is further established and disseminated. Griffin sums this up succinctly in his analysis of war photography when he states that such images 'tend to symbolize generalities, providing transcending frames of cultural mythology and social narratives' (Griffin, 2004: 384). In an earlier study of classic war photography, Griffin argues that enduring press images were

...not those that exhibit the most raw and genuine depictions of life and death on the battlefield, nor those that illustrate historically specific information about people, places, and things, but rather those that most readily present themselves as symbols of cultural and national myth (Griffin, 1999: 123).

The three prominent photographs discussed in *Time*, while directly linked to September 11, offer to transcend the atrocity and relay a mythological representation of the unified, indivisible American citizenry through the US flag. The linguistic notations mentioned – the subheading on Page 1 and the caption referring to the US constituency learning to 'focus on its latest enemy' – also beckon and connote the citizenry as unanimously supportive of its president. This will be further considered as other examples from articles in the September 24, 2001 edition are described and analysed.

The heroic resolve of Bush and the politico-cultural resonances of the prominent portrayal of the flag contrast sharply with the presentation of designated enemies, such as Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. A full page photograph of bin Laden depicts him both as the 'other' and nefarious. It was run with Beyer's article headlined 'THE MOST WANTED MAN IN THE WORLD' with the sub headline 'He lives a life fired by fury and faith. Why terror's $250 million man loathes the US' (Beyer, 2001: 48-53). The image features a close up of bin Laden's head; he is shown wearing an Arab turban, which highlights his 'otherness', while a crude red filter run over the entire photograph presents bin Laden firmly as the enemy, menacing and demonic (p.47). Other photographs placed with Beyer's article depict the wounded after the 1993 Trade Centre and 1998 embassy attacks in Kenya and Tanzania (p.50) and a gaping hole in the side of the USS Cole after it was attacked in Yemen in 2000 (p.51), firmly framing bin Laden as an enemy of the US and humanity. Beyer's article underscores this, describing bin Laden as fired by 'fanatical religiosity and the intemperate interpretation of Islam' (p.48). While bin Laden's previous alliance with US strategies, specifically the removal of Soviet influence from Afghanistan is noted, he is portrayed as ungrateful, having turned on his 'benefactor'. In such ways, bin Laden is rhetorically configured as an unappreciative zealot who turned on America after US troops 'arrived in his sacred Saudi homeland to fight Saddam Hussein' in 1990 (Beyer, 2001: 48). Further, readers are told that bin Laden

…considered their infidel presence a desecration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthplace. He was inspired to take on a second superpower, and he was funded to do so: by a fortune inherited from his contractor father, by an empire of business enterprises, by the hubris that comes from being a rich kid whose commands had always been obeyed by nannies, butlers and maids (Beyer, 2001: 48).

Thus, the demonisation of bin Laden is amplified. He is taken not only to be a murderer, but one who is fuelled by a combination of arrogance, fanaticism and financial wealth that he did not work for.

Other articles similarly frame the September 11 hijackers as extremists, who had betrayed their families and attacked the US out of a 'profound hatred for America' (McGeary and van Biema, 2001: 29). McGeary and van Biema also unquestioningly relayed Bush's persuasive oratory framing the enemy as uncivilised:

This is a conflict without battlefields or beachheads, a conflict with opponents who believe they are invisible. Yet they are mistaken. They will be exposed. We will *smoke them out of their holes* (Bush in McGeary and van Biema, 2001: 28. My emphasis).

Bush's rhetoric, particularly his final sentence, frames the adversary as socially and culturally underdeveloped at best and animalistic at worst. Large photographs of two hijackers, Mohamed Atta and Marwan Al-Shehhi (pp.26-27), along with images of planes, diners where the conspirators ate and maps of flight routes coalesce rhetoric framing the attackers as a 'new breed of terrorist' (p.26), who had secreted themselves among ordinary Americans while plotting and planning to carry out violent acts, thus creating a 'terrible new dimension to the dynamics of terrorism' (McGeary and van Biema, 2001: 29). Another article headlined 'WE'RE AT WAR' featured the word 'RETALIATION' above the headline (Elliott, 2001: 36). This article emphasises hi tech weaponry, framing US vengeance as a sporting contest:

As soon as the US gathers credible intelligence on bin Laden's whereabouts, expect a combination of air power and special forces on the ground. 'I think we'll end up paralysing a big chunk of Afghanistan with air strikes, and then move rapidly to a decisive takedown,' a US Army general tells TIME. If that is

the game, a nighttime blizzard of cruise missiles and bombs would be followed by US commandos – probably including elements of the 82nd Airborne, backed by elite Army Rangers and Delta Force members – all trying to capture bin Laden (Elliott, 2001: 37).

Both the authoritative figure of the unnamed general and Elliott present a potential violent conflict as comparable with a sports match, particularly through use of phraseology such as 'the game' and 'decisive takedown', thus rhetorically distancing the US constituency from the bloody reality of military action. Elliott takes up Bush administration rhetoric with his statement that if US forces 'get to' bin Laden: 'This isn't a case, in the sort of language loved by military folks, in which you just cut off the head of the snake and let the body wither' (Elliott, 2001: 38). The US military are, somewhat quaintly and innocently, framed as 'folks' while bin Laden's status as a reviled enemy to be destroyed is relayed. The shift to identify and blame bin Laden/al Qaeda is notable, particularly as the US had an informal alliance with him and members of his group during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Elliott's article includes a large photograph of President Bush meeting with advisors (pp.36-37). Captioned 'Meeting with advisers, Bush vows to fight ''as long as it takes'',' the photograph is remarkably similar to the image of Carter with aides, run in *Time* decades earlier, and mentioned earlier in this chapter. While shot from a different angle and closer to its subjects, the later image of Bush similarly connotes solemnity, resolve and seriousness. Bush's forehead is notably creased and his facial expression is one of utter concentration. This demonstrates the longevity and durability of specific rhetorical tropes, as they are cascaded through media during repeated conflicts.

Another large image of a fighter plane on a US aircraft carrier (pp.38-39) ran above graphics related to extensive poll questions, such as 'How likely is it that Osama bin Laden was personally involved in Tuesday's terrorist attacks?' and 'How likely is it that Saddam Hussein was personally involved in Tuesday's terrorist attacks? (*Time*, 2001c: 38-39)'[66] Thus, bin Laden is rhetorically linked to Hussein, an official enemy

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[66] In response to the question 'How likely is it that Osama bin Laden was personally involved in Tuesday's terrorist attacks?' 78 per cent of respondents nominated 'very likely' with 14 per cent 'somewhat likely' and 1 per cent 'not very likely'. In response to the question 'How likely is it that

who has already been extensively demonised. This brief reference in a poll again instates *Time's* espousal of Bush administration strategies, particularly related to the identification of official enemies. The slightly blurred photograph of the US military aircraft is captioned 'READY TO STRIKE: Navy personnel inspect aircraft on the U.S.S. Enterprise last week' and connotes both military urgency and the need to take action. Use of this image fits Griffin's analysis of US military action in the Middle East in 1991, 2001 and 2003 where photographic coverage indicates a 'highly restricted pattern of depiction limited largely to a discourse of military technological power and response' (Griffin, 2004: 383). Andrejevic also notes a focus on and fetishisation of weaponry in post September 11 media coverage in America, particularly as 'images consumed on the homefront tended to be distant shots of impressive military equipment' (Andrejevic, 2004: 87). Such strident imagery, as instanced by the example of the aircraft in *Time*, connotes US military strength, power and prowess.

In conclusion, *Time* relayed prominent, familiar and memorable rhetoric, particularly imagery involving the US flag. The news magazine presents the US constituency rallying behind President George W. Bush while quickly identifying Osama bin Laden as an enemy, despite his previous informal alliance with US strategies during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Photographs of American weaponry were also prominent, portraying military supremacy and the ability to vanquish enemies. The final section now examines an alternative, leftist argument, in the *Socialist Worker Online's* treatment of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan.

Saddam Hussein was personally involved in Tuesday's terrorist attacks?' 34 per cent nominated 'very likely', with 44 per cent 'somewhat likely' and 9 per cent 'not very likely' (*Time*, 2001c: 38-39). This push polling is another instance where rhetoric identifies official enemies, rallying the US constituency to support military action.

5.7 The *Socialist Worker Online's* coverage of the US-led invasion of Afghanistan

The Trotskyite *Socialist Worker Online* (US) issued a special antiwar edition on September 14, 2001.[67] The online edition, which does not include photographs or graphic illustrations with articles, features interviews with uncontested assertions from renowned critics of US foreign policy such as Noam Chomsky, Howard Zinn and Norman Solomon.[68] The Page 1 article addresses the *Socialist Worker Online's* audience as distinctly leftist, as highlighted by its assertion that an answer to the 'horror of September 11' involves its readership addressing 'poverty, hunger, militarism, oppression and inequality' (*Socialist Worker Online*, 2001: 1). This was contrasted sharply and as will be demonstrated, emotively, with the Bush administration's desire to use the tragedy to 'push through a right-wing agenda' (*Socialist Worker Online*, 2001: 1).[69] The article frames the Bush administration as aggressors and more specifically, as using September 11 as a pretext for US-led conflict, increased military spending and a dramatic reduction in domestic civil liberties. The *Socialist Worker Online* argues that President George W. Bush and his administration were, 'beating the drum for even more death and destruction. They're trying to use a horrific tragedy to advance their own agenda – war abroad and a crackdown on civil liberties at home' (*Socialist Worker Online*, 2001: 1). Highlighting and contesting what *Time* had termed a 'primal rage for revenge', the *Socialist Worker Online* states:

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[67] Chartier (2004, 2007) has analysed the different practices of composition and publication of online compared to print. Briefly, Chartier argues that digitisation enables texts to be read on screen 'from a new object' such as the computer and further: 'These changes…alter both the methods of textual inscription and the readers' intellectual and physical relationship with what is written.' Chartier argues convincingly that the printed book 'remained identical in its fundamental structures…to the manuscript book'. New objects, such as posters, did not 'undo the essential characteristic of written culture'. However, by comparison digital texts 'no matter their own identity, are displayed on the same medium, the computer screen, and in very similar forms and dispositions' (Chartier, 2007: 407).

[68] Articles in the online antiwar edition were given page numbers, however, were not presented in a standard newspaper format. That is, each article was presented individually on the *Socialist Worker Online's* website, in a non chronological order, despite the inclusion of page numbers with the articles. A brief note beneath all listed articles credited writers Lance Selfa, Lee Sustar, Elizabeth Schulte, Eric Ruder, Paul D'Amato, Anthony Arnove, Alan Maass, Todd Chretien and Sherry Wolf. None of those listed received a byline for individual articles.

[69] The website socialistworker.org, which hosts the *Socialist Worker Online*, describes itself as being a 'place to find news, analysis and commentary from the left'. Its focus includes labour struggles as well as worldwide campaigns for social change and economic justice (www.socialistworker.org)

The corporate media fed the war fever. ''Revenge. Hold on to that thought,'' the *Philadelphia Daily News* shouted. ''Go to bed thinking it. Wake up chanting it. Because nothing less is called for.'' (*Socialist Worker Online*, 2001: 1).[70]

In these sorts of ways, the *Socialist Worker Online* relayed the rhetoric of 'revenge' while recalibrating it to portray Bush and his administration as warmongers. The article went on to claim that Bush would use the September 11 slaughter as the basis for a reduction in civil liberties as

> …all questions will become subordinate to the drive to war. The talk about ''protecting the Social Security surplus'' has gone out the window. Instead, politicians of both parties will push through a tremendous hike in military spending – including the Bush gang's Star Wars missile defense scheme. Money that should be spent on health care, education or any one of a number of areas that would help working people will now be robbed to pay for a military that is already the largest and most powerful in the world by far (*Socialist Worker Online*, 2001: 1).

The highly emotive rhetoric addressed to the *Socialist Worker Online's* (SWO) audience is distinctly different from *Time's* address to US patriotic citizens. SWO's audience is taken to be intimately concerned with social and class justice on international scales and opposed to what the publication frames as the overt warmongering and debased spending priorities of the Bush administration. This is registered in the rhetoric, which presents Bush as being at the head of a rapacious 'gang' that is hell bent on directing public funds away from essential social services in favour of militaristic purposes. Adding to this form of address, the SWO positions itself as being discrete from the 'corporate media', such as the *Philadelphia Daily News,* thus alluding to competing notions of truth and knowledge. In this instance, the connotations made available to the SWO's audience is that the publication has conveyed *facts* while the 'corporate media' has relayed highly questionable and propaganda aligned with the aims of the Bush administration. In this sense, it broadly adopts and contributes to a Chomskyian view whereby mainstream media are taken to be aligned with the objectives of corporate and governmental elites. Evidence for this

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[70] An article in *Time,* reflecting on Bush's rhetoric, stated that his 'plainspoken style may be well suited to a time of fear, grief and a primal rage for revenge' (Elliott, 2001: 28).

partisanship within the SWO is at best limited, such as its reference to the *Philadelphia Daily News* calling for revenge; more emphasis is placed on persuasive phraseology that is *emotive* and *memorable*.

The Socialist, Time and the *Socialist Worker Online* used variations of similar phraseology not solely to create a discrete form of address, but also to emphasise grievances against perceived enemies and strengthen their argument for what constitutes *facts, knowledge* and *truth*. This similarity in phraseology and strengthening of argument through propaganda occurred across the considerable political differences of editorial position between the three publications. This demonstrates Latour's contention that what counts as facts – taken here to be the moral corruption of the enemy, their specious argument, 'otherness' and wanton military and political imperatives – are discerned, assembled, contested, argued for and sedimented over time in the negotiation and production of knowledge within particular frameworks.

The SWO's Page 1 article identifies the Bush administration as using the September 11 tragedy to pursue a Right wing agenda and in turn whipping up a

> …racist backlash against Arab Americans. We must stand up for basic human and civil rights of all people – and not permit ''guilt by association'' because of racial or ethnic background. We must also oppose the effort by the U.S. to launch new wars and build up its military machines (*Socialist Worker Online*, 2001: 1).

In these sorts of ways, the publication frames the Bush administration as morally corrupt and prepared to exploit a devastating event to pursue base political objectives. Other articles in the September 14 special antiwar edition solidify, reiterate and argue that the Right will use the attacks to drastically reduce civil liberties, significantly increase military spending and launch a war; and this, in turn, was combined with identification of a domestic 'racist backlash'. Linkage of the Right and bigoted violence continues in other articles. The SWO ends its Page 4 article, emotively headlined 'No to racist scapegoating!', enumerating racist assaults in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks with a direct appeal to its audience:

We have to oppose all attacks on Arabs and Muslims – and organize opposition to Bush's drive for war. And we have to recognize that restrictions on civil liberties aimed at ''fighting terrorism'' will be used against anyone who opposes the government's policies – whether Arab or not (*Socialist Worker Online*, 2001: 4).

The appeal to the audience to mobilise and oppose Bush's 'drive for war' is presented alongside description of attacks on Arabs and Muslims and the accusation of 'fighting terrorism' to justify a reduction of civil liberties. A Page 3 article by Chomsky headlined 'This will be exploited by the jingoist right' further reinforces the narrative of a ruthless and ascendant right wing, headed by the Bush administration, manipulating the September 11 tragedy to achieve political aims. Introduced as 'one of the best known opponents of US militarism and imperialism', Chomsky, similar to others writing for the September 14 edition, argues that the attacks will be used by the Right to increase military spending and curtail civil liberties:

The events reveal, dramatically, the foolishness of the project of ''missile defense''. As has been obvious all along, and pointed out repeatedly by strategic analysts, if anyone wants to cause immense damage in the U.S., including weapons of mass destruction, they are highly unlikely to launch a missile attack, thus guaranteeing their immediate destruction. But today's events will, very likely, be exploited to increase the pressure to develop these systems and put them into place. ''Defense'' is a thin cover for plans for the militarization of space, and with good PR, even the flimsiest arguments will carry some weight among a frightened public. In short, the crime is a gift to the hard jingoist right – those who hope to use force to control their domains (Chomsky, 2001: 3).

Chomsky's views are presented as incontrovertible fact and uncontested. His article is light on empirical detail to support his argument, however, this is in stark contrast to more extensively researched and referenced pieces such as his landmark work *Manufacturing Consent* (Herman and Chomsky, 1994). Chomsky's reference to the 'hard jingoist right' is noticeable and resonant for the *Socialist Worker Online's* audience, particularly as his target represents an anathema to the publication's presumed constituency. Chomsky's rhetoric positions political adversaries, specifically the Bush administration, as exploiting a form of debased patriotism.

Chomsky's argument positions the Right as morally corrupted by linking it to the use of the 'flimsiest arguments'. While Chomsky does not use the term 'propaganda' here, his reference to 'good PR' suggests the use of persuasive and seductive terminology – especially the generalising term 'defense' – to achieve the Right's aims.

A connection of sorts can be argued between Chomsky's critique regarding increased military spending ('exploited to increase the pressure to develop these systems') and *Time's* coverage more than two decades earlier referring to the 'new mood' where the Defense Department would 'get all the money we need' (*Time*, 1980c: 4). Both publications relayed rhetoric to their audiences regarding increased military spending, yet with significantly different emphasis. The *Socialist Worker Online* disseminated persuasive phraseology stating as fact that the September 11 attacks would be exploited by hard jingoist Right to increase military spending while *Time* extolled the virtue of increased military spending to address Soviet adventurism and restore US national pride and prestige, which had been affronted by the Soviet actions in Afghanistan. Both *Time* and the *Socialist Worker Online's* use of the 'increased military spending' inscription demonstrates how inscriptions can be used not only for distinct constituencies, but also combined with other persuasive phraseology to create vastly different rhetoric. That is, for different political arguments. In *Time*, 'increased military spending' is taken to be a *positive* outcome where national pride is restored and adversaries know their place and fear US power; in the *Socialist Worker Online,* it is taken to be a *negative* outcome where the rapacious Right exploit fear and tragedy to pursue a reductive, ideologically driven agenda to the detriment of social equity and the nation's wellbeing.

In conclusion, the *Socialist Worker Online* (US) disseminated highly emotive, noticeable and memorable rhetoric to its audience, who were taken to be intimately concerned about working people, social justice and governmental spending priorities. Further cascaded rhetoric positions the Bush administration as being at the head of the 'hard jingoist right'. This simultaneously derides Bush while positioning him as the head of a predatory gang of warmongers, racists and exploiters of the American citizenry. This provides the rhetorical basis for a blunt demarcation between the Bush administration and the readership of the *Socialist Worker Online,* which addressed its

audience as fair-minded and informed citizens who are interested in the *truth* as opposed to the 'propaganda' disseminated by Bush and his 'gang' through the uncritical corporate media. Corporate media is taken to be interlocked with the aims of the Bush administration and thus unashamedly beating the drums for Right wing inspired violent conflict.

5.8 Conclusion

The empirical media data examined in the indicative examples outlined in this chapter demonstrates not only the flexibility and durability of persuasive phraseology and imagery as it is sedimented and argued for and against, but crucially, its imitative characterisation. That is, oppositional actors and their supporters are routinely depicted as rapacious, uncivilised, liars and comical at best or alternatively, as animalistic, enemies of God and demonic at worst. Rival inscriptions are disseminated to distinct audiences, addressed as 'aggrieved patriots' and taken to be outraged that proponents and supporters of opposing ideologies and/or militaristic actions would question the validity of both their notion of 'truth' and presentation of 'facts'. This is particularly evident in both the coverage examined in selected extracts from *Time* and *The Socialist*. As the analysis has shown, this was achieved through rhetoric disseminated by authoritative figures in all publications. Imagery and terminology used was, to quote Entman's terms, highly *understandable*, *memorable* and *emotionally charged* – the latter particularly achieved through images such as the destructive and dangerous bear (*Time*), Soviet soldiers protecting children (*The Socialist*) and prominent use of the flag as a rallying point and symbol of national unity and strength (*Time*). The respective connotations were cascaded through the publications with authoritative figures such as Carter, Bush, Brezhnev and to a lesser extent, even Chomsky (the latter in *The Socialist Worker Online*), were enabled to uncritically and emotively disseminate rhetoric, largely without supportive or at best limited empirical detail.

While it could be argued that the media presentations, particularly related to reportage associated with Bush and Carter, validates Chomskyian theory that the media are

interlocked with corporate and governmental aims, there are other ways of approaching the relations of power at work. The calculated as well as reflexive use of a recognisable set of inscriptions, disseminated through particular publications and sedimented, challenged, buffeted and argued for and against over time, are the material means by which the ongoing negotiation of alliances and positions occurs. The rival inscriptions relayed during the 1979 Soviet invasion – variously positing the Soviets as benevolent neighbours or alternatively a Godless and immoral enemy – indicate highly complex communicative strategies. Similarly, the 2001 US-led invasion of Afghanistan was followed by sharply divergent interpretation and presentation of 'fact' – from *Time's* fanatical 'new' enemy compared to The *Socialist Worker Online's* enemy within, particularly the 'hard jingoist Right'.

The dissemination of propaganda by the different publications was particularly achieved through, but not solely, the use of graphics, cartoons and photographs. The argument is that these inscriptions are acutely linked to and indicative of specific power relations, particularly as they are assembled and presented to potentially 'conscript' audiences to 'facts' and what counts as knowledge propagated by actors intimately entwined with specific ideological and/or governmental aims, rather than being simply a form of linguistic or visual ephemera. Further in advancing an understanding of 'propaganda', it is emphasised that all publications took this to be thoroughly mendacious and solely undertaken by oppositional actors.

The chapter also highlights the comprehensive flexibility, malleability and mobility of inscriptions, particularly when considered in terms of the radical recalibration of the Soviets from plucky World War II heroes when Hitler 'marched into Russia in 1942' (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 125) to Godless and barbaric aggressors, as instanced by *Time's* coverage of the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Briefly, strident rhetoric contextualising the Soviets as US allies is demonstrated by the film *The Battle for Russia* (Capra, c1942-1944), commissioned by the American army and made by the Hollywood director Frank Capra as one of a series of seven titled 'Why We Fight' and designed as 'training films for (US) recruits'. The films were widely seen by US soldiers, particularly: 'As they trained to fight in the war, hundreds of thousands of Americans saw these films' (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 125). *The Battle for Russia* features close ups of smiling and cheering Russian soldiers, praising

their resolve and heroism in the bloody conflict against the Nazis at Leningrad. Capra's film firmly highlights official US support for and friendship with the Russians (Capra, c1942-1944). Capra's work will be discussed further in Chapter 7, particularly in relation to his recontexualisation of the Nazi filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl's work and its incorporation into the 'Why We Fight' series. Other Hollywood films made at the same time were also pro-Soviet (Jowett and O'Donnell, 1999: 142). The rhetoric conveyed in these films contrasts sharply with that disseminated during the Cold War period when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, which was discussed earlier in the chapter. *Time's* dissemination of Cold War rhetoric framing the Soviets as mendacious, violent and cruel aggressors, as opposed to Capra's heroic US allies, points to the flexibility and mobility of inscriptions. In the earlier war, the US troops and citizenry were encouraged to see the Soviets in a positive light while in the latter they were presented as a demonic enemy. Dissemination of this propagandistic rhetoric in both was designed to garner support from the US constituency for governmental geo-political aims.

The next chapter analyses the mass mediated US heroine, Jessica Lynch (Iraq), and how she was presented to particular audiences. Analysis centres on the use of 'Lynch' to buttress notions of the 'collective force of the nation' and garner support for military action in Iraq.

Chapter 6

The Damsel in Distress: Conflation of the Individual and the Nation in the 'War on Terror'

6.1 Introduction

Mediatised heroic depictions of US soldier Jessica Lynch serving in Iraq affords the potential for rich analysis of the communication struggles, particularly those involving propaganda, intimately entwined with and emanating from persuasive phraseology and imagery associated with the 'war on terror'. Lynch, the normatively 'pretty' supply clerk who allegedly fought to her last bullet against the Iraqis before being captured, was presented as the best of the American nation. Lynch's femininity was highlighted to emphasise her passivity and the manliness of both her rescuers and the US nation. Analysis of Lynch's portrayal in media texts by feminist academics is discussed in the chapter. Media texts featuring Lynch were characterised by rhetorical devices inscribed with intense patriotic fervour and widely disseminated by US authorities to garner support for Bush administration war aims. Further, 'Lynch' was conflated with notions of military heroism to the extent that her name became a metonym for the bravery, valour, fearlessness and gallantry of the US armed forces and, by extension, the American people as a whole.

Lynch was also presented to Australian audiences as being worthy exemplars of US military resolve and heroism. Lynch, particularly her 'rescuers', and the US military effort as encapsulated within the 'war on terror', were framed as being worthy of antipodean support, particularly the US-Australia alliance. Yet further examination of the subsequent unravelling of the heroic mythology around Lynch alludes to the powerful communication struggles as rhetoric is sedimented, contested and recalibrated. In this context, other media texts highlighting the bloody civilian toll caused by the US military and published simultaneously as those disseminating rhetoric related to Lynch's valour, are also examined and discussed. Articles have

been sampled from the broadsheet *The Age* and the tabloid *Herald Sun* newspapers for reasons of accessibility, to examine antipodean coverage and contextualisation of US military 'heroism' for Australian audiences and the placement and dissemination of 'wire' reports – that is, widely relayed reportage produced by news services such as Reuters – within the aforementioned publications.

Both *The Age* and the *Herald Sun* have distinct, yet partially overlapping audiences. The Australian social analyst David Chalke, who compiles data for Quantum Market Research, identifies *The Age's* core readership as 'inner metro, self confessed ''progressive'', white collar graduate'. Chalke describes *The Age* as a 'niche publication' tightly delineated by circulation in inner metro suburbs. Conversely, Chalke defines the average *Herald Sun* reader as suburban, both across Melbourne and regional centres such as Ballarat, and typically married with two children, two cars and having on average a Year 10 education level (Chalke, 2012a). *The Age* has significantly more upper white collar readers than the *Herald Sun* (28 per cent to 12 per cent) whereas the *Herald Sun* has more overall blue collar readers (36 per cent compared to 21 per cent for *The Age*). This is reflected in the educational qualifications of the two readerships: 33 per cent of *The Age's* readers have a Bachelors degree or higher compared to 10 per cent for the *Herald Sun*; the *Herald Sun's* dominant readership is made up of those who have finished the equivalent of Year 10 – 33 per cent compared to 16 per cent for *The Age*. Chalke's data regarding readership overlap shows that about 25 per cent of *Herald Sun* readers also peruse *The Age*, while 50 per cent of *The Age* readers also peruse the *Herald Sun* (Chalke, 2012b). Chalke argues readership overlap typically occurs in cafes, where both publications are available (Chalke, 2012a). Chalke's research attends to the specification of media audiences and highlights that there is *some* overlap in the readership of *The Age* and the *Herald Sun*.

6.2 Brief overview of Jessica Lynch and related scholarship

Private Jessica Lynch was a 19-year-old supply clerk with the 507th Ordnance Maintenance Company. From the small town (population 350) of Palestine, West Virginia, Lynch 'joined the army because jobs were scarce, the recruiter told her she would be able to travel…and the army promised to provide financial help for college' (Howell, 2003: 9). Subsequently transferred to Iraq to participate in the US-led war, Lynch's unit became lost, after taking a wrong turn, while part of a convoy heading towards Baghdad on March 23, 2003. Lynch's unit was ambushed when 'isolated in combat territory in the city of Nasiriya…many were killed and several were taken prisoner' (Kumar, 2004: 299). Lynch's four wheel drive military vehicle

> …ran into another vehicle, killing the four people with her and leaving Lynch badly hurt. She was captured by Iraqi forces, treated in an Iraqi military hospital, and then removed by U.S. forces from a civilian hospital (Howell, 2003: 9).

Lynch's story, presented through official sources, received wide media coverage and situated the damsel in distress as 'captured in a bloody gun battle, mistreated by sadistic Iraqi doctors, then rescued in another storm of bullets by heroic Navy Seals' (Klein, 2003). The reportage repeatedly referred to the 'daring' and 'dramatic' rescue (Kumar, 2004: 299) of Lynch, who was captured 'fighting, shooting several Iraqis and suffering bullet and stab wounds' (Howell, 2003: 9). However, the truth was substantially more prosaic and involved caring Iraqi medical staff, Iraqis attempting to hand Lynch over earlier but being fired on by US forces and Lynch's injuries being solely consistent with that of a vehicle accident. This will be discussed at length later in the chapter when media texts disassembling the Lynch myth are examined.

The response within the US to Lynch's 'rescue' was phenomenal with Lynch declared a hero 'complete with ''America loves Jessica'' fridge magnets, stickers, t-shirts, mugs, country music songs and an NBC made-for-TV movie'. Further, Lynch's 'rescue' was portrayed as a 'testament to a core American value' (Klein, 2003). In her analysis of reportage in US publications, Kumar notes that Lynch's 'rescue' was

…one of the most extensively covered events of the 2003 US-led war on Iraq. In the 14 days after her rescue, Lynch drew 919 references in major newspapers. In contrast, General Tommy Franks, who ran the war, got 639 references, and Dick Cheney got 549…The coverage of the Lynch story continued well into the year and far outstripped that devoted to any other captured or rescued prisoners of war, making Lynch a household name (Kumar, 2004: 297).

The renowned journalist Phillip Knightley notes that Lynch became 'an icon of the war and the story of her capture by the Iraqis and her rescue by US Special Forces was one of the great patriotic moments of the conflict' (Knightley, 2003: 544). This highlights the jingoistic significance of Lynch's 'rescue' and its use in exercising power relations between proponents of the Bush administration's war aims and claims and various constituencies being recruited in support of them.

Feminist academics, particularly, have analysed the mediatised presentation of Lynch – such as Howard and Prividera (2004), Kumar (2004), Takacs (2005) and Pin-Fat and Stern (2005), to cite several. Howard and Prividera employ a critical and feminist frame to analyse media coverage of Lynch. They argue a critical feminist analysis demonstrates how gendered archetypes frame media narratives of both Lynch and the military and that:

> Information provided by the government and the military and the subsequent narratives generated in the media were founded in the patriarchal system and cast all relevant actors into archetypal roles…the most unnerving part of Private Jessica Lynch's story is the level of her exploitation. Her role in the military was exchanged for a role as archetypal female victim, in a story used to perpetuate biased military practices – practices that perpetuate the marginalization of female soldiers (Howard and Prividera, 2004: 96).

Already drawn on in this chapter, Kumar's feminist analysis argues that the military 'strategically constructed a particular narrative' in which Private Lynch was an object about which stories were told:

> There is nothing empowering about this construction. Instead, it served war objectives in two ways. First, it became the basis for an emotional/non rational pro-war argument. Second, the selection of a female hero served to demonstrate

215

the superiority of the ''West'', justifying the argument that the US was in Iraq to ''liberate'' its people and promote modernity (Kumar, 2004: 310).

The pre-eminent feminist writer Susan Faludi's book (2007) *The Terror Dream*: *Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America* stands as the landmark analysis of rhetoric coalesced around Lynch's heroic myth and the associated captivity narrative and notions of a damsel in distress. Faludi provides compelling argument not solely linking Lynch to a captivity narrative, but particularly tracing the latter's historical roots to the birth of European settlement in America:

> At pivotal moments in our cultural life extending back to the Puritans –
> moments when America was faced with a core crisis – we restored our faith in
> our own invincibility through fables of female peril and the rescue of 'just one
> girl'. Jessica Lynch had a legion of historical sisters (Faludi, 2007: 200).

Faludi's points are considered further as the chapter turns to and analyses some indicative media texts.

6.3 Jessica Lynch: icon, captive and the best of the nation

The mass circulation Australian newspaper, the *Herald Sun,* introduced Lynch to its readership by giving over its entire Page 1 to an image of the US soldier on April 3, 2003. The photograph of Lynch in military uniform and standing in front of a US flag dominates the page; a smaller icon depicting the Australian flag with the linguistic text 'We support our troops' was placed near the masthead. The headline 'SAVING PRIVATE LYNCH' includes the following text beneath it: 'The allies dramatic rescue of wounded 19-year-old Jessica Lynch, taken PoW in Iraq' (*Herald Sun,* 2003c: 1). A large, unattributed quote placed beside Lynch's cheek read: 'America doesn't leave its heroes behind. It never has, it never will.' The huge image of Lynch, accompanied by the headline and quote, frames the event of Lynch's 'rescue' in terms of intense patriotic fervour. The reference in the text, beneath the headline, to Lynch's rescue by 'the allies' is significant, particularly as it falsely connotes some form of antipodean involvement – Australia being among President George W. Bush's so called Coalition of the Willing; rather, only US soldiers were involved in Lynch's

removal from the hospital. Further, the use of both US and Australian flags on the front page, the Australian one albeit significantly smaller, reinforces to the newspaper's large readership that the two nations are not only joined in actions against the perfidious Saddam Hussein, but also united in the glory of their virtuous and heroic military forces. The rhetoric works through a narrative of Lynch as one in a tradition of heroes, but also in terms of the nation's steely resolve and determination, suggested by the quote 'America doesn't leave its heroes behind'. Asserted as fact, the quote was only attributed to an authoritative official figure on Page 4, 'central command spokesman Jim Wilkinson'. The headline 'SAVING PRIVATE LYNCH' refers not solely to Lynch's 'rescue', but also alludes to the *Saving Private Ryan* movie (Spielberg, 1998). This epic war movie centres on a group of US soldiers attempting to find and retrieve a paratrooper, who is the last living brother among four servicemen during World War II. The film depicts the heroism, stoicism, resolve and sacrifice of US soldiers as they search for Private First Class James Ryan. The entertainment reference gives the *Herald Sun* readership a point in which to potentially locate the *drama* of another gallant US wartime 'rescue'.

The *Herald Sun's* Page 4 article in the same edition was headlined 'Daring raiders save Jessica' and underscores the mobility of the rhetoric, particularly given that it was attributed solely to 'Agencies'. An accompanying picture, which would be widely repeated, was supplied by Associated Press and depicts Lynch sitting in front of a tree while wearing jeans and a sleeveless top. The photograph serves to highlight Lynch's petite frame and femininity, while the accompanying text states:

> A stunning rescue mission snatched an American prisoner of war from the heart of the war zone yesterday. Private Jessica Lynch, 19, was whisked from her hospital bed by a special operations team as marines staged a decoy attack in Nasiriya. They blasted targets and pounded Iraqi troops as the rescue team smashed its way into Saddam Hospital…rescuers said the *pretty* 19-year-old supply clerk had two broken legs, a broken arm and gunshot wounds, but was in a stable condition (Agencies, 2003b: 4. My emphasis).

All key details cited as fact in the article are attributed to official sources such as 'rescuers', 'a source', 'sources', an unnamed 'former member of the 75th Ranger regiment' and briefly, Captain Jay La Rossa. As mentioned earlier, central command

spokesman Jim Wilkinson enunciates the story with intense jingoistic fervour, while others indicate the excitement of Lynch's family include Linda Davies, Lynch's former kindergarten teacher and a family friend, Lynch's brother, Gregory, a National Guard member and praising US special forces, and Lynch's grandmother, Wyomena. Wilkinson's quote is extended in the article with the additional statement: 'She's safe in coalition hands and happier than where she was.' This statement highlights Lynch's feminine passivity, the masculinity of her rescuers and the core narrative of her 'rescue'. There are no dissenting voices and the official outline of what constitutes 'fact' is not contradicted in any way. As argued earlier in the thesis, this correlates with Hall et al's findings that the media give preference to the opinions of the powerful and as such these become 'primary definers' of topics (Hall et al, 1978: 58). In these ways, powerful US politico-military figures help to assemble and disseminate an assertive, jingoistic narrative linked to the putative heroism of Jessica Lynch and her rescuers and entailing uncontested 'fact'. The circulation of the propaganda, such as 'dramatic raid', 'daring rescuers', 'pretty supply clerk', combined with patriotic imagery, create the inscription of a *heroic and gallant US fired with steely resolve to rescue one of its heroes in a bold raid*.

The use of the full page photograph on Page 1 combined with the headline and Wilkinson's quote connotes to the *Herald Sun's* readership the momentous nature of what has occurred and its relevance. The portrayal of both flags on Page 1 helps solidify notions of a shared patriotism during a conflict against an enemy who has already been demonised as nefarious and less than human. The use of the heading 'We support our troops' reinforces the notion of shared values with the US as the overall narrative alludes to the Americans doing exactly that – namely, by saving the damsel in distress, Jessica Lynch, in a dramatic 'rescue'. The inscriptions of gallantry, shared values, moral superiority and an epic, bloody military conflict – issued through authoritative figures and relayed by the *Herald Sun* – beckons the publication's readership to maintain support for the Bush administration's war aims in the face of anti-war resistance. In other words, these mobile and flexible inscriptions, presented to *Herald Sun* audiences, potentially muster, increase or ensure the 'fidelity of new allies' (Latour, 1990: 24).

Reporting of Lynch's alleged exploits came at a time of extensive coverage of the Iraq invasion. For example, the first 12 pages of the *Herald Sun's* April 3, 2003, edition were given over to war-related reportage and associated imagery, particularly coalition weaponry such as tanks (p.3, p.7). Nevertheless, not all articles in the edition used jingoistic rhetoric, presenting, albeit briefly, a more complex picture of the war and the toll on civilians in Iraq. A small eleven paragraph article, credited to Reuters, on Page 3 headlined '33 Iraqis die in bombing' states that 33 people had died when bombs hit a residential district south of Baghdad (Reuters, 2003b: 3). The article was overshadowed, however, by other reports on the page, specifically Coorey's piece regarding the 'last push' for Baghdad, featuring a photograph of a coalition tank firing (Coorey, 2003: 3). Coorey's dramatic reportage, along with the image and a small map illustrating the allied route from Karbala to Baghdad, frames the US-led Coalition of the Willing as dramatically 'poised to roll into Baghdad after puncturing three major holes in Republican Guard defences' (Coorey, 2003: 3). A further article run prominently on Page 11 and headlined 'Checkpoint victims tell of van carnage' details the slaughter of an extended Iraqi family by US soldiers. Credited to reporter Meg Laughlin in Najaf, from the US news service KRT, the article details how soldiers had shot and killed Bakhat Hassan's two daughters, son, parents, two older brothers, their wives and two nieces at a checkpoint. A quote attributed to Hassan in the article was enlarged and set in the text: 'We had hope. But then you Americans came to bring us democracy and our hope ended' (Laughlin, 2003a: 11). While a smaller headline 'AUSTRALIA AT WAR CIVILIAN AGONY' with the Australian military slouch hat icon between the words 'AUSTRALIA AT WAR' and 'CIVILIAN AGONY' connotes a broader tragedy involving Iraqis, Laughlin's article extensively outlines the slaughter and did not flinch at stating as fact that US troops were responsible. While the Jessica Lynch heroic myth was given much greater prominence in the *Herald Sun* than these reports, the newspaper did relay counter inscriptions. Dissemination of Bakhat Hassan's story and use of the enlarged quote, noted earlier, circulated a counter inscription questioning certain US war claims, notions of surgical, bloodless military 'strikes' and the implementation of 'democracy' at the barrel of a gun. The publication of Laughlin's article in the newspaper also indicates that not all news services, in this case KRT, and syndicated media outlets homogenously disseminated reportage and/or rhetoric that was uncritical of the US-led campaign. Dominant inscriptions are buffeted and contested

by counter inscriptions as they are cascaded through media outlets and to their diverse audiences.

A follow up article regarding Lynch in the *Herald Sun* the next day, April 4, 2003, further exemplifies the dissemination of statements portrayed as uncontested 'fact', particularly highlighting Latour's argument how 'someone convinces someone else to take up a statement, pass it along, to make it more of a fact' (Latour, 1990: 24). Both repeating and modifying the original inscription, the follow up article coalesced rhetoric magnifying Lynch's heroic mythology, her femininity, the masculinity of her rescuers and the inherent *drama* of her 'rescue'. The article, which was entirely unattributed to either a news agency or an individual journalist, states as uncontested fact:

> Rescued prisoner of war Jessica Lynch shot several Iraqi troops before her capture, firing until her ammunition ran out. ''She was fighting to the death,'' a US official in Washington said. ''She did not *want to be taken alive*.'' The *pretty* young supply clerk kept firing at the Iraqis even after she was hit. Suffering multiple gunshot wounds, she watched other soldiers in her unit die. ''She fought fiercely and shot several enemy soldiers…firing her weapon until she ran out of ammunition,'' the official said. He said Pte Lynch, 19, was also stabbed when Iraqi forces closed in…a *Special Operations team snatched* the *brave* soldier from a Nasiriya hospital on Wednesday after a CIA tip-off (*Herald Sun*, 2003b: 9. My emphasis).

The article featured the same photograph, although much smaller in size, as was used on Page 1 the previous day with a large quote, 'She was fighting to the death', placed directly beneath it. Another larger photograph depicts Lynch, surrounded by military personnel, on a stretcher as she arrived in Germany. The small headline 'AUSTRALIA AT WAR THE HEROES' was featured across the top of the page with a tiny photograph of a clearly distinguishable Australian army slouch hat between the words 'AUSTRALIA AT WAR' and 'THE HEROES'. The combination of highly persuasive linguistic and visual imagery, particularly Lynch in uniform and the Australian army hat, connotes the American soldier as a hero that the Australian constituency can adopt and be proud of as part of the Coalition of the Willing. Registering this, Kumar argues that the (American) 'nation is represented by Lynch,

while Lynch the individual highlights all that is ''good'' about American society' (Kumar, 2004: 302). Furthering this argument, Kumar cites a CNN reporter: 'She's not just the Lynch's daughter. She's everyone's daughter, everyone's sister' (Davis and Harris, 2003. In Kumar, 2004: 302) In these sorts of ways, the inscription is sharpened and reinforced to underscore support for war aims and further contextualise Lynch as a hero for America's staunch ally, Australia; therefore, Lynch is one of 'us'. She is inscribed as a heroic symbol not solely of US resolve, but also for continued Australian involvement in the conflict against the brutish Saddam Hussein and his regime. In doing so, the article also repeats the 'fact' of Lynch's rescue, variously described as dramatic and daring, and the heroism of her rescuers and their audacious exploits (*Herald Sun*, 2003b: 9).

All those quoted in the story are official sources with no dissenting voices cited. For example, those cited include an unnamed 'US official in Washington', Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke, an unnamed 'military officer', Brigadier General Vincent Brooks and an unnamed 'army official'. The article relies on and adheres to the information disseminated by 'official' sources. The intensely jingoistic inscriptions, relayed by the newspaper, are carried along by the actuality of Lynch's 'rescue' and the gallantry of her military rescuers. The rhetoric correlates with Faludi's caustic assessment: 'The story of a helpless white girl snatched from the jaws of evil by heroic soldiers was the story everybody wanted' (Faludi, 2007: 166). Alluding to the initial uncritical adoption of the heroic 'official' line, Faludi saliently notes: 'That the drama seemed straight out of a Schwarzenegger vehicle raised no eyebrows. The press was too busy providing its own whiz-bang soundtrack' (Faludi, 2007: 168).

The articles examined in the tabloid *Herald Sun* are now contrasted with those in another Victorian daily newspaper, the broadsheet *The Age,* which featured an article regarding Lynch prominently on Page 3 of its April 3, 2003, edition. Credited primarily to Adrian Croft with Reuters and *The Washington Post* also listed at the end of the article, the piece was headlined 'Special forces grab POW from hospital' with the smaller headline 'SAVING PRIVATE LYNCH' above it. In these ways, similar to the *Herald Sun*, a narrative connoting a dramatic rescue amid an epic battle was relayed by *The Age.* The main photograph depicts a close up of Lynch, clutching a US

flag, as she is carried on a stretcher during her 'rescue'; two smaller pictures are identical to those used in the *Herald Sun* – Lynch in uniform and in civilian clothes. At this time, there was a stock amount of images of Lynch available, outlined earlier, which were used to emphasise her as heroic survivor assisted by comrades *and* highlight her femininity. *The Age* article, as had the *Herald Sun*, relied solely on official sources – an unnamed 'military source', Captain Jay La Rossa, Brigadier General Vincent Brooks and central command spokesman Jim Wilkinson – along with celebratory comments from Lynch's brother, Gregory, and a cousin, Pam Nicolais. Moreover, the structure of individual sentences, the rhetoric disseminated and the overall tenor of the article is virtually identical to that of the *Herald Sun* article. In these ways, both articles outline the putative dramatic 'rescue' first before the inclusion of celebratory statements from family members. As Van Dijk notes

> …news discourse is organised so that the most important or relevant information is put in the most prominent position, both in the text as a whole and in the sentences. This means that for each topic, the most important is presented first. When the important information of other topics has been expressed, earlier topics are reintroduced with lower-level details (Van Dijk, 1988: 43).

In accordance with these conventions, the empirical 'fact' of Lynch's rescue is prominently featured in both *The Age* and the *Herald Sun* articles. Analysis of examples from both newspapers regarding statements made by Lynch's brother, Gregory, bear out the similarity of sentence structure and Van Dijk's point regarding largely stylistic changes to news agency material (Croft, 2003: 3; Agencies, 2003b: 4). Similarly, a version of Jim Wilkinson's statement, run prominently on the front page of the Herald Sun, is also included in *The Age* article:

> Jim Wilkinson, a Central Command spokesman in Qatar, said Private Lynch was in good spirits. ''America is a nation that does not leave its heroes behind,'' he said (In Croft, 2003: 3).

These examples demonstrate not only the prominent role of wire and news services in relaying and cascading propagandistic wartime rhetoric, but also their utility in reaching different audiences through various media organisations – in this instance, the tabloid *Herald Sun* and the broadsheet *The Age*. This largely correlates with a

University of Amsterdam study examining the use of material supplied by news agencies, which found that 'most agency material was copied without any changes in the six articles that resulted from dispatches' apart from minor stylistic changes (Van Dijk, 1988: 125). Thereby, US military officials disseminated persuasive rhetoric, which was relayed and repeated through media outlets, inscribing Lynch and 'rescuers' as heroes around which the nation and its supporters can rally.

The Age also relayed counter inscriptions, particularly through the inclusion of Meg Laughlin's article outlining the slaughter of Iraqi civilians by US troops. Run more prominently in *The Age* (p.4) than it was in the *Herald Sun* (p.11), Laughlin's piece in the broadsheet was headlined 'Pregnant woman sees her two young daughters killed' and credited to the reporter with the agencies KRT and Reuters listed at the end of the article (Laughlin, 2003b: 4). Raising serious questions about US military tactics, strategy and the cost to civilians, Laughlin's article provides contestation, albeit minor, of the heroic mythology entwined with Lynch and her 'daring rescuers'. Indicating its status as a minor contestation, the article was sent from Laughlin's US employer KRT to Australian media, through AAP, with a note at the top of the article: 'Wednesday, 2 Apr 2003 at 11:19am; category, overseas news; *low priority*; story no 6717. Mid: Iraqi family who lost 11 to US fire were fleeing to safety' (Ramsey, 2003. My emphasis). The massacre of civilians is afforded 'low priority' compared with the 'rescue' of a pretty, white damsel in distress. Yet the different treatment of Laughlin's reportage in *The Age* and *Herald Sun* newspapers, particularly the latter's prominent use of a quote questioning the installation of Western-style democracy at the barrel of a gun, can be regarded as a struggle over the substance of what is being communicated as inscriptions are cascaded, sedimented, modified and sometimes contested.[71]

The Age featured two articles on Page 5 prominently the following day, April 4, 2003; two smaller headlines 'War in Iraq' and 'RESCUE' ran above a larger headline 'Six

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[71] For a more comprehensive analysis of the treatment of Laughlin's article in Australian newspapers, particularly in comparison with the Jessica Lynch heroic mythology, see Fairfax reporter Alan Ramsey's online article 'Sums stink, when it comes to dead'. After considering the prominent reportage of Lynch's removal from the Iraqi hospital as opposed to the slaughter of civilians by US soldiers, Ramsey bitterly complained: 'One pretty, live, teenage US soldier is worth more than a family of 11 dead Iraqi civilians any day, thank you, even when they include decapitated children as young as two and five' (Ramsey, 2003).

minutes: ''We have the girl. Success''.' which once again solidifies the narrative and positions Lynch as a damsel in distress, while highlighting the masculinity and heroism of her military saviours. The article, attributed to Tracy Wilkinson along with the *Los Angeles Times, Guardian* and *New York Times*, features a large photograph of Lynch on a stretcher being carried by soldiers after she came off a 'military plane at the US air base in Ramstein, Germany' (Wilkinson, 2003: 5); two smaller images depict Lynch clutching a US flag while being carried on a stretcher during her 'rescue' in Iraq while the other shows night vision footage of US soldiers on the 'rescue' mission. Of the six people quoted in the article, five were either US military or political figures with an unnamed Iraqi pharmacist briefly quoted in the final paragraphs. Once more, the reportage presents US heroism while again relaying the crucial 'facts' of the 'rescue' (Wilkinson, 2003: 5):

That Lynch had been shot and rescued by gallant US soldiers during a gun battle was once again passed on to *The Age's* audience as unchallenged fact. The article also foregrounds the use of military video footage depicting US military heroism, particularly as it was circulated worldwide:

> Jumpy video footage showed her [Lynch] being carried from the back of the helicopter by five armed commandos. The 19-year-old was smiling wanly, a US flag folded on her chest. The video, shot using a night-vision lens by a combat camera crew that accompanied the assault forces, was beamed live to General Tommy Franks and his staff at US Central Command in Doha, Qatar as they watched the dramatic snatch unfold. *The video was later shown around the world* (Wilkinson, 2003: 5. My emphasis).

The iteration of this imagery is important in affirming the patriarchal captivity narrative, whereby a damsel in distress is rescued from the clutches of evil by gallant commandos. This is particularly borne out by Collins' assessment that

> …Private Lynch was not just any prisoner of war. She was a cute nineteen-year-old volunteer whose rescue, the first such rescue behind enemy lines since World War II, was filmed live and, in a well-edited five-minute video, immediately broadcast on national television. This encouraging story came along at a time when Americans were first beginning to hear dismaying news of Iraqi resistance (Collins, 2007: 15. See also Rich, 2006: 81).

In these sorts of ways, the video played a crucial role in underscoring and expanding rhetoric inscribing Lynch and, more so, her rescuers as gallant symbols of core US values. The placement of the flag on Lynch, portrayed in the video, is also significant; specifically, it rhetorically links Lynch, the military and the nation as a homogenous whole engaged in a united mission and destiny. This is pertinent, particularly given the intense patriotic emphasis placed on the flag after the September 11 attacks and discussed at length in the previous chapter, section 5.6.

More of the same is found in the same issue and on the same page, through the article headlined 'Private Lynch fought fiercely before capture', which was credited solely to the *Washington Post*. Quoted statements in the report were attributed to unnamed 'US officials' and relayed rhetoric identical to that printed in the *Herald Sun,* particularly regarding Lynch putatively 'fighting to the death' and being stabbed (*Washington Post.* In *The Age*, 2003: 5).

The different yet partially overlapping audiences for *The Age* and the *Herald Sun*, outlined earlier, are potentially 'credible allies', which can be recruited through particular techniques of persuasion concerning what counts as knowledge worth acting upon. These groups are *active* and *knowledgeable*, therefore differentiating the thesis from reductive versions of the Chomskyian framework regarding the susceptibility of audiences and constituencies to propaganda. The audiences are formed as credible allies through immutable mobiles such as the photographs of Lynch, the widely circulated military video footage (stills from which were reproduced by newspapers) and initially uncontested and widely disseminated politico-military accounts. These are used as the basis for inscriptions deployed to persuade credible allies to 'hard facts' as the foundations of knowledge – in this instance, Lynch's rescue, the valour of military and its indivisibility with the US nation and its politico-military leadership. The practices of propaganda, subsequently disclosed and elaborated upon in section 6.4, corrupt this foundation of knowledge in terms of the reductive, unelaborated certitudes coalesced in cascading inscriptions related to the heroic mythology of Lynch's saviours. Cottle, whose work has been referenced throughout this thesis, argues convincingly that the 'Hollywood style filming and construction of ''Saving Private Jessica Lynch'' ' was part Coalition of the Willing propaganda aims (Cottle, 2006: 156).

This is not to assume unanimity within audiences to rhetoric diffused through the media. A poll taken in the US by the Pew Research Center found that 71% of respondents felt the Iraq war was going ''very well'' during the first two days, however, this subsequently dropped to 35% after American soldiers were captured before rising to 61% after Lynch was rescued (Pew, 2003. In Cannon, 2005: 1). In these ways, audiences can be shown to be formed as credible allies, however, the polling shows this *is* fluid. In Australia, polling undertaken by Roy Morgan and Gallup International, released just after two months following the US-led invasion of Iraq, underscores a 'complex and interesting' picture regarding Australian views of both the US and the antipodean relationship with it. For example, Michele Levine, the chief executive of Roy Morgan, notes Australian opinion was deeply divided in the lead up to the Iraq invasion. The subsequent polling shows 'more Australians fear that the world is a more dangerous place (49%) than believe it is a safer place (34%) as a result of the war in Iraq' (Levine, 2003). On the threat of terrorism, 24% agreed it had been 'significantly reduced' by the war in Iraq while an overwhelming majority of 69% said it had not. A majority Australians also see the impact of American foreign policy on Australia as more negative than positive – 43% to 31%. Levine notes this put Australia on 'middle ground globally'. For example, 70% of people in Turkey say US foreign policy had a negative effect, while than 80% of those in Kosovo and Albania say it had a positive effect. This attends to the specificity of audiences and the different ways in which they make sense of mediatised, propagandistic inscriptions within national frameworks. As Levine saliently argues:

> There are all sorts of people, in different circumstances, with different backgrounds, beliefs and values. They have very different ways of viewing the world, and everything that goes on in the world (Levine, 2003).[72]

The Roy Morgan and Gallop polling also identifies Australians who took the war to be warranted as largely older, male, and Liberal and National Party voters. Those who considered the US as too eager for war were largely women, students and Australian Democrat or Green voters. Levine also notes, 'less than one in three Australians both

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[72] In a UK context, research done for the Shifting Securities project found different, particularly multilingual, audiences and constituencies were not persuaded by rhetoric circulating the case for war against Iraq, regardless of the relentless repetitions from authoritative figures. The research found that the pro war rhetoric was not only considered unconvincing by some audiences, but furthermore symptomatic of illegality and undermining strategies for exporting democracy (Gillespie, 2006: 7, 9-10).

believed the war was justified, and at the same time believed the US to be too ready to use military force' (Levine, 2003). In these ways, even allowing for problems with opinion polling such as sampling techniques and aggregation, audiences are *active* and *knowledgeable* rather than homogenous and uncritical, passive receivers. Audiences are demonstrated to be formed as credible allies through immutable mobiles, discussed earlier, however, attention to the specificity of audiences shows a highly complex, if not fluid, picture.

The *Herald Sun* and *The Age* articles relaying Lynch's heroic narrative highlight a reliance on official sources and the dominant access to audiences through media gained by the US military's Central Command, outlined in Chapter 3, section 3.5. While there is a qualification in the final paragraph of the 'Private Lynch fought fiercely before capture' article – unnamed Pentagon officials are said to have heard 'rumours' of Lynch's actions but 'had no confirmation' (*Washington Post.* In *The Age*, 2003: 5) – this reads almost as an afterthought and does not alter the overwhelming weight of 'fact', featured in the two Page 5 articles, presenting Lynch's heroism, that of her rescuers and the US military and nation as it strives towards a united goal. Circulation of this jingoistic narrative by both *The Age* and the *Herald Sun,* to their broadsheet and tabloid readerships respectively, is an instance of the dissemination of propaganda to particular audiences through multiple media outlets and its ubiquity during wartime situations. The essentially uncritical presentation of the disseminated details as 'fact', credited to largely unnamed politico-military sources, indicates not only the privileged access and public reach such informants can achieve, but also how such statements are passed along and iterated to make them more of a 'fact'. Reflecting on access to media during violent conflict and on foreign policy issues, Aday notes scholars found 'the news tends to privilege official sources, especially those from the White House' (Aday, 2005: 59). Aday notes

> …officials exercise a great deal of control over the content and framing of international news, even in the contemporary era of technological advances in news gathering that might theoretically allow for more media independence (Aday, 2005: 59).

The Age's and the *Herald Sun's* reliance on unnamed, politico-military 'sources' would seem to bear this out. These articles (Agencies, 2003b: 4, *Herald Sun*, 2003b:

9, Croft, 2003: 3, Wilkinson, 2003: 5 and *Washington Post*, 2003: 5) fit Cottle and Rai's dominant frame whereby

> …news stories are clearly dominated and defined by a single external news source…it is their perspective or views which clearly 'dominate' the communicative frame and which either remain unopposed or receive, at most, marginal challenge (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 172).

In this case, such repetitions were made and the assertive narratives cascaded through media outlets with the consequence of mustering and garnering support for Bush administration politico-military objectives. As this chapter indicates, such orthodox patriarchal narratives also incite certain alternative and resistant analyses. The aforementioned articles also partially fit Cottle and Rai's mythic tales frame, which

> …displays and activates cultural myths that have resonance for contemporary cultures. This communicative frame…is not principally about imparting new information but resurrecting and/or recycling pre-existent values, symbols and narratives which draw from the deep cultural/collective myths that exist within all communities (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 178).

Faludi's aforementioned analysis also links the mediatised depictions of Lynch and established captivity narratives. Intense and patriotically infused rhetoric situated Lynch as a helpless, white female – a 'damsel in distress', who required the extraordinary bravery of the US military to save her from the Iraqis. This will be discussed when Faludi's analysis is further considered.

6.4 Jessica Lynch: a more prosaic actuality

In the months after the initial reportage that circulated notions of a heroic Lynch and her gallant saviours, a remarkably more mundane account appeared. Both the *Herald Sun* and *The Age* published lengthy pieces, with nowhere near the prominence of the original reportage and not written by their own journalists, that effectively disassembled the heroic mythology surrounding Lynch and her 'rescuers'. Of the two newspapers, the *Herald Sun* ran the earliest comprehensive report little over a month

after its front page presentation of Lynch as a hero that its antipodean audience could revere. The double page feature, headlined 'Real saving of Pte Lynch', in the *Sunday Herald Sun's* World section over p.44-45 was unattributed to any reporter, however, the feature repeatedly referred to an investigation by the *Toronto Star* newspaper, which cites Iraqi doctors stating:

> Pte Lynch was almost killed by US soldiers who opened fire as Iraqi doctors tried to hand her over to coalition forces – 24 hours before the rescue mission. Iraqi troops abandoned the hospital where Pt Lynch was being treated two days before the rescue mission. US forces destroyed vital medical equipment during the hospital raid. Hospital staff and patients were handcuffed despite one doctor telling US soldiers: ''You realise that you could have just knocked on the door and we would have wheeled Jessica down to you'' (*Sunday Herald Sun*, 2003b: 44-45).

Unlike the reports circulating Lynch's heroic mythology, the *Toronto Star* report features first hand accounts from those who treated Lynch and/or were present during her removal by US forces: Dr Harith Houssona, Dr Anmar Uday, Dr Mudhafer Raazk and nurse Khalida Shinah. The article, which includes a large picture of a smiling Lynch in military uniform and two other pictures of her on a stretcher – one of which was taken from the widely circulated night vision footage – also disassemble the narrative of Lynch blazing away with her gun and being shot during a battle:

> Doctors said Pte Lynch had severe cuts and fractures after falling from a vehicle – and dismissed reports she had been shot after emptying her weapon in a battle when her unit…was ambushed after its convoy became lost near Nasiriya (*Sunday Herald Sun*, 2003b: 44-45).

The article portrays the Iraqis not as pernicious, but rather as caring and utilising limited medical resources to aid an injured American soldier. It did not contain any criticism of the *Herald Sun* for circulating the narrative of the heroic mythology, but rather sought to contest the 'official version' in what amounted to another media sensation for the paper to publish. This contrasts with *The Age's* distancing of itself from the original reporting. Similar to the *Sunday Herald Sun*, *The Age* ran an extensive two page feature, contesting the narrative of military gallantry involving Lynch, just over a month after the tabloid newspaper's report. The article was solely

attributed to three *Washington Post* reporters and started with a statement in large type, run above the first paragraph, effectively highlighting that news organisation's responsibility for the initial patriotic narrative:

> Saving Private Lynch became America's feel-good story during the war on Iraq. But the *Washington Post*, the paper that broke the story that started the heroic myth, has found that the truth about her capture and rescue is different (In Booth, Priest and Schmidt, 2003: 8).

By this move *The Age* sought to distance itself from the potential opprobrium of its readership as a result of having relayed an uncontested, propagandistic narrative presented as 'fact'. Similar to the *Sunday Herald Sun*, the report headlined 'The Jessica Lynch story: now to rescue the truth' was not run prominently in the news section, as had been the initial reports, but rather in this case in the separate Insight supplement.[73] It features six photographs, the most prominent of which, on the left page where the article began, was the widely circulated image of Lynch in civilian clothing, notable for its focus on her femininity including petite frame and blonde hair. Unlike the initial reports, the feature was notable for depth of its reportage and reliance on first hand accounts with quotes provided by those at the scene including Iraqi farmer Sahib Khudher, Master Sergeant Robert Dowdy, Iraqi army medical corps brigadier Adnan Mushafafawi, nurse Furat Hussein and other physicians. Similar to the *Sunday Herald Sun* article, the report outlines a significantly different version of events to that relayed in the original articles, particularly that Lynch did not kill any Iraqis and was neither shot or stabbed (Booth, Priest and Schmidt, 2003: 8).

Both lengthy articles in *The Age* and the *Sunday Herald Sun* disassembling the official narrative generally underscore Latour's argument regarding what he terms the 'cost of dissenting' to established inscriptions and the creation of 'hard facts' through cascaded inscription. Referring to this in a scientific context, Latour argues:

> Although *in principle* any interpretation can be opposed to any text and image, *in practice* this is far from being the case; the cost of dissenting increases with

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[73] Both the *Sunday Herald Sun* and *The Age* articles (*Sunday Herald Sun*, 2003b: 44-45 and Booth, Priest and Schmidt, 2003: 8-9) disassembling the Lynch myth fit Cottle and Rai's expose/investigation frame, wherein 'journalists actively set out to investigate, expose and uncover information and practices that would not otherwise be revealed within the public domain' (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 174). The two investigative pieces regarding the Lynch myth received nowhere near the prominence of the earlier rhetoric using the dominant and mythic tales frames.

each new collection, each new labelling, each new redrawing. This is especially true if the phenomena we are asked to believe in are invisible to the naked eye…but through the ''clothed'' eye of the inscription device (Latour, 1990: 42. Emphasis in original).

Latour also argues that inscription blocks dissent and the dissenter is 'forced to quit the game or to come back later with…better visual displays' (Latour, 1990: 44). In the instance of Jessica Lynch, the photographs, textual rhetoric, military 'rescue' footage and centralised politico-military accounts form the basis of 'hard facts', involving the heroic rescue of 'Lynch', disseminated and cascaded to worldwide audiences. These audiences could only initially 'view' the phenomena of Lynch's rescue through the pro 'war on terror' inscriptions. Here, generally the cost of dissenting, to these widely dispersed inscriptions, *increased* in that news organisations were forced to send reporters to Iraq in order to produce alternative reports. In these ways, the dissenters challenge the 'hard facts' of Lynch's putative rescue, however, their dissension did not receive the same prominence as the initial accounts, solidified by senior politico-military figures.

The *Washington Post* article, in *The Age*, also briefly alludes to the propaganda value of Lynch's heroic narrative and moves to absolve former for its prominent role, stating senior political and military figures did not dismiss the 'more romanticised initial version of her capture'. This is linked to charges that the Bush administration 'stage-managed' aspects of Lynch's story (Booth, Priest and Schmidt, 2003: 8). Moreover, the article alludes strongly to a 'fog of war' defence whereby CIA and US Central Command officers, in the immediate aftermath of the Iraqi ambush of Lynch's unit, were 'bombarded' with contradictory reports about a female US soldier, who had variously died in battle or been wounded:

> These reports were distributed only to generals, intelligence officers and policymakers in Washington who are cleared to read the most sensitive information the US Government possesses. These intelligence reports, and the one eavesdropped snippet, created the story of the war (Booth, Priest and Schmidt, 2003: 8).

This statement is particularly pertinent, not solely as it alludes to the high-ranking politico-military access to the initial raw and potentially contradictory reports, but also the subsequent constitution of a highly selective and assertive narrative that was passed on and repeated to make it more of a 'fact'. While the genesis of Lynch's heroic mythology can be traced to and observed in military and intelligence reports, the selective inscription of a *heroic masculine US military bravely saving a ''pretty'' supply clerk and damsel in distress* brought a coherence to and stabilised the initial account – in line with Bush administration goals, particularly at a time when 'American forces were bogged down in the war's early days' (Rich, 2006: 109). These aims included building and galvanising support for the US-led war against Iraq. That is not, of course, to suggest that this inscription ultimately went unchallenged, but rather that its origins and the pivotal role played by politico-military figures helped to solidify and sediment the inscription and that significantly it was only 'corrected' with less prominence after the previous account had been widely circulated.

This is not to suggest a uniformity of US politico-military attitudes towards either broadly wartime propaganda or more specifically, the heroic mythology of Lynch and her 'rescuers'. In his book on global propaganda, the British reporter Nick Davies outlines his discussions with American officials during a conference on strategic communications in London in June, 2006:

> I talked to Americans who were deeply embarrassed by some of the misinformation which had been fed into the media by their colleagues. They cited the case of Private Jessica Lynch…But I spoke to others who denied that a single word of misinformation had ever been released about Jessica Lynch: the distortion came entirely from the press, they said. And I had several heated conversations with mid-ranking US military officers who insisted bluntly on their right to lie to the media (Davies, 2008: 247-248).

Davies indicates not only the contestations over what constitutes propaganda, but also its sources in this case.

As intimated earlier, perhaps Faludi's *The Terror Dream* is the definitive analysis of the Lynch rhetoric, particularly its identification of it as a patriarchal captivity narrative. For instance, Faludi saliently notes that those responsible for the production

and dissemination of the Lynch mythology, including the 'special forces camera crew' that accompanied her 'rescuers', were 'all re-enacting old war movies, where American boys win the battles and American princesses of war learn their lessons and go home' (Faludi, 2007: 193). Faludi links Lynch and the assertive narrative surrounding her to post American revolutionary captivity narratives, wherein

> …the abducted women were enlisted into a new duty: their job was now to defend their men from suspicions of insufficiency, to buttress America's frail sense of security by amplifying American masculinity. Amplification was achieved by contrast. For the American man to become the larger-than-life domestic rescuer, the American woman had to be knocked down to pint-sized rescuee (Faludi, 2007: 246-247).

In these sorts of ways, Faludi locates the Lynch mythology within a captivity narrative wherein masculinity is heightened and contrasted with the passivity of the 'pretty' and feminine Lynch, while also tracing its historical roots. The Lynch narrative reiterates 'deep cultural/collective myths' operating within the US nation. Delving into the history of this narrative in the US, particularly involving intermittent violence between white settlers and native American Indians, Faludi argues:

> A young nation was struggling to make sense of a troubling legacy of episodic rampant terror in the homeland, a terror that its male settlers and soldiers had not been able to check at the familial front door. This was the experience that a national myth was called to address – by remaking its shame into triumph (Faludi, 2007: 254).

Similarly, the shame of Lynch's capture and the deadly ambush of her unit were transformed into a jingoistic triumph. The US scholar Christopher Collins, tracing what he terms an 'abduction narrative' back to the abduction by Indians in 1676 of white women such as Mary Rowlandson and her children, argues that in this narrative the rescuing hero must be 'resolute and courageous', a hero whose powers are associated with 'cultural superiority' (Collins, 2007: 123). Collins' argument helps explain the Lynch narrative wherein the hero is represented by the masculine and culturally superior US military. Collins' discussion of the abduction narrative attends to how it addresses audiences:

In the Rowlandson narrative…we are asked to admire the courage and perseverance of the embattled heroines and heroes, empathize with their fears and griefs, and despise the injustice of their captors. But we are also expected to understand that these abductees and rescuers represent 'civilization', which implies reason, compassion, and divinely legislated order, while their enemies represent a condition that has satanic and even prehuman aspects (Collins, 2007: 145).

In like manner, in the Lynch mythology the US military are presented as virtuous while the Iraqis and their leadership are uncivilised, morally corrupt and evil. The Lynch narrative was the source of enormous rhetorical cachet, to potentially galvanise and muster audiences to support the Bush Administration's war in Iraq, with elements of the narrative having substantial historical resonance. The strikingly wide range of news agency reports related to Lynch cascaded, with only minor stylistic changes, through different media pitched at different audiences.

6.5 Conclusion

The promulgation of intense patriotic fervour, through the exploited narrative of the figure of Lynch, was enabled by the widely relayed inscriptions aided by recourse to statements from centralised politico-military sources. As described earlier, this jingoistic zeal was relayed to varying Australian newspaper audiences, situating the US soldier and more specifically her 'rescuers', as heroes that antipodean readerships and constituencies could identify with. As part of this, emphasis was placed on Lynch's femininity along with associated connotations of passivity and vulnerability, positioning her as a 'damsel in distress' saved by the heroic actions of her male military saviours.

The Lynch narrative has deep historical and cultural precursors in the US where a 'damsel in distress' is reduced to a passive rescuee while her masculine rescuers are brave and valiant. Thereby, disaster for the nation can be transformed into triumph. As Cottle notes in his analysis of propagandistic symbolism and the filming of Lynch

by a military camera crew during her 'rescue', 'no expense or effort was seemingly spared in their media propagation'. As Cottle also notes, such imagery was 'clearly designed to support coalition propaganda purposes' (Cottle, 2006: 156). The empirical data in key indicative examples discussed earlier correlates to a significant degree with Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model, wherein dominant media are argued to be largely homogeneous and interlocked with corporate and governmental aims. That is, in this instance, the initial uncritical adoption of the 'official' – at that point unchallengeable – politico-military line concerning Lynch. While Cottle and Rai argue that there is 'more going on in the communication of news than the manipulation of news agendas by powerful strategic interests or the circulation of powerful semiotic codes and discourses' (Cottle and Rai, 2006: 164), in *some* news this orchestration is what is occurring and audiences don't have alternative accounts to compare and contrast with it. Here again the prevailing access to audiences through media gained by the US military's Central Command, which was outlined in Chapter 3, section 3.5, is crucial.

The Lynch myth enables a discussion of propaganda as well as consideration of rival inscriptions. The latter occurred in the belated exposes (*Sunday Herald Sun*, 2003b: 44-45 and Booth, Priest and Schmidt, 2003: 8), which were analysed in terms of what constitutes actuality in comparison to 'propaganda' disseminated to galvanise support for US politico-military aims. As so often with historical examples of propaganda, the damage is already done because actions have already been decided in terms of apparently official descriptions. For example, Lynch subsequently complained stridently about US military propaganda, complaining that the Pentagon had portrayed her as a 'little girl Rambo' and told 'elaborate tales' in an attempt to make her a hero (Tran, 2007; MacAskill, 2007: 11). This indicates that the battles and contestations over persuasive rhetoric cannot be taken to be entirely 'won' by a specific 'side'. Further, the reporter Meg Laughlin's articles outlining the slaughter of an extended Iraqi family by US troops also exemplifies the intense communicative struggles as rhetoric is contested, buffeted and sedimented.

Reflecting on the changing storyline involving Lynch and contested accounts, the US columnist Frank Rich, who has written extensively on Bush administration rhetoric, particularly concerning Lynch, argues:

When American forces were bogged down in the war's early days, Lynch was the happy harbinger of an imminent military turnaround: a superheroine who had tried to blast her way out of the enemy's clutches, taking out any man who got in her path. When those accounts turned out to be largely fiction, she became a symbol of the Bush administration propaganda and the press's credulity in buying it…*Saving Jessica Lynch* brought forth yet another Lynch, appropriate to the current moment in the war: a lowly pawn of larger, mysterious forces operating in the shadows, whether in Baghdad or Washington (Rich, 2006: 109. Rich's emphasis).

This reminds us of the fierce rhetorical contestations, inscriptions and counter inscriptions involving Lynch, and the fluidity of what is presented as 'fact'. Finally, inscriptions exploiting the figure of Lynch were designed in ways which left journalists little option but to persuade audiences as to the merits of a pro war argument as relayed by the Bush administration and its supporters. However, detailed analysis indicates a more complex situation.

In order to contribute to the thesis' description and analysis of what constitutes 'propaganda' and the ways in which it operates, the final chapter analyses the heated rhetorical contestations involved with Michael Moore's landmark film (2004a) *Fahrenheit 9/11* and sometimes asserted similarities to the Nazi filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl.

Chapter 7

Michael Moore and *Fahrenheit 9/11*: The Temperature where Reason Burns

7.1 Introduction

Many labels and epithets have been applied to the American filmmaker Michael Moore: an evil traitor, on par with Saddam Hussein and Adolf Hitler, who deserves to be executed (Greenstreet, 2004); a serial liar whose mendacity allows him to frequently alter or ignore facts and reorder chronology to suit a particular narrative (Hardy and Clarke, 2004: 22-23, 28); and a charlatan in a clown suit whose fulminations represent 'a frothy brew of alarmist conspiracy theories and anti American rhetoric' (Range, 2004: 143-144). And depending on which commentator's views you subscribe to, he's either a purveyor of 'vigilante journalism' (Weber, 2006: 116), the 'first commercially successful postmodern documentary filmmaker' (Wilder, 2005), a maker of 'rhetorical documentaries' (Briley, 2005: 11) or the central figure in the rise of 'docutainment' – the 'treatment of non-fiction topics using all the tools of high production feature films, including animation, fast motion photography, graphics, montage, and rock music' (Mintz, 2005: 11).

Yet what concerns us primarily here is the ubiquitous and highly charged accusation that Moore is a propagandist whose work is on a par with Hitler's favourite filmmaker, Leni Riefenstahl. For instance, a 2005 Historians Film Committee Panel considered the subject 'Michael Moore: Cinematic Historian or Propagandist?' On the furore over Moore's film *Fahrenheit 9/11*, the scholar Robert Brent Toplin noted at the panel: 'Some compared Michael Moore to Adolf Hitler's propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels or to his favourite filmmaker, Leni Riefenstahl' (Toplin, 2005: 8). Some critics argue that Moore's work, both earlier films and his seminal (2004a) *Fahrenheit 9/11*, are analogous to Riefenstahl's (1934) *Triumph of the Will* because of his alleged deceitful editing techniques and mendacious recontextualisation of

material. It is by working on these debates that this chapter seeks to examine the currency, fluidity and transmutability of the term 'propaganda', not only in its application to Moore and his work, but also as it was deployed and circulated in diverse media during the 'war on terror'. Is Moore, as his biographer Emily Schultz tartly notes, simply a 'propaganda-charged villain'? (Schultz, 2005: 11). Or could there more to Moore? This chapter makes the case that there is a compelling argument for the latter; that Moore's work, particularly *Fahrenheit 9/11*, is a landmark, if not a blistering critique of what the filmmaker considers to be government, specifically Bush administration, propaganda. This is a particular populist US understanding of 'government' as separate from and repressive of 'the people'. The chapter also argues that Moore presents the dominant US media essentially as an unquestioning handmaiden to the propaganda schemes of the Bush administration. The chapter describes how Moore set out to mock, critique and highlight the 'propaganda' he argues was being disseminated by dominant media outlets. It also seeks to consider whether the filmmaker's presentation of a counter narrative to the dominant pro Iraq war inscription provoked the 'Leni Riefenstahl' epithet being applied liberally to Moore and if a conflation of 'Michael Moore', 'Leni Riefenstahl' and 'propagandist' was an attempt to reinforce the Bush administration's rhetoric while diminishing Moore's. The chapter analyses and contrasts the filmmaking techniques of Moore and Riefenstahl, as well as considering works by other filmmakers such as Davis's (1974) *Hearts and Minds* and Sellier's (2004) *George W. Bush: Faith In The White House* to discern the contestations surrounding 'propaganda'. To this end, argument from academics and other critics, such as the Australian scholar Dugald Williamson and the renowned contrarian Christopher Hitchens, to name two, is considered. Moore's pointed and rhetorical deployment of music to satirise authoritative figures and underscore his narrative is also discussed.

7.2 Genealogy of a filmmaker

This section turns to 'the author' Michael Moore and more specifically, his background because of emphasis on the centrality of the Moore persona and his career in the debates that have notoriously and increasingly flared after release of his films.

Moore has presented himself as a scruffy, liberal 'outsider' or in the words of Wilder, a 'shambling provocateur' (Wilder, 2005), standing up to corporate and governmental wrongdoers on behalf of the 'little guy'. This key and defining aspect of the Moore persona will be discussed in this section. Both Larner (2005: 17-46) and Schultz (2005: 13-24) have written at length about Moore's working class background and upbringing in Flint, Michigan. The filmmaker's father worked at General Motors' Spark Plug division for many years and his uncle participated in the 1937 strike at a GM plant in Flint that helped to form the United Auto Workers (Toplin, 2006: 17). The scholar Carol Wilder (2005) notes that Moore's 'political bent' became apparent early:

> In high school he earned an Eagle Scout merit badge with a slide show on environmentally unfriendly businesses in his home town…at the age of 18 he was elected to the seat on the local school board, making him one of the youngest people in the U.S. ever elected to public office (Wilder, 2005).

Moore's failed stint as the editor of the left leaning *Mother Jones* magazine and subsequent legal action enabled him to fund his film, (1989) *Roger & Me*, which brought the filmmaker to prominence. Highly critical of General Motors, it 'attacked the company for laying off thousands of autoworkers in Flint, Michigan' (Toplin, 2006: 16). As Toplin further notes:

> The hard hitting film pleased many viewers, who praised it as an entertaining documentary that also managed to raise important social and political questions. Yet it also became the object of angry criticism. Some called *Roger & Me* a highly distorted and untruthful interpretation of events in Flint (Toplin, 2006: 16).

Critics such as Hardy and Clarke argue that fans recognise *Roger & Me* as evidence of Moore's brilliance whereas detractors came to regard it as

> …his first offense in a career of serial mendacity. It also marks the birth of a powerful public persona: the everyday schlub who asks tough questions of the rich and powerful on behalf of the little guy (Hardy and Clarke, 2004: 28).

Toplin took a more measured approach, arguing outcry over *Roger & Me* provides a

…useful introduction to the nature of the debates that animated Americans when *Fahrenheit 9/11* reached the theaters (sic). Arguments about *Roger & Me's* treatment of evidence resembled the debates years later about *Fahrenheit 9/11* (Toplin, 2006: 16).

Moore's bestselling books *Downsize This* (1997) and *Stupid White Men* (2001) followed the critical and financial success of *Roger & Me*. As Wilder notes:

His films were likewise successful, building to the major hit of his fourth feature *Bowling for Columbine* (2002). It was the first documentary ever to be entered into competition at Cannes, where it received a Jury Award. Both a critical and box office hit, *Bowling for Columbine* walked away with the Academy Award in 2003. True to form, Moore used the opportunity of his acceptance speech to attack the Bush administration for a 'fictitious' presidency, garnering cheers and boos and a lot of press (Wilder, 2005).

It was *Fahrenheit 9/11* – released little over 18 months after the US-led invasion of Iraq and only shortly before the 2004 US presidential election – that brought Moore, his film, its content and the techniques employed in it to the forefront of a heated debate. With the authorial figure of Michael Moore established in these biographies and commentaries as the expressive origin of filmic meaning, what is more often contested as propaganda's disparate techniques is given embodied form as Michael Moore.

7.3 *Fahrenheit 9/11* and the ghost of Leni Riefenstahl

Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* was an astonishingly successful film. A box office smash, it broke $100 million in its first month (Wilder, 2005), selling out in US theatres for days and 'ultimately running on 2000 screens in North America, while grossing $222 million worldwide' (Schultz, 2005: 206). As Schultz notes, *Fahrenheit 9/11* became 'a phenomenon' (Schultz, 2005: 206). It was also recognised with Best Picture at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival (Williamson, 2006: 2). The film begins with Bush's slim win over Democrat candidate Al Gore in the 2000 presidential election before

critiquing Bush's response to the September 11 attacks, the US-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, the slaughter of Iraqis and destruction of infrastructure by the Coalition of the Willing, and American mother Lila Lipscomb's profound sense of loss regarding the death of her servicemen son, Michael. Moore's film also examines Bush family business links with the bin Laden family.

Despite the accolades, immediately on the film's US release, it was argued vociferously that the filmmaker was an unprincipled propagandist on a par with Leni Riefenstahl. While this rhetoric was not new – Moore's work has been compared to Riefenstahl since *Roger & Me* (Toplin, 2006: 32) – with *Fahrenheit 9/11* it was ratcheted up to extraordinary levels. The prominent conservative Australian newspaper columnist Andrew Bolt effectively summed up and relayed to Australian readers all the major complaints from conservatives who damned the film (Bolt, 2004a: 19).[74] A formidable rhetorician, Bolt made the link between Moore and Riefenstahl in the opening three sentences of his lengthy critique, caustically headlined 'Fahrenheit Zero':

> I have long thought Michael Moore a liar, and should not have been shocked when I saw his 'documentary' *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Even so, I was horrified. This film – breaking box-office records in America – is so deceitful that it makes the infamous *Triumph of the Will* by Hitler's propagandist, Leni Riefenstahl, seem balanced (Bolt, 2004a: 19).

Bolt does not provide any analysis or commentary regarding Riefenstahl's film or her techniques to support his assertion. Nor does he provide any actual comparison between *Fahrenheit 9/11* or *Triumph of the Will*. The reference to 'Hitler's propagandist, Leni Riefenstahl' is deployed by Bolt strictly as a rhetorical device by which to discredit both Moore and his film.

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[74] Bolt is arguably Australia's foremost conservative rhetorician with a potentially huge audience reach. A columnist with the mass circulation *Herald Sun* newspaper, Bolt has appeared on numerous television and radio programs ranging from the ABC's *Lateline* and *Q & A* and Channel 10's *The 7pm Project*. He previously had a weekday program on the largely right wing radio station, Melbourne Talk Radio, and currently hosts his own regular program, *The Bolt Report*, on Channel 10. Lucy and Mickler note that Bolt's technique is based on performing as someone who 'speaks plain truths to ordinary citizens, who know all too well, as he does, that what passes for truth in most of the rest of the media is nothing more than so many recycled, self-deluding liberal verities designed to flatter the professional classes' (Lucy and Mickler, 2006: 88).

Continuing his critique, Bolt pulls apart assertions in the movie and damns its 'so many deceits, so many wickedly doctored quotes. So many half-truths'. *Fahrenheit 9/11* is a 'lying film' and its maker 'grotesquely irresponsible' (Bolt, 2004a: 19). Relaying another complaint from US conservatives, Bolt argues that 'Moore's foulest distortion' is to 'portray Saddam's Iraq a happy, harmless country'. The filmmaker, Bolt argues, fails to show

> …a single sign of Saddam's mass graves, his gassed Kurds, his torture centres, his official rape rooms, his critics with their tongues cut out – nothing to suggest, as Amnesty International said in 2002, that Iraq was a place of 'all pervasive repression…and widespread terror' (Bolt, 2004a: 19).[75]

Bolt surmises that Moore, in effect, argues 'Bush's America is the true terrorist…at war with its own people. But to believe that, you must believe every foul smear, every childish deception, in his deeply deceitful movie' (Bolt, 2004a: 19). The columnist concludes by directing readers to 'a long, footnoted list of Moore's distortions, Fiftysix Deceits in *Fahrenheit 9/11…* on www.davekopel.com' (Bolt, 2004a: 19).

The *Herald Sun* published nine letters to the editor two days after Bolt's 'Fahrenheit Zero' that debated issues related to the column or Moore's film. Three either applauded Bolt and/or praised President Bush while condemning Moore, *Fahrenheit 9/11* or the Left generally (McLaws, 2004: 16, Anderson, 2004: 16, Turnbull, 2004: 16). Jane Turnbull repeats Bolt's rhetoric, specifically that *Fahrenheit 9/11* was 'full of cheap shots, falsehoods, and shadings of the truth'. Turnbull states as fact that the

> …Nazis had Leni Riefenstahl to brilliantly film and spew their propaganda. The far Left have Michael Moore, who is cleverly using a mixture of lies and half-truths in his movie, which should not have been described as a documentary (Turnbull, 2004: 16).

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[75] The senior US Republican politician, Senator John McCain, repeated a variation of this when he stated Moore had made a 'disingenuous film' that would have people believe 'Saddam's Iraq was an oasis of peace' (In Nichols, 2004). Moore rejected this assertion, stating that *Fahrenheit 9/11* did not 'argue that Iraq was an oasis of peace…[rather the film] suggested that the Bush administration stretched the truth when it argued that regime change had to be forced upon Iraq in order to avert the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction that have yet to be found' (In Nichols, 2004).

However, other letter writers either praise Moore or took Bolt to task for what they argue is his lack of balance or failure to acknowledge or analyse pro war 'lies' (Touzel, 2004: 16, Bruce, 2004: 16, Sobczszyn, 2004: 16). For example, Touzel queries Bolt's failure to dissect 'the Howard Government's lies regarding the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq' and his lack of 'commentary on lies regarding the imminent threat posed by Iraq' (Touzel, 2004: 16).

The letters suggest a robust, if not polarised, debate among readers of the *Herald Sun* over the merits of Moore's film, Bolt's critique and the Iraq war itself. While Bolt was a 'credible ally' for American conservatives seeking to diminish the potential influence of Moore's film, his rhetoric was not uncontested by Australian readers. Bolt's accumulation and use of conservative criticisms of the film constitutes a form of political and cultural capital to range across the documentary. The *Herald Sun* letter writers indicate a concern that Bolt fails to address the 'lies' – or perhaps put crudely the 'propaganda' – of those who enthusiastically sought to prosecute the war in Iraq.

Bolt's rhetoric, relaying that of American and Australian conservatives, endorses the inscription of *Michael Moore as (a treacherous and deceitful propagandist comparable to the notorious) Leni Riefenstahl*. According to the elements that make up the inscription, Moore is an untrustworthy liar who spread distortions about the Bush administration. The inscription as circulated by Bolt indicates that 'propaganda', particularly when conflated with 'Michael Moore' and 'Leni Riefenstahl', has significant currency and fluidity. Currency in that it enables conservatives to discredit Moore's film by linking it to Riefenstahl and her alleged promotion of Nazism. It was fluid in that it could be disseminated to different audiences, such as Australian and American, in different periods initially with (1989) *Roger & Me* and again with (2004a) *Fahrenheit 9/11*. It is also important to note – as evidenced by the *Herald Sun* letter writers – that the term 'propaganda' is contestable. That is to say, the inscription *Michael Moore as (a treacherous and deceitful propagandist comparable to the notorious) Leni Riefenstahl* could be challenged as some letter writers questioned Bolt's failure to critique pro Iraq war propaganda.

Moore's opponents linked 'Michael Moore', 'propagandist' and 'Leni Riefenstahl', circulating these connections through various media to discredit Moore and his film. That is, in effect, to say that they were seen to be interchangeable so as the filmmaker and his arguments could be treated with suspicion, derision and contempt. Bolt returned repeatedly to Moore during 2004. In another lengthy column headlined 'Moore's protege', Bolt infers that Osama bin Laden is Moore's beneficiary:

> Osama bin Laden has clearly seen Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*. In fact, he loved the movie so much that he's borrowed from the script. That's why bin Laden's weekend videotape of threats against the United States sounds so familiar. It contains at least 15 passages that repeat or seemingly endorse anti-Bush smears from Moore's wildly praised 'documentary' as well as his best-selling books and internet writings. Here's proof that Moore and his savage army of anti-American activists in the West really are giving comfort to the enemy (Bolt, 2004b: 19).

Here Bolt adroitly enables rhetorical linkage between Moore and the al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, and Moore and his supporters are conflated with savagery and uncivilised thought and morally corrupt action. Bolt lists examples of what he argues are similarities between the statements of Moore and bin Laden,[76] before arguing:

> There's more examples of Moore's *propaganda* matching bin Laden's script, but you get the idea. Nor is this a freak coincidence. One of the Bali bombers, Sumadra, had his lawyer quote Moore in court last year to justify his murder of 202 people and organisations connected to the terrorist Hezbollah offered to help market *Fahrenheit 9/11* in the Middle East[77]…No, all this is beyond a

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[76] Bolt quotes bin Laden as stating Bush's father, George H. W. Bush, 'became jealous of (Arab autocrats who) embezzle the public wealth of the nation'. As a comparison, Bolt then states Moore's film, 'falsely claims Saudi Arabian leaders bought off the Bush family by investing US$1.4 billion in them, their friends and their business. Moore elsewhere rages: ''These bastards who run our country are a bunch of conniving, thieving, smug pricks who need to be brought down''.' There is little real or actual linkage between these disparate assertions. The first is from the al Qaeda leader while that attributed to Moore is taken from his book (2003) *Dude, Where's My Country?* The full quote, after 'brought down', ends with 'and replaced with a whole new system that we control' (Moore, 2003: p.unknown). Here, Moore would appear to be making a typically provocative statement about engagement by the American constituency in the democratic practices.
[77] The reporter Darren Goodsir, covering the Sumadra court case, describes the defendant's oratory as delivered in a 'theatrical, staccato style – at times whispering, and occasionally shouting'. Goodsir also reports, towards the end of his article, that Sumadra's lawyer, Qaidar Faisal, 'quoted from American satirist Michael Moore's book *Stupid White Men* and other anti-Western texts' (Goodsir, 2003). Goodsir presents this as an insignificant, if not trivial, aspect of the hearing. Many conservative commentators cite an article by Samantha Ellis, for *The Guardian,* to validate the putative *Fahrenheit*

coincidence. Moore – darling of the US Democrat party and winner of the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or for *Fahrenheit 9/11* – really is singing the terrorists' favourite songs. Of course, he probably believes what he chants is true, even the obvious untruths. He probably condemns most of the killings the terrorists do for the cause *he helps them to justify*. *Nor is there a lack of activists, actors, writers and academics who are with him* in seeing Islamist terrorists as just freedom fighters against a despotic US (Bolt, 2004b: 19. My emphasis).

Bolt's demonisation of Moore is all encompassing, fortifying the initial inscription linking 'Michael Moore', 'Osama bin Laden', 'propaganda' and 'terrorism'. In fact, Bolt rhetorically links Moore to no less than three people widely described as terrorists and/or terrorist groups – Osama bin Laden, the Bali bombers and Hezbollah. The filmmaker is portrayed as effectively in league with the US Democrats and supported by 'activists, actors, writers and academics'. In this way, these supporters are demonised and framed as morally corrupt and providing succour to the enemies of Western civilisation. Bolt's rhetoric thus refurbishes the original inscription: *Michael Moore is (a debauched propagandist) giving succour to Osama bin Laden and other terrorists*. The notion of 'propaganda' effectively forms the apex of the inscription. In the first inscription, the historical figure of the notorious Leni Riefenstahl is paramount, particularly given her role in promulgating Nazism and an idolatrous view of the despised Hitler. This promotes the view that like Riefenstahl, Moore is using his filmmaking ability for nefarious purposes. Yet in the second inscription the more contemporary hate figure of bin Laden has replaced that of Riefenstahl. Moore is still a propagandist, but he is immorally and reprehensibly providing intellectual ammunition to terrorists who represent an *immediate danger* to us.[78]

9/11 – terrorist link. Ellis reports that 'the film (*Fahrenheit 9/11*) is being offered the kind of support it doesn't need. According to Screen International, the UAE-based distributor Front Row Entertainment has been contacted by organisations related to the Hezbollah in Lebanon with offers of help' (Ellis, 2004). Similar to Bolt and other detractors, Ellis presents this as 'fact' despite the lack of any hard empirical data, let alone the names of the organisations involved. Taken coterminously, Bolt's recalibration of highly select elements of such media texts sediments his narrative conflating 'Moore' and 'terrorism'.

[78] Bolt negatively referred to Moore twice again in columns during 2004 (Bolt, 2004c: 21 and Bolt, 2004d: 19). This underscores Bolt's commitment to persuasive phraseology in defence of President George W. Bush and hence US war aims, but also to rhetorically eviscerating ideological enemies such as Moore. Together with his lengthier pieces on Moore, Bolt's later references sediment his conflation of 'propaganda' and 'lies', linking both intrinsically to Moore and his advocates.

Ironically, in some ways Bolt's attitude to Moore can be compared to that of Moore's to Bush. Both demonstrate contempt for their subject. Bolt's diatribes, particularly the first two examined above, relay the uproar among US conservatives over Moore's film.[79] For a more extensive discussion and dissection of this uproar, see O'Connor (2005: 7), Greenstreet (2004) and Toplin (2006: 2). In summary, Bolt vigorously relays inflammatory and damning rhetoric through media texts framing Moore as a treacherous liar to discredit the filmmaker and his argument.

One example of this uproar is the contribution of the renowned writer Christopher Hitchens, with transatlantic audiences and some cache on the cultural and political left. In a widely cited scornful review of *Fahrenheit 9/11* Hitchens argues:

> To describe this film as dishonest and demagogic would almost be to promote those terms to the level of respectability. To describe this film as a piece of crap would be to run the risk of a discourse that would never again rise above the excremental. To describe it as an exercise in facile crowd-pleasing would be too obvious. *Fahrenheit 9/11* is a sinister exercise in moral frivolity, crudely disguised as an exercise in seriousness. It is also a spectacle of abject political cowardice masking itself as a demonstration of ''dissenting'' bravery (Hitchens, 2004).

Hitchens caustic contribution to the debate is significant as he presents the dominant Orwellian definition of 'propaganda' and had written a homage to and defence of Orwell titled (2002) *Why Orwell Matters*. In this work, Hitchens argues Orwell is 'uncommonly prescient…about many of the themes and subjects that preoccupy us today' (Hitchens, 2002: 10) and approvingly cites Orwell's 1945 essay *Notes on Nationalism* as a stinging rebuke to 'intellectuals and pseudo-intellectuals (who) affected a sort of neutrality between the victims of New York and Pennsylvania and Washington and the theocratic fascists of Al Quaeda (sic) and the Taliban' (Hitchens, 2002: 12). Similar to Bolt, Hitchens' review discredits Moore by linking him to 'the filmic standards, if not exactly the filmic skills, of…Leni Riefenstahl' (Hitchens,

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[79] McKnight notes that Bolt's columns 'echoed themes from the American Right' (McKnight, 2012: 13). While McKnight's analysis focuses on Bolt's pro Iraq war advocacy and demonisation of Left wing critics, it can also be taken to include his dissemination of rhetoric from US conservatives regarding Moore and his film.

2004). While Hitchens' review studiously tackles Moore's contentions in *Fahrenheit 9/11*, it makes no attempt at any comparative analysis with Riefenstahl's work.[80] Hitchens' uses 'Riefenstahl' solely as a rhetorical device to cast Moore and his film in a pejorative light. Considering also the title of Hitchens' review, 'Unfairenheit 9/11' and the subtitle 'The lies of Michael Moore', the stark connotation is of the filmmaker as a mendacious and profoundly untrustworthy propagandist. Hitchens' politics shifted around 2001 from that of a left-liberal critical journalist to that of a supporter of interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq.[81] Hitchens' critique illustrates the depth and diversity of discussion of what constitutes 'truth' in universalising ways regarding national and international politics. Ironically, Moore drew on Orwellian conceptualisations himself at the conclusion of *Fahrenheit 9/11,* citing a passage from *Nineteen Eighty-Four,* which in part reads:

> It is not a matter or whether the war is not real or if it is...The war is not meant to be won. It is meant to be continuous…A hierarchical society is only possible on the basis of poverty and ignorance…The war is waged by the ruling group against its own subjects (Orwell, 1984b, c1949: p.unknown. In Moore, 2004).

Here, Moore cites Orwell to critically frame the Bush administration as unprincipled and manipulative 'elites', who use 'propaganda' to strengthen their own hold on power and further Bush family financial interests. Hitchens was clearly incensed by Moore's use of Orwell, arguing in his review that

> …it's highly unwise to quote Orwell if you are already way out of your depth on the question of moral equivalence. It's also incautious to remind people of Orwell if you are engaged in a sophomoric celluloid rewriting of recent history (Hitchens, 2002).

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[80] Toplin accurately notes that Hitchens 'concentrated on small details and did little to challenge the filmmaker's fundamental thesis' (Toplin, 2006: 65).

[81] A former Trotskyist, who championed certain left wing causes, Hitchens dismayed allies when he 'ended up as a loud drummer boy for President George W. Bush's war in Iraq, a tub-thumper for neoconservatism, and a strident American patriot' (Buruma, 2010). Buruma, a former ally, argues that Hitchens was not a 'lone contrarian' in his political shift, but rather a 'follower of a contemporary fashion', who emulated other leftists joining neo conservatives (Buruma, 2010). Tariq Ali went further and in a caustic critique of Hitchens' political shift, damned him as a 'saloon-bar bore' who ended up sounding 'more and more like the pompous neo-conservatives he once derided' (Ali, 2002: xxvi).

Similar to his argument in *Why Orwell Matters*, Hitchens again approvingly cites Orwell's essay *Notes on Nationalism* as part of his critique of both Moore and *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Hitchens' citation from *Notes on Nationalism* partly states

> …there is a minority of intellectual pacifists, whose real though unacknowledged motive appears to be hatred of western democracy and admiration for totalitarianism. Pacifist propaganda usually boils down to saying that one side is as bad as the other… (In Orwell, 1984a, c1945: 318).

Hitchens' sediments the 'fact' that Moore is a mendacious anti Western propagandist, variously motivated by hatred, naivety and ersatz 'dissent'. It is indicative that Hitchens and Moore both drew on the contested Orwellian concepts of 'propaganda' – Moore to critique the Bush administration and Hitchens' to appraise the filmmaker's motives and the film. It serves to highlight the contestations surrounding what precisely can be taken as 'propaganda' and who is putatively disseminating it. Put bluntly, both Hitchens and Moore accused their respective targets of being liars, couching their presentation of 'fact' within an Orwellian framework – demonstrating the longevity of Orwell's notions of propaganda and the gravitas with which they are considered.

Another assessment of *Fahrenheit 9/11* is provided by the British novelist and politico-cultural critic John Berger.[82] In contrast with critics such as Bolt, Berger argues strongly that Moore's film is a 'political act' that 'may be a historical landmark' (Berger, 2004: 13). Here Berger specifically addresses the persuasive and hotly cascading rhetoric linking 'Michael Moore' with 'propaganda' and accordingly his argument is cited at length:

> To denigrate this [Moore's argument] as propaganda is either naive or perverse, forgetting (deliberately?) what the last century taught us. Propaganda requires a permanent network of communication so that it can systematically stifle reflection with emotive or utopian slogans. Its pace is usually fast. Propaganda invariably serves the long-term interests of some elite. This single maverick movie is often reflectively slow and is not afraid of silence. It appeals to people to think for themselves and make connections. And it identifies with, and pleads

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[82] Moore's book *The Official Fahrenheit 9/11 Reader* contains critiques of *Fahrenheit 9/11* by Berger and others (see Moore, 2004b).

for, those who are normally unlistened to. Making a strong case is not the same thing as saturating with propaganda. Fox TV does the latter; Michael Moore the former (Berger, 2004: 13).

Berger provides a striking counterpoint to the 'Moore as Riefenstahl as nefarious propagandist' assertive narrative promulgated by Bolt and Hitchens. Rather than being mendacious, let alone a traitor, Berger identifies Moore as a committed patriot whose film 'wants America to survive' (Berger, 2004: 13). Berger's assessment of 'propaganda' is useful in its attention to compositional features. While contrary to Berger's argument, parts of Fahrenheit 9/11 *are* fast – its rapid fire editing will be discussed later in the chapter – other segments, such as those examining Lila Lipscomb's loss of her son and the infiltration by police of the Peace Fresno group, are considerably slower and potentially engender reflection. Berger also characterises Moore's filmic contribution as the assembling of a 'strong case' rather than propaganda or *any* kind of propaganda. To him, the filmmaker demonstrates that

> …a single independent voice, pointing out certain home truths that countless Americans are already discovering for themselves, can break through the conspiracy of silence, the atmosphere of fear and the solitude of feeling politically impotent (Berger, 2004: 13).

In summary, Berger's argument is diametrically opposed to those of Hitchens and Bolt. Rather than being a lying propagandist, who uses his filmmaking skills for treacherous purposes similar to Leni Riefenstahl, Berger argues Moore is a dedicated patriot addressing and holding a light to governmental propaganda. And Berger makes a serious attempt to engage with and analyse notions of 'propaganda' rather than use it as a shorthand pejorative wrecking ball. Amongst the diversity of meanings made of Moore's work, there are also Moore's own objectives in making the film to consider and his criticisms of dominant media. This will add to the exploration of this occasion of contest around 'propaganda', particularly Moore's argument that dominant US media uncritically disseminated the Bush administration's official line. Specific scenes in *Fahrenheit 9/11* are analysed to examine Moore's discursive strategies for achieving both this and his argument that Bush exiled both 'truth' and 'trust' from politics.

7.4 More to Moore? Beyond 'something called Fox News'

Michael Moore's reference, as narrator, to 'something called Fox News' in the introduction to *Fahrenheit 9/11,* signals his disdain, if not outright contempt, for media he identifies as aligned with and promulgating Bush administration 'propaganda'. Moore's use of this statement, regarding Fox News' decision to call the result for Bush in the 2000 presidential election, and its place in the introduction will be discussed, particularly drawing on Wilder's arguments.

After citing quotations from Moore promoting both (1989) *Roger & Me* and (2004a) *Fahrenheit 9/11,* Toplin outlines the filmmaker's contemptuous attitude towards much television news media. Toplin notes the filmmaker

> …wanted to tell stories that network news organizations were unwilling to take on directly and forthrightly. He maintained that network executives were too timid to take strong stands, and their reporters imitated their example, for fear of alienating advertisers and viewers. Moore intended to handle stories with controversial political implications much less cautiously than the networks had done (Toplin, 2006: 21).

It is this intense scorn that fuels *Fahrenheit 9/11* and its key argument – that television news media disseminated 'propaganda' aligned with the aims of the Bush administration. Indeed, the film's title provides a strong indication of the filmmaker's position. A pointed take on Ray Bradbury's book (1954) *Fahrenheit 451,* Moore updated the title to signal his views on both the Bush administration and the dominant media. As Wilder notes:

> In … *Fahrenheit 451,* books are banned and interactive flat screen 'parlor walls' anesthetize the population. A ragtag collection of hobo intellectuals take to the woods to become talking books, each preserving a treasured text. In Bradbury's world, people stopped reading because the combined forces of censorship and political correctness reduced content to 'vanilla tapioca' while at the same time a cacophony of electronic media deluged the senses. It would be fifty years before Michael Moore's incendiary twist on Bradbury's title changed the playing field for political documentaries (Wilder, 2005).

Toplin makes a similar observation, adding that 'criticism of the news media was central to the thesis of *Fahrenheit 9/11*' (Toplin, 2006: 36). This is to argue that Moore set out to highlight the propagandistic role of the news media in relation to the Bush administration (see Rapoport, 2007: 94, 236). Others scholars have defined the film's central tenet in terms of Moore's partisan critique of news media. My interest is also to argue that Moore undeniably conflated 'dominant media', particularly Fox News, and 'propaganda' to form an alternative inscription. Moore's aim was to create a powerful counter narrative to the pro war/pro Bush inscription he argued was being relentlessly and unquestioningly relayed by the media. Moore was not the Right's 'treacherous propagandist providing succour to terrorists', but rather a provocative voice challenging, highlighting and reviewing pro Bush/pro war 'propaganda'. For example, Hamill argues just this in his analysis, describing *Fahrenheit 9/11* as

> …a corrective to the daily drumbeat of right-wing talk radio, which slants the news to fit a radical agenda. Yet the Rush Limbaughs and Sean Hannitys scorn Michael Moore for daring to express his point of view with pictures (Hamill, 2004: p.unknown. In Moore, 2004b: 230).

How Moore's low opinion of journalism is established in *Fahrenheit 9/11* is described by Wilder, analysing the film's first sequence concerning the 2000 presidential election:

> The filmmaker-narrator-waif asks 'Was it all just a dream?' A sound track of fierce country fiddling plays over clips of network news footage including Dan Rather projecting Gore the winner in Florida, CNN calling the election for Gore, 'then something called the Fox News Channel' called the election for George W. Bush…within a few minutes, Moore has skewered both traditional network 'news' anchors, and the 'fair and balanced Fox'. It is clear that he has no use for 'journalism' as practiced by either orientation, and the viewer is forewarned that what is to come plays by different rules (Wilder, 2005).

In summarising a range of particular readings of *Fahrenheit 9/11*, Williamson notes many commentators saw the film

> …as raising popular consciousness, providing real news through the cinema, while *holding a mirror to the mass media's uncritical coverage of the Bush administration that beguiled many members of the public about the need for*

war ...The film's general argument is that the Bush administration has exiled truth from politics, as reflected in the lie used to justify America's invasion of Iraq, that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction (Williamson, 2006. My emphasis).

This argument is made in the sequence, immediately after the introduction, depicting senior Bush administration officials including Cheney, Rice, Wolfowitz and Powell, along with Bush himself, being 'made up' in readiness to appear on television. Scenes showing each individual having makeup applied or their hair done are interspersed with the opening credits. A mood of tension and suspense is further heightened by Moore's use of music – a brooding acoustic guitar backed by a synthesiser. The images connote both artifice and revelation; that Bush and his cohorts are confecting an image to make themselves and their rhetoric more saleable to the audience through the use of televisual conventions. The playwright Bertolt Brecht makes a similar argument his play *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui,* a satire on Hitler's rise to power. The Ui/Hitler character, signalling his intentions to enter politics, consults an actor identified as 'Old Mahonney' in order to learn certain gestures, elocution and how to present himself before audiences. At one point during his session with the actor, Ui vehemently rejects suggestions he is aiming to impress the 'fancy-pants' senior figures; rather, his enhanced gestures and improved elocution are intended for the 'little people'. Ui is 'not trying to convince professors and smart-alecks. My object is the little Man's image of his master' (Brecht, 1976: 44). This is not to compare Bush with Hitler, but rather note Brecht and Moore make similar arguments regarding figures being prepared for propaganda purposes with instructions for certain gestures. For example, in *Fahrenheit 9/11* Bush is also shown, in footage taken immediately prior to his announcement of the war in Iraq, going through a series of facial expressions including mock seriousness and jocularity. The connotation is one of 'revelation', whereby Moore will tear down the curtain and expose the 'truth' about the Bush administration and its propagandistic strategies.[83]

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[83] In his analysis, Kellner argues that the sequence 'suggests that the administration is a product of artifice and scripted theatre…sinister music and off-center close-ups help convey the threat and danger of the highly secretive and rarely exposed mechanics of Bush-Cheney administration image production' (Kellner, 2010: 149).

Moore cements this argument in *Fahrenheit 9/11* with a sharp contrast between Bush administration rhetoric and contradictory imagery and/or commentary. In a lengthy sequence, the film depicts the disparity between statements by Rumsfeld, regarding the 'humanity' of so-called precision bombing, and images of dead and maimed civilians. Following images of an older Iraqi woman, highly traumatised and distressed over the destruction wrought by the conflict, the film presents a brief interview between the pop singer Britney Spears and an unidentified interviewer. Spears appears wearing a blonde, bob wig and chewing gum throughout.

> **Spears**: 'Honestly, I think we should just trust our president in every decision that he makes and just support that, you know, and um, be faithful to what happens.
>
> **Interviewer**: Do you trust this president?
>
> **Spears**: Yes, I do.
>
> [At the tail end of the interview clapping is heard.]
>
> **Moore as narrator**: Britney Spears was not alone. [Cut to wider shot of Bush being applauded by US politicians.] The majority of the American people trusted the president and why shouldn't they? He had spent the better part of the last year giving them every reason why we should invade Iraq. [Wide shot of Bush being applauded by politicians.]

Bush is then shown equating 'Saddam Hussein' with 'weapons of mass destruction' followed by an excerpt from Powell's infamous address to the United Nations, in which Powell states: 'Saddam Hussein is determined to get his hands on a nuclear bomb.' Following rapid fire editing depicting Bush repeatedly saying 'nuclear bomb' and another excerpt from Powell's UN speech, Moore pursues the film's narrative of a mendacious Bush administration that has exiled 'truth' from politics.

> **Bush**: 'He has got chemical weapons.' Followed by three rapid fire edits of Bush saying 'He's got em.'
>
> **Moore as narrator**: 'Huh, that's weird because that's not what Bush's people said when he first took office.'
>
> **Powell** (captioned February, 2001): 'He has not developed any significant capability in respect to WMD.'
>
> **Rice** (captioned July, 2001): 'We are able to keep arms from [Hussein]…his military forces have not been rebuilt.'

253

Bush: 'Saddam Hussein arms and protects terrorists, including members of al Qaeda.'

Cheney: 'There was a relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda.'

This is followed by rapid edits showing Bush saying separately 'Saddam' and 'al Qaeda'.

Further rapid edits depict Bush stating of Hussein: 'This is a man who hates America', 'This is a man who can't stand what we stand for' and 'He hates the fact, like al Qaeda does, that we love freedom'.

Moore then mocks the Democrats, as an ineffective opposition, which failed to 'stop all these falsehoods', and lampoons the nations constituting the 'Coalition of the Willing'. The latter is ridiculed with each mention of a nation accompanied on the image track by a national stereotype. To cite a few, Romania (a vampire); the Netherlands (a young man smoking a hash pipe); Afghanistan (people in a poppy field).

Moore then states sardonically: 'Afghanistan, oh yeah, they had an army – our army! [Cut to shots of US soldiers.]

Moore: 'I guess that's one way to build a coalition – just keep invading countries.'

The film then turns directly to the media and the role it plays in uncritically disseminating Bush administration propaganda.

Moore as narrator: 'Fortunately, we have an independent media in this country who would tell us the truth.'

Male Fox News anchor: 'The rally around the president and around the flag and around the troops clearly has begun.'

Soldier on tank: 'We're gonna win.'

Female Fox News reporter: 'You have to be with the troops to understand that type of adrenaline rush they get.'

TV anchor Katie Couric to grinning soldier: 'I just want you to know I think Navy Seals rock.'

Unidentified reporter: 'The pictures you are seeing are absolutely phenomenal.' [With images of military vehicles in the desert.]

TV anchor Dan Rather: 'When my country is at war, ah, I want my country to win.'

This lengthy sequence demonstrates the persuasive counter narrative to Bush administration 'propaganda' and 'lies'. On the latter, Moore draws on Orwellian notions, mentioned earlier, to paint Bush and his senior officials – as evinced by the contrast between their rhetoric and the non contemporaneous contradictory statements and imagery, along with sarcasm, irony and humour, in the sequence described above – as members of a manipulative and disingenuous government. Regarding use of the Spears clip, it can be argued Moore uses a 'soft target' to make a blunt point about the inanity of the media having a vacuous pop star comment on such serious matters. However, Moore through his narration immediately frames the central issue as presidential 'trust'. Spears is positioned as representative of the American constituency – she had, wrongly in Moore's argument, trusted her president and his senior officials. The political establishment is then positioned as a claque – taken here to mean fawning and applauding sycophantic admirers who were *ineffective* and/or *in thrall* of Bush.

Moore's use of irony is particularly pertinent throughout the film and enhanced by the selection of music, such as, to name several instances

> …REM's ''Shiny Happy People'' during a montage of photos and footage of the members of the Bush family meeting with the Saudis, an instrumental passage from Eric Clapton's ''Cocaine'' when showing records of Bush's absence from the National Guard, ''The Theme from *The Greatest American Hero*'' when Bush arrives on the aircraft carrier to declare ''Mission Accomplished'' (Ness, 2010: 162).

The use of ''Shiny Happy People'' is particularly sarcastic when used with images of George W. Bush, his father and other senior US governmental figures holding hands with Saudi rulers.[84] Specifically, Moore connotes a deep distrust and intense questioning of the relationship and who benefited – the American people as a whole or governmental senior figures aligned with the Bushes.[85]

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[84] In her comparison of Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* and Peter Davis's classic (1974) anti Vietnam War documentary *Hearts and Minds*, Wilder argues that the logic of both films 'exemplify a pattern of ironic juxtaposition' (Wilder, 2005).
[85] Music is recognised as a specific propagandistic device and has been analysed in depth as such, notably by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in its examination of music and war (Brookes, Pietropaolo and Taylor, 2010).

Moore's technique is based heavily on what Williamson identifies as practices of compilation, particularly a reliance on 'narration to make links between diverse images and voices and provide continuity' (Williamson, 2006: 5). Further, the 'narration anchors the meaning of images taken from different contexts' (Williamson, 2006: 6). The lengthy sequence described above demonstrates precisely this use of narration. A continuity is thus produced across the milieu of the scenes involving Spears, Bush being uncritically lauded by fellow politicians and rapid edits of Bush's rhetoric. This enables the filmmaker to advance his argument that Bush has exiled both 'trust' and 'truth' from politics. The various scenes at the end of the sequence, highlighting Moore's assessment of the media as cheerleaders for the Bush administration, are tellingly anchored by his acerbic narration regarding 'independent media' which will tell the American constituency the 'truth'. Understanding this technique wards off charges of propagandistic manipulation:

> It could be argued that the 'doctoring' of the compilation is justified by the film's search for the truth behind Bush's actions and the smokescreen provided by the mainstream news media (Williamson, 2006: 6).

Moore's critique enables audiences to *question* both the conduct of the Bush administration and the media whereas the vitriolic appraisal of Bolt and Hitchens simultaneously consolidates the gravitas of Bush while discrediting both Moore and *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

Moore's presentation of Bush and Cheney's equation of 'Saddam' and 'al Qaeda', to justify the bloody invasion of Iraq, highlights the Bush administration's rhetorical strategy. As mentioned above, the filmmaker's use of clips featuring Rice and Powell, pre September 11, stating that Hussein does not pose a threat are double edged: Moore both solidifies his argument that the Bush administration is mendacious and also reinforces his narrative that the dominant news media has been lazy, failed to do its job and therefore been complicit in disseminating Bush's propaganda. The final series of edits featuring the television anchors and reporter underscore the key elements of Moore's narrative. As Toplin notes: 'Katie Couric's exclamation ''Navy Seals rock!'' hints that *she was acting like an unwitting contributor to the administration's propaganda schemes*' (Toplin, 2006: 81. My emphasis).

That the Bush administration's pro war rhetoric had significant political currency is demonstrated in Toplin's account of the polls:

> Public opinion polls indicated that at one point after the US invasion of Iraq, 69 percent of the American public believed that there was a direct link between the activities of Saddam Hussein and the events of 9/11…Polls taken around the time of the [2004] election found that Americans who voted for George W. Bush were much more likely to believe that there was a link between Iraq and al Qaeda than those who voted for John Kerry (Toplin, 2006: 110).

The political currency of this rhetoric was assisted by pro-'war on terror', pro-Bush supporters assembling and deploying its components through various media texts to promote their cause. The dehumanisation of Saddam Hussein and the glorification of Jessica Lynch as the embodiment of the US military and national virtue arguably marshalled adherents.

In concluding this section, Moore composed *Fahrenheit 9/11* as a fierce rhetorical blow *against* the Bush administration's propaganda and a way to ignite a critical discussion about Bush, his policies and the dominant news media's treatment of both. For Moore and his detractors, notions of 'propaganda' and who precisely was disseminating it lay at the heart of the discussion. Given the damning association by Moore's critics of 'Michael Moore' with 'Leni Riefenstahl', the next section delves deeper into Moore's technique, along with that of Riefenstahl, to help distinguish different styles and deployments of propaganda and its critique to variously disposed audiences.

7.5 No more of Leni: the technique of Moore and Riefenstahl

As already discussed, Moore's rapid fire editing forms a significant basis of the technique he employs in *Fahrenheit 9/11*. For his critics, this signals and critically exemplifies what they argue are Moore's manipulative propagandistic techniques. For example, Hardy and Clarke argue:

His editing techniques…have now fully evolved. He can take a speech and turn it into whatever he desires, skilfully using images and other footage to hide the cuts. One cannot compare Moore to the Stalinist propagandists. Next to him, they were oafs with a cheap tape recorder (Hardy and Clarke, 2004: 222).

Through such assertions, Moore is presented as a propagandist *par excellence,* worse than the Stalinists. Given how widely such views of Moore's filmmaking were circulated, what is the status of such claims? Is there more than 'propaganda', crude or otherwise, at work in Moore's technique? Wilder's work contributes here. In her comparison of *Hearts and Minds* with *Fahrenheit 9/11*, Wilder argues compellingly that the logic of both built

…through the composition of an intricate succession of incongruous, contradictory, and ultimately ironic words and images. The cumulative effect of carefully juxtaposed sound and pictures provides the structure of an argument from antithesis, where the adjacency of contradictory or incongruous messages creates the dialectical tension that propels the audience to a resolution (Wilder, 2005).

In her assessment of the images, discussed earlier, of Bush, Cheney, Rice, Powell and Wolfowitz being readied for their television appearances, Wilder argues: 'The implication of this ironic choice is that it is all theatre; they are not for real; not to be trusted' (Wilder, 2005). Techniques of editing and juxtaposition enable audiences to notice contradictions and artifice in the presentation of pro-war propaganda and its sources.

Critics such as Hardy and Clarke argue that Moore's propagandistic skills, in films such as *Fahrenheit 9/11*, are predicated on a process of 'decontextualisation and recontextualisation'. That is, removing sounds and images from their original context and replacing them within a 'new and invented context' (Hardy and Clarke, 2005, c2004: 128) Does this combined with the filmmaker's editing technique constitute 'propaganda'? Contrary to Hardy and Clarke, Moore's work actually provides a critique of prevailing forms of 'propaganda'. In a piece where he makes the point that use of some techniques associated with propaganda does not establish a film as

propaganda, Williamson deals with different possible readings of *Fahrenheit 9/11,* noting of the opening segment

> …it could be suggested that the changes to the sequence of actual events…is justified because the editing is imaginatively motivated, and its purpose is to evoke the experience of alienation caused by the betrayal of the democratic process. Contending that the film alters facts, statements and relations between events thus only gains a *limited critical purchase on the film*. The opening sequence can be found compelling, independently of the need to develop a conventional argument in which claims are supported by evidence (Williamson, 2006: 6. My emphasis).

In this scenario, Williamson offers a plausible alternative to comparing Moore's imaginative work with what some argue is orthodox documentary, predictably finding it wanting and thus 'propagandistic' according to a limited and binary classificatory framework. This debate will be discussed further in the next section, particularly in terms of the historical roots of Moore's filmmaking style.

Further reviewing other segments of *Fahrenheit 9/11*, Williamson argues that it *did* recontextualise and distort 'many statements, gestures and action' (Williamson, 2006: 10). However, delving further into the debate surrounding the film, he concludes:

> However, *its appeal is not reducible to that of propaganda*, and is not necessarily overcome by counter-factual statements. Rather, the film's persuasive appeal depends on continually borrowing documentary forms – from poetic composition and compilation to observational and expository techniques – that enable it to engage momentarily to political events, actors, discourses and problems, while at the same time it uses these forms as the means to achieve a higher aesthetic mode of speaking the truth of politics (Williamson, 2006: 10-11. My emphasis).

Elsewhere in his article, Williamson categorises this aesthetic mode of 'speaking truth to politics' as a Romantic one. Williamson draws on Schmitt's (1986) definition of political romanticism when assessing Moore's form of critique, specifically that

> …once its gaze settles upon political events, political romanticism is indifferent to the particular situation, except insofar as it provides the 'occasion' for an

aesthetic 'play of forms' (Schmitt, 1986: 144-145)…Schmitt demonstrates that political romanticism is 'based on the practice of constantly escaping from one sphere into another…and of blending ideas from different spheres' (p.145), so as to produce a higher 'genial apprehension' of truth (p.97)…as Schmitt demonstrates, for the political romantic, it is not 'concrete reality and efficacy' (p.96) that matter, but rather 'romantic productivity' (p.93), the spinning of an aesthetic 'quasi argument' (p.145) by which to transfigure the real (In Williamson, 2006: 11).

In these ways, Moore uses rapid fire editing and blends an array of diverse images and words in his film, which is not reducible to 'propaganda'. Moore's romantic aesthetic enables him to mount a forceful argument. Moreover, Moore's exposition of the policies and rhetorical strategies of the Bush administration combined with caustic humour and the filmmaker's strategy to entertain provides for a compelling counter inscription. Yet as Williamson demonstrates, to describe and define this crudely as 'propaganda' is reductive and fails to appreciate the breadth and scope of the production of meaning available to audiences of *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Moore's skill as a filmmaker includes his ability to show that dominant rhetoric can be challenged and recombined. As noted earlier, government figures usually associated with solemnity could be portrayed in such a way as to question their authority, credibility and status, or simply as humans requiring makeup for televisual presentation of 'gravitas'. Moore's filmic narrative went further than simple ridicule or offering what some may term a 'counter propaganda'. Rather, the filmmaker effectively highlights what he considers to be propaganda relayed by the Bush administration and a largely uncritical dominant news media. To achieve this, Moore appropriated some documentary techniques and blended these with a desire to entertain and persuade. Moore's stunts and pranks related to the latter are numerous and legendary, featured prominently in his television series *TV Nation* (Moore, 1994 and 1995) and *The Awful Truth* (Moore, 1999 and 2000). Larner, particularly, provides extensive examples in both programs of Moore's inspired infusion of entertainment with a serious message (Larner, 2005: 95-96, 98). And Steven Mintz notes that despite the pranks and cheap shots, Moore's work also engages in a

> …powerful form of unmasking, laying bare realities that had been hidden or repressed, whether this was the impact of deindustrialization on the residents of

a decaying rust-belt city or the collateral damage that is inflicted on civilians in
wartime (Mintz, 2005: 11).

Toplin drew a similar conclusion, going further to argue that many filmgoers *expected*
Moore to push the envelope in *Fahrenheit 9/11* (Toplin, 2006: 6).

Given that 'Moore' was comprehensively associated with the Nazi filmmaker 'Leni
Riefenstahl', it is important to assess her filmmaking technique, particularly at work
in her most renowned film, (1934) *Triumph of the Will*. The film critic and
documentary director Mark Cousins describes Riefenstahl's most celebrated work as a
'bombastic record of a 1934 Nazi party rally' (Cousins, 2004: 154). In terms of her
specific technique, Cousins notes:

> Riefenstahl used symmetry, scale, slow-motion, low-angle shooting, suspense
> and mystery to aggrandize her subjects…she explored the discipline of military
> manoeuvre, its absence of individuality or doubt, and eroticized it. She filmed
> her subjects as if they were Greek gods, apparently approving of, or oblivious
> to, the politics of her paymasters (Cousins, 2004: 154).

In assessing Riefenstahl's style and filmic substance, Cousins argues the filmmaker
'essayed the epic nobility of the Germans' (Cousins, 2004: 159) and further identifies
what he terms as her 'fascist operatics' (Cousins, 2004: 278).[86] Thus, the notorious
opening scenes of *Triumph of the Will* present Hitler and his cohorts, God-like,
descending from the clouds in a plane to the rapturous applause of adoring small,
massed people; Hitler's plane cast a cruciform shadow on the scenery below,
reinforcing the narrative of the Nazi leader as a quasi deity. There is no sense of
dissent and the numerous doting figures in the crowds, demonstrated by close ups of
excited faces, are presented as being as one in their admiration of and adherence to
Hitler and his leadership.

The infusion of religiosity, Hitler as a messianic figure, and the masses whose best
interests are represented by the military, a cohesive and unifying force behind the
Nazi leader, is further reinforced in Riefenstahl's images taken on the final day of the

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[86] Professor of American Studies, Thomas Doherty, who has an interest in Hollywood cinema, reaches
a similar conclusion. Doherty argues that the 'worshipful low-angle shots and natural lighting
silhouetting a deific Fuhrer imprinted the spectacular allure of the Nazi mythos in motion picture
memory' (Doherty, 1993: 18).

rally. Riefenstahl's use of masses of soldiers, in specific, rigid formations while completely focused on Hitler and his message, underscores her narrative of the Nazi leader as a divine figure and the German nation, as represented by the Nazi Party and associated military, totally attuned to Hitler as their saviour (Clark, 1997: 51).

In these ways, Riefenstahl presents a hagiographic account of Hitler as representative of a unified and Aryan Germany, which adores its messianic Nazi leader. Nevertheless, there are multiple readings of Riefenstahl's film, as evinced by the work of film theorist Steve Neale. In summarising Neale's detailed analysis of filmic propaganda, Chapman notes that Neale argues there is a 'distinction between films which are ''propaganda'' and others which may serve a ''propaganda function'' but which in themselves are not necessarily any different from the classical narrative feature film' (Chapman, 2000: 684). In advancing this argument, Neale states there are 'instances in which propaganda texts can be placed within a space of address in which their nature as propaganda can be totally defused' (Neale, 1977: 40). Neale cites Gardner's contention that *Triumph of the Will* could not 'have been made by a propagandist pure and simple'. Rather, the film is the 'work of an artist, even if an artist of an immensely naive political nature' (Gardner, 1965: 30. In Neale, 1977: 40). Neale highlights the depth of and complexities related to propaganda analysis, particularly regarding Riefenstahl's work. Both Williamson and Neale attend to the argument regarding the aestheticism of film as art, however, Williamson particularly highlights the purposes and uses of films by different audiences.

Neale argues that propaganda is 'predominantly discussed from a distinct liberal humanist position, certainly in relation to the cinema' (Neale, 1977: 10) and identifies certain 'propaganda' films as classic realist texts. Briefly, Neale argues that the notorious Nazi film *Jud Suss* (Harlan, 1940), with similar 'general characteristics and mode of address' to populist Hollywood films of the 1930s, is a classic realist text (Neale, 1977: 25) in which 'an anti-semitic position is produced as the place of the coherence of meaning' (Neale, 1977: 25).[87] In *Jud Suss* anti-semitism is 'inscribed as the specificity of meaning produced within the mechanisms of the classical text…the production, maintenance and ultimate containment of heterogeneity that marks the

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[87] Ian Hunter also examines problems regarding the category of the classical realist text in his piece 'Realist Cinema and the Memory of Fascism' (Hunter, 1984).

classical text is here mapped in terms of signifiers of race whose over-determined focus is the body' (p.27). Neale argues that propaganda cannot be identified with 'one particular mode of its problematic address – dogmatism – and thus dismissed as such…What has to be identified is the *use* to which a particular text is put, to its function within a particular situation, to its place within cinema conceived as a *social practice'* (p.39. Emphasis in original). Neale highlights the necessity of analysing both the utility and deployment of specific texts while avoiding the argument that intransigence or stubbornness is the hallmark of the challenging address of propaganda. Remarkably, the roots of the film *Jud Suss* can be traced to German Jewish writer Lion Feuchtwanger's anti Nazi book, which was radically reworked at the behest of Nazi Propaganda Minister Goebbels to frame 'Jews as crafty, untrustworthy, hook-nosed beings' (Connolly, 2010). This underscores the thesis' argument regarding the fluidity and flexibility of propaganda; in this instance, the production of it for a specific German national audience, yet with its roots in something radically different.

Some comparisons can be made between the filmmaking styles of Riefenstahl and Moore. Firstly, Riefenstahl aggrandises and deifies a leader while Moore does the complete opposite. Secondly, there is no Riefenstahl persona in *Triumph* while Moore's renowned scruffy provocateur persona is on display in his film. Thirdly, Riefenstahl displays none of the humour or sardonic wit that marks Moore's filmic effort. Finally, Riefenstahl uses low angle camera shots, lighting and edits to conflate Hitler, the Nazi Party through the swastika, and the German constituency as one, while Moore employs rapid edits, music and ironic juxtaposition to ridicule and relentlessly question the leadership of George W. Bush and his administration's policies. For example, Hitler is portrayed by Riefenstahl as a much loved and god-like leader while Moore ridicules Bush, early in *Fahrenheit 9/11*, as a buffoon who is constantly on holiday. *Fahrenheit 9/11* features a caustic critique of the news media and what Moore argues is its uncritical dissemination of Bush administration rhetoric while Riefenstahl revels in propagation of an assertive narrative glorifying Hitler and his ideology. Riefenstahl also made *Triumph of the Will* as a state-aligned filmmaker

while Moore acted independently – regardless of what his critics claimed.[88] In summary, the identification of Michael Moore as some form of latter day Leni Riefenstahl is not only specious, but highly questionable.

Delving further into the debate surrounding Moore and his work, the next section examines the provenance of Moore's work, particularly that of agenda driven cinema. This is examined alongside the work of Frank Capra and debates to what is classified as documentary. Analysis of these debates is useful in terms of highlighting the longstanding and contentious links between 'documentary' and 'propaganda' as well as locating the historical roots of Moore's provocative films.

7.6 Michael Moore and the documentary

Michael Moore never concealed his aim of making an impact on the 2004 presidential election when he made *Fahrenheit 9/11*. As Toplin notes, the filmmaker 'stated frankly that he hoped the move would help drive George W. Bush out of the White House' (Toplin, 2006: 120). Moreover, Moore never referred to the film as a 'documentary'. In publicity interviews for the film, Moore described it as

> …an op-ed piece. It's my opinion about the last four years of the Bush administration. And that's what I will call it. I'm not trying to pretend this is some sort of, you know, fair and balanced work of journalism (Moore in Hardy and Clarke, 2004: 201).

In this case, earlier arguments about Moore's status as a journalist simply don't apply. Moore also described the film as 'a comedy, too' (Moore in Hardy and Clarke, 2004: 201). Regardless of this statement, many critics such as Bolt focused their invective on definitional objections – the film couldn't be a 'documentary' because it was 'propaganda' and the techniques employed within it, specifically the editing, were

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[88] In his memoirs, George W. Bush infers that Moore produced a 'so called documentary that was nothing more than campaign propaganda' for Democrat 2004 presidential candidate John Kerry (Bush, 2010: 290). Like Bolt, Bush equates 'Moore' and 'bin Laden', arguing that statements made by the latter in October, 2004, 'sounded like he was plagiarizing Michael Moore' (Bush, 2010: 194). This indicates the ubiquity of this rhetoric and the authoritative figures using it.

said to have proved this. The merit of argument related to notions of 'propaganda', and 'documentary' is now explored.

For critics such as Bolt and others, Moore corrupts the notion of what constitutes a 'documentary' to disseminate what they argue amounts to reprehensible and malevolent propaganda. But as Toplin (2006) argues, agenda driven cinema is not exactly new and its roots can be traced back to the muckraking authors of the 1900s. Toplin's research indicates that Moore 'did not create a uniquely partisan style of filmmaking. Instead, he made some impressive contributions to a long-standing and evolving practice of agenda-driven cinema' (Toplin, 2006: 71).Toplin argues that:

> Most notable documentaries deliver hard-hitting, assertive perspectives because they have evolved from a journalistic tradition that originated with provocative revelations delivered to the public in print rather than on film (Toplin, 2006: 73).

Toplin locates Moore's work as the heir to that of muckrakers such as: Tarbell, who examined John D. Rockerfeller's business practices in (1904) *The History of The Standard Oil Company*; Sinclair, who reported on conditions at meatpacking plants in (1906) *The Jungle*; and Steinbeck, who famously portrayed the plight of Americans in the Great Depression in (1939) *The Grapes of Wrath* (Toplin, 2006: 73). Toplin drew on William Stott's study of the documentary tradition in the 1930s (Stott, 1986. In Toplin, 2006: 74-75). Toplin's assessment of Stott's argument is important to quote at length, particularly as it demonstrates fluidity and flexibility in what precisely constitutes 'propaganda' and how it relates to 'documentary' films:

> …Stott observes that filmmakers who made important contributions in the Depression era *approached their subjects with a passionate interest in provoking social change*. These artists wished to convince viewers of a need for major improvements in society. They appealed to the sympathies of audiences…Documentary makers had an 'axe to grind'…They wanted viewers to take stands and 'fix things'. He acknowledges that many of these documentary productions constituted a form of 'propaganda'. But that term can be misleading, Stott points out, because it often carries strongly negative connotations. Commentators typically think of disturbing examples of film propaganda from the 1930s, such as Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the*

Will...Yet there is 'honest propaganda,' too, argues Stott. Several documentary

films of the 1930s aimed to persuade in socially responsible ways (Toplin,

2006: 74-75. My emphasis).

This discussion of classifications of 'propaganda' and 'documentary film' allows for

much greater complexity than Moore's critics, who circulated notions of the former in

the by now more familiar and dominant pejorative sense of 'propaganda' when

ascribing it to 'Michael Moore'. Indeed, the filmmaker's detractors relayed the

rhetoric related to 'propaganda' so Moore could be negatively associated with

Riefenstahl. This was despite Moore never having claimed that *Fahrenheit 9/11* was a

documentary. Moore wanted to arouse viewers to vote against Bush or in the words of

Stott, to 'fix things'. Moore's film is opinionated, but as demonstrated, this was

hardly novel in terms of the broad history of documentary film. As Toplin pertinently

states, Moore 'did not invent a new form of partisan documentary. In crafting

Fahrenheit 9/11, Moore drew on advances made by the numerous pioneers of

nonfiction cinema who came before him' (Toplin, 2006: 82).

Further, contentious debates over 'documentary' and 'propaganda' have long existed,

the roots of which can somewhat ironically be traced to Capra's pro US involvement

in the World War II 'Why We Fight' series of films. As the American film scholar

Richard R. Ness notes in his comparative analysis of rhetorical techniques in Capra's

series and in *Fahrenheit 9/11,* Capra won an Academy Award in 1942 in the

Documentary category for *Prelude to War* – the first film in the 'Why We Fight'

series – despite it being 'clearly…recognized even at the time of its release as

propaganda' (Ness, 2010: 150). Despite the significant differentiation in critical point

of reference – the 'intent of the government-sponsored Capra series was to encourage

our involvement in one war, while the goal of Moore's…film is to question our

involvement in another' (Ness, 2010: 153) – both filmmakers employed similar

rhetorical techniques. Both Capra and Moore used existing footage with the former

having 'compulsively scavenged *Triumph of the Will*' (Doherty, 1993: 74). As

Doherty notes:

> Filtered through Capra's lens, Riefenstahl's paean to Nazism becomes a real-life
>
> horror show. The images are left untouched, but the contexts project another
>
> picture. The lockstep discipline of the SA stormtroopers becomes robotic

simplicity, the grand parade of Hilterjungen evokes a march of lemmings into oblivion (Doherty, 1993: 74).

In these ways, Capra radically recontextualised Riefenstahl's landmark work to 'generate a response to the images different from what was originally intended' (Ness, 2010: 156) – in this instance, a desire by US service personnel to join the battle against Nazism. Moore uses a combination of material 'that…was never intended to be seen', such as images of Bush and senior officials being groomed for television (Ness, 2010: 156). Moore's work also features footage 'taken out of context in which it was originally presented' (Ness, 2010: 156), such as the montage discussed earlier, highlighting linkages between senior Saudi and Bush administration officials. As Ness notes in his analysis of this, 'Moore…does not provide any specific context for these images, allowing viewers to assume that these encounters all involved capitalistic dealings' (Ness, 2010: 156). While there are differences in the technique between the two filmmakers, such as Moore's use of footage unintended for screening and his deliberate use of humour (Capra's work is overtly earnest), the rhetoric strikes a similar chord – to join the battle. In Moore's case, it was the battle against Bush while Capra impelled service personnel and the national citizenry to see the government's rationale for the fight against Nazism and, in his other films, the Japanese. Capra's work and more particularly his Academy Award highlight the vexed nature of the debate surrounding 'propaganda' and 'documentary'. In reflecting specifically on this, Ness cites Paul Rotha's seminal 1935 study *Documentary Film,* particularly Rotha's argument that 'cinema pursuing the ends of propaganda and persuasion has been largely responsible for the documentary method' (Rotha, 1935: 92). Therefore, disputes over the value, linkage and characterisation of 'propaganda' and 'documentary' are longstanding and by no means solely generated by *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Echoing Toplin's aforementioned argument, Ness notes that, 'Moore's works are merely the latest extension of and variation on established documentary conventions' (Ness, 2010: 149). In these senses, *Fahrenheit 9/11* fell within the documentary tradition and the association of 'Michael Moore' with 'Leni Riefenstahl' served as a devastating rhetorical device to demean the filmmaker and his work. This cannot be understated, as Doherty notes that 'Riefenstahl' was taken by Western audiences to be a 'parable for the corruption of art by power. As an enemy propagandist, only…Goebbels surpassed her in infamy and insult' (Doherty, 1993:

19). In concluding this section, it is clear that 'documentary', 'Michael Moore' and 'propaganda' formed the basis of a heated debate surrounding *Fahrenheit 9/11* and the meanings that could attached to it by different audiences, and in which its detractors worked to debase both Moore and his filmic production. Further responses to *Fahrenheit 9/11* are now briefly considered.

7.7 Faith in George W. Bush: a *very* conservative response

That conservatives sought to contest and mute Michael Moore's rhetorical challenge is not in dispute. The scholar John O'Connor notes that Republican critics

> …pressured theater (sic) chains not to screen the film commercially, sought to ban its advertising and, among other 'dirty tricks', did all they could to cancel or otherwise foil Moore's planned appearances on college campuses (O'Connor, 2005: 7).

O'Connor highlights not only the potential persuasion that conservatives feared from Moore's polemic, but also the broad scope of their response. Perhaps the most infamous conservative reaction to *Fahrenheit 9/11* was *George W. Bush: Faith In The White House* (Sellier, 2004). Billed by conservatives as a counter documentary, the film notoriously features Bush as a child with a halo along with a narrative framing Bush as a devout, Christ-like figure. Scenes and narration in the film aim to rebut and blunt Moore's argument, with references to Bush as a leader who eschews 'political correctness' by openly declaring his faith while coming under rhetorical attack from critics such as the actor Richard Gere and left leaning political activist Ralph Nader.[89] Interviewed in the film, Tom Freiling, author of *George W. Bush on God and Country* (Freiling, 2004), states Bush's overt faith had 'given strength to Christians who are in the middle of fighting the culture war' (Freiling in Sellier, 2004). The following images of Bush depict the US president as prayerful and smiling behind a lectern, before turning to stills of a po-faced Gere and a partially squinting Nader. Bush, by contrast, is immediately afterwards again presented as prayerful (he is showed praying

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[89] As foreshadowed earlier (Chapter 2, section 2.8), conservatives have used 'political correctness' as a derogatory term to dismiss the arguments of progressive or left wing opponents (Wilson, 1995: xi).

with soldiers) and a man of the people as he shakes hands with appreciative members of the public. In other words, *George W. Bush: Faith In The White House* presents a portrait of a humble and inspirational leader in stark contrast to Moore's feckless and irresponsible president who led America into two wars under questionable circumstances. In positioning *Faith In The White House,* the film's producer David Balsiger describes *Fahrenheit 9/11* as 'Bush-bashing, incendiary and manipulative' while rationalising *Faith In The White House* as portraying Mr Bush as a 'caring, compassionate faith-based president that the world has not seen before' (In Lavine, 2004). Balsiger also positions the film as an 'alternative to *Fahrenheit 9/11* that addressed the issues raised by Moore without attacking the film directly' (In Lavine, 2004). This underscores the highly contested notion of filmic propaganda; further indicating its fluidity, Larner skewers *Faith In The White House* as propagandistic and notes the irony of Christopher Hitchens being cited in it (Larner, 2005: 177-178) – although by this point Hitchens was severely critical of what he criticised as Islamofascism.[90]

Thus, *Faith In The White House*, putatively disseminated to rebut a scheming and propagandistic work, was itself pejoratively denounced as 'propaganda'. *Faith In The White House* was not the only conservative film made in response to *Fahrenheit 9/11.* Others included *Celsius 41.11: The Temperature At Which The Brain Begins To Die* (Knoblock, 2004) – described by Larner as 'truly a gem of a propaganda piece' (Larner, 2005: 172); *FahrenHYPE 9/11: Unraveling The Truth About 9/11 And Michael Moore* (Peterson, 2004); and Michael Wilson's tendentious *Michael Moore Hates America* (Wilson, 2004). Wilson interprets Moore's 'muckraking style as a sign that the filmmaker hates America' and 'fails to recognize that many social critics want to improve a good society by drawing attention to its shortcomings' (Toplin, 2006: 59). The film's title alone suggests questions of treachery and sedition, which was particularly topical due to the post September 11 Homeland Security laws.

These films demonstrate not only a broad rhetorical assault on Moore, but also attempts to persuade audiences and constituencies. Yet another film inspired by

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[90] In a lengthy online article defending use of 'Islamofascism', Hitchens argues he initially employed the similar term 'fascism with an Islamic face' to 'describe the attack on civil society' on September 11 (Hitchens, 2007).

Moore's work, the no-budget Australian made *Time To Go John* (Gough-Brady et al, 2004), features a wide ranging filmic attack on then Australian Prime Minister John Howard, a major proponent of the Coalition of the Willing. Made by volunteers, *Time To Go John*, released prior to the 2004 Australian election, was hosted by the left wing activist and comedian Rod Quantock and includes a series of short films addressing topical issues including Howard's industrial and asylum seeker policies, and Australia's involvement in the Iraq war, to name a few. The filmmakers adopt a limited Orwellian approach to propaganda, classifying it as 'lies'. For example, one of the short films, *Eye Saw* (Hansen, 2004), shows a silhouetted graffiti artist spraying a wall with text equating 'Howard' with 'lies'. *Time To Go John* presents an antipodean response to Moore's work, albeit with radically tighter budgetary constraints.

In the rhetorically and politically heated run-up to the 2004 presidential election in the US, both Moore and his opponents placed a premium on their rhetoric cascading through adjacent and overlapping media texts. Of the duelling inscriptions they respectively relayed, it is possible to argue that the conservatives of 2004 ultimately had the upper hand. History shows that Moore did not succeed in his stated aim of driving Bush out of the White House.[91] Toplin concludes that propagandistic invective disseminated by conservatives and aimed at Moore had an impact:

> Leaders on the Right worked arduously to discredit Moore's film in the public mind, and to a considerable extent they succeeded. Words such as 'manipulation', 'distortion' and 'lies' made many Americans suspicious of *Fahrenheit 9/11* (Toplin, 2006: 135).[92]

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[91] In a lengthy essay titled 'Was the 2004 Election Stolen?' published in *Rolling Stone*, Robert Kennedy Jr argues strongly and fervently that electoral malpractice, including the shredding of Democratic registrations and 'faulty voting equipment', occurred during the 2004 presidential election (Kennedy, 2006: p.unknown). The case being made here is that the electoral result does not give a clear indication of the 'effect' of the conservative onslaught on Moore.

[92] Toplin comes to this conclusion based on the frequency and high visibility of persuasive anti Moore rhetoric.

7.8 Conclusion: the triumph of Michael Moore

Fahrenheit 9/11 and the discourse sparked by and around this one film provides a fascinating insight into the currency and fluidity of what can be taken to be 'propaganda'. Both Moore and his critics deliberately put 'propaganda' at the centre of their rhetoric. As both discourses – Moore's and his critics – indicate, to be a propagandist is to be dangerously untrustworthy, devious, manipulative and most importantly, treacherously malign. Other rhetorical devices were used by Moore and his detractors to embroider, strengthen and solidify their discursive inscriptions. There was a remarkable degree of contestation in the application of notions, categorisations and classifications of 'propaganda': it could be used from a variety of political perspectives. Moore's critics could (effectively) say: 'Here's the dishonest charlatan, Leni Riefenstahl reincarnated, spewing his hateful propaganda against President Bush and his administration.' At the same time the filmmaker could critically, as Williamson argues, utilise a process of compilation 'to evoke the experience of alienation caused by the betrayal of the democratic process' (Williamson, 2006: 6).

The association of 'Michael Moore', 'propagandist' and 'Leni Riefenstahl' was a powerful rhetorical tool, particularly for audiences not attuned to debates over whether Riefenstahl was a naive artist or a deceptive and morally corrupt enemy propagandist. The solidification and further circulation, by critics such as Bolt, of 'Moore', 'propagandist' and 'Riefenstahl' along with rhetoric related to 'Osama bin Laden' and other 'terrorists' contributed to the framing of Moore as a 'vile traitor'. However, as demonstrated, Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* drew on a long history of partisan and passionate work. The meanings attached to it sparked an intense and, at times, highly partisan debate. If this was Moore's sole contribution to the 2004 presidential campaign, it contributed a perspective contesting the rhetoric and rationale presented as being the basis for two wars and a variety of conservative policies. Moore's unique selection and unearthing of material highlights the dominant news media's largely unquestioning regurgitation of Bush administration 'propaganda'.

Moore was, of course, not the only filmmaker to critique Bush administration 'propaganda' and the dominant news media's promulgation of such. Yves Boisset's (2004) *US Media Blues* was more of a traditional partisan documentary. Dour and at times plodding, it has none of the wit, biting sarcasm, irony or rapid fire editing of Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11.* Yet it made essentially the same point on the news media as Moore's film – that the dominant media acted as cheerleaders for the Bush administration and its pro war policies.[93] Greenwald's (2004) *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War On Journalism* sharpened its focus on Fox News, but again argues that dominant news services aligned themselves with government policy and acted as 'propagandists'. Neither Boisset nor Greenwald attracted anything comparable to the vitriol or heated critique that Moore did, let alone the audiences. Moore's film won audiences, as evinced by *Fahrenheit 9/11's* stunning financial success, with the filmmaker's utilisation of humour coupled with rapid fire editing and entertainment values. As Toplin notes, *Fahrenheit 9/11* represents

> …an impressive example of the power of an entertaining documentary to raise significant questions about public policy and to provoke thought and debate…Information coming to light after the summer of 2004 appeared to indicate that quite a few of the complaints registered in *Fahrenheit 9/11* were valid (Toplin, 2006: 119).

In these ways, Moore raised pertinent questions about government policy and propaganda. As a trenchant critic and outsider, it was always likely he would earn the scorn and derision of conservatives promulgating the dominant 'war on terror' frame. After all, like many Depression era muckrakers he had an 'axe to grind' and wanted to provoke social change – even if it was audaciously taking down a president while simultaneously demanding that the dominant news media stop being so timid and do its job.

In concluding, there are subtle differentiations between Moore's position on and approach to highlighting governmental 'propaganda' and Herman and Chomsky's position. Crucially, Moore is more sanguine and optimistic regarding the critical

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[93] This draws on Toplin's comparison regarding the points made in Moore's film and books by US Senator Robert C. Byrd (Byrd, 2004) and the historian Arthur M. Schlesinger jr (Schlesinger jr, 2004). Toplin notes the three works made similar points, however, *Fahrenheit 9/11* was the 'most eye-opening and provocative statement among the three commentaries' (Toplin, 2006: 146).

capacities of resistance and opposition he attributes to audiences of his film. Further, Herman and Chomsky premise their propaganda model on powerful governmental and corporate senior figures utilising the media to dupe audiences; whereas Moore, drawing partly on Orwell, aims to highlight governmental rhetoric, yet maintains audiences can be informed and thus resist and be activated against such propaganda. Having considered such different approaches, along with the impassioned and at times frenzied debate surrounding Moore's filmmaking techniques, the thesis now turns to the conclusion.

Conclusion

The 'war on terror' has seen the dissemination of highly ubiquitous and recurrent rhetoric. As demonstrated through examination of 'the only language they understand is violence' rhetoric and its derivatives (as analysed in Chapter 4), this rhetoric is significant for its marked recurrence and deep historical roots. As a rhetorical artefact, 'the only language they understand is violence' has been disseminated during innumerable conflicts including but not limited to World War Two, Vietnam and Iraq – presenting the necessity for violence as *justifiable* and *inevitable*. This demonstrates its longevity, currency and fluidity. It is a significant factor in distancing publics from the consequences of bloody military action taken in their name and constructing notions of a wartime 'other', who is cognitively and morally deficient. This propagandistic device has also been underpinned by highly racist notions in some instances, as evinced by the work of Fanon and examples cited regarding the Vietnam and Iraq conflicts. While not uncontested, the ubiquitous recurrence of 'the only language they understand is violence' rhetoric indicates its likely repetition by multifarious actors across a range of future conflicts.

The thesis has also demonstrated the currency of the category of 'propaganda' and 'propagandist'. Combined with other rhetorical artefacts, a 'propagandist' can be variously presented as pernicious, wicked and uncivilised. 'Propagandists' were furthermore mendacious, wilfully invented untruths and coterminously Godless barbarians – the latter disseminated by the US and its supporters within the Cold War frame regarding the Soviet Union (Chapter 5). As the comparative analysis regarding the separate US-led and Soviet invasions of Afghanistan has demonstrated, the category of 'propaganda' was used to vilify opponents and avoid engaging seriously with their arguments and or ideology (as discussed in Chapter 5). Furthermore, the category of 'propaganda' does have currency in these times as demonstrated by the highly specific rhetorical assault on both the filmmaker Michael Moore and his film *Fahrenheit 9/11* (as discussed in Chapter 7). In this instance, the linkage of 'Moore' with 'propaganda', 'Leni Riefenstahl' and official enemies designated as terrorists points to 'propaganda' as the essential apex of a rhetorical skein whereby opponents

are framed as morally corrupt and, as such, eviscerated. In another occurrence, the *Socialist Worker Online* used the category of 'propaganda' pejoratively to signal to its left wing audience that the Bush administration was engaged in an exploitative, racist and ideologically-driven push for war (as discussed in Chapter 5). In such ways, the category of 'propaganda' has enormous contemporary currency for actors disseminating their rhetoric from diverse and, at times, oppositional perspectives.

In accordance with the thesis' aims (outlined in the Introduction), the thesis has demonstrated that dominant propaganda models are too generalising. That is, contrary to Herman and Chomsky's model of propaganda and the S→M→R model, audiences are not passive, inert and homogenous, and that communicative transactions critically involve gambles and risk as opposed to fail-safe or guaranteed outcomes. Audiences are *diverse* and their sense-making capacities are *complex*. For example, *Herald Sun* readers did not respond in a 'uniform manner' to Bolt's columns, as evinced by letters published in the newspaper (as discussed in Chapter 7). Furthermore, the fierce contestations surrounding Michael Moore's film *Fahrenheit 9/11*, discussed in Chapter 7, allude to the multiplicity of audiences as well as the film as a source of dissent and contestation of pro 'war on terror' inscriptions.

Latour's analytical tools make it possible to examine how what is taken to be 'fact' and 'knowledge' is passed along, contested, sedimented and recalibrated as potential allies are galvanised and mustered. Coterminously, the thesis has considered the critical role of what Latour terms the dissenter in contesting what can be presented as 'stabilised' fact and knowledge. As the thesis has demonstrated, these dissenters can include journalists, playwrights, cartoonists, filmmakers, historians and politic-economic researchers, to name a few. Their role underscores the gamble of communication wherein composers and users can never *assure* conclusions because of the diverse sense-making work of diverse audiences. As Harman, in his discussion regarding Latour's figure of the 'dissenter', notes:

> The dissenter may be a loathsome pest, but he does have a point: anything can be challenged. There is never a red light flashing in our head once we hit the right answer, no genie or magic fairy in our ear that we now have the truth…instead, we assemble the truth as painstakingly as a symphony or an

electrical grid, and any of these things can collapse beneath the weight of unexpected resistance (Harman, 2009: 44).

In the instance of Moore's 'unexpected resistance', this led to a heated discussion not only about 'propaganda' and 'propagandist', but crucially about Bush administration discursive strategies and rationale regarding the 'war on terror'. Attention to the important role of the dissenter and her/his ability to recalibrate rhetorical artefacts – such as Moore's use of George W. Bush's speeches and imagery associated with him and senior officials – marks the thesis' departure from the generalising SMR model of communication, attending instead to the contingency and occasion-specific aspect of communicative struggles. That is to argue that propaganda analysis must be situational and take account of multifarious audiences, contestations and dissenters reworking 'fact' to present alternative and oppositional accounts – such as those of Michael Moore and the cartoonist Nicholson. Moreover, publications like the *Socialist Worker Online* presented anti 'war on terror' inscriptions to its left wing audience, as discussed in Chapter 5. In other instances, publications relayed what can be characterised as conflicting rhetoric, simultaneously positing pro and anti 'war on terror' themes. In such ways, different propositions are buffeted by those presented alongside them, requiring audiences to distinguish and compare. Which proposition will persuade which audience is a gamble and involves risk. Considering 'war on terror' rhetoric in this way demonstrates greater complexity than either how the Herman and Chomsky model of propaganda is routinely used or the SMR model is capable of specifying. Another way of signalling this is to say that propaganda analysis requires substantially more than identifying 'lies' and 'manipulative language'.

The repositioning of Dyson's anti military cartoons to advocate a pro war stance (discussed in Chapter 3), Capra's recontextualisation of elements of Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (as discussed in Chapter 7) and Cave and Logan's use of 'official' video imagery to highlight important questions regarding the US military 'line' (as discussed in Chapter 4) underscores the need for situational analysis. All involve the recalibration or repositioning of rhetorical artefacts – underscoring how these are contested and reworked whereby audiences can potentially garner an alternative meaning than those intended by the 'Sender', be they individual, organisational or

institutional. Rhetoric is not made sense of in an unchallenged linear direction from its source. 'Propaganda' is fluid and mobile, established by highly repetitive and simplified cascading inscriptions, in the lead up to war. A *cascade* of reductive and repetitive inscriptions allows 'harder facts' – in some instances grounded in racism and mimetic in nature – to be produced. However, as the thesis has demonstrated, these are not unchallengeable or solidified in perpetuity.

In terms of claims stated in the 'Rationale' section of the Introduction, the thesis has demonstrated that propaganda can be shown to be 'historically usual'. This is exemplified through propaganda related to World War I and the first Gulf War (Chapter 3), the French war in Vietnam (Chapter 4), the Soviet and US-led invasions of Afghanistan (Chapter 5) and the conflicts entwined with the 'war on terror' (Chapters 6 and 7). The Rationale section also argues that 'propaganda' is a term widely circulated and often unexamined. This is addressed and questioned throughout the thesis, particularly in terms of the competing inscriptions regarding the Soviet and US-led invasions of Afghanistan (Chapter 5) and conservative critiques of the filmic work of Michael Moore (Chapter 7). Finally, the 'Rationale' section also argues that investigating the concept of propaganda is part of comprehending the role and operation of rhetorical justification of violence through particular media texts. The thesis has addressed this through analysis of propaganda disseminated through media texts regarding the US-led conflicts involving Iraq in 1991 and 2003 (Chapter 3) as well as specific battles such as Haifa St, Baghdad, in 2007 (Chapter 4).

The thesis' argument regarding critical attention to the specificity of audiences, their complex sense-making practices and recalibration of rhetoric is indicated by the work of the social-cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai. In his masterful analysis of globalization and modernity, Appadurai provides a rigorous analysis of 'war on terror' rhetoric as adapted by Hindu nationalists in India to demonise Muslims. Appadurai argues forcefully that state propaganda and fundamentalist ideologies 'spread vicious certainties about the ethnic other – about its physical features, its plans, its methods, and the need for its extinction' (Appadurai, 2006: 90-91).

Appadurai demonstrates how Indian Hindu nationalists recalibrated and infused anti Muslim rhetoric from the 'war on terror' as part of a 'national campaign to reduce

Muslims to a humiliated and ghettoized minority' (Appadurai, 2006: 94-95). In considering the rhetorical subterfuge deployed by the right wing nativist party, the Shiva Sena, Appadurai notes the organisation had planned and run large scale, public prayer rallies (known as maha-arati) to highlight Hindu strength and solidarity (Appadurai, 2006: 98). Ostensibly, the prayer meetings held in large temples and public spaces in Mumbai were held to bring 'peace' to both the city and the world. Appadurai further argues:

> The outrageous feature of these claims is that it is exactly these large-scale rituals which, in 1992-93, were the main instrument for organizing anti-Muslim mobs, for making inflammatory speeches, and for linking Hindu mega-rituals with direct intimidation of Muslim communities and neighbourhoods. To restore these rituals in the period after 9/11 was in one stroke to restore the deadly propaganda links between Muslims and Pakistan, while casting Hinduism in the role of a peacemaking force (Appadurai, 2006: 98).

Appadurai demonstrates how diverse groups can recalibrate and incorporate elements of larger narratives in order to formulate their own propaganda. The Hindu nationalists euphemistically depicted themselves as peacemakers and/or bearers of peace while pursuing the opposite – an aggressive and violent agenda of demonising the Muslim 'other'. Hindu nationalists also drew on notorious Nazi metaphors with references to 'hunting the vermin' (Appadurai, 2006: 107) and calls to clean out slums 'dominated by Muslims, which are alleged to be ideal havens for terrorists from Kashmir and beyond' (Appadurai, 2006: 106-107). Further, Indian Muslims were portrayed as potential traitors to India as well as 'secret agents for Pakistan…and as instruments of global Islam determined to undermine Hindu India' (Appadurai, 2006: 110). In such ways, rhetoric from historical and contemporary wartime propagandistic campaigns – a focus of the thesis – was infused with elements of Hindu nationalism to create a narrative for a distinct audience. Importantly, Appadurai notes the role of the media in which 'global dramas of war, peace and terror arrive at different national and regional locations in different guises and take on highly specific synaptic connections to local anxieties' (Appadurai, 2006: 101). Intersecting with the thesis' argument regarding the 'gamble of communication' where there is risk in communicative acts, Appadurai argues that 'even at the highest levels of global control and circulation no one quite rules the roost' (Appadurai, 2006: 101).

Eschewing Herman and Chomsky's model, Appadurai argues the rise of Al Jazeera demonstrates that the 'battle for global information and opinion is hardly over' (Appadurai, 2006: 101).[94] This resonates with the thesis' argument that those seeking to influence global opinion with cascading and reductive 'hard facts' face risk from dissenters and recalibrated propaganda directed at specific audiences. Militaristic propaganda is not injected into passive, inert and homogenous audiences. It *can* be parodied, reformulated and contested. Furthermore, as the thesis has demonstrated across a range of media examples, there is a significant degree of contestation in the application of notions, categorisations and classifications of 'propaganda'.

While acknowledging contestations of 'propaganda', it is important to recognise the successful use of particular rhetorical devices deployed in a variety of instances in the 'war on terror'. Effusive and highly emotive inscriptions encapsulating *valour*, *bravery* and the *'best of the US nation'* and pro 'war on terror' aims – linked to the exploited figure of 'Lynch' – were effectively and (for a period) uncritically disseminated by US politico-military figures (as discussed in Chapter 6). While Latour's figure of the 'dissenter' did eventually provide opposition, the successful deployment of propagandistic inscriptions should not be understated. Similarly, the contestations of pro 'war on terror' inscriptions by playwrights such as Rayson and Sewell along with cartoonists including Nicholson (as discussed in Chapter 3) amounted to resistances, but with the consequences of these resistances being minor at best. This is borne out by what *was* achieved by those deploying the pro 'war on terror' rhetorical devices examined in the thesis. That is, the mediatised circulation of a torrent of reductive and unelaborated certitudes, uncritically presented as 'fact', and passed along to multifarious audiences and constituencies. This was achieved coterminously with the denigration and vilification of 'dissenters' such as Moore (Chapter 7) and Rayson (Chapter 3). Given this, the use of pro 'war on terror' in inscriptions was 'successful'.

In considering propaganda in the current circumstances, the forceful argument of Edward Said is highly relevant:

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[94] The reporter Megan K. Stack accentuates the need to consider greater complexity in her memoir regarding aspects of her reportage of and experiences covering the 'war on terror'. Stack demonstrates her own ambivalence along with contestations of 'official' rhetoric and its flexibility (Stack, 2010: 28). Stack is neither a credible ally nor a captive audience.

Rather than the manufactured clash of civilizations, we need to concentrate on the slow working together of cultures that overlap, borrow from each other, and live together…But for [this] kind of wider perception we need time and patient and sceptical enquiry supported by faith in communities of interpretation that are difficult to sustain in a world demanding instant action and reaction (Said, 2003: xxii. In Hobson, 2004: 322).

Said's irenic hopes as nearly as anything indicate the activation and impetus of this thesis' work.

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