GLOBAL MEDIA GO TO WAR

ROLE OF NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA DURING THE 2003 IRAQ WAR

About the Cover

The cover's background photo, like the Arab region itself, is enigmatic. It is either a sunset over the desert, signaling the end of day and a journey into darkness, or it is a sunrise presaging a new day with new opportunities. Like the merits of the 2003 Iraq War, the reader is left to decide.

Like no other single photograph taken during the 2003 Iraq War, the picture of Marine Corporal Edward Chin draping the American flag over the statue head of Saddam Hussein on April 9, 2003, reverberated throughout the Arab world and cyberspace as a symbol of American arrogance, disrespect, Arab humiliation, and the abusive use of military might. Most Americans, on the other hand, swelled with patriotic pride and thought the picture illustrated a fitting end to the Ba'athists' and Saddam Hussein's viselike grip on tyrannical power.

One picture, two diametrically opposed audience effects. Such is the reality (if not the surreality) of reporting war in the Middle East and the *raison d'etre* of this collection of essays and studies.

RDB

GLOBAL MEDIA GO TO WAR

Role of News and Entertainment Media During the 2003 Iraq War

Edited by Ralph D. Berenger

Preface by Cees J. Hamelink
Foreword by John C. Merrill
Afterword by Kaarle Nordenstreng

Printed in the United States of America

To Carol and our children,
who have put up with my dreams for decades,
and to journalists everywhere
who bare their souls in every story

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Note: A portion of the proceeds from the sale of these books helps support the nonprofit Center for Global Media Studies at Washington State University.

C ONTENTS

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Reflections on the 2003 Iraq War

Cees J. Hamelink

When the United States and the United Kingdom governments decided to invade Iraq in 2003, they had a serious communications problem. How could a military invasion be justified against a sovereign member state of the United Nations without the consent of the UN Security Council?

The political and moral justification was complicated by the fact that the attack was to be launched against a country where children made up 42% of the population. Many of these children had already been seriously affected by the withholding of five billion dollars in humanitarian supplies during the sanctions against Iraq. It was also widely known that the Iraqi armed forces were enormously weakened after the war against Iran and the Gulf War of 1991.

References to Iraq's refusal to implement UN resolutions or to its poor human rights record would not be very helpful as both the U.S. and the U.K. had never much cared about such issues. The need to control Iraq's energy sources could have been used as a justification, but might not have persuaded political elites and the public at large that murdering Iraqi citizens was justified.

Moreover, the problem was further complicated by the possibility that the invasion would be seen as a crime against humanity. This was a serious possibility as the judges of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg (after World War II) had stated that "to initiate a war of aggression" constitutes the supreme international crime. The judges added that there could be no defense for pre-emptive attacks against other countries. Yet the U.S. and U.K. governments

wanted to remove Saddam Hussein and needed an invasion that had been on various military and political planning boards for quite some time.

Connecting Iraq with the war on terrorism seemed an attractive strategy. If people could be convinced that the Iraqi president could deploy weapons of mass destruction and possibly make these weapons available to terrorist groups, a military strike against such a ghastly threat could be sold as a legitimate pre-emptive action.

However, UN weapons inspectors had been unable to find the WMDs. And while the U.S. and the U.K. intelligence services might have been uncertain whether Iraq possessed biological and chemical weapons, they were quite certain that Iraq had no nuclear arms program. Actually, the intelligence services were quite unequivocal about the fact that there were no nuclear weapons. It needs to be remembered that only these weapons pose in the real sense a threat of mass destruction. Therefore, Iraq did not pose an imminent threat to the region, let alone to the rest of the world. Even before President Bush, Prime Minister Blair, and Secretary of State Powell publicly used the argument about nuclear weapons, their own sources had already defeated it. Yet the invasion had to take place and had to be sold.

Luckily for the bellicose governments, assistance was coming forward in two forms. First, with the help of bright professional minds such as "perception managers" John W. Rendon[1] and Alastair Campbell,[2] a strategy of propaganda and persuasion was initiated that was bought by a sufficiently large number of gullible news media. Second, in several countries (such as the United Kingdom itself and in some supportive countries like the Netherlands) there was considerable popular protest against the invasion, but, given the ineffectiveness of their democracies, this could be conveniently ignored by the political leadership.

With war propaganda and media complicity in place and a public opinion that was favorably massaged or conveniently ignored, the invasion could begin. Now another communications problem arose: coverage of the war proceedings. This had to be steered in such ways that the media spectacle would present to a global public a war of liberation that was fought swiftly, effectively, and with minimal civilian and coalition casualties.

With some exceptions, the majority of the Western mainstream media was helpful to the invaders. They accepted the censorship of the "embedding" strategy and they gave the war protagonists (Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Powell, Blair, Hoon, and Campbell) ample space to mislead the public.[3] Most of these media acted with little professional inquisitiveness and adopted conveniently the frame of interpretation that was fabricated by spin-doctors. This should surprise no one since it was just a repetition of what happened during the Panama invasion, the Gulf War of 1991, the NATO intervention in Kosovo, and the military operations in Afghanistan.

For the communications student, this raises at least three pressing questions. Can one so easily refer to "the media" as the preceding text suggests? Of course not. "The media" do not exist. There are big media and small media, media with different ideological positions and political affiliations, and there are mainstream and alternative media. The Iraq invasion news coverage was brought to the public by Western media, but also by Arab media. Little analysis is needed to see that the coverage by the three leading world agencies (AP, Reuters, and AFP)[4] was significantly different from the Inter Press Service newscast. Even superficial observation demonstrates how American broadcasters such as CNN and the Fox network differed from the Al-Jazeera TV station or Abu Dhabi TV.

Even so, the key issue remains: How did opinion-leading news media in the countries that initiated and supported the invasion assist the justification of the attack? This leads to a second question: How can one explain media connivance with partisan propaganda and persuasion? Among the explanatory factors to understand the voluntary "embeddedness" of journalists with the military are the strength of patriotic feelings, the desire to apply crude dichotomies of good versus evil to an increasingly complex world, plain sloppiness, lack of professional skills, and the fact that there is in most societies an elite political consensus that frames contemporary history in accordance with elite interests. Media (and certainly the mainstream international media) are, in many countries, part of that elite and share its consensus.

The third question is: Will media coverage be different during the next international armed conflict? This is a legitimate question since, after the failures of media war coverage in the past, there has been—at least among responsible journalists—a process of critical reflection and firm resolve to do better the next war. However, there is little reason to believe that such intentions will be realized. The institutional context of media coverage with its pressures of political preference, economic interests, and the dictates of time and competition shows no signs of radical change in the years ahead. So, however genuine intentions may be, the next conflict will see that most media again focus more on "shock and awe" than on the murdered victims, and demonstrate more empathy with "Us" than with "Them."

It is also quite probable that in future conflicts the inequality of arms between the propagandists and the journalists will further increase. Whereas many professional journalists have an interest in uncovering the truth, their counterparts in propaganda are not hampered by such moral motives. They can easily resort to lies and deception. In the struggle between truth and lies, the latter are usually the stronger combatants. Also, in the next war's coverage there will inevitably be biased perceptions of reality, partisan preferences, and political and financial obstacles to hamper serious investigative journalism.

If mainly despair is left, why preface this book? A major reason is that without such critical analyses as are presented in this book, the situation might be

a lot worse. In times of political insanity, it is necessary and encouraging to find signals of intellectual sanity.

The critical analysis also needs to be made—time and again—in order to alert media audiences to what is being done to their minds. War today is, more than anything else, psychological warfare by governments against their own population. It will be a great day for the democratic ideal when people discover the propaganda and the media distortion and begin to demand that they—to use the words of the judges of the European Court of Human Rights—are informed properly about matters of public interest.

Endnotes

1. Rendon, president of The Rendon Group, a public relations firm that has worked with governments on both sides of the Atlantic, refers to himself as "an information warrior and perception manager." Rendon was credited with shaping the perceptions of Iraq as a threat before the war, and managing the imagery coming out of it during the war. (See Rampton, S., & Stauber, J. *Weapons of Mass Deception: The Uses of Propaganda in Bush's War on Iraq.* New York*:* Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2003.)

2. Until he resigned on February 25, 2004, Campbell was Blair's press secretary. Embattled by the press during the run-up and conduct of the 2003 Iraq war, he was cleared of any wrong doing—particularly the leaking of Dr. David Kelley's name to the press as the source of a BBC report critical of Blair's WMD claims. Dr. Kelley allegedly committed suicide on July 18, 2003, shortly after being grilled by Members of Parliament. The BBC, not Campbell, was strongly criticized for reports by correspondent Andrew Gilligan in the *Report of the Inquiry into the Circumstances Surrounding the Death of Dr David Kelly, C.M.G.* by Lord Hutton. (Available at http://www.the-hutton-inquiry.org.uk/content/report/)

3. Referenced here are U.S. President George W. Bush, U.S. Vice President Richard (Dick) Cheney, U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, UK Secretary of State for Defense Geoffrey W. Hoon, and Blair's Press Secretary, Alistair Campbell.

4. Refers to the Associated Press, headquartered in New York; Reuters, headquartered in London; and Agence France Presse, headquartered in Paris.

Response to Hamelink

John C. Merrill

Cees Hamelink raises an interesting and important question in the *Preface*: Will the media be different during the next international conflict? He hopes so. Me, too, as do the authors of the stimulating chapters that make up this book.

Hamelink proceeds to provide a cautious answer that goes beyond hope. "Yes, if. " *If* democratic systems begin to offer the opportunity for governments to get the word from the people that they are sick of being lead about by egocentric and plutocratic elites, and *if* the people become more sophisticated about propaganda.

These are big "ifs" and history shows that democracies are largely pseudo in that people never really rule: They are basically followers in various kinds of authoritarian systems. And it seems that media themselves are tied to their respective political systems and have not found a way to provide unbiased and independent coverage of wars. Many "responsible" journalists, as Hamelink points out, may resolve to do better with each war, but will they?

The following pages shed some light on this question. It will take a multitude of "responsible" journalists, not just a few, to bring about real change.

Propaganda persists, as Hamelink says, and I should stress that it comes from all sides, not just from the aggressor who invades a country such as Iraq. Bias leads to propaganda, and all parties are biased. It is true that some biases are more humane and more human than others, but people everywhere fall under the hypnotic spell of the media.

Cees Hamelink clearly shows how wars can start and can be justified by aggressive governments, and how such governments care little about public thinking on the matter. In the United Kingdom and in the Netherlands, for

example, there was considerable protest against the Iraq war (he could have mentioned the United States as well), but to no avail.

The Western media did not help calm the war fervor, Hamelink says. They basically accepted the line that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and went along with the American policy of "embedding" (in-bedding?) journalists with the invading troops. This is true, but it should be noted that the Arab media produced a steady diet of anti-invasion (especially anti-Bush) material and even pulled its own punches in condemning Saddam Hussein and his human rights excesses. Media seem to be warriors for their cause in any war, hot or cold.

Hamelink stresses that critical analyses, such as the reader will find on the following pages, need somehow to reach the people who must be constantly alert about what is being done to their minds. How true. But do the audiences get this propaganda analysis and media criticism, or is it available only to intellectuals and a handful of university students?

Here's the problem: Getting average citizens to know about, even care about, the skewed world the media are foisting upon them. They are so busy being entertained by media that they know little or nothing about their governments and their covert and overt activities. Such a situation, of course, does not bode well for democracy.

It could be that the media—intrinsic institutions of their own cultures—are simply reflecting the biases and values of their people. Perhaps the media will change when the people change. Perhaps it is the people of the various countries who need criticizing; perhaps, as Aristotle pointed out, the individual citizen's values and ethical endeavors must come first. Then, maybe, the leadership will become better. At any rate, it is quite possible that we get the kind of media we deserve.

Hamelink's final sentence is a hopeful clarion call for public enlightenment. He shows, as do a number of the authors of the following chapters, that idealism is not dead and that there are some who believe that knowing about media distortion will end it. A fine hypothesis—one that we need to get busy and try to prove.

Global Media Go to War

Ralph D. Berenger

No other war has been as extensively reported as was the 2003 Iraq War. Through mixtures of new and old media, professional and amateur journalists told the story of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime's fall after nearly a generation of iron-fisted rule. Thanks to the Internet, more "reporters" and "commentators" than ever examined, analyzed, praised, lambasted, speculated about, or criticized every byte of information, every pixel of image, and every thread of uploaded commentary about global media behavior.

The short Iraq war was an artifact of its time. Communication satellites. The twenty-four-hour news cycle. A polarized world still trying to make some sense of the events of September 11, 2001 (and America's rage about it). The near Delphi-like predictions of a "Clash of Civilizations." And, most importantly, transnational media parity for Western and Middle Eastern audiences during an event that affected them both. All was fertile ground for media researchers who looked not only at the messages and messengers, but the effect they had on audiences.

This book was conceived before the first shots echoed across the windswept Iraqi desert in March 2003. From its inception only one title summed up what was happening: Global news media were at war not only by reporting an international conflict with global significance, but with themselves in a battle for audience acceptance, with their newsroom cultures that often mediated news from the front lines to fit editorial preconceptions, with general and academic critics on all sides, and with the very people they were trying to cover—at times with lethal consequences.

Covering a war, even a high-tech one, is dangerous duty. Elevated media risks in this war involved a variety of bifurcated side issues such as religious

misunderstandings; diverse, disputed, and dysfunctional political ideologies; social, economic, and ethnic inequities; differing cultural norms and values; and a rock-ribbed, regional cynicism that nothing *halal*[1] could possibly come out of the West (thus dooming before they could even begin any liberal democratic changes in post-war Iraq, including a free press and elections).

Also from the inception was the problem of naming this war. Was it, as Arab broadcasters said, "The War on Iraq," "The Aggression on Iraq," "The Anglo-American War on Iraq," "The U.S. Attack on Iraq," or was it "Gulf War II"? For Americans the latter designation, though accurate, is confusing. While Western media were apt to report the conflict as "Gulf War II," that name reflected a particular Western ethnocentrism for Arabs. They still remember the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s as "Gulf War I," perhaps choosing to forget that both the 1967 and 1973 wars against Israel were also Gulf Wars, in that Persian Gulf nations lined up against Israel with others in the region.

At any rate, since no Arab country openly supported the 2003 war (as they had, however unenthusiastically, the 1991 war), use of the Gulf War designation here seemed inaccurate, and the "U.S./U.K.-Iraq War," appeared unwieldy. A more neutral "2003 Iraq War" emerged as the top contender since it clearly differentiates the previous conflict by year.

Players in this war were more grizzled replicates of the 1991 Iraq War—another George Bush was in office (he had advised his father in 1991). Back were Dick Cheney, Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld, and a host of Gulf War policy veterans whose names might never be made public. After a dozen inter-war years, junior officers on both sides during the first war on Iraq were now senior officers in this one.

Of course, Saddam Hussein was back and so was the eloquent Iraqi spokesman, Tariq Aziz, but in a less visible capacity. Early in the war names and faces of the Ba'athist regime leaders would become more familiar to the American and British publics than in the past war, thanks to a Pentagon gimmick: decks of playing cards that entrepreneurs reproduced and quickly sold over the Internet.

The press, too, had stars reprising their roles, some with different networks. Christiane Amanpour was still with CNN doing field reports as an embedded reporter; Robert Fisk for the Independent and John Simpson for the BBC covered the war in-country; John Burns was still with *The New York Times*, reporting from Baghdad; and *The New York Times'* Thomas Friedman was adding his informed commentary from various locations in the Middle East. Peter Arnett, the slightly tarnished media hero of the 1991 Iraq War, proved to be as controversial with NBC, who fired him, as he was with CNN, and all the major American news anchors were still around after the 1991 war. ABC's Peter Jennings, CBS' Dan Rather, and NBC's Tom Brokaw made pilgrimages to Iraq at one time or another. But there were new players in the media as well, many of them from the Middle East.

Even before the first invading/liberating U.S. or U.K. soldier set foot in the Middle East, the Arab press in most of the region's twenty-two countries was brutal and vocal in its assessment of the coming war, as several of the following chapters will attest. The openly hostile Arab media variously framed the seemingly inevitable conflict between the U.S./U.K. coalition and Iraq as a war to avenge the Bush family honor, a ploy by "oil-rich" Bush to control Iraqi petroleum output, an "ignorant" and out-of-control "cowboy" Bush lashing out at terrorist shadows and hurting innocents in the process, and an "evil" if not "satanic" Bush doing the bidding of the Zionists.

The Middle East media were unrelenting in their pre-war, wartime, and post-war criticism of the United States and, in the Iraq context, the Blair government in the United Kingdom. In fact, regular readers of the Arab press are hard-pressed to recall any favorable stories about the United States over the past decade, including perfunctory, carefully parsed, and brief sentiments following 9/11. The general consensus then and sometimes now was that Arabs were incapable of the Twin Towers and Pentagon attacks, and some even suggested that Israel was behind it all. That same level of denial was expressed about Iraq's threat to the region, its WMD capabilities, and, surprisingly, about the ease by which this war would be prosecuted. Many wistfully predicted a protracted war with thousands of allied deaths.

Arab press readers—admittedly less than half of the region's 307 million population—are well attuned to charges that Israel is the source of all malevolence in the Middle East.[2] The United States, since the late 1980s, is supplanting the Jewish state as the most evil of entities because of its wealth, its assumed cultural decadence, its military power and, above all, its perceived blind support of Israel. Those sentiments bubble to the surface in several ensuing chapters.

The West, too, conducted a rigorous propaganda campaign to drum up support for war against Iraq among wobbly-kneed allies. The propaganda machine ground out stories, real and speculative, of Saddam Hussein's intentions in the region, his financial support of suicide bombers' families in Palestine, his continued threats against Iraqi Kurds and Shia'as, his regime's alleged links to al-Qaeda cells and training centers in Iraq, his family's personal extravagance while the average Iraqi suffered through painful international sanctions, and, most importantly, his acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and his willingness to use them against enemies foreign and domestic.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

From its conception, this book had several operational themes that fashioned themselves into goals. More specifically, the intent was to produce a work that was:

● *Cross-Disciplinary.* This book includes writings from experts in fields other than journalism and mass communication. It was hoped that such contributions would enliven and broaden the debate.

● *Cross-Cultural.* Viewpoints of writers from nearly all continents are represented in this volume, with emphasis on Middle Eastern scholars and journalists who not only examine the war's impact on their region, but on the "Other" as well. Readers will be able to discern the various schemata each writer brings to our understanding of what happened to global media during the conflict.

● *Cross-Generational.* This project, assembled in less than a year, involved studies by undergraduate and graduate students, as well as some of the best-established scholars in the international communication field. Young scholars were selected for their energy and fresh perspectives on media; senior scholars were chosen for their wisdom and experience.

● *Focused on Media Behavior.* The over-riding theme of this work is how media behaved before, during, and after the war. Behavior is critical because in war lives are put at risk, potentially hundreds of thousands of them if Saddam Hussein indeed had a viable weapons of mass destruction program. To get stories inside Iraq, many journalists and TV crews gambled their lives, and some lost.

It could be argued that at least one person, Dr. David Kelley, Britain's WMD expert, might have been a direct casualty of media war behavior. Dr. Kelley allegedly committed suicide when his personal and professional ethics rubbed against newsroom ethics of the British Broadcasting Corporation, which used him as a source for its stories. At least the Hutton Report strongly suggested that early in 2004.[3]

● *General and Student Reader Appeal.* All of the authors were asked to eschew academese and write their chapters for general audiences. With that in mind, this work could be acceptable as a classroom reader for courses in international relations, political science, sociology and, of course, Middle East and mass communications studies. This edition should also appeal to mass audiences interested in how news media (one of their information connections to the war as it unfolded) behaved during a major international event, and, possibly, how they can become media monitors themselves by using new media.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

This book contains thirty-four essays, which includes the *Preface*, *Foreword*, *Introductio*n, *Afterword*, and thirty chapters. The *Preface* and *Foreword*, written by two world-renowned scholars, involve a dialogue about media, government and war.

Cees J. Hamelink of the University of Amsterdam argues that during the 2003 Iraq War mainstream mass media from coalition countries became tools of "propaganda" for the U.S. and British governments, and that there is little hope that will change in future global conflicts. "If mainly despair is left, why preface this book?" he writes. "A major reason is that without such critical analyses as presented in this book, the situation might be still a lot worse. In times of political insanity, it is necessary and encouraging to find signals of intellectual sanity."

John C. Merrill, professor emeritus at the University of Missouri, agrees with Hamelink that scholars and citizens need to publish "critical analyses," but one of the problems is "getting average citizens to know about, even care about, the skewed world the media are foisting upon them. They are so busy being entertained by media that they know little or nothing about their governments and their covert and overt activities. Such a situation, of course, does not bode well for democracy."

In his Afterword Kaarle Nordenstreng of the University of Tampere in Finland renews a call for international media monitoring, and proposes an international collaborative project of media scholars to collect the burgeoning number of academic studies on media behavior to be issued in an annual report. He urges use of content analysis to identify what is being communicated to whom in what channel.

The book is divided into six major sections: *The Prelude to War*; *The International War of Words*; *The War in the Coalition Press*; *The War in Other Places*; *The War in Cyberspace*; and *The War for Hearts and Minds*.

Part I: The Prelude to War

The first six chapters survey the global media scape before the war, and how news and entertainment media in different parts of the world cultivated their audiences and national policymakers to either support or oppose the war.

James Napoli studied media in two countries opposed to the war, France and Egypt. Jinbong Choi used the diagnostic and heuristic tool of framing to study the meanings of Bush's "axis of evil" pronouncement. Because world audiences receive nearly all their foreign news from international news agencies, Beverly Horvit examines five of them and how they covered the coming war, with some surprising results.

George Gladney deconstructs Marshall McLuhan's "global village" concept

and finds it fragmenting into competing ideologies, religious beliefs, and cultures, each currently or potentially supported by media. In a similar vein, Emmanuel C. Alozie's study of print media in different sub-Saharan countries finds a mixture of distrust and disagreement with coalition goals, while Stephen Quinn and Tim Walters relay how Al-Jazeera's impact in the Middle East, even before the latest Gulf war, might be more enduring than Western critics would like.

Part II: The World War of Words

Stuart Hall once wrote that "words have meanings," and this section tries to ascertain the meaning of words used to prepare populations for war.

Yahya R. Kamalipour suggests how words often reported uncritically by journalists create meaning for audiences. Jack Lule extends the concept further when he follows the metaphors used in the 2003 Iraq War. Words played a role in how Turkey's media debated what kind of cooperation, if any, that country should give the United States, one of its most important allies. As the U.S. reaction to Turkey's decision process grew critical, so too did the Turkish press grow critical of providing any help at all to the coalition, Dilruba Çatalbaş discovered.

Ibrahim Al-Marashi, an Iraqi-American doctoral student at Oxford, explains how his academic paper on Iraq's alleged WMD capacity—purloined by the British government—led to a brief (and at times frustrating) career as an international media pundit. Andrew Paul Williams and his colleagues find late-night-TV comedy is serious business when it comes to shaping public opinion.

Part III: The War in the Coalition Press

This section examines how global media from Allied countries behaved.

The Washington Post's Howard Schneider reviews some of the war's biggest press blunders and how the media dealt with them. Martin Hirst and Robert Schütze investigate Rupert Murdoch's flagship paper's (the *Australian*) support of the war; Kris Kodrich and Sweety Law tackle the issue of how "newspapers of record" in England and the United States chose to report the WMD story. Stephen D. Cooper and Jim A. Kuypers compare reporting practices of embedded and non-embedded journalists with unexpected conclusions, and Maggy Zanger reports behind the lines in Iraq on how "journos" scratched for a story that never materialized.

Part IV: The War in Other Places

The section examines how television and print media in countries other than the United States, Great Britain, and Australia covered the war.

While the major media in combatant countries covered the war story, Christine Burchinger, Herman Wasserman, and Arnold de Beer investigated how South African media struggled to make sense of the war and gain a global perspective. Similarly, across the planet, Yoichi Clark Shimatsu followed how the "far-off war" was reported in Hong Kong and in Mainland China.

S. Abdallah Schleifer assessed the job of Middle East broadcasters and, despite some errors of commission and omission, figures the fledgling satellite news operations are on their way to becoming professional, credible news operations in a region unaccustomed to them. Catherine Cassera and Laura Lengel see Al-Jazeera's effect on public diplomacy as similar to CNN's.

Janet Fine looks at media coverage of the war in India, the world's largest democracy, which should have been a huge supporter of the coalition, but wasn't. She offers some suggestions why.

Part V: The War in Cyberspace

Few people routinely used the Internet during the 1991 Gulf War, much less as a network for sharing huge volumes of information. What a change a dozen years makes.

Naila Hamdy and Radwa Mobarak set the tone for this section by providing an overview of the Web during the war, while Daniela Dimitrova, Lynda Lee Kaid, and Andrew Paul Williams find varied news coverage during the first hours of the war. Lisa Brooten explores the phenomenon of *Indymedia.org* and wonders if we are witnessing the future of news interactive—sensational, instantaneous, and opinionated. David Weinstock and Timothy Boudreau offer free advice to news organizations on how to capture and retain young viewers.

Cyberspace is a big, uncharted place several authors found. Barbara K. Kaye and Thomas J. Johnson, for example, look at the do-it-yourself publishing of Weblogs, including the widely followed Baghdad adventures of an Iraqi blogger, "Salam Pax," during the war.

Part VI: The War for Hearts and Minds

A considerable effort is being expended by the U.S. and U.K. governments to win over a skeptical population in the Middle East—reversing years of official Western neglect and indifference which allowed political Islam to take root without critical assessment, which often enacted policies blindly supportive of Israel, which bolstered increasingly repressive regimes that encouraged their media to scapegoat the West and camouflage their own shortcomings, and which influenced some intellectuals whose positions at governmental institutions depend on toeing the party line. This section examines public opinion in the region.

Makram Khoury-Machool shows why the U.K./U.S. coalition met with

disbelief and resistance in the Arab media. How did young people view the war? Two chapters concentrate on the effects of media in the United States and in the United Arab Emirates: Glenn Sparks and Will Miller investigate the emotional effects of U.S. children during time of war, while Muhammed Ayish researches students' attitudes at Sharjah University about the 2003 Iraq War.

Finally, Abdullah Al-Kindi looks at the war against media—and the possible effect on journalists' behavior because of it—the war against media's ultimate goal being to control not only what reporters said about the war, but what their viewers, readers, and surfers thought about the conflict.

Endnotes

1. *Halal* is an Arabic word meaning something is accepted by Islam. The opposite is *haram*, which means religiously forbidden.

2. *Arab Human Development Report 2002: Creating Opportunities for Future Generations.* New York: UNDP, pp. 143, 151.

3. Lord Hutton was commissioned by the British government to look into the July 18, 2003 death of Dr. Kelley. The report, issued in February 2004, took the BBC and its reporter Andrew Gilligan to task while clearing the Blair administration of any wrongdoing. It was widely known that Dr. Kelley was the source of anti-administration leaks doubting Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program (See *Report of the Inquiry into the Circumstances Surrounding the Death of Dr. David Kelly C.M.G. by Lord Hutton.* Available at http://www.the-hutton-inquiry.org.uk/content/report)

PART I

THE PRELUDE TO WAR

Hating America: The Press in Egypt and France

James J. Napoli

"Phooey, not another one," I thought, as I considered the umpteenth research proposal on the general topic of the "Arab image" in the American media. Simultaneously inspired and depressed by exposure to heavyweight tracts on how the American media victimize the Arabs, graduate students at the American University in Cairo seemed to queue up to add their two piastres' worth with more research papers or theses on, well, how the American media victimize the Arabs.

It was hard to imagine even then—and this was long before September 11, 2001—that anything fresh could be said on a topic that hadn't already been well and truly flogged by the likes of Edward Said, Jack Shaheen, Noam Chomsky, Alfred Lilienthal, Richard Curtiss and Paul Findley. It wasn't just the repetitiveness of the topic, or even its seeming insubstantiality (Image, shmimage. What about the real world?) or the retreat into comfortable conspiracy theory that it so often implied.

The real problem was that I was annoyed. I was reading every day in the Egyptian and other Arab press, in English, about how America and Americans were arrogant, godless, religion-less, materialistic, rootless, devoid of moral values, obsessed by money, sex-crazed, superficial, imperialistic, cruel, indifferent to their own families, cold, unsympathetic to the sufferings of others, parochial, narcissistic, ignorant of geography, history, and other cultures, blundering, cowardly, satanic, hypocritical, and conspiratorial with Israel and all of the West against Islam and the Arabs.

And this wasn't just the commentary. Some of these assumptions pervaded even routine news coverage, transforming mundane events like the 1994 UN population conference in Cairo into a springboard for paranoid fantasies about U.S. media plots, no doubt inspired by the Jews, to do the dirt on Egypt. But virtually no students saw the American image, which I saw as a stereotype of Americans as idiot savants (clueless, but inexplicably successful) in the Arab press as an issue deserving research attention. Sure I was annoyed.

Now, of course, the issue of the American image abroad is all the rage, at least among Americans. The U.S. news media have been preoccupied since the horrific events of 9/11 (and continuing through the aftermath of the 2003 war in Iraq) with the question, "Why do they hate us?" Scholarly articles and popular books are being published, such as Jedediah Purdy's *Being America: Liberty, Commerce, and Violence in an American World*, that seek to elucidate how the United States, which generally views itself as the beacon of freedom on earth, could somehow be perceived as "the global villain" nearly every place else (Gewen, 2003).

Pollsters are also beavering away to accumulate evidence that public opinion in much of the world is leaning against the United States. In July 2002, when the Independent Task Force sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations released its report recommending a higher priority for global "public diplomacy," it cited a range of surveys confirming widespread negative attitudes toward the United States around the world. "The findings of a widely publicized Gallup poll on attitudes in nine Islamic countries, a Zogby International ten-nation poll on impressions of America, State Department foreign attitude and media opinion surveys, and views of many informed observers in and out of government are broadly consistent: America does indeed have a serious image problem" (July 2002). This "image problem" was more intense in the Middle East, but also extended among certain groups in Western Europe, Latin America, Asia, and elsewhere, the evidence revealed.

Before the 2003 Iraq war, the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press released a broad summary of public opinion polls in forty-four countries showing that, even though majorities in most non-Muslim countries still rated the United States positively, negative opinions of the United States had widely increased over the previous two years. The press release for the report leads as follows:

> Despite an initial outpouring of public sympathy for America following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, discontent with the United States has grown around the world over the past two years. Images of the United States have been tarnished in all types of nations: among longtime NATO allies, in developing countries, in Eastern Europe and, most dramatically, in Muslim countries (What the World Thinks in 2002, December 4, 2002, p. 1).

The Pew study identified results in France as "notable" because they showed that, despite widespread French criticism of U.S. policies, America's image in France had not grown more negative over the past two years; in fact, it had grown marginally more positive, though remaining among the lowest in Europe (p. 6).

A follow-up survey Pew conducted after the war in twenty countries and the Palestinian Authority showed that favorable attitudes toward the United States had slipped in nearly every country. As might be expected, disregard for the United States grew in most Muslim countries, where people rallied round their co-religionist and, in most cases, fellow Arab Saddam Hussein (pity about the mass murders and torture). But skepticism about U.S. policies and about President Bush had sharply increased even among solid UN and NATO allies Germany and France, whose governments had been involved in a very public rift with the United States over the war. More than 60% of the Germans and French had a positive view of the United States in the earlier poll, but in the follow-up only 45% of the Germans and 43% of the French were well disposed toward the United States (Marquis, 2003, p. A19). *C'est la guerre*!

It is reasonable to assume, as do many other writers and scholars, that anti-Americanism, however defined in a particular country, is influenced by anti-Americanism in that country's press, since, as Richard Lambert recently wrote, "newspapers and magazines tend to reflect and reinforce the views of their readers" (Lambert, 2003, p. 63). "In today's uneasy political climate," he adds, "skewed media representation further shapes and entrenches negative attitudes." Media representation of the United States is not the same everywhere, however, even in those countries where the anti-Americanism strain is strong. "Hating" America means one thing in France and another thing in Egypt. They arrive at the present from different historical contexts, and the distinctive media systems of a European democracy and a Middle Eastern autocracy may reinforce their anti-American sentiments in different ways.

It should be restated at the outset that not everybody hates the United States; the plaintive question "Why do they hate us?" is, at least in part, mere rhetoric. There are substantial percentages of people sympathetic with the United States in most Western countries who also weigh in against U.S. policies. Further, strong majorities in Italy, Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Spain and other countries remain staunch supporters of the United States in, for example, its fight against terrorism. Even in countries where sentiment is deemed unfavorable to the United States, most people said the problem was "mostly Bush," not "America in general" (Marquis). Majorities almost everywhere were positive toward economic and political ideals associated with the United States; that is, free-market capitalism and, most of all, democracy and representative government. Despite the brouhaha between France and the United States over Iraq, former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who was serving as president of the constitutional Convention on the Future of Europe that year, was flattered, not

offended, at being compared to American founding father Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson authored the Declaration of Independence and supported the U.S. Constitutional Congress as U.S. ambassador to France in 1789, and d'Estaing drafted a constitution for a United Europe. He recalled, "I tried to play a little bit the role that Jefferson played, which was to instill leading ideas into the system" (Sciolino, 2003, p. A6).

So, not everybody hates America and not everybody hates it to the same degree, for the same reasons, or in the same way. A brief examination and comparison of "anti-Americanism" in the print media of Egypt and France may provide some insight into the "anti-American" psychology of both countries, as well as into their press systems. It might suggest some policy directions for those in the U.S. government, among others, who would like to cultivate more pro-American attitudes in the foreign media as the reluctant Imperium consolidates its position.

THE EGYPTIAN PRESS: NATIONAL CONTEXT AS DEFAULT MODE

Many Americans were disturbed by the lack of unalloyed support for America in the Egyptian press—and, in fact, in most of the Arab press—after the events of September 11. Even at its most moderate, the Egyptian press often expressed its sympathy in the most backhanded way: "Oh yes, it was terrible and all that, but really the United States has been asking for this by its unfair policies toward Palestinians and Muslims in general, and maybe it was all arranged by the Jews to make the Arabs look bad."

An anti-American perspective directed much of the commentary from the government press ("The U.S. and terrorists suffuse a foul atmosphere throughout the world," Ahmad Ragab, *Al Akhbar*, September 25, 2001); the "independent" press ("Millions across the world shouted in joy: America was hit!" Nabil Farouq, *Al-Maydan*, September 24, 2001); and the opposition press ("People derived satisfaction from the insult to American pride," Salah A-Din Salim, *Al-Ahrar*, September 25, 2001).

The Middle East Media Research Institute reported in its Special Dispatch Series, No. 281, "Terror in America," October 4, 2001, p. 12: "The Egyptian Government, Opposition, and Independent Press All Celebrate the Terrorist Attacks on the United States." Many Americans were incensed by the general reaction and wrote hundreds of letters to the government English-language *Al-Ahram Weekly* to say so (MEMRI, Special Dispatch Series - No. 306, November 30, 2001, "Americans respond to the Anti-U.S. Egyptian media.")

In fact, however, anti-Americanism, meaning an aggressive bias not only against specific U.S. policies, but against the very idea of America, didn't suddenly erupt on September 11. It suffused reportage and commentary for decades prior to the attack and continued through the 2003 Iraq War and its

aftermath. In a range of issues as varied as the widespread practice of female circumcision, the October 1999 crash of EgyptAir flight 990 out of New York, and the trial of civil society activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim, the rhetoric of the press nearly always found its way to a denunciation of the United States and its alleged co-conspirator, Israel.

In recent years, this predisposition has taken an increasingly religious cast, but even that has a long history carried forward from the 1950s by Islamic leaders such as Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb, who were genuinely appalled by the secular challenge of America. The strength of the religious motive was compounded by the political. One consequence of the 1952 socialist revolution headed by Col. Gamal Abdul Nasser was a state-controlled press mobilized against Western imperialism and Israeli metastasis on Arab land. Though the political and religious influences on the Egyptian press could be at odds on specific issues, they united in trumpeting anti-Americanism which implied, on one hand, a broad distrust of the West and, on the other, a visceral hatred for Israel.

The anti-American rhetoric might have been moderated if the journalists adhered to agreed-upon international professional standards of objectivity, fairness, attribution, and balance. These standards, loose and imperfect though they are, do impose a kind of discipline on journalists who try to comply with them. This has not generally included those working in a state-controlled press. Most Egyptian journalists stick more closely to their religious, political, or personal loyalties than to professional principles, and it shows.

A number of studies, including those by Lamey (1992), Matar (1991) and Hagag (1993), were published after the 1991 Gulf War and criticized the lack of professional standards among Egyptian journalists. Critics honed in on their lack of objectivity, lack of reporting skills, failure to provide adequate background information, and heavy reliance on secondary sources. Others (Mayer and Brooks, 1991) recounted how Saddam Hussein campaigned before the war to win over the Arab press, including Egypt's, with thinly disguised bribes in the form of financing for supportive publications and writers and with new Mercedes-Benzes for select journalists.

With no professional standards to uphold, Egyptian journalists revert to a narrow national context, which provides a tightly focused prism of ideological and religious bias for guidance. Spared the necessity to maintain any distance on events they cover, or to provide for inclusiveness in news and commentary, or even to distinguish between the two, journalists characteristically indulge in the familiar rhetoric of anti-American grievance and defiance.

This doesn't mean that news media in other countries don't also have national contexts that affect coverage. The fact that they do was nowhere more obvious than in the extent of chauvinism in U.S. coverage by American cable news networks (especially, but not only, by Fox News) of the September 11 attacks and subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In the end, however, news

organizations and journalists that wish to claim professionalism for the sake of their own credibility as a competitive news source are under continuous pressure to provide a measure of balance and fairness. And for the most part, they did and they do.

The experience of the Qatari-based Al-Jazeera television news network is illuminating in this regard. Although it was expected to take a strong pro-Arab position on the news from Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, and the Palestinian Authority, Al-Jazeera journalists publicly committed themselves to airing every point of view and wound up pleasing neither the Americans nor the Arabs—at least not all of them, all of the time. Its use of multiple sources and its allowing representatives from the United States and even Israel to have their say (even while retaining its orientation to its Arab audience) constitute a revolutionary influence on the tightly controlled Arab news media.

El-Nawawy and Iskandar in their book on Al-Jazeera (2002) call the network's approach on the news "contextual objectivity." The standard is that "the medium should reflect all sides of any story while retaining the values, beliefs, and sentiments of the target audience" (p. 27). Such a standard, if applied in the Egyptian press, would require a significant widening of its comfortable context, which now verges on the solipsistic. It makes hatred of "the Other" too easy.

THE FRENCH PRESS: *L'OBSESSION ANTI-AMÉRICAINE*

As in Egypt, anti-Americanism has a long history in French society and the French press. It dates at least from the late nineteenth century when the power of the new Anglo-Saxons across the Atlantic began to be evident. From writers like Charles Maoris, founder of the royalist *L'Action Françaises*, the stereotype of the United States as the purveyor of ruthless capitalism began to take shape. And to Maoris, too, goes the credit for linking Americans and Jews as a menace to European civilization (Mead, March/April 2003, p. 141), just in time for Vichy.

Anti-Americanism also was a staple of the leftist press after World War II, although its antipathy may have stemmed as much from resentment of the global success of American culture as from U.S. political, economic, and military hegemony (see Revel, 1972, p.139).

After the initial expressions of sympathy for the victims of the September 11 attacks were out of the way, it didn't take long for many French intellectuals to resume their wonted position as critics of the United States. Of special interest was Thierry Masan, whose book *L'Effroyable Imposture* (The Horrifying Fraud) makes the bizarre assertion that American Airlines Flight 77 never existed and that the American military blew up the Pentagon themselves to advance the cause of Big Oil. The book was on the French bestseller list for twelve weeks (Fraser, September 2002, p. 59). Another French intellectual, the philosopher Jean Baudrillard, argued that the horror of dying in the World Trade towers was

inseparable from the horror of working in them, suggesting that the victims and West got what they secretly wished for (Menard, September 16, 2002, p. 101). In short, the primary significance of the murder of nearly 3,000 people was its use as a metaphor for self-hating capitalism.

Almost a year after September 11, in late August 2002, the moderate Paris daily *Le Monde* ran a roundup of prominent books published in France about the United States since 9/11. Perhaps the most interesting of the lot was an unsympathetic examination of the prevailing French and European attitudes toward the United States, *L'Obsession Anti-Américaine,* by Jean-Francois Revel. Most famous for his 1972 essay on American cultural and economic vitality, "Without Marx or Jesus," in his latest work Revel examined what he considers Europeans' irrational resentment of the United States.

Others on the list took equally strong positions either defending or attacking the United States and its global role (R.P.D., August 30, 2002, p. viii). *Le Monde* itself, perhaps the most influential newspaper in France, was generally sympathetic with the United States in the months after 9/11. Its director, Jean-Marie Colombani, was even quoted as saying that anti-Americanism had become "irrelevant" because all developed countries now faced a common enemy: terrorism. Nevertheless, by May 2002 the paper was again denouncing Americans as "arrogant, bellicose, and deaf to all criticism" and rejecting a new era of U.S. "messianism" (Blocker, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, May 27, 2002).

But, unlike in the Egyptian press, anti-Americanism is not particularly obtrusive in the French press. France and the United States may differ sharply over Iraq, and, as public opinion polls show, the French public may be increasingly critical of the United States, but the French press seems to remain relatively even-handed toward the world's superpower.

To assess French newspaper attitudes toward the United States this writer conducted a content analysis of *Le Monde*, an elite newspaper whose circulation is heaviest in Paris, and *Ouest-France*, the largest circulation daily in the country, distributed in seventeen editions in Brittany, Normandy, and the Loire country. A sample of newspapers from the last two weeks of August 2002 were examined for articles that were exclusively or primarily about the United States to try to determine an attitude or bias.

In general, any negative comments about the United States in *Le Monde* were embedded in specific assessments of American politics, particularly its foreign policy and wartime behavior in Afghanistan. There were no sweeping denunciations of U.S. "imperialism" or "hegemony" or supposed cultural traits such as violence or racism. Although these and other negative attributes were occasionally mentioned, in none of the articles was there any evidence of broad negative stereotyping of Americans as a people, as distinct from their government. There was plenty of evidence of disagreement with American policies, but none of "hatred" directed either against the American public or the U.S. government.

The positive comments tended to gather around examples of American higher culture, particularly its music, art, film, and literature. Although the French allegedly "hate" American global culture (represented by McDonald's and Disney World), coverage of American culture in its finer manifestations by *Le Monde* was decidedly appreciative.

As one might expect of a provincial daily with less commitment to covering the international or even the national scene, *Ouest-France* was far less occupied by the United States than *Le Monde*. Most of the articles tended to be news stories rather than analyses or opinions. As in *Le Monde*, none of the articles was seemingly designed to promote negative stereotypes of the United States or of Americans. For the most part, negative comments about the United States as a nation were presented as specific responses to the policies or actions of the U.S. leadership, usually by others quoted in the news stories. There was little or no evidence that *Ouest-France* was deliberately cultivating "hatred" of America or Americans. And when it came to American culture, particularly in the form of American film, the United States was treated favorably by the newspaper (Napoli, 2003).

The commentary could, in fact, be quite thoughtful about the quandary facing the rest of the world because of America's preeminent position, as well as the need to avoid badgering and blaming the United States for everything that goes wrong in the world. Karim Dahou ("Developement durable et stabilité internationale," August 28, 2002, p.13) starts out in *Le Monde*, for example, decrying the "various fantasies" ("*diverses fantasmagories*") of Arab and other opinions that try to saddle the United States with responsibility for the 9/11 terrorist attacks. He then argues that Europe, for the sake of international stability, should play a role in America's maturation. Europe, he says, needs to make a greater effort to help the United States appreciate the implications of its own power and the need to avoid unilateral action in the world community.

In short, if the United States and Americans suffer an "image" problem in France, it does not appear to be a function of any reflexive anti-Americanism in the French press. Indeed, a limited study of French television newscasts conducted by American students in France under the tutelage of Robert M. McKenzie showed little daily coverage of news about the United States at all.

At the same time, the students perceived sentiment among the French themselves that Americans are "well-off, spoiled, selfish, bold, aggressive, uncultured, and pushy." America itself, they found, was typically described as a "spoiled materialistic bully" (McKenzie, 1999, p. 125). McKenzie posits that negative images of the United States are not primarily derived from French, but from American, media. In particular, American rock songs, television programs, and movies seem to be the most important envoys of the negative images of violence and greed in America. To those sources must be added other Idols of Invidious American Materialism and Superficiality, such as the Disney theme park

outside Paris and the McDonald's restaurants targeted for attack by French anti-globalization activists.

The relative lack of anti-American rhetoric in the French press may, ironically, be a consequence of the Americanization of French journalism. The aggressively ideological, discursive, and literary tradition of the French press has been eroding under the pressure of the more telegraphic style of Anglo-American journalism, particularly as practiced by international news agencies such as the Associated Press and Reuters, since the late nineteenth century. A corollary of the agencies' "breaking news" approach is a set of news writing conventions, including objectivity and balance, that has largely been adopted by contemporary French newspapers. Whereas some politically engaged newspapers of an earlier era might have provided a podium for anti-American tirades, they would be considered journalistically unprofessional by most newspapers today.

Vive la Différence!

Clearly, a comparison of anti-Americanism in the Egyptian and French press argues for the efficacy of professionalized journalism. By "professionalized" is meant the incorporation of standards of objectivity, fairness, balance, attribution, and so forth, recognizable in news provided by major international news agencies which have long propagated them globally. The fact that these standards have never taken firm hold in the Egyptian press may be ascribed, in part, to the retarding effect of state media control.

Generations of journalists have come to positions of leadership in the press with the assumption that national policy, not some abstract professional ethic, should determine how the news should be treated. Further, the anti-American sentiment so strongly expressed in the Egyptian press is also reflective of growing religious fervor which strikes a similar tone of injury and victimization.

In France, which also has a history of anti-Americanism, the press is far less strident and far more "professional." It is, in effect, able to remove itself from the fray and to more effectively objectify the world. Its journalism evolved relatively independent of the government, making it easier for practitioners to identify with the profession as widely practiced elsewhere—and to keep themselves and their views out of their stories. In a freer atmosphere, proponents of anti-Americanism, or any other position, are likely over time to generate their own opposition. And however disagreeable that may be to the journalists, the opposition finds its way into their stories *de rigueur*.

Of course, even a fully professionalized free press is no proof against the tendency to unfairly generalize about other nations and people. As Lambert has pointed out of mutual American-European misunderstandings, the "emphasis on trivia and stereotypes, a feature of reporting on both sides of the Atlantic, reinforces the general sense that the two continents have little in common and are

drifting further apart" (p. 72). More contextualized news reports that eschew stereotypes for substance would improve any newspaper. The broader news definitions required, however, are a stronger prospect in an independent than in a state-controlled press.

One other thing: image isn't everything. Criticizing the United States for its policies, including a policy of going to war in Iraq despite the best advice of many U.S. allies, cannot be simply written off as "anti-Americanism." To do so would be to stifle legitimate public debate by employing the old propaganda technique of bundling all political opposition in a dialog-resistant wrapping.

Merely by virtue of being the world's sole superpower, the United States is going to draw much of the world's attention, mistrust, and criticism. That doesn't mean the rest of the world "hates" the United States, or that Americans are justified in posing pathetically as innocent victims of "bad image." Every country has a lot at stake when the United States makes a wager and every country has a right to vigorously express opposition in its press. Sometimes, surely, the United States deserves to be opposed.

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Global Village Disconnected?

George Albert Gladney

Global media coverage of the 2003 Iraq War provides an unusual opportunity to examine one of the more provocative concepts given to the world by the late medium theorist Marshall McLuhan. The "oracle of the Electric Age" had famously prognosticated that the new electronic communication technology, particularly television, would transform the world into a "global village."

This chapter examines the nature of global news coverage of the 2003 Iraq War within the context of global village, asking the question: Was the Iraq War a global village event or something quite different? While premature for a final assessment, the evidence seems to suggest that McLuhan's most famous thesis might be seriously, if not fatally, flawed.

"GLOBAL VILLAGE" CONCEPT

Before examining coverage of the war within the context of global village, it is necessary to understand what "global village" meant to McLuhan, because the concept is much more than just a clever paradox.

McLuhan was a professor of English literature at the University of Toronto, but his interest had been diverted to the study of pop culture and mass communication. In two important early works, *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964), McLuhan explained (although McLuhan never really explained anything, preferring instead to tease his readers with partially completed thoughts, or "probes") some concepts that stimulated the public imagination. Most notable was his perplexing but profound statement, "The medium is the message."

But his metaphor of "global village," further explicated in later works such

as *Counterblast* (1969) and the co-authored *War and Peace in the Global Village* (1968) and (posthumously) *The Global Village* (1989), was easier for most people to grasp.

The concept had broad and instant appeal. It made sense to people that transoceanic TV broadcasts made possible by the launch of new telecommunication satellites were ushering in an era in which all humans would be exposed to the same mass-mediated content at the same instant. Time and space—zapped! Humankind was now bound in electric simulation of global consciousness.

In McLuhan's day, transoceanic satellite transmission of TV news coverage of the Kennedy assassination and funeral served as the revelatory demonstration of the global village. Today, the village is best demonstrated by World Cup soccer, with audiences so vast that no one can truly comprehend their size. Nobody really knows, but it is likely that the 2003 Iraq War drew an even larger world audience.

Guided seminally by his tutor and colleague, University of Toronto scholar Harold Innis (1950, 1951), McLuhan became absorbed with the notion that different communication technology (media) have different technological biases; i.e., they exhibit propensities to be used in particular ways with particular effects. Chief among these propensities is to alter social arrangements so as to centralize or decentralize administration of human affairs, or to create "de-tribalizing" or "re-tribalizing" influences on humankind.

The pre-literate or old—primarily oral—tradition (adhesion to the small tribal unit) was characterized by simultaneously shared experience/participation of all members of the tribe, wholeness, homogeneity, intimacy, cultural stability, inclusiveness, empathy, deep integral awareness, and non-linearity of thought and experience. McLuhan thought of this as living in an auditory or "acoustic" environment dominated by the unifying sense of hearing.

The invention of writing (especially the Greek phonetic alphabet) began a radical shift from acoustic space to visual space—transforming spoken words, which exist only in the living present, to visual objects (words on paper). Writing also fostered individualism by enabling individuals to break away from the tribe and it made possible the building of empires; i.e., civil and military rule over vast distances.

Moreover, the printing press accelerated these changes, particularly the rise of individualism (detachment, non-involvement). Print encouraged fragmentation of knowledge and the rise of specialists, and it created uniform and centralizing conditions necessary for political consolidation and the creation of modern nation-states (nationalism).

With the invention of the first electric communication technology—the telegraph—in the 1830s, it appeared that now it might be possible to re-tribalize humankind into, well, a global village. In fact, the medium's inventor, Samuel F.

B. Morse, provided a workable definition when he observed that his invention would make "one neighborhood of the whole country" (Czitrom, 1982, p. 12).

Once people grasped the marvel of the telegraph, there was much utopian rhetoric—talk of how the telegraph would spawn a blissful era of global peace, harmony, unity, communion, understanding, democratization, and egalitarianism. As it turned out, commercial interests rapidly commandeered the technology, and the telegraph business was an oligopoly by the 1870s; as a result, ordinary people were never equipped with sending or receiving sets. Same story with radio, except ordinary people got receiving sets that enabled them to be on the dumb end of a one-way, one-to-many communication dominated by powerful elites.

But, for McLuhan (1968), "the new total field sensibility" of radio provided an important impetus for the global village because it "inspired ... a multiplicity of new images, depriving the country of a simple visual-mindedness" (1968, p. 134). Television merely added pictures to radio, but the critical difference for TV—in terms of the global village—was the launch of telecom satellites and especially multiple satellites in geosynchronous orbit. Suddenly, with TV, the same content could reach all corners of the globe simultaneously, virtually at the speed of light.

For McLuhan, this moment in history was powerfully prophetic because it meant that, once and for all, the broken promise of the telegraph would be fulfilled. With TV, McLuhan thought, all of humankind would be connected as never before. We would all return to the era of the pre-alphabetic tribe, except this time we would gather around the glow and flicker of the cathode-ray tube instead of the aboriginal campfire.

Although McLuhan was writing at a time when the computer was still incipient, he discerned its vast potential as a global extension of our nervous system, observing that the computer "makes natural and necessary a dialogue among cultures which is as intimate as private speech, yet dispensing entirely with speech" (1968, p. 90). Some of his observations seem to eerily presage the Internet and World Wide Web. Like TV, the computer will "[alter] every phase of the American vision and identity," he said (p. 134).

McLuhan's prophecies express optimism and hope, but at the same time he warned that the coming changes caused by the new conditions of the global village would cause turmoil and chaos. He explained that as everyone becomes involved in the affairs of all others (integral inclusiveness) or part of a simultaneous field of human affairs, the self-image of individuals and whole cultures and societies becomes threatened, inviting a mandate for war.

BIFURCATED GLOBAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE IRAQ WAR

Roughly four decades after popularization of the global village concept, the world witnessed the second U.S.-British invasion of Iraq in ten years. Few events

have so greatly attracted the world's attention. If the global village concept holds, one would expect that everyone, everywhere would receive essentially the same mass-mediated facts, or portrayal of reality, about the war.

However, this was not the case. To observers of war coverage by both U.S.-British media and media from the Arabic-speaking world, one thing was clear: There was an almost complete disconnect between the two media spheres. As James Poniewozik (2003, April 7, pp. 68-69) points out, it is not unusual "for two camps to see the same war differently," but the Iraq war gave new meaning to "one-sided" coverage for it meant audiences tuned in to preferred versions of reality (p. 68).

Let's now examine how media watchers sized up world media coverage of the war in terms of diversity or sameness of content. Many media watchers during and shortly after the war agreed it was as if the two media spheres were reporting about different wars on different planets.

Poniewozik, a *Time* staff writer, wrote in the magazine's April 7, 2003, issue (p. 68):

> In this war, the mighty but merciful allies target bombs carefully and tend to the enemy's wounded. In that war, the allies blow up women and babies. In this war, Iraq is postponing certain defeat by cheating, killing civilians and using human shields. In that war, a weak nation is steadfastly defending itself using the only effective means available. This war, on American television, is alternately "the war in Iraq" or "Operation Iraqi Freedom." That war, broadcast by the media of the Arab and Muslim worlds, is "the invasion."

Similarly, Delinda C. Hanley wrote in the May 2003 issue of the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (p. 6):

> There are two wars going on in Iraq. One is a gripping made-for-TV show starring brave U.S. and British troops putting their lives on the line to bring freedom to oppressed Iraqis. Little blood is spilled on camera. Soldiers pass food out to starving Iraqi civilians and prisoners. Homesick and on edge, these idealistic servicemen and women remain confident that they will soon win this just war and return to their families.
>
> "Collateral damage," sandstorms, flies, fierce resistance and doubt have not yet worn down [the] gallant troops. This war, featuring their hometown heroes, is the one Americans watch on network and cable TV every night, and read about, complete with moving photos, with their morning coffee.
> The other war is waged by Iraqis desperate to protect their homes and their ancient land against U.S. and British invaders. Bombed buildings, smoke and chaos are the backdrops for this war. Its stars are wounded and screaming Iraqi women and children, captured or terrified Iraqi—and yes, U.S. and British—soldiers. Iraqis' pain is immortalized by the Arab and European press ... ."

Hanley added, "Unlike U.S.-based news stations, Al-Jazeera shows its thirty-five million viewers across the Arab world intensely terrifying scenes of war" (p. 6). Writing in the April 14, 2003 edition of *Newsweek,* Tom Maslund and Christopher Dickey told of an American woman who visited her three-year-old nephew who lives in Lebanon, only to be greeted "with horror." The nephew had "caught a glimpse of footage from Iraq, aired on an Arab TV network, of the headless body of an Iraqi child killed by a Coalition bomb gone astray. 'Don't go back to America,' Khalid urged his favorite aunt. 'They're killing children'" (p. 49). The writers then made the broader point that:

> [T]he war Americans see on their television screens is wholly different from what's shown elsewhere. U.S. programming concentrates on victory. Arab and Muslim TV focuses on victims. Children feature prominently: grisly images of the dead and dying and maimed. Such is the bitterness evoked by this war that even benign acts of charity are tainted. ... While the American public may believe—and share—the administration's hope that this invasion will lead to a more stable and democratic regime, the young and the old, the poor and the rich, the educated and the illiterate of the Muslim world are united in disbelief.

For further evidence of bifurcated news coverage emanating from two distinct media spheres during the Iraq War, consider the following: According to Al-Rashid (2003), much of what was reported from Baghdad by Arab networks, including Al-Jazeera, came from the Iraqi Information Ministry. To wit:

> The result: Even though we were told [by the Ministry] about the drama of (U.S.) jets being shot down over Baghdad, we didn't seem to hear any Arab reporters wondering out loud: "Where are these planes that you are boasting about having shot down?" At the same time, the Western television networks were poking fun at the story and revealed it as an obvious fabrication. (p. 23)

An American living in Canada wrote:

> If [Americans] saw what the Canadian press has been showing—dead and bloodied Iraqi civilians, terrified American POWs, angry European and Arab protesters—they'd likely be appalled. But they don't see much of that stuff. News reports from the States, whether from the rah-rah patriots at Fox News or the seemingly objective staff of *The New York Times*, have been disturbingly partisan in their coverage, protecting Americans from some of the harsher truths about this war. (Considine, 2003, p. 56)

The American Journalism Review observed that with the Iraq war American journalism entered a new era in which:

> it no longer has unquestioned dominance in the global information marketplace.

During the war in Iraq, television news operations in Arab countries provided viewers throughout the world with an alternative view of the conflict. (Sharkey, 2003a, p. 19)

The magazine quoted Fawaz Gerges, a professor of Middle Eastern studies at Sarah Lawrence College, as saying, "Arabs and Muslims are getting a dramatically different narrative from their American counterparts." The U.S. networks have focused "on the technologically advanced nature of the American military armada. The Arab and Muslim press tend to focus on the destruction and suffering visited on Iraq by this military armada" (p. 19).

According to *U.S. News & World Report,* in Western journalists' dispatches from Iraq "the holy city of Najaf was reported jubilant. It was like the 'liberation of Paris,' an American officer said of the throngs gathered around their liberators" (Ajami, 2003, p. 38). And yet *Time* reported that an overwhelming majority of Arabs it surveyed in Amman and Cairo said that only a fool would believe that the U.S. goal was to liberate Iraqis from tyranny.

Instead, the magazine reported, those Arabs believe that America is "fighting a war of conquest and occupation. For the most part, the war depicted in Arab media is one of subjugation and suffering for Iraqis" (MacLeod, 2003, p. 47). *U.S. News & World Report* added: "A contrived sympathy for the Iraqi people suddenly crowds the airwaves and the printed media of Arab lands" (Ajami, 2003, p. 38).

At one point in the war, Iraqi TV released a videotape showing dead U.S. soldiers in a building. U.S. networks, which had access to the tape through Al-Jazeera, declined to show it, citing issues of "taste and viewers' sensitivities" (Sharkey, 2003a, p. 22). Al-Jazeera defended its broadcast of the tape, saying TV "would be deceiving its audience" if it were to "censor any of the information that actually makes people aware of all aspects" of the conflict (p. 23).

Poniewozik (2003, April 7)) observed that while American TV showed U.S. and British administration and military briefings (talking heads), sound bytes from George W. Bush and Tony Blair, allied advances on the battlefield, interviews with Coalition troops and POWs' families, Al-Jazeera showed some of those things as well, but added blood, mourning, "charred bodies lying beside gutted cars" (p. 69). For Al-Jazeera's viewers:

cameras linger over dead allied soldiers and bandaged Iraqi children. Mourning families wail, and hospitals choke with bleeding and burned civilians. If the war on American TV has been a splendid fireworks display and tank parade punctuated by press conferences, on Al-Jazeera ... war is hell. (p. 69)

Massing (2003) reported that the U.S. military was unhappy with Al-Jazeera because, unlike U.S. media, it highlighted:

antiwar demonstrations, the resistance inside Iraq, and angry statements from scholars and clerics. Above all, it was airing footage of civilian casualties. Over and over, it showed hospital wards overflowing with the victims of the fighting: children without limbs, women lying unconscious, men covered with burns. Such images were stoking passions in the Middle East. (p. 37)

Not surprisingly, these anecdotes show that media—whether from the West or from the Middle East—are mindful of political and cultural considerations and play to the emotions and biases of their audience. As Poniewozik (2003, April 7) observed:

Arab media observers see some slant in the Arab networks' language and image choices, but they also see bias in Western TV, with its reliance on Administration and military talking heads and flag-waving features like MSNBC's pandering 'America's Bravest' wall of G.I. photos. Arab networks play to their audience too, which in their case means skepticism of allied claims, lots of tear jerking, and talking heads who doubt American motives and prowess. (p. 69)

He added that:

straight news on the Arab networks in many ways [offered] viewers a more complete and inside look at the war than U.S. TV ... . They (were) given greater access by Baghdad, which sees them—as it saw CNN in 1991—as a conduit to the outside world. (p. 69)

These anecdotes suggest two media spheres, each portraying a different reality—one for Arabic-speaking audiences and the other for Western (primarily American-British) audiences. But that is to oversimplify the situation. Even within a country such as the United States, Great Britain, or any one of the Arab-Islamic nations, it is possible for audiences to shop around for media offering particular slants on reality, if not different realities altogether.

Sharkey (2003b) quotes media critic Tom Rosenstiel as saying that the Arabic-language TV networks help U.S. journalists understand the "Rashomon quality of news"—"the phenomenon of different people witnessing the same event and coming away with widely varying interpretations" (p. 26). This phenomenon affected individuals, but also news organizations collectively.

Chasan (2003) asserts that an individual's reaction to visual images of the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad's central Fardus Square during the war's third week depended on the individual's allegiance or perspective or bias. For some (i.e., Bush-Blair supporters) it was a moment for jubilation; for others (i.e., people in most Arab capitals) it was an anxious, bitter, humiliating moment.

At the collective level, readers of most large U.S. metropolitan daily

newspapers were much more likely to get a positive sense of U.S. military and diplomatic progress than readers of *The New York Times,* whose editorial misgivings (collective) about the conflict were well known. Similarly, TV viewers supporting Bush got upbeat reports of the war's progress on two cable news networks in particular, Fox and MSNBC, both of which used patriotism to lure viewers and enjoyed huge ratings increases during the conflict (Poniewozik, 203, April 14; Sharkey, 2003a). Other U.S. networks "allied themselves with the U.S. forces to some degree," but CBS and ABC executives said "overt displays of patriotism were not appropriate for their newscasts" (Sharkey, 2003a, p. 25).

While most Americans relied on major newspapers and cable networks, satellite dish owners seeking alternative war coverage (such as Arab-Americans, many of whom resented the partiality of U.S. media) were able to watch BBC, Al-Jazeera, and American pacifist stations Free Speech TV and WorldLink TV (Chayet, 2003). If U.S. viewers watched carefully, they could find some Arab perspective on TV. C-SPAN, for example, presented newscasts from stations in the Middle East and Canada. CNN offered a segment called "Arab Voices," a summary of what the Arab media were saying. NBC offered viewers a segment called "Listening Post," which covered international reaction to the war (Sharkey, 2003a).

In Great Britain, according to Abdalla (2003), London's sizable Arab population was in a much better position than Arab-Americans to bypass or counteract what the Saudi government labeled "the allies' propaganda machine" (p. 19). Eighty-seven percent of Arab homes in Britain have access to the Arab satellite and cable networks of Al-Jazeera, Abu Dhabi, and Al-Arabiya Television.

The Arab community in Britain also relies on five London-based, Arab-language daily newspapers. The editor of one of these papers, *Al-Quds al Arabi* (circulation 500,000), is convinced of the importance of newspapers that address the Arab community exclusively. "Arab newspapers are for Arabs, English newspapers are for English people," he said (p. 19). Ajami (2003) asserts that these Arab-language newspapers portrayed the Coalition as "rampaging crusaders bent on dispossessing Iraqis of their oil wealth" (p. 38). Not surprisingly, newspapers in Arab capitals were targeted for the same sort of criticism (Al-Rashid, 2003; Ajami, 2003).

For readers of English dailies in Britain, there was a clear choice of pro-war media and anti-war media. For example, Glover (2003) observed: "After 14 Iraqis had been killed in the first marketplace bomb, the [*Daily*] *Mirror* carried a front-page picture of a laughing George W. Bush with the headline 'He Loves It.' Alone among British newspapers, the *Sun* reported that the unloading of aid from the ship *Sir Galahad* was 'greeted by ecstatic Iraqis.' Readers of these two newspapers are following an entirely different war" (p. 35).

Of course, one must acknowledge that obtaining truth in accounts of war—regardless of the source—is problematic. Much war information is likely

to come from government and military sources that, for strategic purposes, systematically distribute disinformation and propaganda. Stephen Franklin (2003), writing in *CJR*, noted that during the Iraq war, Arab television "too often blindly swallowed the words of the Iraqi Information Minister," but he said a broader concern is that the Arab press produces "a make-believe news product put out by intimidated journalists and propagandists stuck on timeworn delusions... It was not made to inform; it was made to fend off information from the outside" (p. 60). Similar charges of propaganda are made against Western governments and media (Miller, 2004).

GLOBAL VILLAGE DISCONNECTED?

The evidence suggests bifurcated global perceptions of the Iraq war—the existence of dual media spheres that gave people the world over their choice of which reality to have confirmed as they searched for news of the Iraq war. Based on that evidence, it seems reasonable to doubt the continued relevance or application of the global village metaphor—at least for now. Does this mean oracle McLuhan got it wrong?

Looking at the past four decades, one finds evidence both supporting and detracting from McLuhan's prophecy of a global village. As Croteau and Hoynes (2003) point out, implicit in the notion of a global village is the idea that everyone (people in wealthy Western nations and poor, developing nations) can "get a hearing" in the international media (p. 366).

If that's the case, clearly, hordes of humanity are excluded today from the global village and the metaphor fails. To prove that so, Croteau and Hoynes cite the failure in the late 1970s and 1980s of the effort by poorer nations to create a "new world information and communication order," which was promoted by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization). This movement aimed to alter information production and distribution by curtailing Western domination of the international flow of information (media products) and helping create and support media infrastructure in poorer nations. In short, Third World countries resented media domination (i.e., cultural imperialism) by wealthy Western nations; they wanted to be heard in the international media.

However, Croteau and Hoynes concede that the threat of cultural imperialism by Western media is subsiding as the popularity of U.S. programming in developing nations has declined and large media firms pursue a strategy of localization and tailoring of content to particular countries/cultures.

The global village concept seemed to hold up during the Gulf War of 1991. Back then, as Poniewozik (2003, April 7) points out, "Western, Arab and Muslim audiences used their rooting interests to filter the same source: American TV" (p. 68). But something happened between 1991 and 2003 that changed everything,

bifurcating the global village—causing the disconnect between news coverage by Western media and news coverage by Arabic-Islamic media. The difference, explained Nabil El-Sharif, editor of Jordan's *Ad-Dustour* newspaper, is that Arabs saw the 1991 Gulf War through the eyes of CNN, but with the 2003 war, "Now we're seeing the war through Arab eyes" (p. 68).

The Arab-Islamic world also saw the 9/11 destruction of the World Trade Center through Arab eyes, and global coverage of the investigation of that disaster provides the first real compelling evidence of the great disconnect or bifurcation of global media. The evidence came in early 2002 when the Gallup polling organization reported the first-ever opinion poll covering a wide range of Muslim countries. It was based on in-home interviews with ten thousand people in nine countries: Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. A key question: "Do you believe news reports that Arabs carried out the September 11 attacks?" The governments of Jordan, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia would not permit that question to be asked.

In the remaining countries, results showed that 18% said Arabs were responsible for the attacks and 61% did not (Whitaker, 2002). What evidence, from what source, led to that belief? The disconnect becomes obvious when one realizes that virtually any American is certain that most (fifteen out of nineteen) of the 9/11 attackers were Saudi (Arab) nationals. What evidence, from what source, led to that belief? We must ask the same question as we examine the disconnect—the break-up of village, the huge split in public perceptions of fact—evidenced by the Iraq war.

World reaction to the U.S. military's capture of Saddam Hussein in December 2003 provides an interesting counterpoint to this disconnect. For one, unlike news of the 9/11 attack, news of the U.S. announcement of Hussein's capture was not reported by some Arab TV stations (Bauder, 2003; "Saddam dominates," 2003). Syria's regime-controlled media, for example, virtually ignored the news (Mixed Reactions, 2003). So much for the global village for those audiences.

Elsewhere in parts of the Middle East, some people simply did not believe the news of Hussein's capture, but the disbelief quickly evaporated (LaBelle, 2003; "Saddam Capture," 2003). That's because news of Hussein's capture was accompanied by the endless replay of powerful video images of a bedraggled, dejected Hussein being checked for lice.

The post-9/11 investigation, on the other hand, had no compelling visuals to persuade or dissuade. As Neil Postman (1985) observed, photographic images present the world as object ("a real slice of space-time") and are therefore essentially irrefutable, whereas language presents the world as idea, inviting propositions, arguments, refutations (pp. 72-77).

In sum, news of Hussein's capture was a discrete event grounded in irrefutable images, while the news of who was responsible for the WTC attack

involves assertions, opaque and amorphous, grounded in words. Images of the Hussein capture led to worldwide consensus that, in fact, he had been captured. Lacking pictures for evidence, and relying exclusively on words, the world remains divided about who carried out the WTC attacks. It depends on which proposition (reality) you want to believe and who you want to believe.

As we try to figure if and where McLuhan went wrong, we must consider that in McLuhan's day, transoceanic or global TV transmission was limited largely to content generated by Western nations, especially the United States and Great Britain. Apparently taking Western media domination for granted, McLuhan, it appears, did not foresee the crucial media developments occurring just a few years prior to the Iraq war. He did not foresee the establishment in 1996 of Al-Jazeera, a free and independent (uncensored) TV news operation, based in Qatar and funded by that country's liberal government, that reaches forty-five million people (Sharkey, 2003b) in Arab nations and millions of people outside the Arab sphere. Nor did McLuhan envision the existence today of four other pan-Arab news networks (e.g., Abu Dhabi and Al-Arabiya Television) or two Egyptian satellites to carry them.

In short, McLuhan did not consider that, given time, it might be possible that news of a major world event might be broadcast not just by the Western networks ABC, NBC, CBS, and the BBC, but also by new news operations that are part of the "500-channel" and "1,000-channel" future, or from new global networks emanating from alien cultures.

This chapter has confined its analysis to traditional news media—ignoring the fact that the Internet was used to disseminate a vast array of images and messages related to the Iraq War, which is covered elsewhere in this book. This author argues that the global village concept does not fit the Internet and never will (unless commercial interests succeed in their effort to transform the Net from a many-to-many communication medium to a broadcast-model, one-to-many medium). The Internet had been greeted in its early pioneering days with the old utopian rhetoric, but much of that talk has quieted since the rapid spread of commercial domains beginning in the mid-1990s.

Furthermore, this author argues that if the Internet has a technological bias, it is to counter global homogenization by expanding and accelerating fragmentation and de-tribalizing tendencies in today's global culture. It does that by creating countless virtual (online) communities that have little or no community-to-community interaction. For the most part, online communication is between and among people with like-minded interests and ideas—hardly the sort of medium to foster global understanding, peace, harmony, unity, etc.

In the final analysis, we must not be too harsh or rigid in our assessment of McLuhan's prophecy of global village. Today, in the wake of the 2003 Iraq war, and looking at the whole post-Soviet era—with the United States as the sole and unchallenged superpower—the prophecy seems empty. It is hard to imagine an era

of greater global chaos, unrest, and division since World War II. Yet perhaps this is what McLuhan expected, remembering his warning that when self-images (cultural values) are threatened, the result is a mandate for war. Bruce R. Powers, who co-authored *The Global Village,* published almost a decade after McLuhan's death in 1980, wrote in the Preface:

> Electric flow has brought differing societies into abrasive contact on a global level, occasioning frequent worldwide value collisions and cultural irritation of an arcing nature, so that, for instance, when a hostage is taken in Beirut an entire nation on the other side of the world is put at risk. McLuhan said, "In the last half of the 20th century the East will rush Westward and the West will embrace orientalism, all in a desperate attempt to cope with each other, to avoid violence. But the key to peace is to understand both systems." (p. x)

That observation clearly brings to mind the current state of world affairs with respect to the World Trade Center attack and the Iraq war.

When looking at effects of new communication technology, perhaps the longer view is required. After all, even today, TV has barely reached adolescence. McLuhan did not promise that the full effects of global village would transpire overnight. While many experts predict that current tensions between the West and Middle East will take many decades to settle, what will become of the world once those tensions are finally settled?

Maybe we need to let things develop much longer, perhaps over many centuries, before assessing the prophecy of a global village. It took that long for the full effects of writing and the printing press to take hold, and perhaps TV and the Internet will take as long.

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The Framing of the "Axis of Evil"

Jinbong Choi

Since his inauguration as the 43rd President of the United States, George W. Bush has included the simulative rhetorical phrase "axis of evil" in many of his public speeches. He introduced the phrase in his 2002 State of the Union Address and applied it to three countries: Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. In particular, Mr. Bush used the phrase to help justify the war on Iraq as well as the so-called "war on terror."

After the collapse of the Iraqi government in spring 2003, the other two "axis of evil" countries (Iran and North Korea) have felt threatened by possible preemptive U.S. attacks. Scott Lasensky, a Mideast expert at the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations, termed the fall of the Iraqi government a "wake-up call" to the other two "axis of evil" countries (Ross, April 15, 2002). And it had some effect.

North Korea decided to participate in multilateral discussions with the United States and China concerning its nuclear program. Korea previously had preferred meeting only with the United States, from whom it could have sought concessions. Also, "Iran's former president, long allied with Islamic hardliners against the 'Great Satan' America, is advocating a referendum on renewing ties with the United States" (Ross, 2002).

By framing and naming Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as an "axis of evil," Bush's January 2002 speech functioned to motivate his audience to fear threats against world peace in order to justify expanding the war on terrorism. Through using framing analysis, this study (analysis) will explore what the rhetorical

function of the framing and naming of the "axis of evil" is, and to what extent this "axis of evil" framing is reasonable. Specifically, this paper first describes the concept of the terms "evil" and "axis" and then evaluates how Bush uses the naming and framing of "axis of evil."

THE CONCEPT OF FRAMING

Bateson (1972) and Clair (1993) use the "picture example" to explain framing. Photographers must make conscious choices of what to include in a picture. Only a small part of any event or activity is selected as the context of the photograph. The photographer in effect "frames" the photograph and what remains is his or her vision of reality (shaped, of course, by news, values, routines, and organizational constraints).

People who see the finished product might be unaware of the context of the photograph and what was excluded from the photographer's "vision" but will ascribe their own meaning to the picture. The way it is framed offers strong cues that influence their understanding of the photo (especially when people do not have enough information and background about the picture).

Bateson says frames delimit "a class or set of messages (or meaningful actions)" (1972, p.186). "People perceive and evaluate social interactions" in framed messages (Clair, 1993, p.117). In other words, "the frame is involved in the evaluation of the message…as such the frame is metacommunicative" (Bateson, 1972, p.188).

This visual analogy can be extended beyond concrete images to the way a speaker chooses objects to frame in a speech or to weave abstract images into a comprehensible narrative of a speech. Sociologist Erving Goffman (1974) explains that when individuals encounter particular events, they tend to respond through a particular framework, or schemata, of interpretation that is primary to them. "A primary framework is one that is seen as rendering what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful," and that "each primary framework allows its user to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms" (Goffman, 1974, p.21).

Mass communication scholar Robert Entman says to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described (Entman, 1993, p.52). Entman theorizes that frames are found in four places in the communication process: communicators, the text, receivers, and the culture. Of these, communicators and the text are the most important components for this analysis. In other words, through the use of special and sensational names and frames to describe objects, a communicator (or rhetor) can create fragmentary and

distorted images of the objects to provide a communicator's stereotyped images of the objects that guide the audience to a communicator's judgment about the objects.

In addition, Snow & Benford (1992) define a frame as: "an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one's present or past environment" (p. 137). Thus, a frame gives people a standard for how to understand and identify objects. They also argue that frames render objects and occurrences meaningful (Snow, Rochford Jr., Worden, & Benford, 1986). In other words, the concept of framing is developed on "the metaphor of the frame, a structure for containing a representation. As a communication concept, framing is essentially an act of interpretation, a strategy whereby communicators represent ideas and events in an appealing and meaningful way" (Trasciatti, 2003, p. 409).

Kirk Hallahan (1999, p. 224) suggests that people use framing strategies in their speeches to make good public relations. Hallahan argues that framing is essential to public relations. In developing programs or speeches, public relations professionals fundamentally operate as frame strategists, who determine how situations, attributes, choices, actions, issues, and responsibility should be posed to achieve favorable outcomes for clients or audiences. Framing decisions are perhaps the most important strategic choices made in a public relations effort. Out of strategic framing, public relations communicators develop specific themes (i.e., key messages or arguments that might be considered by the public in discussions of topics of mutual concern).

Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki (1993, pp. 59-63) focus on five structural framing devices: syntactical structure, script structure, thematic structure, rhetorical structure, and lexical devices. Two of these—rhetorical structure and lexical devices—are appropriate for this analysis. Pan and Kosicki argue that rhetorical structure refers to particular choices communicators make. This category includes metaphors, catch phrases, depictions, and naming, which can all be used to evoke images and increase the salience or intensity of a particular characteristic. Also, lexical devices refer to word choices or labels (naming) that communicators (speakers) use to frame certain objects (pp. 59-63).

Moreover, Gamson (1989) argues that a frame is the essence of a large unit of public discourse, which is a "package." In terms of his explanation, the package has an internal structure with the frame as a central organizing idea (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, p. 3). The package works for constructing meaning and incorporating an object or social event into a rhetor's frames (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). For Gamson, framing is the primary meaning-making activity in public speech (discourse), in which active agents with specific purposes are engaged constantly in a process of providing meaning (Gamson, 1992). Gamson explains that:

[f]acts have no intrinsic meaning. They take on their meaning by being embedded in a frame or story line that organizes them and gives them coherence, selecting certain ones to emphasize while ignoring others. (1989, p. 157)

As a result, framing and naming are powerful strategies to create special and unique images (negative or positive) of objects for communicators or rhetors. Using a framing strategy, a communicator chooses only one particular image of an object or creates a special image of an object that influences audience understanding of the object. In framing, rhetors adapt different kinds of strategies such as metaphors, catch phrases, keywords, and stereotyped images to evoke special images or particular characteristics of an object.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE CONCEPTS OF "AXIS" AND "EVIL"

After the September 11 attacks, "evil" has been used by Mr. Bush as a most intensive and prevailing word to describe the targets of his war on terror: non-democratic and dictatorial regimes, terrorists, and organizations allegedly related to the planning and execution of the 9/11 attack. In his 2002 State of the Union Address, Mr. Bush declared the targets of his war on terror as follows: "the United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons." Further, he described the world's most dangerous regimes as Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. Yet there are some problems in describing these three countries as "evil."

First, Mr. Bush labeled Iran, Iraq, and North Korea "evil" countries because they have "regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America" (the 2002 State of the Union Address). However, it is hard to find any evidence that Iran and North Korea were linked to the September 11 attack, and the evidence is weak that Iraq was linked to al-Qaeda, who claimed responsibility for 9/11 and other international acts of terrorism. Without inculpatory evidence, Mr. Bush's designation of these countries as "evil" is problematic. Without incontrovertible proof, his idea of "evil" countries comes from his own private schema or deeply held personal beliefs, thereby making his concept of "evil" countries less persuasive for those who do not share his schema.

Second, in his 2002 State of the Union Address, Mr. Bush claimed these three "evil" countries were developing weapons of mass destruction. He named Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as part of an "axis of evil" because they are "arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction" (the 2002 State of the Union Address). It is irrational to designate a country as an "evil" country just because that country develops WMDs. If that were the case, the United States is an "evil" country—not because its military corporate complex is the most powerful and sophisticated weapons industry in the world, but because it is the only nation ever to have used an atomic bomb (the quintessential WMD) against

humans—twice—without distinguishing soldiers from civilians.

Thus, to claim a country is "evil," Mr. Bush needed to prove that Iraq had used WMDs before and would do it again. He pointed to the alleged poison gassing of Kurds in Halabja in 1988 ("Saddam used weapons against his own people") as evidence. If Saddam Hussein had used WMDs on his own people, Bush argued, the Iraqi leader would have no compunction about using them against his neighbors, Israel, or even the United States. But what of the other members of the "axis of evil?" Bush hardly verified that the other "evil" countries have plans to use WMDs, or even that they were developing them.

Even Iraq's "proven" WMD program was in doubt. Although UN inspections (which were suspended in both 1998 and 2003) operated in Iraq to find weapons of mass destruction, the inspection team could not find any, although they did find very small pilot facilities for continuing research. What the U.S. government did have as a common link to the axis were "stories" that Iraq and Iran both had biological and chemical weapons programs and were, like Korea, developing nuclear weapons capabilities. The main fear was that, unlike Iraq and Iran, Korea had developed a missile delivery system it was willing to sell to anyone with hard currency, such as "petro-dollars."

On the other hand, if the threat of WMD proliferation only is considered, India and Pakistan are two of the most dangerous countries in the world because they possess nuclear weapons, WMD programs, and delivery systems capable of reaching each other's capitals. However, Mr. Bush did not put these two countries on his "evil" country list. Both are U.S. allies, albeit shaky ones, and one is the world's largest democracy. Further, in his 2003 State of the Union Address, Mr. Bush insisted that Iran, Iraq, and North Korea are "evil" because they developed biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons. If the development of those weapons was the standard for categorizing the "axis of evil" countries, then "why is it limited to only these three countries when, according to the Department of Defense, the extant and emerging threats to the United States, friends, and allies encompasses twelve nations with nuclear weapons programs, thirteen nations with biological weapons, sixteen nations with chemical weapons, and twenty-eight nations with ballistic missiles?" (Pena, 2002, p. 5).

Third, through using the concept of "evil," Mr. Bush tried to attain the moral high ground that would justify using military action to defeat "evil" countries. In other words, the administration's war on terror was to destroy "evil." "'Evil' is too heavy and radioactive a word; you cannot make a deal with evil, but only kill it" (quoted in Reynolds, January 21, 2003). In short, by using the word "evil," Mr. Bush made it clear that he would not negotiate with "evil" countries. Further, by using the word "evil," Mr. Bush made it easy to see "why the country ([the U.S.]) needs to attack Iraq" (quoted in Reynolds, January 21, 2003). Mr. Bush emphasized that "evil is real, and it must be opposed" (the 2002 State of the Union Address). The ill-defined war on terror then would become a "just war."

Mr. Bush likes to:

> imagine that he can pin down evil in places like Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. He believes that he can contain it there, and destroy it by sending all the weapons at his command hurtling down out of the sky. … In his plan, he will just throw bombs at the problems there in 'evil' land [(countries)], killing as many people as it takes to exorcise the spirit of 'evil.' (*Irregulartimes*, February 22, 2003)

By naming and framing Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as "evil" countries, Mr. Bush used these "evil" countries as targets to justify and continue his war on terrorism. In short, Mr. Bush has failed to describe why and how he chose the term "evil" to designate these three countries instead of other terms, but in advocacy framing, evidence often is not included in the picture one wants to paint.

On the other hand, consider the second concept of an "axis." *The American Heritage Dictionary* defines the term "axis" as meaning partnership or alliance of powers, such as nations, to promote mutual interests and policies. Mr. Bush designated Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as an "axis" because they are "terrorist allies" by saying, "states like these and their terrorist allies constitute an axis of evil" (the 2003 State of the Union Address). However, he has not provided any evidence that those three countries are terrorist allies—he's only offered that possibility in his speech. In short, in spite of the fact that Iran, Iraq, and North Korea have no alliance or conspiracy with one another, Mr. Bush provided a possible military engagement of these countries. For instance, North Korea "remains locked in the grip of an anachronistic communistic dictatorship and, far from colluding with other nations, may instead be the most isolated country in the world" (quoted in Reynolds, January 21, 2003).

Thus, in Mr. Bush's rhetoric, through framing these three "evil" countries as an "axis," the president emphasized that danger is increased significantly and intensively due to an alliance and combination of these "evil" countries although there is no evidence that they are allied as an "axis." Klare (2002) points out that:

> there is absolutely no indication that the three states (Iran, Iraq, and North Korea) in question have conspired together to fight the United States or to cooperate militarily. Indeed, President Bush reportedly was obliged to eliminate language from his speech suggesting such ties because U.S. intelligence agencies were unable to find any proof of a connection.

Although the three "evil" countries should have been treated differently because they have different political and economic situations and different networks of international relations, Mr. Bush categorized them as an "axis," which implied that they posed similar dangers, enhanced by their association. In other words, by framing the three countries as part of an "axis," Mr. Bush tried to raise fears about increased threats to world peace and security to emphasize the

necessity of his war on terror without providing any evidence connecting these three countries.

For a sizable population in the world, the word "axis" is evocative of the common threat posed by Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperial Japan over half a century ago, a potent historical frame. Even though a White House spokesperson explained that "the President did not mean such a comparison and that the expression was 'more rhetorical than historical'" (Sanger, 2002), Mr. Bush invoked the concept of the "axis powers" of Germany, Italy, and Japan to reflect this negative image to the concept of "axis of evil." Furthermore:

> "simply by uttering the phrase 'axis of evil'—so suggestive of the 'axis powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan)' of World War II—seemed to put the United States on a higher level of war preparation" (Klare, 2002).

In addition, Mr. Bush seemed to have adapted former President Ronald Reagan's "evil empire" rhetoric to rally Americans in a perpetual war against terrorism and the "axis of evil." Just before the end of the Cold War, "Ronald Reagan used the Cold War to lambaste the 'evil empire' of the Soviet Union. Their administrations are strikingly similar not only in their use of adjectives, but also their desires to increase defense spending because of unseen if not illusory enemies" (Turnipseed, 2002).

THE FUNCTION OF THE "AXIS OF EVIL" FRAMING

Through "axis of evil" framing, Mr. Bush warned that Iran, Iraq, and North Korea "constitute[d] an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world" and that "by seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger." Mr. Bush, again, provided no evidence linking the "axis" to al-Qaeda or Osama Bin Laden. Thus, Mr. Bush's concept of the "axis of evil" was neither persuasive nor logical because he designated Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as an "axis of evil" without evidence. He tried to justify the war on terror and to reduce public opposition to the war by raising the specter of an "axis of evil."

In short, after September 11, President Bush used "evil" as a metaphor to justify his war on terror. To justify his war, Mr. Bush needed an enemy (he used the word *enemy* four times in his 2002 State of the Union Address), one it was necessary to destroy; in creating this enemy, Mr. Bush utilized the *evil* metaphor for three countries: Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. Through framing and naming the three countries as an "axis of evil," Mr. Bush was shaping reality and was persuading a particular perspective on these three countries to his audience.

Furthermore, Mr. Bush's "evil" metaphor became more powerful due to the news media. According to Jeffrey Tulis (1987), because of the news media, Presidential speeches are more frequently available to people today than in any

other time in history. Tulis calls this phenomenon the "rhetorical presidency," and argues that media have facilitated the development of the rhetorical presidency "by giving the president the means to communicate directly and instantaneously to a large national audience and by reinforcing … verbal dramatic performance" (Tulis, 1987, pp. 133-135). Therefore, people's understanding of the political world depends on the president's framing, naming, or description of objects. That is, political issues "are not objective, independent entities, but linguistic constructions" (Bostdorff, 1994, p. 4).

In short, the news media presented Mr. Bush's framing of an "axis of evil" so that audience members would understand that it encompassed three countries: Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. By naming and framing these three countries as the "axis of evil," Mr. Bush not only denounced them, but also announced to the world that he would treat these three countries in a similar fashion. However:

> while Bush could not realistically do this, he found it domestically and internationally desirable to keep using the term, as a way of proving to his country …, and to the world that the U.S. was now willing to make maximum use of the threat of its power to stamp out terrorism. The unintended consequences have proved considerable" (Saikal, 2003).

Finally, the concept of "axis of evil" was used broadly by President Bush. When Mr. Bush originated the "axis of evil" concept in his State of the Union Address, he seemingly used it only to raise the level of fear over terrorism. Over time, however, he has extended the boundaries of the "axis of evil" concept to other foreign and domestic agendas to achieve his purposes and goals.

CONCLUSION

In summary, framing analysis was used to study the text of President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address. In conducting this study, three main questions were asked: for what purpose did Mr. Bush frame Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as an "axis of evil;" what kinds of problems did the concept of "axis of evil" have; and how did the framing of the "axis of evil" work?

After the September 11 attack, President Bush stated clearly in a number of public speeches that "he would love nothing more than to spend the rest of his four-year term ... identifying 'evil-doers' and sending his armies after them with guns blazing and bombs bursting" (*Irregulartimes*, February 22, 2003). The 2002 State of the Union Address is where Mr. Bush stated the goal of his first presidential term.

Through the State of the Union Address, Mr. Bush motivated audiences to fear a threat so that he could gain public support and justify his war on terror.

Because Mr. Bush lacked hard evidence about the "axis of evil" frame, it was ultimately nothing more than an appeal to fear.

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African Perspectives on Events Before the 2003 Iraq War

Emmanuel C. Alozie

This essay explores how sub-Sahara mass media covered the major events leading to the Anglo-American War—from September 12, 2002, when President Bush launched his campaign to dislodge Saddam Hussein, to March 19, 2003 when he announced the onset of the war. It is often implied that the philosophical, moral, and political perspectives prevailing in that country and region color news media coverage of foreign affairs. As Han Morgenthau (1957) suggests, "All the news that's fit to print," means one thing for *The New York Times*, another for *Pravda,* and yet another for the *Hindustani Times.*

Drawing from literature on international news discourse with emphasis on framing, propaganda, globalization, and social adaptation, this study will employ critical textual analysis to discern how the sub-Sahara African press constructed the events leading to the Anglo-American War. The goal is to determine if there is congruence between the position taken by African news organizations and the consensus among African leaders and the public to seek a peaceful solution.

Two major questions will guide this study: 1) What are the dominant themes and framework in African news discourse? and 2) Did the coverage reinforce the call for a peaceful solution to the crisis?

The analysis will focus on four leading news outlets from three countries: South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya. South Africa and Nigeria were chosen because they are dominant countries in sub-Sahara Africa, while Kenya was selected because it has suffered from terrorism in recent years and publishes a regional weekly. The three countries also contain significant Muslim and Christian populations, as well as other faiths. It has always been argued that in countries where people profess different faiths (Christianity, Islam, and other traditional beliefs), the mass media play a large role in promoting understanding on national and international issues, especially in cases where there may be religious connotations, such as the 2003 Gulf War.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rusciano's (1992) study of media perspectives in editorials in *The New York Times* and *The Times of India* during the 1990-1991 Gulf War supports Morgenthau's assertion that news media coverage of events is colored by national interest and opinion.

The study found that *The New York Times* repeatedly referred to international reactions and determined that world opinion favored the American position on the invasion and the resulting demonization of Saddam Hussein. *The Times of India*, representing a resource-developing nation, offered a greater variety of voices regarding the crisis. The Indian newspaper mentioned other world leaders and Iraqi public opinion in its attempts to define world opinion. Its reactions were then ambivalent regarding the degree of consensus among nations.

Chrisco (1994) conducted an interpretative study to explore the pre-war editorial reactions of six Middle East newspapers during the seven-month Gulf crisis. The study was aimed at better understanding how national newspapers in the conflicted region presented and explained issues surrounding the Gulf crisis in order to discern what stance they took. The newspapers examined included the *Arab News* of Saudi Arabia and the *United Arab Emirate News,* which represented the Gulf Sheikdom. Chrisco found that both papers professed Arab unity, monarchy, and the world community's defense of small Arab nations. (It should be noted the papers in the Gulf States might have taken this stance because they felt Iraq threatened them.)

The *Jordan Times* and *Syria Times* shared the Arab-unity themes and saw Iraq's invasion of Kuwait as an inter-Arab problem. President Saddam Hussein was not demonized, denoting Arabic values of unity and brotherhood. Both papers frequently cited the Israeli territorial aggression and occupation of Arab land. They called for solutions based on economic emancipation of the region, urged Arab unity, and often returned to the issue of Israeli territorial aggression. By linking the Iraq invasion to Arab territories, the Syrian and Jordanian press took a stance on the Gulf crisis based on their internal policies and interests. Despite

a frosty relationship between the Iraqi and Syrian leaders, the Syrian newspaper did not demonize Hussein. Syria joined the alliance during the 1991 Gulf War but did not support the 2003 war.

The non-Arab *Kayhan International of Iran* based its approach on Islamic unity and saw Hussein as a victim of U.S. aggression. Iran sought the role of mediator in 1991, despite the bitter eight-year war between the two Gulf states that had ended only a few years earlier. Values centered on Islam, Middle East autonomy, and economic alliances.

On the other hand, the *Jerusalem Post* viewed Israel as the victim of Arabs, as misunderstood by the world community, and as one whose primary overriding values were based on the right of the Jewish state to exist. The newspaper demonized and relied heavily upon the Hussein-as-Hitler theme. Like the Jordan and Syrian press, national interests colored the editorial stance of Iranian and Israeli newspapers.

Chrisco's findings illustrate the complexity of world opinion, while the perspectives held in the conflict zone differed, as Rusciano (1992) found. During the 2002-2003 crisis, the American public was split between those favoring immediate military action and those who supported giving diplomacy and sanctions adequate time to work.

However, some studies have been critical of the U.S. press for failing to reflect the complex perspectives that existed in the United States. That failure in 1990-1991, critics charge, denied the American public balanced information to reach its own decisions on a crisis that led to a war in which thousands of people lost their lives and which caused extensive environmental and property destruction (Lee & Devitt, 1994; Chomsky, 1992).

However, an analysis of the news coverage of the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis in nine prestigious American newspapers differed (Fico, Ku, & Soffin, 1994). Newspapers examined in the study produced a higher number of stories favoring anti-war advocates in their inside pages, while their front pages tended to be more balanced.

PROPAGANDA, GLOBALIZATION & SOCIAL ADAPTATION: A NEXUS

Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2000) contend that international discourse, as in the Gulf crisis, can be studied and understood through an integrative perspective in which propaganda influences on the media are explored in connection to the role of news media for public opinion-building and the globalization of international relations and events.

In most societies, the mass media operate as a public forum where the values and vision of a society are conveyed to its members as civic responsibilities and social realities. To portray and convey these values and realities to a community, the mass media rely on news and related discourses (Park, 1995;

Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). As a product, news discourse allows consumers to receive, consume, perceive, and think about issues and events. News assists the public understanding and establishing an opinion about international and domestic issues and events (Entman, 1991 & 1993; Jensen, 1987; Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes & Sasson, 1992).

Turning to the framing of events leading to the Gulf crisis of 2002-2003, it could be argued that news media frames contributed to the nexus that existed among propaganda, social adaptation, and globalization in its discourse. Propaganda is a "conscious and systematic symbolic activity aimed at creating and reproducing emotional and cognitive support from the target groups for a certain goal" (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000, p. 21). To persuade a community, propaganda uses symbols, emotional appeal, and cognitive content.

Addressing the UN Security Council in February 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell used these devices when he sought a second resolution to legitimize inevitable military action in Iraq. He produced a vial containing a small amount of white powder as a symbol of biological weapons of mass destruction. His strident pronouncement to the world community urging force, if necessary, to oust the Iraqi Ba'athist regime because it posed a danger to the United States and the world evoked emotion. Playing the taped voices of Iraqi officials allegedly discussing how to hide weapons of mass destruction provided cognitive content.

Mr. Powell's presentation represents a "deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions and behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist" (Jowett & O'Donnell, 1992, p. 4, cited in Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000, p. 24). Known as "purpose models of propaganda," developed by Jowett & O'Donnell, the model consists of three elements of implementation. These include:

- Systematic approach with its strict goal orientation—Iraq must be disarmed by any means necessary;
- Exploitation of highly emotional values—protecting the United States and allies from weapons of mass destruction; and
- Frequent and paramount exploitation supplanted with combinations of threat and support as the United States and its allies kept threatening over months.

During the 2002-2003 Gulf crisis, the Bush administration was trying to convince Americans and the international community of its position on Iraq. Those on opposing sides of the issue employed propaganda to achieve their aim, but the degree of their success is difficult to ascertain (Severin & Tankard, 1997).

When relying on news as narrative to deliver information to the public—as in the case of the Anglo-American-Iraq crisis, which involved a global audience—news media organizations provided context and reason. The news media also employed mythical references and metaphors in their text to

reciprocate and support each other's arguments and lessons (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000; Bird & Dardenne, 1988; Jensen, 1987; Entman, 1991). It could be argued that the American and sub-Sahara African press similarly used these approaches to support their respective positions on the 2002-2003 Gulf crisis.

Like the earlier 1990-1991Gulf crisis, the extent and manner in which a nation's foreign and security policies are enacted affect an increasingly seamless world. Globalization concerns the ever-increasing complex social connections and interconnections among states worldwide in a manner that makes events, issues, and problems in one part of the world trigger major ramifications for individuals and communities thousand of miles apart (Giddens, 1990, 1991).

Proponents assumed at its inception that globalization would enhance homogeneity, unification, and harmony of states and societies—leading to political and economic order and harmony (Uche, 1997; Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000). These premises have not materialized. The world has witnessed growing civilizational, societal, ethnic, regional, and, indeed, individual self-consciousness producing an era of disorder (Robertson, 1992). The divisions that occurred in the former Yugoslavia and disagreements on political and socioeconomic directions taken in the world during the past fifteen years demonstrate the negative impact of globalization (CNN.com, 2001). Globalization enhances the ability of communities in distant places to learn about others through instantaneous delivery of the news, but it has not necessarily promoted understanding and harmony (Robertson, 1992; Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000).

The growing expression of differences on a variety of national and international issues raises questions regarding how people learn to adapt to propaganda and the prevailing public opinion of a community in the information age. It also raises questions about the effectiveness of propaganda in both national and global contexts, as exemplified by the failure of globalization to produce the homogeneity, unification, and harmony its proponents promised (Robertson, 1992; Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000).

It is essential to observe that there is a mutual dependence, or mutual exploitation, between state and media as a point of departure for analyzing the role of mass media in events leading to the 2002-2003 Gulf crisis. This dependence is a result of the media's reliance on government officials as news sources and newsmakers, and on the ability of the media to build public opinion through edification, conceptualizing, and promoting a view to the public, who rely on them for crystallization and adopting an opinion (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000).

Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2000, p. 23) contend that news content helps individuals form an opinion. However, a person may be compelled to change his or her opinion if a large number of community members adopt a contrasting opinion. They describe this form of public opinion evolution as "social adaptation theory of public opinion-building." They argue that news discourse as a vehicle

for "propaganda cannot simply be conceived as information injected into the minds of passive receivers. Instead, propaganda messages should be understood as part of the various reality constructions available in the symbolic environment, and thus a condition for the opinion formation carried by members of the target group." The ability of individuals to resist propaganda can be attributed to a number of factors, including active interpretation and production of meaning."

METHOD

This study relies on the electronic versions of *Business Day* of South Africa, *This Dayonline* of Nigeria*, Daily Nation on the Web* and *The East African on the Web* of Kenya*.* These news outlets were chosen because they are the national leading daily and/or wire service outlet in each country and reach an international audience. Leaders and opinion-makers within and outside their respective countries read them. A computer search strategy was used to identify news, features, editorial, commentaries, and letters concerning the 2002-2003 Gulf crisis.

Qualitative studies, including rhetorical and textual criticisms, are concerned with the explorative description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of persuasive techniques in human and mass communications (Brummett, 1994; Mohanty, 2000). The approach examines themes, values, topic categories, images, and texture of the stories to discern its direction. Weston (2003) states that critical textual analysis of newspaper stories is drawn from studies that suggest news conveys social values—that is, news takes on meaning and resonance beyond conveying "facts" about "events." Weston adds that critical textual analysis draws on studies of journalistic practices dealing with selection, exclusion, emphasis, and organization through reporters and editors who mold events or situations into "stories."

Rhetorical and textual criticisms help discern omissions of potentially problematic definitions, explanations, evaluations, and recommendations in news discourse, because omission of these frames is as important as their inclusion in guiding and influencing the public that these persuasive messages reach. When some points of view and arguments are omitted, those views become salient (Gamson & Modiglani, 1989; Gamson, et al., 1992; and others).

Applying critical textual analysis calls for a sequential and multiple reading of the text. The first step entailed a general multiple reading of the text to gain an understanding of the stories, while taking descriptive notes about the content of the articles (Gavrilos, 2002). The online articles were read a second time, along with detailed note-taking to identify certain recurring themes, values, and topic categories. These themes, values, and topic categories were labeled to develop a framework for a third reading: an in-depth interpretation of the articles.

With that in mind, the third reading involved applying critical analysis

techniques to gain a deeper understanding of the messages conveyed to discern their implication, connection, stance, and values in relation to the theoretical underpinning and research questions being explored (Gavrilos, 2002).

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

When President Bush launched his propaganda offensive calling for force should the Hussein regime continue flouting UN resolutions requiring disarmament, the world community wavered and advocated a peaceful solution. The world sought a peaceful solution because many argued that a war could produce unintended consequences.

People argued that many questions had not been answered:

- How would a war influence the relationship among nations and peoples of different faiths?
- How would a war affect the ability of the world committee to work in concert in addressing common concerns of the future?
- Would a war exacerbate terrorism, while diminishing international cooperation to fight the scourge?

The results of this textual interpretation of sub-Sahara African mass media coverage of events leading to the 2003 Gulf War demonstrates that these concerns influenced their stand.

The analysis of the African online newspapers produced several themes and frames that largely opposed Bush's administration policies. The anti-war theme and orientations that emerged included:

- Give inspectors more time to do their work. Inspection works.
- Allow diplomatic negotiations to continue in order to resolve the crisis peacefully.
- The United Nations remains relevant.
- A war will scuttle international diplomacy.
- The United States lacks understanding of the world.
- The Americans have not proven their case.
- The United States is arrogant and wants to dictate to the world.
- The United States and her Western allies want to impose their ideologies and will in order to dominate the world.
- The United States is suffering diplomatic isolation.
- The West has double standards.
- Africans have a mission to stop war-mongering through active political initiatives.
- A war would create political instability within and outside Africa.
- Muslims within Africa would regard a war as a religious war.
- A war would have adverse economic consequences for Africa and the

developing world.
● Africa would be neglected.

On the other hand, there were themes and frames that advocated use of military force to disarm Iraq. The themes and orientations were:

● Iraq must be forced to comply in an effort to avoid proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
● Africans should cooperate in order to avoid offending the United States and her Western allies.
● Saddam is a bad apple.
● The world must build and maintain a sense of cooperation and coalition.

Exploration of these themes and orientations indicates that the stand the African mass media took can be classified within several frameworks and propositions: diplomacy and negotiations; inspections work; economic, socio-cultural, and religious; colonial heritage and dependence; and rising independence. Africa's triple heritage of rich indigenous inheritance, Islamic culture, and the impact of Western imperialism have helped to shape contemporary Africa (Mazuri, 1986) and influence these propositions. These frames will be explored in detail.

Diplomacy and Negotiations

To avoid the sufferings associated with war, sub-Sahara African media regarded diplomatic negotiations as a vehicle for resolving crisis peacefully (Stremlau, 2003 January 14; *Business Day*, 2002, October 23). The region's media gave extensive coverage to diplomatic activities within and outside the UN (Hartley, 2003). The diplomatic, or lack of diplomatic, activities by African countries received critical attention from the *Daily Nation* (2003, January 14). When most African countries failed to declare their position on the crisis, the *Daily Nation* (2003, February 18) questioned their silence and urged them to stop hiding behind the African Union's call that "there should be a second UN resolution before military action," (p. 1 of online printout) which the paper considered a weak position on the imminent war.

On the other hand, Wanyeki (2003) described former South African President Nelson Mandela's pronouncement that "world peace could only be achieved if all nations, including the most powerful, adhered to its founding principles" and heeded calls for diplomatic resolution as a moral stand (*Business Day*, 2002, December 18, p. 1 of online printout). Wanyeki (2003) implied that Mr. Mandela came to rescue African leaders, indicating that the continent's stance for diplomatic negotiations must be allowed to take its course at a time when they were cowing to express their position.

As the United States and its allies sought a second resolution authorization, the sub-Sahara African media commended Angola, Cameroon, and the Guineas, as well as the African members of the UN Security Council, for their steadfast and courageous decision not to reverse their stance, despite intensive American lobbying and bullying to vote in favor of the resolution authorizing force (Kelly, 2003).

Sub-Sahara African media regarded the U.S. failure to gain the support of Turkey, the European Union, France, China, Germany, and the Organization of Islamic Council as diplomatic isolation. Power (2002, September 10) asked whether the world was drifting away from the United States. Describing the imminent war against Iraq as "unjustified," Ochomo (2003, p. 1 of online printout) called the decision of these and other nations and organizations which refused to support the war or offer assistance "commendable." He reminded the United States and its allies that they "must remember that the Gulf War circumstances where America had many allies no longer" holds and warned "war against Iraq will not be a 'walk over'" (p. 1 of online printout).

Weapons Inspections Work

In a UN address in September 2002, Mr. Bush stated that if Iraq did not comply with the "just demands of peace and security" to disarm "action will be taken" (CNN.com/U.S., 2002, September 12, p. 1 of online printout); the United States would act with or without UN sanction. He added that his administration was prepared to take military action to disarm Hussein of his weapons of mass destruction, calling the UN efforts to disarm Iraq and Iraqi compliance "a decade of deception and defiance" (CNN.com/U.S., 2002, September 12, p. 1 of online printout).

The world perceived Mr. Bush's push for military action and willingness to act unilaterally as the reckless, dangerous, and obnoxious act of a superpower requiring immediate attention and amicable resolution. Mr. Bush's drive generated a flurry of activities on weapons inspections at the United Nations and in world capitals. The Security Council met and passed UNSCR 1441; Iraq agreed to comply, enhanced her cooperation with inspectors, and offered a new report about its weapons program as UNSCR 1441 demanded. The UN inspectors continued their inspections and offered periodic reports to the council. Despite these positive movements, the United States, Britain, and Spain insisted weapons inspections were not working and demanded a second resolution permitting the use of force.

Like most people and leaders in other parts of the world, African leaders and people shared the opinion that inspections were working and inspectors should be given time to work. The sub-Sahara African press agreed and adopted a similar tone, arguing that inspections remained the only viable means of

resolving the crisis to avoid bloodshed. They called on Iraq to offer full cooperation to UN inspectors, pointing out that inspectors needed time to ascertain the status of Iraq's weapons programs. The following headlines reflect how the African press framed the issue of weapons inspections:

- UN sees progress in talks with Iraq (*Business Day*, 2002, October 1)
- Iraq accepts new round of inspections; party expected in Baghdad in two weeks (*Business Day*, 2002, October 2)
- UN inspectors get ready to begin search; strategy involves paying unexpected visits (*Business Day*, 2002, November 27)
- UN arms inspectors ready to evaluate Iraq (*Business Day*, 2002, November 18)
- Inspectors check an idle Iraqi airfield (*Business Day*, 2002, December 2)
- Arms inspectors spring a surprise (*Business Day*, 2002, December 3)
- Iraq document tells of secret nuclear efforts (*Business Day*, 2002, December 12a)
- U.S. team to speed through Iraq's weapons declaration (*Business Day*, 2002, December 12b)
- UN weapons inspections continue amid a rapid U.S.-led military buildup (*Business Day*, 2003 January 9)
- Iraq signs declaration to cooperate with UN (*Business Day*, 2003 January 21)
- Inspectors find banned weapons in Iraq (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 February 14)
- Iraq has no weapon of mass destruction—UN inspectors (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 February 15)

- Iraq cranks up its concessions to UN (*Business Day*, 2003 February 19)
- UN inspectors submit report, find nothing on Iraq (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 February 28).

Despite their resistance to military action, the sub-Sahara African press believed Iraq's enhanced cooperation with UN inspectors, agreement to provide access to presidential sites, and the destruction of proscribed long-range missiles must be credited to the passage of Resolution 1441 and the Anglo-American military build up in Iraq (*Business Day*, 2003 January 9). With a headline that read, "Iraq's capitulation a victory for Bush," the *Daily Nation* (Giraudo, 2002, September 20) stated that Mr. Bush had scored a diplomatic win for the UN and restored the credibility of the world body (p. 1 of online printout).

However, when the United States and United Kingdom disagreed with the positive assessment of Iraq's cooperation, bombed Iraqi facilities, and continued

to threaten unilateral military intervention (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 February 11; *Business Day*, 2003 February 19), the sub-Saharan African press described the position and action as ironical, ominous, irrational, defiant, and akin to playing double standards (Ochieng, 2003 March 9). The United States and its allies were accused of trampling on international conventions and failing, as usual, to meet their obligation to international agreements by acting as rogue nations, threatening the stability of the world (Mnyanda, 2002). Critics contended an attack without UN sanction would jeopardize the institution and destabilize Africa and the Middle East (Mathiu, 2003).

Economic Consequence

The economic impact of an attack gained a great deal of attention in the African press. The accounts and commentaries dealt with the short- and long-term economic impact on Africa and on a global scale. In the short run, the sub-Sahara African media contended that Africa would suffer immensely. Calling the prospect of a U.S. attack on Iraq the hottest international issue, the *Daily Nation* (2003, February 20, p. of online printout) stated, "we cannot look at the likelihood of such a war without considering how it will impact our own economic, security and geopolitical interests."

In the short run, the sub-Sahara African press contended the prospects of an Anglo-American-Iraq war contributed to higher prices in transportation services, as well as petroleum-produced products. For example, in January of 2003 rising oil prices were blamed on alleged U.S. stockpiling in preparation for war (*Daily Nation*, 2003 January 9). The prospect of a war was blamed for the immediate decline in tourism (Bindra, 2003). Other short-term economic problems associated with the war included declining local and international stock prices, declining foreign investments and borrowing from foreign financial institutions (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 January 29a), and a growing number of weakened African and international currencies (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 January 29b). The sub-Sahara African media also argued that the war would have an adverse effect on the global economy by worsening the sluggish conditions the world economy has suffered in recent years (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 January 29a & b; Stremlau, 2003 March 4; Daily Nation, 2003 February 20).

In the long term, Africa contended that if Iraq was attacked and the war then dragged on, the United States, Europe, and other donor groups and organizations would neglect Africa (*East African on the Web*, 2003, p. 3 of online printout). One official underscored the impact of the crisis on Africa when he stated, "as it is now, the Iraqi issue is eclipsing other world needs to focus on such issues as the fight against AIDS, pervasive hunger in Africa."

When Mr. Bush canceled a proposed visit to Africa, the *Daily Nation* (2002, December 26) reported that the fears of Africans had been realized. The paper

cited *The Washington Post*, which condemned the cancellation and argued that, "Africa is taking a back seat in policymaking." The story stated that the cancellation of the visit would deter the World Bank and International Monetary Fund from releasing about $200 million in suspended aid that Kenya would have received if the president had visited after Kenya's successful election and peaceful transition of power in 2002.

Press accounts stated that the African Union's stance against war created a rift between the continent and the United States and its allies, and that rift may lead to economic reprisals against those nations that opposed the United States. However, the sub-Sahara African press also noted that the United States was paying more attention to oil-producing countries in order to cultivate them as an alternative source of energy, rather than the Middle East (Kelley, 2002, September 16).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The sub-Sahara African media—as forums for discourse where information and commentaries are presented and shared to influence the course of events, policies, national and international leaders, and the public—urged the Bush administration to be patient, to not attack Iraq, and to allow diplomacy to take its course. As they advised Mr. Bush to show restraint, they called on African leaders and institutions to resist the drive to use force.

The sub-Sahara media contended that if the Americans and the British carried out the attack on Iraq without UN support, hostility and animosity toward the United States would increase in the Middle East, Africa, and worldwide (Akinterinwa, 2003). The attack would inflame religious intolerance (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 January 31) and swell terrorist attacks and violence worldwide (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 February 12; *Daily Nation*, 2002, October 16; *Business Day*, 2002, November 19). They also contended it would lead to weapons proliferation (*ThisDayonline*, 2003 January 10), destabilize the world economy (Akinterinwa, 2003; Osambi, 2003) and eclipse the focus on Africa's crippling problems of AIDS, debt burden, and famine (*East African on the Web*, 2003 March 24). This fear of diminished attention was realized when Mr. Bush canceled a proposed visit to Africa (*Daily Nation*, 2002, September 26). (Six months later, Mr. Bush embarked on a five-day, five-nation visit of Africa.)

The sub-Sahara African media argued that the ongoing crisis, preparation for, and imminent war created a rift among nations and disrupted the diplomatic process. Despite their overwhelming support for a peaceful resolution of the crisis, the growing pluralism in sub-Sahara Africa is demonstrated through the diversity of opinion contained in articles supporting the United States' use of force. Such articles contend that the United States must be supported for its efforts to remove a dictator—a subject most Africans continue to suffer (*Business Day*,

2003 February 12). Supporters of the Bush administration policy railed against African leaders who opposed the United States' use of force, thus offending the United States and risking their national welfare (Hartley, 2002, November 6).

Judging from the overall coverage of the events leading to the 2003 Gulf War, this study suggests that sub-Sahara Africa opposed unilateral use of force because it would create political, social, economic, and religious upheaval in the region (Chaudhary, 2001). This finding supports the concept that media coverage of issues is colored by the prevailing conditions in a country. Whether they took this position to support the policies of the government, as suggested by Herman & Chomsky (1988), remains a subject for another study to explore. Research suggests that the South African and Kenyan media tend to drive and influence policies, instead of being driven and influenced by government policies.

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Al-Jazeera: A Broadcaster Creating Ripples in a Stagnant Pool

Stephen Quinn and Tim Walters

"Al-Jazeera is a drop of fresh water that was dropped into a pool of stale water that stood still for decades," said Jihad Ali Ballout, who was responsible for media relations at the Qatar-based channel a few days before the war broke out. "Al-Jazeera has created ripples that refreshed the water. The more the water moves the fresher it gets, until such a time that we have really fresh water for the audience to take from" (Ballout, 2003).

In the Arab world of state-controlled and stale media, Al-Jazeera has indeed caused ripples. The staff of the satellite-delivered television channel see those ripples as creating a "revolution" in the Arab world. Ballout, in particular, views Al-Jazeera as a major force in developing freedom of expression and liberalizing the marketplace of ideas in the Arab world.

Traveling this pathway has not been easy—politics, laws, and customs in the Middle East sometimes make covering stories difficult. A raft of privacy laws, plus custom and respect for authority, make covering certain subjects either uncomfortable or off limits. Timeliness is sometimes a problem as well. Mohammed Jasim Al-Ali, the channel's director-general, has noted that a host of agreements between Arab television stations obliged them not to broadcast any report before transmission by official news agencies. Practically speaking, this has

meant waiting several hours before broadcasting a report.

"Arab information mentality must change and develop, and not remain as it was many years ago," Al-Ali said (Al-Farah, 2003). Al-Ali and his staff want Arab audiences to return to trusting the Arab media, especially the news. "You should bring them the truth, not false information, or they won't watch. We treat them as an intelligent audience, rather than the conventional idea that they'll take whatever you give them" (quoted in Schleifer, 2000).

Al-Ali has said the broadcaster was a demonstration of faith in the message of freedom. "When the channel became operational, everyone wanted to silence this free voice," he told *Al-Dustur*, Jordan's leading establishment daily (Al-Farah, 2003). The Middle East media have a reputation for being censored and controlled. "All media business in the Middle East is controlled by the government. The leaders of Qatar wanted to change that; they wanted to have a satellite channel with the aim of no longer hiding any information," Al-Ali said (Schleifer, 2000).

AL-JAZEERA: EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OFFENDER

Al-Jazeera is becoming an equal opportunity offender, irritating almost every government in the region and many outside the Gulf. At one time or another, governments from Algeria to Yemen have lodged complaints against the station. Tunisia, Morocco, and Libya have all recalled their ambassadors from Doha in protest of Al-Jazeera coverage, reinstating them once their point was made.

Dr. Faisal Al-Qassem, who presents the high-rated but controversial "The Opposite Direction," said Egyptian police once dragged Qassem's brother—a pop star—out of his home in his pajamas and bundled him on a plane to Jordan as a warning to Qassem. "In Algiers," Qassem said, "they cut off the electricity supply so that people could not watch the program because we were talking about the military generals and how they are wasting the money of Algerians" (quoted in Whitaker, 2003, p. 1).

Egypt's state-owned media ran a campaign against Al-Jazeera's programs, describing the station as a "sinister salad of sex, religion and politics" topped with "sensationalist seasoning." Yasir Arafat was reportedly incensed by Al-Jazeera's frequent interviews with the Hamas spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. The network upset Palestinian authorities with a preview of a March 2001 documentary that explored the role of Palestinian guerrillas in the 1975-1990 civil war in Lebanon. Jordan temporarily closed Al-Jazeera's bureau in the capital, Amman, after a guest on a debate program criticized the government.

Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, chairman of the board of Al-Jazeera, recalls that when Al-Jazeera covered events in Iraq, it was accused of being a channel financed by Iraq or Saddam Hussein.

"When we reported on the Israeli elections and when we ran interviews with Ehud Barak and Shimon Peres, Al-Jazeera was immediately accused of being financed by the Mossad. When we reported on events or issues within the United States from our office in Washington we were accused of being financed by the CIA" (quoted in Sullivan, 2001).

According to the channel, some Arab viewers have even accused it of promoting U.S. propaganda when it puts U.S. officials or statements on air. Al-Jazeera broadcasts all White House, Pentagon, and State Department press briefings from Washington (Campagna, 2001).

Broadcasts of videotapes featuring Osama Bin Laden have generated the most fame and notoriety for the channel. Al-Jazeera's long 1998 interview with Bin Laden, which it rebroadcast with English subtitles not long after the September 11, 2001, attacks, brought the channel praise and condemnation in almost equal measure.

A month later, *The New York Daily News* editorialized that Al-Jazeera was "one of the most potent weapons in the Islamic Axis arsenal." The newspaper then opined, almost hysterically: "It is an Arab propaganda outfit controlled by the medieval government of Qatar that masquerades as a real media company. For years, it has inflamed the Arab world against the United States and its allies." The paper concluded that dealing with the station was "a job for the military." "Shutting it down should be an immediate priority because, left alone, it has the power to poison the air more efficiently and lethally than anthrax ever could" (*New York Daily News*, 2001).

During a meeting in Muscat in October 2002, the ministers of information in all six Gulf Co-operation Council states recommended that Al-Jazeera be banned in their countries because the station's news and programs "offend the whole Gulf region" (*The Gulf News*, 2002, p. 1). The United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman subsequently decided to allow the channel to stay.

Saudi Arabia forbids Al-Jazeera staff from entering its territory, and in 2003 extended the ban to special events such as the hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. Al-Ali was philosophical about these bans, suggesting that satellite technology allowed them a virtual form of entry. "True," he said, "we do not exist in Bahrain, but we do cover events there. The same can also be said about Kuwait and other places, regardless of whether we have a presence there or not. We have been covering events without any problem. No one can say that they can boycott Al-Jazeera, because that is very difficult" (Al-Farah, 2003).

Others inside the station agreed with this assessment. "Some of Al-Jazeera's coverage of events ran against the grain of several Arab states to say the least, and the reverberations of which we can still feel, with the refusal to let us work in several states. We only have two bureaus, one in the UAE and one in Oman. While Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain have a problem with the way we do our business. So yes, it has caused us some problems, but it goes with the territory. I

think if everyone was happy with us, we won't be doing our job" (Ballout, 2003).

Since 2001 various Western government leaders have asked Qatar's emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, to restrain the station. The U.S. embassy in Qatar filed a formal diplomatic complaint with local authorities regarding Al-Jazeera's coverage. Bush administration officials made it clear that they were upset by what they viewed as Al-Jazeera's "unbalanced and anti-American" coverage. And in the aftermath of September 11, many Washington officials refused to appear on the channel despite numerous requests from Al-Jazeera's Washington bureau (Sullivan, 2000).

DEFENDERS OF AL-JAZEERA

But Al-Jazeera has its defenders too. Organizations like the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Journalists sans Frontieres have complained about the aggressive statements coming out of the United States. "Arab government attempts to influence Al-Jazeera have garnered widespread attention over the years. We are disheartened to see U.S. officials adopting similar tactics," said CPJ executive director Ann Cooper (quoted in Sullivan, 2000). Former CNN correspondent Peter Arnett rhetorically asked: "What about the U.S. right-wing press that's been [bashing] Arabs? Do they rein them in? Do they rein in Fox TV? Are we going to order our own media to rein in its coverage? It's getting out of hand."

Aside from the press freedom implications, CPJ Middle East coordinator Joel Campagna noted, U.S. calls for Qatar to censor Al-Jazeera may have backfired by generating criticism from the Arab world at a time when the United States needed the support of people in the region. "I think this elevates Al-Jazeera into an even more powerful organization than it is," agreed Arnett. "Simply, it's a news source that's threatening the U.S. They don't have any guns. They haven't been traced to Bin Laden" (quoted in Campagna, 2001).

Some critics of Al-Jazeera have maintained that the station is willing to criticize Arab government in the region, but will not challenge Qatar's rulers. *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman argues that Al-Jazeera sometimes "goes easy" on the Doha government. "To be sure, Al-Jazeera goes easier on Qatar than it does on Saudi Arabia, but it has actually aired charges of torture in Qatar" (Friedman, 2001).

The CPJ argues that the station has generally been well regarded for its editorial independence, despite being funded by the emir of Qatar until November 2001. "Nevertheless, it has been taken to task for usually avoiding tough scrutiny of Qatari affairs and any strong criticism of the ruling Al-Thani family" (Campagna, 2001). Qatari families sometimes wonder the same thing.

More seasoned thinkers believe that muzzling Al-Jazeera would be a case of shooting the messenger. Yosri Fouda, head of Al-Jazeera's London bureau,

asked rhetorically: "If Bin Laden is going to send a tape, who will he send it to? To CNN, who he probably considers a representative of 'the enemy'? No. To an Arab government channel? No, because there's just as much animosity there." Al-Jazeera was relaying valuable information that the West did not have, Fouda said, and it would continue doing so "for as long as everything is verified and as long as time and space are given for different viewpoints" (Sullivan, 2000).

Arab journalists see U.S. policy as hypocritical for pressuring Al-Jazeera to modify its coverage, given the American view of itself as a symbol of freedom and democracy. Daoud Kuttab, director of the Institute of Modern Media at Al-Qud University on the West Bank and an observer of Arab regional media, believes Al-Jazeera's work has been professional and balanced:

> As to the Americans, they are completely wrong and apply a double standard. I can see why they are angry but it is not because Al-Jazeera is not fair. On the contrary, I think they wish for Al-Jazeera to be biased to the U.S. (quoted in Campagna, 2001).

Al-Jazeera's creators appreciated early on the power of media technologies, particularly satellites and more recently the Internet to enter Arabian homes and tell compelling stories:

> You could once control the information before there was Internet, before there was satellite. People got much of their information from government sources. When satellite channels started, it was no longer possible to hide the sources of information from the viewing audience. This is the atmosphere in which Al-Jazeera started (quoted in Schleifer, 2000).

Many countries have managed to block the BBC terrestrial services, but they cannot block satellite channels or the Internet, Al-Ali said. "If something is on a Western channel, it has a limited effect. But Al-Jazeera affects a much larger audience, because it's in Arabic" (quoted in Schleifer, 2000).

BREAKING DOWN COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

The barriers that prevented dissemination of information to Arab citizens have been torn down because of developments in information technology and telecommunications worldwide, Al-Ali said. "The Arab information ministries can no longer control information. No one can control information." In the 21st century, the news business has changed but the news mentality in many Arab states has not. "And, if there has been a change, it is very modest and has not caught up with the rapid change in the technology and information sectors worldwide" (quoted in Al-Farah, 2003).

Others who work at the station agree with this assessment, notes Jihad Ali

Ballout, and "Al-Jazeera has managed to push a crack in the dogma of media in the Arab world. I think we have the lead and people now are following. Al-Jazeera has blasted the censors. The rest are stepping, a step at a time, towards perhaps how media should be practiced professionally, with lesser censorship, lesser control, lesser influence of whatever powers that be" (Al Farah, 2003).

On his part, Ballout is happy to see that Arab media have moved towards the type of service that the Arab public deserves.

"For decades," he said, "the Arab public has been treated by the media as simply a pot where news is chosen, disinfected, doctored and thrown in." And the public had to accept it. The difference today is that the public can now see news "as raw, as it is."

> We are proud to say, that this is what Al-Jazeera has started. Someone has said that Al-Jazeera has started a revolution in media, and I think this statement is born out because so many media are trying to base their ethos along the lines that Al-Jazeera has come out openly with. (Ballout, 2003)

Al-Jazeera has made television news both interesting and topical in the Arab world, through a combination of professionalism and controversy. Before Al-Jazeera went on the air in November 1996, Arab stations ignored news, concentrating on entertainment. That has changed. And more changes are afoot. Viewers were turned off because the media gave the official side. Al-Jazeera was different because it stuck to "the viewers' side, which is the most important" (Al-Farah, 2003).

PROGRAMMING ON AL-JAZEERA

Al-Jazeera gives more than the official view, deliberately offering opinions from different viewpoints. This policy is reflected in the station's motto, emblazoned in Arabic on its publicity brochure: "*al-ra'i ... wal-ra'i al-akhr*." In English it means "opinion ... and the other opinion." This is reflected in the titles of its talk programs—"The Opposite Direction," "More Than One Opinion" and "No Frontiers"—which screen about 9:30 p.m. most evenings.

Its news programs offer breadth and depth of content, with bulletins at the top of the hour plus a full hour at dawn, early morning, midday and late evening. The channel boasts two flagship investigative programs that screen after the evening talk shows about 10 p.m. All station timings are based on Saudi Arabian time, which is three hours ahead of GMT.

From Ballout's perspective, the origins of this varied programming are simple:

> To gel all this together, to come up with a good product. You need a constant

measure of freedom, for your journalists to express themselves through. And here we have the acid test. Al-Jazeera has taken the element of freedom and transparency to extremes perhaps, some people say . We believe we can still go further than that. It's just a matter of if the others can create for themselves a playing field the boundaries of which are wide enough for them to express themselves satisfactorily, to be happy with themselves in the first place as journalists and then to satisfy the audience that [we] have spoiled for all intents and purposes by getting them used to news that has been unedited, uncensored and to a very considerable extent balanced.

If that news is imperfect, that is just because of the way people are, he said. After all:

a journalist is a human being at the end of the day. He's got his loves, his likes, his hates. So perhaps it is very difficult for a journalist, like any other person, to be fair, because fairness is a matter of the heart and the spirit. I would not claim that any of my colleagues have attained a spiritual clarity. (Ballout, 2003)

What should happen, he thinks, is that a journalist can create a level playing field by being balanced. "If a journalist can manage to do that ... he would be going a long way towards doing his job," Ballout said. This search for balance is the way in which Al-Jazeera sees itself as revolutionary.

Some commentators think that station may have gone too far, complaining the station deliberately courts controversy. Some believe that the "raw, as it is" method of presenting leads to the "if it bleeds, it leads" mentality of local U.S. news. Others believe that Al-Jazeera's choice of content reflects the Arab perspective on world events, telling the truth through Arabic eyes. That means the war in Iraq was presented through the eyes of average Iraqis, not through the eyes of coalition soldiers. This is very much a different perspective.

Dr. Lena Jayyusi (2003), a Palestinian media commentator, applauds Al-Jazeera's news for its depth, breadth and analysis:

I was in Paris when the war against Iraq started. I had access to CNN and BBC there around the clock. But, despite the pleas and warnings of friends and relatives about flying back to the Gulf, and questions about whether I was worried or fearful about doing so whilst the war was taking place, I could not wait to get back, just so I could follow the war through the coverage of Al-Jazeera. Literally. I knew I would not get one-sided propaganda on this issue, and I would get to see really what was going on at ground zero. This has indeed been the case, at a time when networks like the BBC and CNN sanitize the images and reports they air. This reaction is pretty well general in the Arab world.

AL-JAZEERA AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Dr. Badran Badran (2003), another Palestinian media commentator who is an avid Al-Juazeiro viewer, believes the station leads in the area of freedom of expression:

> Arabs appreciate a station that covers all major events very well and is not afraid to tell the truth. I appreciate the station's coverage of inter-and intra-Arab issues in a transparent and open manner. I also admire the station's echoing of Arab voices against what they perceive to be an ineffective and dysfunctional Arab body politic.

Dr. Badran said he appreciated Al-Jazeera's commitment to be balanced and objective. "[But] I do not appreciate the lack of intellectualism in some of its talk shows which smell of political agitation without a real agenda" (Badran, 2003). Ballout counters that this lack of an agenda has its own value:

> I think that our *raison d'etre* is the other opinion. I believe without freedom of expression, a human being is missing. Without a human being able to express himself, in a responsible, without being told 'this is a taboo, don't touch' in other words you are telling him not to think. Ultimately people will become stale. If they can't express why should they think. Or they would think and bottle it up until such a day that they would explode. It's not only that we believe in freedom of expression, we practice it.

Beyond attracting an audience, Ballout believes that freedom of expression ultimately will profoundly impact the entire Arab world:

> I was discussing the issue of freedom of expression and democracy with a senior colleague the other day. My colleague said that Al-Jazeera will have another role, and that's leading with freedom of expression towards democratizing the community and Arab society. This idea made sense to me. I have reached the stage where I have started thinking [that] freedom of expression and democracy are one in the same, and there is hardly any difference. Because to be able to practice democracy you have to have freedom of expression, and to have freedom of expression you have to have democracy. So perhaps there is a fine line that separates freedom of expression and democracy. So in essence, for you Americans, we are practicing democracy in Qatar.

This wasn't always the case in Qatar. In 1995 Sheik Hamad, then crown prince of Qatar, overthrew his father on holiday in Europe in a bloodless coup. Analysts say the crown prince was impatient with his father's reluctance to release funds for investment. The new emir and his foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, promptly announced a new order and set out to challenge Saudi primacy in the Gulf region. They hoped that Al-Jazeera would

demonstrate the country's independence and give the small kingdom a voice in the world (Curtiss, 1998). Sheik Hamad founded Al-Jazeera by decree in February 1996 and it started broadcasting on November 1 that year. Initial funding of about $140 million was provided on the understanding that the station would be self-sustaining within five years of debut. The station operated for six hours a day initially, quickly moved to 12, and on New Years Day 1999 it began broadcasting around the clock (Zednik, 2002).

The emir, Sheik Hamad, abolished the position of minister of information in 1998. Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer Al-Thani is chairman of the Al-Jazeera board and a member of the royal family. He noted that the ministry of information in Arab countries controls the news media, observing that the West has advanced media and no information ministries.

AL-JAZEERA'S AUDIENCE

Audience data are not easily available in the Arab world, but the generally agreed figure before the 2003 Gulf War was that at least 35 million households watch Al-Jazeera regularly—a huge audience, given the large number of people in extended Middle East households.

Most households receive it via satellite. Dishes are almost ubiquitous in the Arab world—tens of millions of Arab families own them—and dishes cost less than $100. "They are as common in Cairo slums as they are in Dubai mansions. Al-Jazeera beams its signal free of charge to most countries." Outside the Arab world, in countries like the United Kingdom and United States, Al-Jazeera is usually offered as part of a subscription package (Ajami, 2001).

Managing director Al-Ali attributes the station's success to three factors. "First is the financial means, which, if available, would ensure the technical resources, which are equally important. Second is the existence of a specialized, good working team, which is under constant training. Third and most important is the availability of a margin of freedom" (Al-Farah, 2003). Al-Jazeera has earned a reputation that inspires love and hate in almost equal measures (Whitaker, 2003, p. 1). Until Al-Jazeera arrived, Arab viewers rarely recognized newscasters, though the people who introduced variety programs were well known. Al-Ali noted that in the past few years, presenters and newscasters have become famous—"like film stars"—because of their exposure on the channel.

AL-JAZEERA: THE ORGANIZATION

For a station with such a large reach and loud voice, Al-Jazeera is located in a small building with a tiny newsroom and—by Western standards—a minuscule staff. The palm trees, satellite dishes, and transmission masts outside dwarf the headquarters building in Qatar's capital, Doha. Egyptian president

Hosni Mubarak, touring the building in 2000, is said to have exclaimed: "This matchbox? All this noise is coming out of this matchbox?" (quoted in Friedman, 2001; Zednick, 2002).

The main newsroom, with about seventy workstations, measures 45 feet (14 meters) in each direction. Al-Jazeera has 755 employees worldwide compared with CNN's 4,000. Only seventy-five journalists work in the Doha newsroom, said Ballout, who is one of three people authorized to give media interviews (Ballout, 2003).

The others are managing director Al-Ali and chairman Sheik Hamad. Reporter Rick Zednik, who spent twelve days in Qatar in late 2001, described the journalists in the newsroom as a loose, sociable bunch, representing almost all twenty-two members of the Arab League. "Moroccan producers, Syrian talk show hosts, Iraqi translators, Algerian fixers, Sudanese librarians, Palestinian secretaries, and Qatari executives all speak together in Arabic" (Zednik, 2002). No one nationality dominates, though almost all are Muslims. The newsroom is a secular place, but a tiny mosque sits behind the main building.

Journalists are united through their language and religion, though not necessarily their politics. Al-Ali believes this gives his station an edge over rivals in the region. "In Iraq we know the language," Ali-Ali has said. "We know the mentality. It's very easy for us to find out things and move around there" (quoted in Whitaker, 2003, p.1). The journalists come from many different backgrounds, Al-Ali said. "There are communists, secularists and Islamicists. But they produce professional work in the end" (Al-Farah, 2003).

Dima Khatib has worked as a reporter and producer for Al-Jazeera since 1997. A Syrian, she initially worked for Swiss Radio International in Berne. On the evening we interviewed her, it was her day off and she had already spent seven hours at the station, and was about to return to translate Spanish prime minister Jose Maria Aznar's broadcast from the Azores. Khatib speaks seven languages fluently and loves working at the channel. When she started it "felt like home" because it gave her a chance to "put all her experiences together" in an Arab context. "There is no typical day in my life, actually. This would be the hardest question for me to answer."

Working for Al-Jazeera gave her huge opportunities for travel, and to show the world that many of their perceptions of Arab women were stereotypes (Khatib, 2003).

Al-Ali maintains that his journalists' style is more similar to the BBC than CNN: "We are closer to the ideas and the rhythm of the reports of the BBC." Chief editor Ibrahim Helal said Al-Jazeera was set up about the same time that the Orbit-funded BBC Arabic TV service was closed down. Al-Jazeera brought seventeen former BBC staff to Doha to help build the channel.

"We built Al-Jazeera up on the Western experience we had," said Helal, who moved from London to Qatar. "From Day One most of our editorial staff

were from this BBC environment: assignment editors, interview producers, news-gathering editors, even picture editors ... even after five years if we're in doubt in a certain situation, we convene and ask ourselves, if we were in London now what would we do?" (Sullivan, 2001). Al-Jazeera's staff are Arabs but most have had experience working with Western media—"they're ex-BBC, ex-U.S. media, but all are Arabs."

Reporters gained the professional experience from the BBC, but their background as Arabs meant they adapted this experience to the Arab world. "We know the mentality of the Arabs—but we also want the expatriate Arab audience, who are used to Western media." Al-Jazeera had worked hard to create a "culture of television journalism" in the newsroom, Helal said (quoted in Schleifer, 2000).

In an interview with Transnational Broadcasting Studies Journal, Al-Ali pointed out that chairman Sheikh Hamad had worked as a journalist for fourteen years and "thinks like a journalist" implying that he appreciated freedom of expression. "He's got good experience in the media. He's a graduate in communications from Qatar University ... [and he] thinks as a journalist, and that helps us a lot. He knows what we want exactly" (Schleifer, 2000). *Asia Times* magazine, based in Hong Kong, said Qatari officials likened their relationship with the channel to what the British Broadcasting Corporation enjoyed with the British government, but added a codicil: "It is a well-known fact that Qatari foreign minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani owns 35% of the channel and is a cousin of the Qatari emir" (Janardhan, 2002).

Al-Jazeera is not a member of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU). The channel initially applied for membership, but the union rejected it, claiming that Al-Jazeera failed to respect the union's code of honor, which includes not broadcasting material critical of any Arab head of state. Al-Ali admitted the channel tried to join in the beginning. "We would be an addition to them as much as they could be a support to us. We are not losing anything by not being part, though; there's no advantage for us" (quoted in Schleifer, 2000). By 2003, the channel was seeing its non-membership as a badge of honor, an indication that it was not part of the broadcasting establishment.

Al-Jazeera's chairman, Sheik Hamad, has maintained that the channel is going in the same direction as the state of Qatar. He cited elections for a chamber of commerce, plans for Parliamentary elections, and municipal elections with women's participation as candidates and voters as recent examples of modernization. Qatar was the first Gulf nation to hold elections for municipal positions. "I think this direction corresponds with the direction of the media, be it Al-Jazeera or lifting censorship on local Qatari newspapers. The two go together in this stage, and I think the direction of Al-Jazeera is a natural one that corresponds with the strategy Qatar is taking," Sheikh Hamad said (Sullivan, 2001).

AL-JAZEERA COPYCATS

With the onset of conflict in Iraq, it appears that several other broadcasters are looking at recreating the Al-Jazeera formula. Late in 2002 the U.S. Congress approved $30 million for creation of the Middle East Television Network (METN). The Arabic channel is said to be the brainchild of Kenneth Tomlinson, president of the United States Broadcasting Board of Governors in charge of radio and television broadcasts targeting foreign audiences. Tomlinson said a U.S. state-run television broadcast via satellite was "an important step towards reaching the people in the Arab world with accurate news and the message of freedom and democracy" (Tomlinson, 2003).

Abu Dhabi Television, the flagship of Emirates Media Incorporated, has an extensive news operation that gained much attention from Arab viewers because of its coverage of the Intifada violence from September 2001. It set up a bureau in a prime location in central Baghdad several months before the war started. The station also distributed $8 million worth of backpack video equipment with satellite uplinks to people on the ground in Iraq. Many of these people were not trained as reporters but they have managed to get some impressive footage. These strategic moves have meant the channel has been able to provide superior coverage of the war in the capital, especially after Iraq evicted CNN's four journalists soon after war started.

Late in 2002, the Saudi-owned Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC), with headquarters in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, announced the formation of Al-Arabiya, a twenty-four hour news channel. It launched on February 20, 2003, broadcasting for twelve hours a day, and sees Al-Jazeera as its main competition. Salah Negm, head of news at MBC, said journalists with TV experience at an international level were rare in the Arab world. "The industry is not yet mature and the training in most of the mass communication schools is not up to the required standards," he said. Negm worked for Al-Jazeera from July 1996 until September 2001. The $300 million investment in Al-Arabia is said to come from private Saudi, Kuwaiti, and Lebanese businessmen, but the Saudi government, through parent company MBC, will be able to exercise influence (Khalaf, 2003).

In Beirut, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) and the London-based newspaper Al-Hayat will spend $12 million a year in a joint venture in which the newspaper's sixty-nine correspondents supply news for LBC International's three, half-hour bulletins each day. Jihad Khazen, Al-Hayat's founding editor-in-chief, and LBCI's managing editor Salameh Nemett said if the venture succeeded another twenty-four hour news channel could emerge. Saudi money is also partly behind this partnership (Khalaf, 2003).

For his part, Ballout is not worried. "If imitation is any indication of respect, then Al-Jazeera is doing well. This little bit of competition is always healthy."

THE ECONOMICS OF AL-JAZEERA

One key issue in the drive for editorial independence will be revenue streams for all stations. Despite the fact that Al-Jazeera has the most popular news and is the second most-watched pan-Arab station, it generated only about $66 million in advertising revenue in 2002. By contrast, the Lebanese Broadcasting Company (LBC)—the region's most-watched network—attracted about $93 million. MBC generated about $300 million, and LBCSAT generated about $66 million (Pan Arab Research Center, 2003).

Most Arab stations earn about 90% of their revenue from advertising. But commercials account for only 40% of Al-Jazeera's revenues. The rest comes from renting equipment, cable subscription fees, and selling programs and videotapes. Three-minute sections of Bin Laden footage have reportedly fetched as much as $250,000 apiece. As of early 2002 the station operated without government subsidies, Al-Ali said (Zednik, 2002).

Yet this is not the same as paying for itself. Seven years after launching and sixteen months after it was cut loose from the emir's financial umbilical cord—and despite a huge audience of at least thirty-five million households—Al-Jazeera was not making money as of early 2003. "We have not yet reached the profit-making phase," said Al-Ali in January 2003. "In fact, we are still trying to break even by covering our expenses from our work as much as possible and by diversifying the sources of income" (Al-Farah, 2003). The sale of footage from the Afghan conflict to other television channels has boosted revenue, as should footage from the Iraqi war.

Meanwhile, some major advertisers operate an undeclared boycott, Al-Ali admitted. "Advertising in the Middle East is not based on the commercial, it is based on the political," he said, though he declined to give more details. Others blame Saudi influence and moves by the Gulf Co-operation Council against the channel (Whitaker, 2003, p. 2).

In another, earlier interview, Al-Ali said the channel needed to change the mentality of the businessman in the region. "Usually when you have a large audience, all the advertising companies come to you. Here, all the advertising businesses are impacted by political considerations; they think about the political side rather than business side. I think this will change, just like the freedom of the press has changed on the editorial side" (quoted in Schleifer, 2000).

Regional and multinational companies tend to avoid ruffling the feathers of host governments, so they also have not bought advertising. Al-Ali admitted that Saudi Arabian companies had tried to influence Al-Jazeera's coverage by cutting advertising budgets for the station or threatening to do so. The tactic had no effect, he said. "We would lose our credibility with the audience." PepsiCo and General Electric canceled advertising campaigns worth a combined $3 million in 2001, Al-Ali said (Zednik, 2002). Some marketing people have suggested taking

advantage of the Al-Jazeera brand, probably one of the most valuable in the Middle East. A tobacco company wanted to use the channel to sell Al-Jazeera cigarettes but that idea was dropped. Branded sunglasses might be a safer option, marketing staff suggested (Whitaker, 2003, p. 2).

Al-Jazeera still has big plans, despite cash shortfalls. On March 16, 2003, it announced that an English-language Web site would be launched that month, just more than two years after launch of *aljazeera.net*. The new site debuted ten days later, presumably hastened by the need to cover the Iraq war (see http://english.aljazeera.net/), and immediately became a target for hackers, which shut the site down almost as soon as it opened.

Al-Jazeera also said it would be broadcasting in English early in 2004. It remains to be seen whether the latter occurs, because other broadcast plans announced years earlier have failed to materialize. Late in 2001, Al-Ali announced plans to launch new Arabic-language networks, including a business news channel in cooperation with CNBC and a documentary channel along the lines of National Geographic or Discovery.

In January 2003 Al-Ali repeated the plan to establish an Arabic-language documentary channel by the end of that year, along with opening bureaus in Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur (Al-Farah, 2003), respectively the capitals of Indonesia and Malaysia. Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population. The channel has signed an agreement with the BBC to set up a training center, because Al-Ali appreciates the importance of training. To stay at the top, he said, "we have to keep up with the latest in the technological and technical fields and raise the efficiency of the technicians and employees."

CONCLUSION

Despite the number of pretenders Al-Jazeera intends to stay at the top. It has the advantage of a good reputation among Arab viewers, the benefit of being the first twenty-four hour news and talk station in the Arab world, and dedicated and well-trained staff.

The major issue will be its ability to pay for itself and to keep key people. Despite having a smaller staff budget compared with CNN and BBC World, broadcasting remains an expensive business. Small staff numbers mean that reporters work long hours, and it may prove difficult to retain staff over the long term if they are tired, and if richer channels come by with checkbooks open.

Regardless of whether reviewers have been negative or positive, it is safe to say Al-Jazeera has attracted great attention, putting tiny Qatar with its population of perhaps 600,000 on the world map. And, while some critics object to the "how" and the "what" that the stations put on air, those who work at Al-Jazeera believe in their mission.

"The journalist always makes a difference. From a basic reporter up to the

editor-in-chief, everyone makes a difference. We feel that we are making a difference, especially in view of how the traditional Arab media has been for the past four or five decades," said Ballout. Al-Jazeera and its staff, he believes, are a breath of fresh air. They are happy to be creating ripples in the stagnant pond of Arabic broadcasting.

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