

**Dispatches from the front:
War reporting as news genre, with special reference to news flow
to South African newspapers during *Operation Iraqi Freedom***

NICOLENE BOTHA



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**Promoter: Professor Lizette Rabe
Co-promoter: Professor Leopold Scholtz**

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I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature: Date:

Summary

During Gulf War II, the American government implemented new media policies which, due to their potentially manipulative impact, became a subject of concern to academics, social commentators and the media alike. Key to these policies was the Department of Defense's Embedded Media Program which allowed hundreds of selected reporters to accompany US forces to the war front. The US openly tried to win international support for the war, and critics felt that this policy was designed to saturate the media with reports supporting the American point of view. This study examines these policies, the history of war reporting as a separate news genre, as well as the fluctuating relations between the US military and the media. Because of the US media policies, the fact that only one South African newspaper reporter was in Iraq during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* phase of the war and South African newspapers' consequent reliance on foreign news sources, there was a real possibility that the American position would be propagated in the local press. To test whether this was the case, the way the war was reported on in four leading South African newspapers is examined in terms of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing. Using an adapted version of Propp's fairytale analysis as a standard, it compares the slant and content of the South African coverage to the way four senior US government officials presented the war. Also, the coverage of the newspapers is compared to one another. The analyses indicate that while most of the information published by the newspapers came from American sources, the news reports generally did not mirror the US standpoint, but instead criticised President Bush and the war on Iraq. Neither the frequency of the newspapers, nor its cultural background showed any correlation with the way the war was depicted by the different newspapers. It is therefore concluded that while the US might have been successful in their attempt to "occupy the media territory" in terms of sources cited, they were not able to sway the opinion of the South African press in their favour. However, the US is aware of these failures and plans to rectify the mistakes made in Gulf War II by means of proactive global operations started in times of peace.

Opsomming

Tydens die Tweede Golfoorlog het die Amerikaanse regering 'n nuwe mediabeleid ingestel wat weens die potensieel manipulerende impak daarvan 'n bron van kommer vir akademië, sosiale kommentators en die media self geword het. Sentraal tot hierdie nuwe beleid was die Departement van Verdediging se sogenaamde "Embedded Media Program" wat honderde uitgesoekte joernaliste toegelaat het om Amerikaanse magte na die oorlogsfront te vergesel. Die VSA het openlik probeer om internasionale steun vir die oorlog te werf en kritici het gevoel dat dié beleid ontwerp is om die media met nuusberigte wat die Amerikaanse standpunt steun, te versadig. Hierdie studie ondersoek dié beleid, die geskiedenis van oorlogsverslaggewing as afsonderlike nuus-genre, asook die wisselvallige verhouding tussen die Amerikaanse weermag en die media. Weens die Amerikaanse mediabeleid, die feit dat slegs een Suid-Afrikaanse koerantverslaggewer tydens die *Operation Iraqi Freedom* fase van die oorlog in Irak was en Suid-Afrikaanse koerante gevolglik van buitelandse nuusbronne afhanklik was, was daar 'n werklike moontlikheid dat die Amerikaanse posisie deur die plaaslike pers gepropageer kon word. Om te toets of dit die geval was, is die manier waarop in vier vooraanstaande Suid-Afrikaanse koerante oor die oorlog berig is, ondersoek in terme van hekwagterskap, agendastelling en raamskepping. Deur 'n aangepaste weergawe van Propp se feëverhaalanalise as maatstaf te gebruik, is die neiging en inhoud van die Suid-Afrikaanse dekking vergelyk met die manier waarop vier senior Amerikaanse amptenare die oorlog voorgehou het. Die koerante se dekking is ook met mekaar vergelyk. Die analises wys dat hoewel die meeste van die inligting wat deur die koerante gepubliseer is van Amerikaanse bronne kom, die nuusberigte oor die algemeen nie die Amerikaanse standpunt weerspieël nie, maar eerder krities teenoor President Bush en die oorlog teen Irak is. Nie die frekwensie van die koerante of die kulturele agtergrond daarvan het enige korrelasie getoon met die manier waarop die oorlog deur die verskillende koerante uitgebeeld is nie. Die gevolgtrekking word gemaak dat hoewel die VSA moontlik daarin geslaag het om die "mediaterrein te okkupeer" in terme van aangehaalde bronne, het hulle nie daarin geslaag om die Suid-Afrikaanse pers se opinie in hul guns te swaai nie. Die VSA is egter bewus van die foute wat tydens die Tweede Golfoorlog gemaak is en beplan om dit deur middel van proaktiewe globale operasies in vredestryd reg te stel.

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*There are no hard distinctions
between what is real and what is unreal,
nor between what is true and what is false.
A thing is not necessarily either true or false;
it can be both true and false.*

**Harold Pinter
Nobel Prize in Literature (2005)**

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Problem statement and motivation

During Gulf War II¹, the United States (US) government implemented new media policies, which, due to their potentially manipulative impact, became a subject of concern to academics, social commentators and the media alike (see Diemand, 2003; Hafez, 2003; Miskin, Rayner & Lalic, 2003; Robinson, Goddard, Brown & Taylor, 2006).

This study will examine these policies, the history of relations between the US and the media in times of war, and will attempt to determine whether and to what extent the American point of view was reflected in reports published by four leading South African newspapers during the *Operation Iraqi Freedom* phase of the Gulf War II.

The key concern of detractors of the new US media policies centred around the Department of Defense's Embedded Media Program which allowed hundreds of selected reporters to accompany the US forces to the war front to "tell the factual story – good or bad – before others seed the media with disinformation and distortions, as they most certainly will continue to do" (Rumsfeld, 2003a). The US made no secret of its desire to gain the support of the international community for the American led war on Iraq, and critics were of the opinion that this policy in particular was designed to saturate the international media with news reports biased towards the American point of view (Diemand, 2003; Miskin *et al.*, 2003).

Being geographically and politically removed from the conflict, the South African media was in a good position to bring balance through impartiality into reports, but with only three local reporters in Iraq, and then for a very brief period (Schoonakker, 2003), there was an increased likelihood of the American stance being promoted through reports received from foreign sources. Apart from Bonny Schoonakker who reported for the *Sunday Times* from Baghdad during the first weeks of the war, South African newspapers relied on news agencies (*Business Day*, 2003), foreign media reports and the views of local experts, few of whom had ever set foot in Iraq.² Questions were therefore raised about the content of the reports published by newspapers which did not have the opportunity to witness the events first-hand and had to publish information provided by journalists embedded with and contractually bound to the US Department of Defense.

¹ The name "Gulf War II" is popularly used by both the military and the media to refer to the 2003 US led war in Iraq, and is therefore preferred in this study even though in the Middle East the war is popularly referred to as Gulf War III – Gulf War I being the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s. This study focuses on *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, but the term "Gulf War II" is used where the timeframe referred to transcends this phase of the war.

² René Horn and Arnold Spangenberg of SABC2 were the only other South African reporters in Iraq – and then very briefly – but they represented television broadcasting and not the newspaper industry.

1.2 Preliminary reading

When this study commenced in 2003, no scholarly research had been done on this issue in South Africa, but communication scientist Kai Hafez of University of Erfurt, Germany (2003) had conducted a preliminary study on the impartiality and objectivity of the media of countries that did or did not participate in the war in Iraq, namely the US, United Kingdom (UK), and Germany.

Hafez (2003) indicated that in Germany, which was not involved militarily, there was little evidence of any mechanism that "manufactured consent" about the war:

governments have a political target that they follow; the media work according to their own inborn ideological and professional or commercial orientation; and the public decides on matters of war and peace according to their own values and attitudes that are rooted in the political culture and history of the relevant country.

In the US, which was the main military player during the war, the media as well as the public moved closer to the government's stance, but in the UK, which fully supported the US, a pattern very similar to that of Germany was exhibited, with little interdependence between government, media and public opinion (Hafez, 2003). The study determined that it is not possible to establish a general and direct correlation between a government's involvement in a war, and the support to the war effort of that particular country's media and citizens.

However, in their report to the Australian Parliament, Sarah Miskin of the Politics and Public Administration Group, and Laura Rayner and Maria Lalic of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group of the Department of the Parliamentary Library of Australia (2003) expressed concern that media and public opinion about the war might be influenced by the US military's invitation to the media to join them on the battlefield. Referring to past wars, they felt that the privilege of accompanying the US military might impair the media's objectivity and result in self-censorship: "The result is that the public may not be offered the alternative views that would help them to decide whether or not to support a conflict".

Due to the recency of the war in Iraq when the preliminary reading was done in 2003, no South African studies were yet available about news coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, nor had any books been published on the subject. This situation made it pressing to try to understand

- the US government's media policies during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*,
- the history of the relationship between the US military and the media,
- the history of the media policies and how they came into being, but also
- how these policies translated into reports that were eventually printed by South African newspapers.

Since 2003, only a few journal articles and book chapters have dealt with news coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* by the South African media. None of these

qualitative studies made the connection between coverage and the US government's concerted effort to win global support for the war effort.

Head of the media section of University of Cape Town's Centre for Film and Media Ian Glenn (2004:128-131) analysed South African and international media coverage of the war and how it was received by viewers. He found that South African coverage was surprisingly balanced and politically in the middle of the spectrum, but remarked that it might be argued that people with strong political feelings might find fair and balanced reporting less compelling.

In their analysis of war coverage, Arnold de Beer, Herman Wasserman and Nicolene Botha of the Journalism Department at the University of Stellenbosch (2004:185-186) also remarked on how balanced South African coverage was, and noted that although South Africans were mostly against the American attacks on Iraq, coverage – even by some of the most critical South African newspapers – was not biased against the United States.

Christine Buchinger, Herman Wasserman and Arnold de Beer of the Journalism Department at the University of Stellenbosch (2004) asked how the South African media had fared in its coverage of the war, and whether or not it was influenced by the Western sources from which it obtained much of its information. They too came to the conclusion that the South African television broadcasters kept to the centre of the political spectrum (Buchinger *et al.*, 2004:220). This study focused only on televised reports, and not on newspaper coverage.

Leopold Scholtz, military expert, Professor Extraordinaire of History at University of Stellenbosch and Deputy Editor, *Die Burger*, (2005:34-38) touched on the "most interesting experiment ... namely to 'embed' journalists with certain units" in an article on the US military strategy during Gulf War II, of which the policy of embedding formed a part. Scholtz (2005:38) came to the conclusion that

Allowing the independent media to be embedded may have been an attempt to co-opt them in a subtle state propaganda campaign. If so, it failed, because the journalists, by and large, kept their professionalism and reported mostly objectively, including writing or saying things that were unflattering to their hosts.

1.3 Research problem, research questions and hypothesis

The aim of this study is to test the hypothesis that the novel media policies implemented by the US during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* had resulted in pro-American coverage by South African newspapers.

In order to achieve this objective, questions about the origin and history of war reporting as a news genre will be answered, with special reference to the historical relationship between the US military and the media, the policies that shaped this relationship and the policies during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. The origin, flow and content of Gulf War II reports will be examined in terms of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing, especially as they were published by four leading South African

newspapers. An attempt will be made to determine whether either the frequency or the cultural background of the South African newspapers (determined in terms of language) had an effect on the coverage.

It is expected that this study will show that the US message about the war in Iraq had largely found its way to South African newspapers, resulting in coverage leaning towards the American government's point of view.

1.4 Research design and methodology

To understand the current relationship between the military and the media, a media historiographical study will be done on the origin and evolution of war reporting as a distinctive news genre. This will be augmented with a focused examination of the interaction between the media and the US military during various conflicts since the American Civil War.

This examination will be elucidated with the views of a number of international war correspondents who personally experienced the outcome of the US media policy during different conflicts, namely Peter Arnett, Paul Watson, Martin Savidge, Robert Fisk, and Bonny Schoonakker. The US media policy will be assessed, with special reference to the Embedded Media Program, its ground rules and the media boot camp.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will be used to analyse the content of all *Operation Iraqi Freedom* news reports published by the leading English and Afrikaans daily and Sunday newspapers, namely *The Star* (English, daily), and *Die Burger* (Afrikaans, daily), as well as *Sunday Times* (English, Sunday), and *Rapport* (Afrikaans, Sunday) between 21 March 2003 (the day after the start of the *Operation Iraqi Freedom*) and until the first publication date of the respective newspapers after the end of major combat operations was announced. This will be done to establish whether and to what extent the US's take on the war found its way to South Africa. The newspaper reports will be classified into news agency reports, reports written by own reporters or local experts, and reports compiled from various news sources.

The content analyses will be done using selected theoretical models of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing as parameters. Russian linguist Vladimir Propp's (1968) fairytale analysis will be employed to enumerate elements in the news agenda of major role players during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* for the purpose of analysis.

1.5 Theoretical background

Three classical models of news theory will be employed in this study to examine the origin, flow and content of reports on *Operation Iraqi Freedom* that were published in four major South African newspapers:

The first model is American Public Communications Professor Pamela Shoemaker's (1991) model of gatekeeping. This model is based on a compilation of various models of gatekeeping, most of which are founded on the "model of selective gatekeeping" of the Norwegian Peace and Conflict researchers Johan Galtung and Marie Holmboe Ruge (1965), which in turn originated from the gatekeeper model of David Manning White, (1950), a former journalist and mass communications scientist and educator. Although

earlier research focused on individual news judgements (Dimitrikova, Connolly-Ahern, Williams, Kaid & Reid, 2003:402; Kim, 2002:432), this study will examine the extent to which these judgements were transferred through the news channel.

The second model to be used for the content analysis of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* coverage is the 1972 agendasetting approach of communication and public opinion researcher Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, communication historian and theorist, as expanded by McCombs (1999). Agendasetting refers to the mass media's tendency to pay attention to certain issues, but neglect others. The expanded model (McCombs, 1999) to be used in this study identifies two levels of agendasetting:

- The first level of agendasetting is concerned with the salience of news *issues*, or "objects", while
- the second level of agendasetting pertains to the salience of the *attributes* of news topics.

The third model that will be employed in the analysis of the war reports is framing. Although there is much contention about the exact nature of framing (Roefs, 1998; Scheufele, 1999:103), it is generally accepted to be related to the model of agendasetting, and especially to second level agendasetting. Framing can be described as the presentation of selected elements of a news story in such a way that a particular view of the problem, or causality, or moral evaluation, or course of action is promoted (Entman, 1993:52)

A conspicuous frame that emerged from *Operation Iraqi Freedom* media coverage is what is called the Hollywoodisation (Knight, 2004) of the war. This refers to the many ways *Operation Iraqi Freedom* was presented to and interpreted by the public as an event akin to a Hollywood action-adventure with a hero fighting against an evil empire to save the world. Because of indications by US military sources that "storytelling" is considered to be a useful tool for influencing public opinion (Casebeer & Russell, 2005), a structure of story elements was sought for the analysis of the story frame. Such a structure was found in the seminal fairytale analysis of Vladimir Propp (1968), which will be employed not only to examine the proposed news frame, but also as a yardstick against which agendasetting will be measured as part of the process of news flow.

1.6 Overview of Chapters

Chapter 1: In the introductory chapter the research problem will be stated, the motivation for the study will be provided and the preliminary literature study will be addressed. A brief synopsis of the research design and methodology will be given, as well as an outline of the chapters of the study.

Chapter 2: Key concepts of this study will be explained and the theoretical framework for the study will be provided, with special reference to the models of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing that will be used in Chapter 7 to analyse the news flow during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* from the sources of information to the South African newspapers. This chapter will also explain Propp's fairytale analysis and how it can be applied to the analysis of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* news coverage.

Chapter 3: An overview of the literature available on gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* will be given, and the use of Propp's fairytale model to analyse news reports will be discussed.

Chapter 4: The design of the study and the methodology to be followed will be described.

Chapter 5: The historical evolution of war reporting as a news genre will be studied, as well as the inevitable interaction between the military and the media. The media policies and relationships between the US military and the media during conflicts from the American Civil War to the war in Afghanistan preceding Gulf War II will subsequently be investigated. This will be augmented with the views of renowned war correspondents.

Chapter 6: The intricacies of the US strategic communication network during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* will be investigated. The US Department of Defense's media policy will be described, with special reference to the Embedded Media Program, its ground rules and the media boot camp. The advantages and disadvantages of the position of embedded reporters will be weighed against that of unilateral reporters. This will be supplemented with the views of war correspondents.

Chapter 7: The content of all news reports pertaining to *Operation Iraqi Freedom* published by four South African newspapers during the first weeks of the war will be analysed in terms of gatekeeping, agendasetting, and framing and compared to analysis of public addresses and news briefings by four prominent US government officials.

Chapter 8: Conclusions about the results of the analysis will be drawn, on the basis of which recommendations will be made.

1.7 Summary

In this study the potentially manipulative media policies implemented by the US government and military during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* will be examined. The history of relations between the US and the media in times of war will be investigated by means of a historiographical study, and an attempt will ultimately be made to determine whether and to what extent the American point of view was reflected by the South African press.

Initially, no scholarly literature was available on the South African media's coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, and there still are very few completed studies on the subject. Since 2003, more international studies had become available on gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing in coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, but none of these dealt with the interaction between US media policies and coverage in South Africa. This study will therefore contribute to the knowledge base of international news flow.

Using the classical news theory models of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing as functions of the news flow process as parameters, the origin, flow and content of reports on *Operation Iraqi Freedom* that were published in South African newspapers will be analysed through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Elements of

Propp's fairytale analysis will be used as a standard to quantify newspaper reports in terms of the selected news theories.

* * * * *

In Chapter 2, the theoretical models of gatekeeping, framing and agendasetting, with special reference to research on news coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* will be examined. Propp's fairytale analysis and how it can be applied to the news coverage will also be discussed.

Chapter 2

Theoretical background

2.1 Introduction

The US government actively promoted certain views of Gulf War II by using the media as a strategic weapon (Hill, 1997:25; Belknap, 2002:110; Martin, 2003:1, 9; Lewis, 2006:149). To determine whether and to what extent this portrayal of the war and especially of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* had found its way to South African newspapers, the theoretical models of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing that will be used to analyse news documents in Chapter 7, are discussed in Chapter 2. Additionally, because of the alleged "Hollywoodisation" of the war (Knight, 2004; Watkins, 2007) Propp's fairytale analysis is examined and an argument is made for its application to the analysis of coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*.

2.2 From practice to theory

Journalism is inherently about the creation and distribution of meaning in society, and as such a study of journalism – and therefore war reporting as a genre of journalism – necessarily has much in common with communication studies (Skinner, Gasher & Compton, 2001:342, 345).

Canadian media and mass communication experts David Skinner, Michael Gasher and James Compton (2001:349) state that

Journalists do not simply "find" meaning in the raw data – "the facts", interviews, etc. – they use to write stories. Rather, they create meaning out of, or from, this information ... from choosing to cover one event over another, to the choice of language used in a story, to where the story is finally placed in the newspaper or programme line-up, news production is a complex process of selection through which journalists produce meaning.

American former journalist and mass communication scholar Peter Parisi (1992:8) explains that from the perspective of critical or cultural studies

news writing represents a set of choices: choices that (a) define an issue as newsworthy and certain questions as relevant; (b) admit, mute, or reject information, sources, and perspectives; and (c) decide the level and extent of detail and "color" with which to render a person, community, region, or issue.

These choices can be described by the models of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing:

- (a) *gatekeepers* define the newsworthiness and salience of an issue,
- (b) *news agendas* is the result of admission and/or negation of certain issues, and consist of
- (c) a series of news stories portrayed in particular *frames*, which are determined by detail, colour and emphasis of the report.

These three models of news theory will be used in this study to analyse news on *Operation Iraqi Freedom*.

2.3 News flow and gatekeeping

The theory of gatekeeping goes hand in hand with news flow, as gatekeepers are responsible for the flow of news from its sources to the consumer. Almost half a century ago, Journalism and Mass Communication Professor John T. McNelly (1959:102-103) addressed the fact that between the event and the audience, news flows through the hands of many gatekeepers, who may be correspondents, news bureau personnel or various levels of editors. This observation is still true today.

McNelly's (1959) model illustrates how a foreign news event might be covered by a correspondent, who sends it to a regional bureau, where it is shortened before it is passed to the agency's central bureau. At the central bureau it may be altered or combined with another story before it is transferred through to the national bureau of a country, where it may once again be changed before it is dispatched to a newspaper or radio station that may modify it again, or even reject it, before publication or broadcast. The audience, in turn, may also act as gatekeepers by passing snippets of information on to other people. Throughout the process, feedback in various guises may or may not have a further effect on the manipulation of the news report.

Since McNelly's (1959) study, very little has changed in the way international news flow is perceived (Hjarvard, 1995):

News flow analysis has implicitly or explicitly understood the news process to be a question about selection, at least in a very general sense of the term; for empirical analysis the point of departure has been a simple, but important observation: international news ... [is] transported around the globe between countries and between social actors and the volume and content of this flow is continuously subject to a kind of selection process: something is added, removed or changed from the flow depending on the countries and actors involved.

In 1965 Galtung and Ruge identified factors used in the selection of news in the news flow process, and subsequent studies (e.g. Boyd-Barrett, 1980; Fenby, 1986; Friedland, 1992; quoted by Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1995) determined that these and other "gatekeeping factors" were predominantly in the hands Western news agencies, particularly in the US. By 1995 the US still dominated the news scene, but other regions, including Africa, were starting to partake in the previously North/West oriented and geographically separated news flow in an attempt to provide a "contra-flow" to the major Western news flow (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1995). This development did not go far and today international news flow is no more symmetrical than 30 years ago, with the US still at the centre of news output (Kleinsteuber, 2002:9).

Because of the inseparable bond between news flow and gatekeeping McNelly's model was integrated by Shoemaker into her 1991 model of gatekeeping – which will be used in the present study.

The term "gatekeeper" was first used in 1947 by the American social psychologist Kurt Lewin who studied the way food was selected for household consumption (Lewin, 1947:145). He referred to the person who selected the food as the "gatekeeper", adding that the theory of gates "holds not only for food channels but also for the travelling of a news item through certain communication channels in a group" (Lewin, 1947:145).

In 1950, White used this idea in his study of the selection processes involved in the flow of news from the source to the audience past the various filters or "gatekeepers" (White, 1950:66). This made him the first scholar to study gatekeeping in the journalistic sense of the word (Zhou, 2001). White specifically studied what he called "the last 'gatekeeper'" – a wire-editor, referred to as Mr Gates, who was responsible for the selection of national and international news for the front and jump pages of the newspaper (White, 1950:67). White concluded that the communication of news is a highly subjective exercise, closely associated with the gatekeeper's own experiences, attitudes and expectations (White, 1950:72).

This study was replicated in 1966 by American communication scientist Paul B. Snider, who found that since White's study, little had changed: "Mr Gates still picks the stories he likes and believes his readers want" (Snider, 1995:286). However, the nature of the news had changed, as in 1966 the press was more interested in hard news and international conflicts than was the case in 1950.

Many researchers have since re-examined Lewin's "gates", including various other elements that have an impact on the flow of news, such as Gieber (1964), Bass (1969), Brown (1979), Gans (1980), Chang (2004), Berkowitz (1990) and Roberts (2006).

Sociologist Walter Gieber, as one example, found that as gatekeepers, wire editors' selection of news was not driven by his feelings about the social meaning or impact of the news items, but rather by pressures of getting the news copy in the paper – although his employer's values did play a significant role (Gieber, 1964:219). Gieber focused on reporters and their sources as two gatekeepers in the channel of news flow, but he, like White, came to the conclusion that the news is "very subjective", stating that news does not have an independent existence and that it is in fact the product of the members of a "news-gathering bureaucracy" (Gieber, 1964: 218, 223). News, Gieber declared, is what the media make it.

2.3.1 Selective gatekeeping

Galtung and Ruge's (1965) model of selective gatekeeping addresses an aspect of news flow and gatekeeping that was largely ignored by most other gatekeeping models, namely the criteria used by gatekeepers to select or reject news items to, referred to as "news values" (McQuail & Windahl, 1989:105).

In 1965, Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge from the Peace Research Institute in Oslo studied the international flow of news about three conflicted regions, namely Cuba, Congo, and Cyprus, to Norway (Galtung & Ruge, 1965:64-91). Extrapolating factors identified as conducive to attracting attention on a psychological level, Galtung and Ruge postulated eight hypotheses about news selection. Using radio signals as metaphor, they referred to frequency, amplitude, unambiguity, meaningfulness,

consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, and composition. These factors were regarded as internationally applicable, but the authors granted that the selection of events as news may also be influenced by culture-bound factors, which *for the Norwegian community* included reference to elite nations, to elite people, to people, and to something negative. The authors stressed that these twelve factors are mere hypotheses and that "no claim is made for completeness" (Galtung & Ruge, 1965:64).

In the light of Galtung and Ruge's own ambivalence about the news values that they have identified, it is remarkable that over the past four decades this work has consistently been embraced as the Holy Writ of newsworthiness. Virtually all discussions of news values refer to this list, whether or not such studies pertain to international news flow as the 1965 study did (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001:264).

News scientists have since attempted to produce alternative lists of news values (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001:266). For example, in his study of domestic news German-born American sociologist and educator Herbert Gans (1980:146) found that journalists use a range of interrelated considerations to determine the newsworthiness of a story. He divided these criteria into three groups, namely

- substantive considerations, which deal with content and newsworthiness;
- product considerations, which deal with the quality of the information; and
- competitive considerations, which deal with a story's worth measured against the rivalry between news organisations to find the most suitable news.

Gans (1980:147-152) further identified four substantive considerations used to judge the *importance* of a news story:

- rank in government and other hierarchies,
- impact on the nation and national interest,
- impact on large numbers of people, and
- significance for the past and future.

Gans (1980:155-157) also referred to *interesting* stories, which generally are what he called "people stories". Whereas "important" stories often tend to be "bad", "interesting" stories are generally "good" or at least "light". News selectors are inclined to choose these stories based on personal reaction, but a number of story types are more likely to be included in a publication, namely:

- people stories,
- role reversals,
- human-interest stories,
- exposé anecdotes,
- hero stories and
- "gee-whiz" stories.

One of the more recent studies of news values is that of British journalism scholars Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill (2001:261-280), who examined three British daily

newspapers to establish which news values are currently used the gatekeepers of the British press. Using the news values proposed by Galtung and Ruge (1965:4-91), they analysed 1 276 news articles to determine what may or may not have led to their selection (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001:66-267).

While recognising that many of Galtung and Ruge's news values still remain valid, they preferred to rename some of them (Harcup & O'Neill 2001:77). In their updated list of ten contemporary news values, Harcup and O'Neill (2001:79) found that generally news stories had to address one or more of the following issues to be considered newsworthy by gatekeepers:

- **Entertainment.** *Stories concerning sex, show business, human interest, animals, an unfolding drama, or offering opportunities for humorous treatment, entertaining photographs or witty headlines.* This includes press conferences of Iraqi Minister of Information, Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf, also known as "Comical Ali" because of the way he "bemused the West with his litany of claimed victories over coalition troops, and amused Arabs with his bottomless dictionary of insults". It would also include stories about the fate of the animals at the Baghdad zoo (Russell, 2003); and the drama of 12 year old Ali Ismaeel Abbas who lost his arms and received burns over 60% of his body when his home was bombed by the coalition forces (*The Star*, 2003a).
- **The power elite.** *Stories concerning powerful individuals, organisations or institutions.* In the context of Gulf War II, that would refer to news about people like US President George W. Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, about organisations such as the United Nations, the US Department of Defense, as well as some of the most influential media corporations, such as CNN and the BBC.



Figure 1. Iraqi Information Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf (Photo: CBS, 2003a).



Figure 2. George W. Bush delivering his 2003 State of the Nation address (Photo: CBC, 2003).

- **Relevance.** *Stories about issues, groups and nations perceived to be relevant to the audience.* South Africa is a remarkably Americanised country, especially in consumerism and the arts (Cuthbertson, 1998). According to Bush there is "a vital and strong relationship" between the two countries (The White House, 2003), making matters of concern to the US important to South Africa. This, however, did not necessarily amount to favourable coverage of the US (De Beer, Wasserman & Botha, 2004:179-187).



Figure 3. *Politically and economically, there are strong ties between the USA and South Africa (Photo: The White House, 2003).*

- **Good news.** *Stories with particular positive overtones such as rescues or cures.* One of the most significant events during the war was the now controversial rescue of Army Pfc Jessica Lynch from the Saddam Hospital in Nasirya, which prompted newspapers world-wide to wax lyrical about both her bravery and the heroism of her rescuers (Lamprecht, 2003a:8).



Figure 4. *Army Pfc Jessica Lynch (Photo: CNN, 2003a).*

- **Bad news.** *Stories with particular negative overtones, such as conflict or tragedy.* In times of conflict, definitions of "good" or "bad" news depends on point of view. Caskets draped with the US flag arriving at air bases is clearly bad news to the US (Milbank, 2003). Few of these images were published, as the Pentagon instructed US military bases that "there will be no arrival ceremonies for, or media coverage of, deceased military personnel returning to or departing from Ramstein (Germany) airbase or Dover (Del.) base, to include interim stops" (Milbank, 2003). These are the most important ports for the returning remains of soldiers who died in Iraq. Such images were the source of great joy amongst people harbouring anti-American sentiments (*Die Burger*, 2003b:11).



Figure 5. *A rare photograph of flag-draped coffins inside a cargo plane at Kuwait International Airport. Tami Silico, the contract-worker who photographed the coffins, was released from her position shortly after the publication of this image (Photo: Bernton, 2003).*

- **Magnitude.** *Stories that are perceived as sufficiently significant either in the numbers of people involved or in potential impact.* The "shock and awe" attack was newsworthy not only because of the governmental and media hype beforehand, but also for the more than 1 300 missiles and bombs that were exploded by the US military forces on selected targets in and around Baghdad on the night of 20 March 2003 (*Rapport*, 2003a).



Figure 6. *The commencement of Gulf War II, designed to cause "shock and awe"* (Photo: BBC News, 2003b).

- **Surprise.** *Stories that have an element of surprise and/or contrast.* Although president George W. Bush already enjoys "important person" status in terms of newsworthiness, his Thanksgiving visit to his troops in Baghdad (Lamprecht, 2003b:6) was a fail-safe move to ensure wide media coverage, especially because of the clandestine nature of the visit.



Figure 7. *President Bush serves his troops* (Photo: Associated Press, 2003a).

- **Media agenda.** *Stories that set or fit the news organisation's own agenda.* Global coverage of Gulf War II shows clear differences in the news agendas. The agendas of South African television broadcasters were so different that at times it seemed like they were covering different wars: while the government-owned SABC tended to portray the US in a fairly positive light, the news programmes by privately owned e-tv was harshly critical, verging on anti-American propaganda (De Beer, Wasserman & Botha, 2004:184).



Figure 8. *Newspapers of 22 March 2003* (Newseum, 2003).

- **Follow-up.** *Stories about subjects already in the news.* One of the most prominent series of follow-up stories during Gulf War II dealt with "weapons of mass destruction", the presumed presence of which was given by the US and UK as *raison d'etre* to attack Iraq (*The Star*, 2003b; *The Star*, 2003c), despite reports to the contrary by the United Nation's weapons inspectorate (Du Toit, 2003:4).



Figure 9. *The continued search for weapons of mass destruction* (Photo: CNN, 2004).

2.3.2 Shoemaker's model of gatekeeping

In 1991, Pamela Shoemaker reviewed existing gatekeeping theories and research, most of which are based on the 1965 "model of selective gatekeeping" of Galtung and Ruge (1965), in a comprehensive summary (Shoemaker, 1991:74-76). She condensed and integrated these models into a detailed model of gatekeeping, which agreed with McNelly that news flow through various channels to news organisations, such as wire services, newspapers and television networks, where the messages are either rejected or selected and adapted before it is passed on to the next person or organisation.

Recognising the complexity of the gatekeeping process, Shoemaker (1991) acknowledged the distinct traits and characteristics of the gatekeeper – people in a news organisation who select and shape news messages, such as reporters, news editors, sub-editors and editors. These idiosyncrasies are based on the individuals' life experiences and include personal likes and dislikes, values, attitudes, views of the profession, socialisation, approaches to problems and strategies of decision-making, which all impact on how news articles will be selected and adjusted (Figure 10).

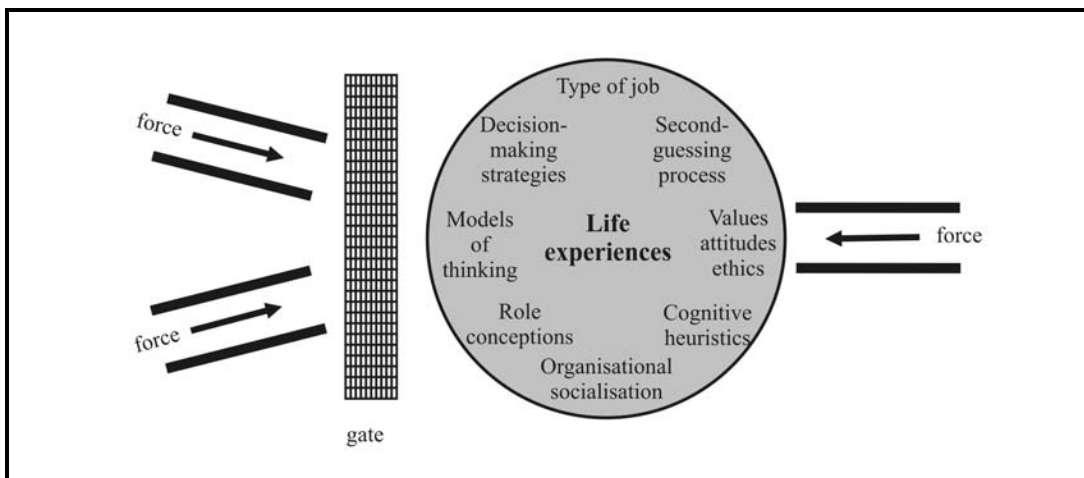


Figure 10. *Intra-individual gatekeeping processes* (illustration redrawn as in Shoemaker, 1991:76).

In the case of journalists reporting on *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, one of the factors that may have had an impact on the way potential news items were handled was access (Baker, 2003; Ghaffar & Feinstein, 2005; Wolff, 2003a):

- some reporters were embedded with the military,
- others were "unilaterals" travelling without protection,
- quite a few were "embedded" in the Palestine Hotel in the heart of Baghdad,
- hundreds reported from neighbouring countries,
- many attended the regular briefings held by the US Department of Defense,
- while others reported from the White House in Washington.

In each case, fear, excitement, camaraderie, alcohol, exposure, frustration, exhaustion, disenchantment, patriotism, anger and even groupthink might have had an effect on what was reported (Baker, 2003; Ghaffar & Feinstein, 2005; Wolff, 2003a).

As seen in Figure 11, these reporters must comply with the limitations of their news routines, and with their employers' priorities (Shoemaker, 1991:75). For example, when veteran *Washington Post* reporter Walter Pincus questioned whether the US government had proof that Saddam was hiding weapons of mass destruction, his editors refused to publish his story and only did so when forced by assistant managing editor Bob Woodward (Kurtz, 2004). Reporters accused the *Washington Post* of printing government views on the front page, while anything contradicting the administration was placed "on A18 on Sunday or A24 on Monday" (Kurtz, 2004).

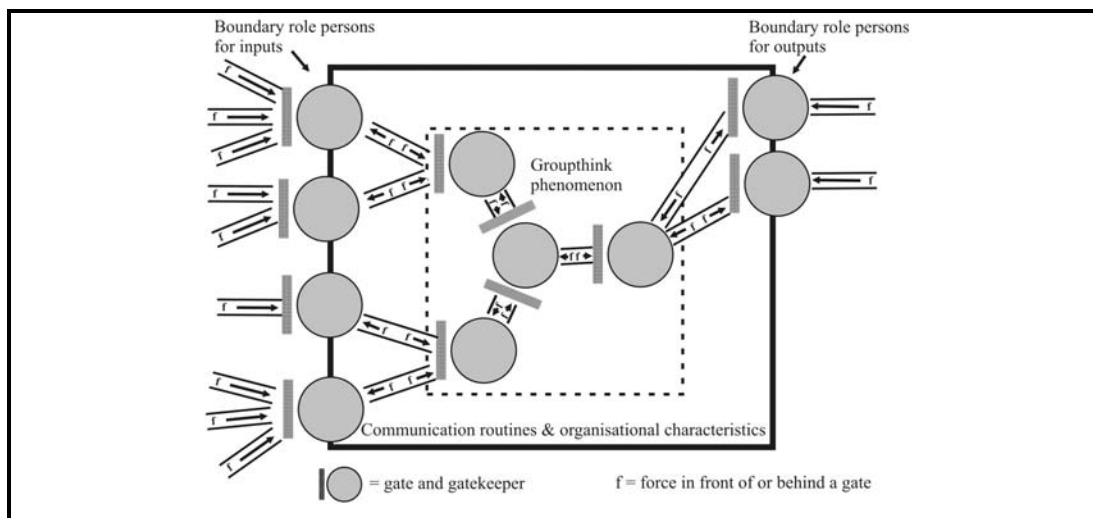


Figure 11. Gatekeeping within an organisation is embedded in communication organisational characteristics (illustration redrawn as in Shoemaker, 1991:75).

The demands of influential forces outside news organisations are equally important in news selection (Shoemaker, 1991:76). In Iraq embedded reporters had to comply with the Pentagon ground rules, which prohibited the publication of information on e.g. geographical position, troop strengths, equipment, current or future operations, and

unique military tactics (United States Department of Defense, 2003). Because Fox News correspondent Geraldo Rivera broke these rules by drawing a map in the sand indicating his location with the 101st Airborne unit relatively to Baghdad, as well as their destination, he was asked by the Pentagon to voluntarily leave Iraq (Plante, 2003).

In this section of the model, Shoemaker also made provision for the "groupthink" phenomenon first described by psychologist Irving Janis in 1972, who defined it as

a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action.

This phenomenon is of particular interest in coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, as two prominent US newspapers, namely *Washington Post* (Kurtz, 2004) and *The New York Times* (2004) both used the word "groupthink" when apologising for their erroneous reporting on weapons of mass destruction as justification for the war on Iraq.

As indicated in Figure 12, surviving news items that were fashioned to suit the needs and characteristics of the organisation, are subsequently either transmitted directly to the audience, or passed to a next news organisation, where it is subjected to a similar series of gatekeeping procedures (Shoemaker, 1991:74).

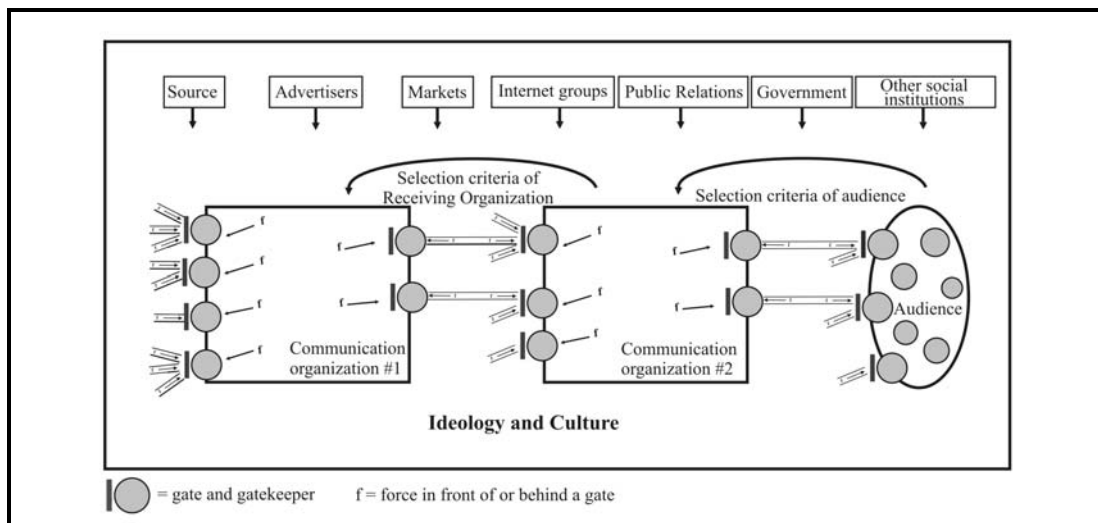


Figure 12. Gatekeeping between organisations is embedded in social system ideology and culture and is influenced by social and institutional factors (illustration redrawn as in Shoemaker, 1991:74).

The first section of Shoemaker's (1991) model of gatekeeping can be applied to the war in Iraq, where war news flowed along various lines from the sources to the public in South Africa. The *Sunday Times* had their own unilateral reporter in Baghdad (Schoonakker, 2003), which cut down considerably the number of gates and the consequent sifting and alterations to the messages. *The Star* as part of the international

Independent group, received its reports from sister publications in the United Kingdom (Harber, 2003), which to an extent also reduced the number of external gates. All the other newspapers, however, relied solely on agency material, which some newspapers adapted to their readership, while others, such as *The Citizen*, published wire reports without rewriting them.

As indicated by the feedback loops in Figure 12, news organisations do not act in isolation, but form part of the ideology and social system in which they function, and their news agenda is therefore subjected to sanctioning by their audience as representatives of this community (Shoemaker, 1991:74). They are also under pressure from external institutions such as advertisers, shareholders, and government bodies.

The extent of these pressures can best be illustrated by the dismissal of Pulitzer Prize winning news correspondent Peter Arnett by US broadcaster NBC after he made critical comments about the US war effort when interviewed on Iraqi television (Sales, 2003). Initially NBC defended Arnett, but within 24 hours yielded to outside pressure to fire their only correspondent in Baghdad. The front of organisations outside a media company that may exert pressure to influence news content is extremely complex: for example, NBC belongs to General Electric (General Electric, 2005), the manufacturer of amongst other things, engines for F-16 fighters and Apache Longbow helicopters (GE Transportation, 2005) and holder of contracts with the US Department of Defense to the value of \$4.4 billion for the period 2003-2004 (Department of Defense, 2003a). While one cannot allege that General Electric in any way perpetuated the war, it would not be unreasonable to assume that a company would strive to protect its relationship with such an important client (Deserano, 2003; Ireland, 2003).

Other gatekeeping criteria deal with issues such as the size and preferences of the target market, and editorial policies of the news organisations (Elliot & Lester, 2003). A news organisation's ability in terms of staff, technology and funds to cover events or issues is equally important. During *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, this played a crucial role in the coverage by the different South African media companies: while Johnnic's *Sunday Times* sent reporter Bonny Schoonakker to Baghdad at a cost in excess of R5 000 per day, while Media24 preferred to use agency reports (Harber, 2003):

"It would have been ideal to have someone there. Only your own person knows what will speak to your readers," said Beeld deputy editor Henry Jeffreys. "But when we looked at the resources required to do it ourselves, we decided it wasn't worth our while."

Once a message has passed through a "gate", it is transferred to the next gatekeeper in the news flow channel, and lastly to the audience, as a news story. Through selection and the assignment of salience by e.g. position on the page and in the newspaper, as well as headline size, the gatekeepers set the newspaper's agenda (McCombs, 2000).

2.4 Agendasetting

"Agendasetting" describes the media's powerful ability to focus public attention on specific issues (McQuail & Windahl, 1981:62). This ability was first recognised by newspaper columnist Walter Lippmann, who referred to "the pictures in our heads" in his book *Public Opinion* (Lippmann, 1922): "The only feeling that anyone can have about an event he does not experience is the feeling aroused by his mental image of that event" – an image to a large extent created by the news media.

This view was confirmed in 1948 by US sociologists Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton (1971) who referred to one of the mass media's roles in society as "status-conferral" function, which means that

the mass media confer status on public issues, persons, organizations, and social movements. Common experience as well as research testifies that the social standing of persons or social policies is raised when these command favorable attention in the mass media ... The mass media bestow prestige and enhance the authority of individuals and groups by legitimizing their status (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1971:560-561).

Examining this idea in his 1963 book *The press and foreign policy*, which dealt with the media's role in the foreign policy decision-making process, Bernard Cohen, a political scientist from the University of Wisconsin, observed that the press "may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about" (1963:12-13):

It is here, in the description of the political environment and the suggestion of the policy alternatives that give the best promise of managing the environment, that we shall find the press playing such an important role in current thinking about foreign policy ... For most of the foreign policy audience, the really effective political map of the world – that is to say, their operational map of the world – is drawn by the reporter and the editor, not by the cartographer.

It was US reporter and author Walter Lippmann's (1922) insight that directly resulted in the agendasetting theory of McCombs and Shaw (1972), which deals with "the relationship between the media agenda - the prominence of issues in the media - and perceptions of the importance of those among the public" (McCombs, 2006). By the emphasis placed on events through coverage, the media indicate the importance of an issue to the public, which sets an agenda for public attention and consequently lays the foundation for the public's opinion on a particular issue (McCombs, 1999).

It must be noted that the term "agenda", according to McCombs (2000), is not intended to imply that a news organisation has a premeditated, often evil, "agenda" that it pursues relentlessly, but is merely a descriptive term, referring to the result over time of numerous day-to-day decisions by all the gatekeepers in a news organisation, from the reporter in the field to the sub-editor and the editor. It includes the influence of advertisers, shareholders, company directors, and the organisation's target audience.

In their seminal agendasetting study, McCombs and Shaw (1972) over a period of 20 days matched the images 100 voters in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, had of the central issues in the 1968 presidential election campaign, with the media content of the time (McCombs & Shaw, 1972: 321).

[W]e conducted a public opinion survey to see what voters in Chapel Hill thought were the important issues ... and then indeed we found a near-perfect correspondence in the pattern of issues on the public agenda, the array of issues - the issues the public thought was most important, the one they thought second-most important, et cetera. That the line-up of issues on the public agenda was very similar to the line-up of issues that was in the new coverage of the previous month ... (McCombs, 2006).

According to McCombs (2000) newspapers provide various cues about the salience of a particular news event through the placement of a report on a page, the page it is printed on, and the size of the headline, for example. When the same cues regarding the importance of an issue recur over a period of days, weeks, months, or even longer, it becomes possible to identify the agenda of a news organisation.

Since that first study almost four decades ago, and more than 350 empirical studies later (Weaver, 2007:143), the agendasetting theory has expanded into five distinct stages (McCombs, 2000; McCombs, 2006). These are:

- *first level agendasetting*, which is the basic transfer of the salience of objects;
- *need for orientation*, or the audience's psychological level of awareness or knowledge;
- *second level agendasetting*, which refers to the transfer of attribute salience;
- *inter-media agendasetting*, which deals with the transfer of salience among the media;
- *priming*, which addresses the consequences of the pictures created in the public's mind.

2.4.1 First level agendasetting

First level agendasetting refers to the relationship between the media's agenda of salient issues and the public's perception of the importance of those same issues – which is still regarded as the crux of the agendasetting theory (McCombs, 2006). The idea of first level agendasetting resulted from the theory initiated by McCombs and Shaw after their 1968 Chapel Hill research project which dealt with the prominence or salience of objects: "public issues, political candidates, other public figures. It could be any set of objects that you might be interested in" (McCombs, 2006).

Other first level agendasetting studies include those by Winter and Eyal (1981), Iyengar and Kinder (1987), Eaton (1989) and Brosius and Kepplinger (1990).

2.4.2 Need for orientation

The concept of "need for orientation" asserts that the media's influence on perceptions of object salience is greatly affected by people's psychological need to be familiar with their mental and physical surroundings (McCombs, 2006). This insight came during an

agendasetting study of the 1972 US presidential election, when McCombs and Shaw realised that the media agenda did not have a sweeping or general effect on public opinion, but that it was determined by the differences in individuals' levels of interest in an issue, and their knowledge thereof.

When people are in an unfamiliar situation, they experience a "need for orientation" which makes them turn to the news media to orient themselves (McCombs, 2006). Highly knowledgeable people will be less likely to be influenced by the news agenda, but interested people who have little knowledge would have a strong need for orientation, resulting in a very strong correspondence between the media agenda and those people's opinions about an issue.

Studies on "need for orientation" were done by Weaver (1977), Erbring, Goldenberg & Miller (1980), Wanta (1997), Poindexter, McCombs and Smith (2003) and Matthes (2006).

2.4.3 Second level agendasetting

The idea of a "second level" of agendasetting appeared soon after the first agendasetting theory was formulated (McCombs, 2006), although the name was only formalised in the mid-1990s (Lee, 2005:17). In recent years, studies of agendasetting increasingly moved away from first level agendasetting, or the media telling the audience "what to think about", to focus on second level or attribute agendasetting, which means the media is telling the audience "how to think about" issues or objects (Sheafer, 2007:22).

Stated differently, while the first level of agendasetting refers to the transmission of *object* salience, a second level of agendasetting involves the transmission of *attribute* salience, which in fact may guide people in what to think (McCombs, 2000). An "object" refers to for example topics, issues, and persons, which may each have various attributes, i.e. characteristics and properties that make up the multi-dimensional image of an object. Just as objects may be presented by the news media as more or less important, so too may attributes vary in salience, which makes them equally powerful as agendasetting tools.

Perhaps a quick way to summarize the difference between the basic agenda-setting effect, and what's now come to be called attribute agendasetting, is in terms of Lippman's phrase "the pictures in our heads". The object agenda, in effect, says "What are the pictures about? What are they pictures of?" The attribute agendasetting really says "What are the pictures? What does this really look like?" (McCombs, 2006).

Second level agendasetting studies (e.g. Kiouisis, Bantimaroudis, & Ban, 1999; Kim, Scheufele, & Shanahan, 2002) found that the object attributes emphasised by the media impact on the public's perception the saliency of attributes such as a political candidate's credentials and views on political issues (Sheafer, 2007:22).

According to McCombs (quoted in Sheafer, 2007:23) two broad groups of attributes can be identified at the second level of agendasetting, namely

- *cognitive or substantive attributes* which deals with "the definition of issues (or objects in general) in the media", and
- *affective attributes* which deals with "the tone of media presentation, with evaluation of issues (i.e., positive, negative, or neutral)".

Empirical studies, however, do not draw a clear distinction between cognitive and affective attributes (Sheafer, 2007:23).

Other recent studies on second level agendasetting include those by Scheufele (2000), Golan and Wanta (2001) and Kioussis (2005).

2.4.4 Inter-media agendasetting

The third stage of agendasetting, namely inter-media agendasetting, refers to the impact of one media's agenda on that of others (McCombs, Lopez-Escobar, & Llamas, 2000). This means that the salience of an object or its attributes in the stories published by one medium will be mirrored by other media.

Once it became obvious that media reports influence the public's perception of the importance of various issues, media researchers wanted to know who is responsible for the media's agenda (McCombs, 2006). This is a complex question with many answers: most importantly, the media's agenda is shaped by news values and journalistic tradition. The agenda is also shaped by outside influences, such as various sources: press spokespersons, government officials, politicians, and the ubiquitous public relations agencies. However, an agenda is also shaped by

the whole mix of different media - the relationship that exists, for instance, between blogs and news media, both Internet and traditional ... [which] in the jargon of the research, is called "inter-media agendasetting" – that is, the influence of one news media on another in setting the agenda (McCombs, 2006).

Studies on inter-media agendasetting were done by Reese and Danielian (1989), Semetko, Blumler, Gurevitch, and Weaver (1991), Roberts and McCombs, (1994); Lopez-Escobar, Llamas, McCombs and Lennon (1998), Golan (2006) and Zhang (2006), amongst others.

2.4.5 Priming

Priming, regarded by McCombs (2006) as the fourth stage of agendasetting, refers to a process by which the media gives more attention to some issues, while ignoring others, thereby influencing "the standards by which governments, presidents, policies, and candidates for public office are judged" (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987:63):

By priming certain aspects of national life while ignoring others, news sets the terms by which political judgments are rendered and political choices are made ... When the news focuses on a problem, the public's priorities are altered and altered again as it moves to something else (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987:33).

Attention to the effect of agendasetting on the audience dates back to the study by US journalism and mass communication specialists David H. Weaver (Indiana University), Maxwell E. McCombs (Syracuse University) and Charles Spellman (Rutgers University)(1975) on the effects of the news coverage of the Watergate scandal (Weaver, 2007:145). Although Weaver *et al.* (1975) proposed that the news media might suggest to the audience which issues should be used to evaluate the politicians, they did not use the term "priming". Political Science and Communication Studies Professor at the University of California, Shanto Iyengar and University of Michigan Political Science Chair Donald R. Kinder (1987) associated the effects of television agendasetting with perceptions of the US President "in a demonstration of what some cognitive psychologists have called priming – making certain issues or attributes more salient and more likely to be accessed in forming opinions" (Weaver, 2007:145).

Priming is similar to first level agendasetting, but goes further by addressing the *effect* of these agendas on the audience's perceptions of an issue (Lee, 2005:17-18). It begs the question: "What are the consequences of creating these pictures in the public's mind?" (McCombs, 2006). Priming is based on the assumption that people's perceptions of other individuals, events or issues rely on information that can be easily accessed from memory (Nisbet & Lewenstein, 2001:4). According to this view, people will therefore make evaluations or judgements based on what they regard as being more important, or what is discussed most in the media, as this information is the easiest to access.

It must be noted that some authors disagree with the notion that priming is an extension of agendasetting, e.g. in their study, Political Communication Professor (University of Pennsylvania) Vincent Price and David Tewksbury of the Department of Speech Communication (University of Illinois) (1997:176) came to the conclusion that agendasetting is a variation of priming, and not the other way around.

Priming was also studied by Brewer, Graf and Willnat (2003), Druckman (2004), Sheafer and Weimann (2005), Kelleher and Wolak (2006) and Edy and Meirick (2007).

2.5 Framing

There is a close relationship between agendasetting – especially second level agendasetting – and framing. This relationship is apparent from McCombs's (1999) definition, which describes framing as

the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a particular object is discussed.

A generally accepted definition of framing is, however, problematic. Although there exists abundant literature on framing – some 350 articles are indexed in *Communication Abstracts* for the period 1971 to 2005 (Weaver, 2007:143-144) – analysts differ in their interpretation of the concept when dealing with the different approaches to and theories of frames, framing devices, models of framing, framing analyses and framing effects (Kinder, 2007:158).

Frame analysis is neither a full-fledged theoretical paradigm, nor a coherent methodological approach. Rather, frame analyses are a number of related, even though sometimes partially incompatible methods for the analysis of discourses (Scheufele, 1999:18).

American sociologist Erving Goffman (1974:21) is one of the first scholars to define framing, which he explains as the many ways in which the media create the context within which the audience may "locate, perceive, identify and label" world affairs, in other words, to make sense of those events.

Columbia University Journalism and Sociology Professor Todd Gitlin (1980:7) points out that the largely invisible frames organises the world for journalists, who report on world events, by enabling them to quickly and routinely process large amounts of information. Conversely, frames also help the audience to understand the world.

Framing – that is, making sense of the world by

- the *selection* of news stories,
- the *shaping* of its content, and
- the *highlighting* important, novel, dramatic, and distinctive information, while
- *ignoring* or under-emphasising the ordinary or expected,

is therefore inherent to the journalistic profession (Gans, 1980:199-201). This does not necessarily mean that journalists endeavour to "spin a story or deceive their audiences" (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:11). On the contrary, some form of media frame is essential to the understanding of the world – without it, much of what happens and what is said would remain "mere talk and incomprehensible sounds" (Tuchman, 1978:192).

American Media and Public Affairs Professor Robert M. Entman (1993:55) describes framing as basically involving selection and salience:

To frame is to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in the 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. Frames, then, define problems – determine what a causal agent is doing and costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of cultural values; diagnose causes – identify the forces creating the problem; make moral judgments – evaluate causal agents and their effects; and suggest remedies – offer and justify treatments for the problem and predict their likely effects.

In order to analyse frames present in coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, it is necessary to decide on an applicable frame. This is rather problematic, as just like the *definition* of framing is vague in literature (Scheufele, 1999:18; Hyun, 2004; Kinder, 2007:158), so is the *identification* of frames: "We are not told how to identify a frame" (Carvalho, 2000). This "conceptual conundrum" often leaves it to the researcher to "*propose their own definition of frames and approaches to framing study before they begin their research*" (Hyun, 2004).

The result of this is what Kinder (2007:158) calls the "operational thinness" of empirical literature on framing, which "typically operationalizes frame in an emaciated way. Alternative frames are represented by a single presentation of a sentence or two, reminders of how an issue might be understood." He suggests a return to Gamson and Lasch's (1983:399) original formulation of framing, which Gamson and Modigliani (1989:3-4) refined to five *framing devices* "that suggest how to think about the issue"

- metaphors
- exemplars (historical examples from which lessons are drawn)
- catchphrases
- depictions
- visual images (icons)

and three *reasoning devices* "that justify what should be done about it"

- roots (i.e., a causal analysis),
- consequences (i.e., a particular type of effect), and
- appeals to principle (i.e., a set of moral claims) (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989:3-4).

This study focuses on how international news flows and not on the *effects* of the news on the audience. Therefore, framing devices are particularly important to this research.

In this regard, American public relations scholar Kirk Hallahan (1999) proposes three types of frames, of which the last is especially interesting for the purposes of this study:

- *valence framing* – information is presented as opposing valences, i.e. it is put either in a positive or a negative light, for example Bush protects his people, Saddam kills his people;
- *semantic framing* – the simple alternative phrasing of terms, e.g. "terrorist" versus "freedom fighter";
- *story framing* – the most complex form of framing that involves
 - the selection of key themes as the focus of the message
 - the incorporation of various techniques of storytelling to support the theme (Hallahan, 1999:207-208).

2.5.1 Story frame

The media presented *Operation Iraqi Freedom* as a story or an action film (Figure 13, next page), complete with heroes and villains, which led to allegations of the "Hollywoodisation" of the war (Knight, 2004; Watkins, 2007).

Coalition forces were characterised as freedom loving, working hard to avoid civilian casualties and seeking to protect religious diversity ... The Iraqi military were meanwhile depicted as brutal, tyrannical, corrupt, unethical and deploying "weapons of mass murder" ... Saddam Hussein and his sons, like a gang of Hollywood rustlers, were given forty eight hours to get out of town (Knight, 2004: 1, 5-6).

By the time of writing, no clear definition existed of the term "Hollywoodisation" but it is understood by this author as the presentation of newsworthy events as a story akin to a Hollywood film in order to make it more comprehensible to the public.



Figure 13. Mad Magazine (2003) satirised the "Hollywoodisation" of Operation Iraqi Freedom by framing it as a fairytale akin to the Star Wars epic.

There are many reasons for the use of the story frame in the production of news. It is employed to attract attention by provoking feeling in the audience, "inducing him to feel a sense of personal identification" (Lippmann, 1922:10). It is also a consequence of the mass media's continuous need for more news (Boorstin, 1961:16). To satisfy this need, "bogus dramas and humbug heroes" are created which spawn an "empty world of celebrity" (Hanson, 1999).

We expect new heroes every season, a literary masterpiece every month, a dramatic spectacular every week, a rare sensation every night (Boorstin, 1961:16).

Jamie Shea, NATO spokesman during the Balkan war, told business leaders in Switzerland, in a talk named *Selling a conflict – the ultimate PR challenge*, that he credited his successful media campaign in the Balkans to giving the public what they loved: "daily soap operas with good characters". Whenever things grew quiet on the war front, he used the time "to explain again who's the good guy and who's the bad guy". An important PR principle, according to Shea, is: "If you don't have a story, make a story" (Berlin Online, 2000).

To present hard news as entertainment, journalists use traditional story elements in investigative reports (Ettema & Glasser, 1988). The usefulness of the story frame was tested by Massachusetts Institute of Technology political scientist Alan J. Berinsky and Kinder (2006) in their study of the decision making process. They found that

citizens understand particular event sequences when they can organize the relevant information into coherent stories. Citizens should therefore understand a political event better when the event is framed by the media to conform to a narrative structure (Berinsky & Kinder, 2006:640-641).

As illustrated by Shea's statement above (Berlin Online, 2000), the groundwork for the story frames that appear in the media is laid by people who have the most interest in the current events (Berinsky & Kinder, 2006:641, 654). Political leaders, analysts and government officials tend to frame their views and statements – to be transferred to the public through all the various sectors of mass media – with the audience in mind, thereby shaping the way the public process and store information that would contribute to their understanding of politics.

In a study on how people make sense of politics, Berinsky and Kinder (2006:654) found that when information is framed as a good story, the audience's understanding of the data changes, which in turn appears to shape opinion. These frames

do not need to present strong arguments for one side or another in order to change public opinion. Small and subtle differences in the presentation of information can sometimes do the trick.

Berinsky and Kinder (2006:642) declares that

[a] good frame is at its heart a good story. To understand why some frames succeed and others fail, we need to understand what makes an effective story.

According to Kinder (2007:159)

[p]eople know what makes a good story, and this knowledge influences how they understand text and how they represent such text in their minds ... a good story organizes and orders the jumble of facts and claims. Evidence is unscrambled. Causal and intentional relations are established. Gaps are filled. Plot turns are identified.

Thus, the story frame is a useful device to create desired perceptions about current issues, and its utilisation as a strategic tool is advocated by US military scholars William Casebeer and James A. Russell (2005):

if military force is to play the appropriate role in our national security strategy and the “Global War on Terror,” we need a more comprehensive understanding of how a failure to tell good stories can lead to an increased risk of insurgencies, violent social movements, and terrorist action

there's ample evidence that stories influence our ability to recall events, motivate people to act, modulate our emotional reactions to events, cue certain heuristics and biases, structure our problem-solving capabilities, and ultimately perhaps even constitute our very identity.

Because the story frame has become a weapon in the hands of government officials and military strategists who use the media to disseminate carefully constructed tales (Payne, 2005:81), it became imperative to determine what the elements of a good story are.

There is no generally accepted definition for a story (Casebeer & Russell, 2005), but the first true attempt to define the structure of stories was made by Vladimir Propp in 1928 when he analysed Russian fairytales for recurrent plot lines and characters (Propp, 1968:25-65). Propp's seminal study is often regarded as the birth of modern narratology (Schärfe, 2001:18). As such, Propp's schema will be used in this study to demarcate the story frame to be used in the analysis of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* media coverage.¹ Additionally, Propp's model is still commonly used in the analysis of cinematographical scripts, and is therefore particularly well suited to the analysis of the story frame in news reports (Simpson, 2004:73; Watkins, 2007).

2.5.2 Propp's fairytale analysis

In 1928, Vladimir Propp pioneered the structural analysis of stories when he analysed a collection of Russian tales of magic, or fairytales (Schärfe, 2001:18). He broke down 100 folktales into their "small component parts" and identified eight character types (Table 1) and 31 basic elements or "functions" (Table 21, next page) in the stories (Propp, 1968:25-65, 71-91). Not all the elements were present in all the folktales, but those that were, always recurred in the same order.

Table 1. *Propp's dramatis personae – the basic character types* (Propp, 1968:71-91)

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Hero | suffers from actions of the villain is aware that something is missing agrees to fight for the sake of another may be supplied with a magic agent |
| Villain | fights with the hero, threatens the victim |
| Donor | provides hero with magic agent that will that eventually end misfortune |
| Helper | helps the hero to solve his task by assisting, rescuing, solving |
| Magical Agent | transforms hero by giving him supernatural powers |
| Dispatcher | sends the hero on his quest |
| Princess | the princess brings luck and a "happy ever after" |
| Victim | has to be rescued, often rewards the hero and/or punishes the villain |

¹ It is not the purpose of this study to delve into the intricate realm of the narratology, nor is it to advocate any narratological or structuralist theory. Therefore, despite the merits of the work by authors such as Aristotle (384 BC - 322 BC), Freytag (1863), Lévi-Strauss (1963), Foucault (1966) and Barthes (1975), the historical development, advantages and reciprocal critiques of different approaches to narratology will not be discussed.

Table 2. *Propp's 31 basic functions* (Propp, 1968:25-65)

| | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | One of the members of a family absents himself from home. |
| 2. | An interdiction is addressed to the hero. |
| 3. | The interdiction is violated |
| 4. | The villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance. |
| 5. | The villain receives information about his victim. |
| 6. | The villain attempts to deceive his victim as to capture him or his belongings. |
| 7. | The victim submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy. |
| 8. | The villain causes harm or injury to a member of a family. |
| 9. | One member of a family either lacks something or desires to have something. |
| 10. | Misfortune or lack is made known; the hero is approached with a request or command; he is allowed to go or he is dispatched. |
| 11. | The seeker agrees to or decides upon counteraction. |
| 12. | The hero leaves home. |
| 13. | The hero is tested, which prepares him to receive either a magical agent or helper. |
| 14. | The hero acquires the use of a magical agent. |
| 15. | The hero is transferred, delivered, or led to the whereabouts of an object of search. |
| 16. | The hero and the villain join in direct combat. |
| 17. | The hero is branded. |
| 18. | The villain is defeated. |
| 19. | The initial misfortune or lack is liquidated. |
| 20. | The hero returns. |
| 21. | The hero is pursued. |
| 22. | Rescue of the hero from pursuit. |
| 23. | The hero, unrecognized, arrives home or in another country. |
| 24. | A false hero presents unfounded claims. |
| 25. | A difficult task is proposed to the hero. |
| 26. | The task is resolved. |
| 27. | The hero is recognized. |
| 28. | The false hero or villain is exposed. |
| 29. | The hero is given a new appearance. |
| 30. | The villain is punished. |
| 31. | The hero is married and ascends the throne. |

When these elements are distilled into a simpler form, the most common story told is that of a villain who harms a victim, prompting the hero to go on a quest. The hero receives a magic agent from a donor, which he uses to defeat the villain in order to right the initial wrong and ultimately to win the hand of the princess (Propp, 1968:135-143). While these stories have enduring appeal as fairytales, they also form the backbone of popular cinema. Propp's model has been used for the analysis of films such as *Apocalypse Now*, *Star Wars* and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Film Education, 2005a & b), but may also serve as a frame for the analysis of international news (Propp, 1968: 143).

During *Operation Iraqi Freedom* the author, as an ordinary member of the global audience, was struck by the strong "story-like" coverage by the media. Broadly speaking, the events in Iraq were apparently framed by the Anglo-American news media – especially CNN, BBC and Sky News, the three television news channels available via the South African satellite channel DSTV – as an attempt by Bush, as the leader of the only "super power" in the world, to protect his country, and maybe even

the whole world, against the evil deeds and aspirations of Saddam Hussein. This fits comfortably into Propp's fairytale frame, in terms of which the *Operation Iraqi Freedom* story might read as follows:

The hero. In this case, President George W. Bush is the indisputable hero. *The Wall Street Journal* described Bush as

not only of strong moral character himself, but ... he actually believes in things ... He sees rights and wrongs ... and has a clear vision of what is and is not in America's interest and does not hesitate to act accordingly (Du Pont, 2002).

In his January 2003 State of the Union address, Bush pledged:

Whatever action is required, whenever action is necessary, I will defend the freedom and security of the American people (Bush, 2003a).



Figure 14. *Against the backdrop of a painting of Jesus, with his body-language mirroring that of the Saviour, Bush is by association framed as everything that is heroic, noble, good, fair, honest, and blameless* (Photo: Spiegel Online, 2004).

According to White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer (2003a), however,

nobody, but nobody, is more reluctant to go to war than President Bush ... He hopes it can be averted, but he is also clear about the fact that one way to save American lives is to prevent Saddam Hussein from engaging in something that can be far, far worse than the price we saw on September 11.

Despite this reluctance, Bush (2003b) told the press at his ranch in Texas:

I'm going to continue doing the job the American people expect, which is to safeguard America and Americans ... My job is to protect the American people ... I've got my mind on the peace and security of the American people.

When he met Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom, he pledged:

My most important obligation is to protect the American people from further harm. And I will do that (Bush, 2003c).

For this, the US Senate and House of Representatives gave him the authority to

take the necessary actions against international terrorists and terrorist organizations, including those nations, organizations or persons who planned, authorized, committed or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001 or harbored such persons or organizations (The White House, 2002).

The hero is often assisted by a trustworthy side-kick (Propp, 1968: 152) – a role which British Prime Minister Tony Blair assumed during Gulf War II.

The villain. Saddam Hussein is the villain in this tale, "the man who tried to kill my dad", according to George W. Bush, referring to an alleged plot to assassinate Bush Senior in Kuwait in 1993 (Lyon, 2003).



Figure 15. *With his dark suit, fedora and moustache, the gun-toting Saddam Hussein apparently fits in his frame as a Brando-esque villain* (Photo: CNN, 2001).

In the words of Bush's national security adviser Condoleezza Rice (*Mail & Guardian*, 2002), Saddam is

an evil man who, left to his own devices, will wreak havoc again on his own population, his neighbours and, if he gets weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, all of us.

Richard Perle, chair of the Department of Defense's Defense Policy Board, reminded readers in an article in *The Telegraph* that

he has invaded two countries and killed with impunity. His brutal rule includes slaughter, rape, mutilation and the destruction of families ... Saddam is working feverishly to acquire nuclear weapons (Perle, 2002a).

US Secretary of State Colin Powell was quoted saying that

Saddam Hussein's inhumanity knows no limits ... [He] has investigated dozens of biological agents causing diseases such as gangrene, plague, typhus, tetanus, cholera, camel-pox and haemorrhagic fever, and he also has the wherewithal to develop smallpox (Powell, 2003).

The Iraqi leader's alleged links with Al Qaeda, who was held responsible for the 11 September 2001 attacks, were also widely published:

Bush said the removal of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein should be considered part of the war on terror "because of the nature of Saddam Hussein ... because of his Al Qaeda connections, because of his history, he is a danger to Americans" (CNN, 2003b).

Even Saddam's taste in art was used to vilify him: *The Guardian's* art critic Jonathan Jones (2003) described him as "a miniature Hitler, a cut-price Nero", but whose taste is less elevated than that of Hitler. "These are art for the barely literate, or the barely sentient, dredged from some red-lit back alley of the brain".

Much the same images were portrayed during Gulf War I, when Saddam was referred to as a Hitler, a dictator, a military strongman, a madman who was a menace to world peace and the American way of life, a beast and a monster that Bush Senior had to destroy (Kellner, 1991).

The victim or princess. In his 7 October 2002 speech in Cincinnati Bush (2002) laid a perfect foundation for the future portrayal of the American nation as a victim in the Gulf War II "fairytale", who must be saved from the villain. In this speech, Bush reminded the American people of 11 September 2001, when

America felt its vulnerability – even to threats that gather on the other side of the earth. We resolved then, and we are resolved today, to confront every threat, from any source, that could bring sudden terror and suffering to America.



Figure 16. *During Operation Iraqi Freedom, US government officials often reminded the American people of the tragedy of 11 September 2001, thereby framing them as the victim: vulnerable and in need of a saviour (Photo: New York Newsday, 2001).*

He continued to say that "the Iraqi dictator must not be permitted to threaten America ... with horrible poisons and diseases and gases and atomic weapons" and that the threat against the US already significant, and that continues to grow (Bush, 2002).

We know that the regime has produced thousands of tons of chemical agents, including mustard gas, sarin nerve gas, VX nerve gas. Saddam Hussein also has experience in using chemical weapons.

Bush (2002) told Americans that Iraq and Al Qaeda shared a common enemy: the USA, and that on 11 September 2001, "Saddam Hussein's regime gleefully celebrated the terrorist attacks on America". He warned that if Iraqi could obtain the smallest amount of enriched uranium, it could produce a nuclear weapon in less than a year:

We've experienced the horror of September the 11th. We have seen that those who hate America are willing to crash airplanes into buildings full of innocent people. Our enemies would be no less willing, in fact, they would be eager, to use biological or chemical, or a nuclear weapon (Bush, 2002).

These views were repeated in January 2003, when Bush again reminded the American people of their vulnerability and the threat Saddam posed:

because of Al Qaeda connections, because of his history, he's a danger to the American people, and we've got to deal with him before it is too late (CBS, 2003b).

The quest. The hero's quest in the fairytale frame was to topple Saddam Hussein, and thereby to remove the threat of his weapons of mass destruction. Bush was quoted saying that Saddam was producing and hiding weapons that would enable him to dominate the region and intimidate "the civilized world – and we will not allow it" (Bush, 2003d).

He continued to say that if Saddam's government did not meet UN demands *we are prepared to disarm Iraq by force ... The safety of the American people depends on ending this direct and growing threat (Bush, 2003d).*

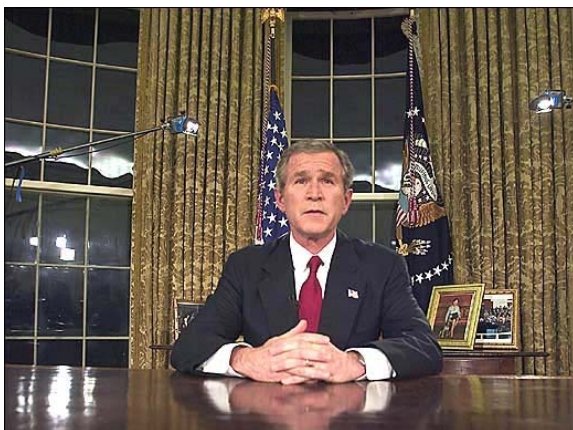


Figure 17. *Bush announced the start of the war from the Oval Office, and told his nation that his quest was to disarm Saddam in order to protect the Americans (Photo: The Boston Globe, 2003a).*

In his widely publicised address of 17 March 2003 Bush declared that the US

has the sovereign authority to use force in assuring its own national security. That duty falls to me as commander-in-chief by the oath I have sworn, by the oath I will keep. The terrorist threat to America and the world will be diminished the moment that Saddam Hussein is disarmed (Bush, 2003e).

In his quest to quickly find and neutralise Saddam, Bush gave his permission to launch some 40 missiles against a "target of opportunity - house in suburban Baghdad where Saddam was suspected to be, thereby moving the strikes against Iraq ahead of schedule (Gellman & Priest, 2003:1).

The donor. The US government acted as the donor of the magic agent that helped the hero in his quest. The US Congress recognised "the threat to [their] country" and "voted overwhelmingly ... to support the use of force against Iraq" (Bush, 2003f).



Figure 18. *Framed as donors in the Operation Iraqi Freedom fairytale, members of the US Congress congratulate Bush after they agreed to foot a military bill in excess of \$74 billion* (Photo: NRK, 2003).

Members of Congress also told the media that "they will quickly approve President Bush's \$74.7 billion request for war spending", although many were uncertain about how the funds would be spent (*USA Today*, 2003:11). Fully supportive of the war, despite a few in-house squabbles, "the House and Senate have been doing more cheerleading than debating or legislating when it comes to war-related issues" since the bombs started exploding over Baghdad (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 2003).

Congress exercised its war power "by building and maintaining the military through the budget – deciding what bombers to build and what tanks to buy". The reason given for this united front was that

once U.S. troops are committed, Congress will give them whatever they need, whether they agree with the military engagement or not ... Congress is not likely to leave them in a lurch (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 2003).

The magic agent. In this instance, the US military acted as the magic agent provided by the government, the donor, to aid the hero in succeeding in his quest. This "magic agent" was described in the media as an "immense force" that Bush was about to unleash (Walczak, 2003), acting with "breathtaking precision, almost eyewatering speed, persistence, agility and lethality" (Sullivan, 2003a) in order to "to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger" (Bush, 2003g).



Figure 19. *President Bush gives the thumbs-up sign to his troops, framed as the magic agent with which he planned to obliterate the villain (Photo: The Boston Globe, 2003b).*

The "peace of a troubled world" became the responsibility of the US military as Bush promised Saddam that he will use the "full force and might of the US military" against him, referring to the 280 000 coalition troops, six carrier battle groups, and more than 700 aircraft that were ready to "pummel Iraq" (Walczak, 2003). As the offensive stages of the war drew to a close, Bush told the troops onboard *USS Abraham Lincoln* that

we have fought for the cause of liberty and for the peace of the world. Our nation and our coalition are proud of this accomplishment, yet it is you, the members of the United States military, who achieved it ... Because of you our Nation is more secure. Because of you the tyrant has fallen and Iraq is free (Bush, 2003h).

The victory. The Iraq "fairytale" frame produced two iconic moments of "victory", the first being the toppling of the Saddam statue, which was "irresistible for a media that remain hungry for iconic images" (Gilbert & Ryan, 2003).

This was the moment when the "magic agent" brought the evil villain to a fall in a scene rich in symbolism: the US tanks rolling up to the statue on the Al Firdos square, a Marine covering the face of Saddam with the American flag, then removing it to replace it with the Iraqi flag, the Iraqis trying but not succeeding to pull down the statue, the US Marines coming to the rescue, the giant Saddam that dominated the scene bowing to the American forces, falling, and ultimately revealing that it is nothing but an empty shell.



Figure 20. *The statue of Saddam on the Al Firdos square in Baghdad was toppled with the aid of an American tank, signalling victory to the Americans (Photo: CBS, 2003c).*

The fall of this last statue became symbolic of the fall of the Iraqi government, even though Saddam himself had not been captured at that stage (CNN, 2003c). The White House and 10 Downing Street agreed that these images did not represent the end of the war and, in Blair's words, that victory was "far from complete" (BBC News, 2003a). When asked by the media when the instant of victory might come, the reply was: "I think we will know that moment when we see it".

That moment of victory apparently did not require either the apprehension of Saddam Hussein or the discovery of weapons of mass destruction. Instead, in another made-for-the-media scene, reminiscent of the film *Top Gun*, Bush dressed in a green flight suit and holding a helmet, got off a navy plane after it landed on the aircraft carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln* (CNN, 2003d).



Figure 21. *Despite the perception that the war ended when the statue was toppled in the heart of Baghdad, Bush received a hero's welcome when he landed on the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln to announce "the end of major combat operations" in Iraq (Photo: Guardian, 2003)*

He saluted those on the flight deck, shaking hands with some, while on the tower above him, a huge sign declared: "Mission Accomplished". Hours later, he told the carrier's crew that "major combat operations have ended", but admitted that they did not know "the day of final victory, but we have seen the turning of the tide" (Fox News, 2003). This message was however overshadowed by Bush's earlier triumphant fly-past and hero's arrival on the scene.

Although this happened outside the time frame of this study, it can be argued that the hero, Bush, finally won the hand of the victim or princess, namely the American people, when they re-elected him as president in the 2004 elections.

2.6 Summary

In Chapter 2, key news theories that will be employed in the analysis of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* news coverage were examined. Firstly, it was established why a theoretical approach is necessary for a study of practical journalism. The news flow models of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing were subsequently examined. The process of *gatekeeping* was discussed with special reference to Harcup and O'Neill's (2001) updated version of Galtung and Ruge's (1965) model of selective gatekeeping, as well as Pamela Shoemaker's (1991) model, while *agendasetting* was studied in terms of McComb's five stages of agendasetting. An exploration of *framing* failed to identify a single generally acceptable definition of the concept, but it was determined that various authors agreed that news may be framed as a story. Consequently, Vladimir Propp's (1968) seminal analysis of folktales was discussed and applied to general coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*.

* * * * *

In Chapter 3, literature pertaining to the theoretical models of journalism that were examined in Chapter 2 will be discussed, especially with reference to war reporting in general or *Operation Iraqi Freedom* coverage in particular.

Chapter 3

Literature review

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter an overview is given of scholarly literature available on the theoretical aspect of the research subject, namely the news theory models of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing that are used in Chapter 7 to analyse the news flow during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* from the sources of information to the South African newspapers. Also, studies are examined that employ story analyses reminiscent of Propp's fairytale analysis to investigate news coverage.

The primary objective of a literature review is to determine what has been done in the field of study and could therefore actually be referred to as a "scholarship review" (Mouton, 2005:87). The current study commenced in 2003, shortly after *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. Due to the recency of the war, completed studies of news coverage during the war was practically non-existent, with the exception of Hafez's (2003) case study of the effects of military involvement in conflict perception. Initially, therefore, the review of scholarship on the key issues of news flow and gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing was done on studies that had nothing to do with either Gulf War II in general or specifically *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, but which showed similarities in some respect.

However, by the end of the current study, a large corpus of research on Gulf War II news coverage became available in academic journals. These scholarships were reviewed *post hoc*, and the most relevant works are included in this study for the sake of completeness. In other words, much of the literature was reviewed not to determine possible duplication of research or the methodology used by those authors as it is done traditionally (Mouton, 2005:87), but to indicate various approaches that were followed in studies that ran parallel to the current study.

Interestingly, shortly before the present study was concluded, the first results from a similar study conducted in the UK was published. The study by Robinson *et al.* (2006), entitled *Media wars: Media performance and media management during the 2003 Iraq war*, focused on the framing of the war in the British media, the identification of key government information management strategies, and the media agendas during the conflict. It was a joint project between the Universities of Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds, and was funded by a British Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) grant of £119 169.07 (R1 713 070). The Robinson *et al.* (2006) project shows that while the present study was general and not quite on the scale of its British counterpart, the research ideas and approach is valid and in fact worthy of a full research programme.

Literature employed in the current study covers a wide field, as the study itself deals with war reporting from different angles, which necessitates a wide range of sources:

- Scholarly documents and monographs were consulted to support the theoretical approach to the study.
- Books, newspaper and magazine articles were included in the historiographical part of the study, but also in the theoretical study.
- Official documents from the US government were included to prove the intentionality of media management practices during the war.
- Interviews were conducted to give eyewitness accounts of the result of the media policies.
- Video recordings of the television coverage of the war were used to refresh the author's memory with regard to the coverage of certain incidents during the war.

3.2 Sources of literature

A variety of primary sources (eyewitness accounts, unedited political speeches and interviews), secondary sources (textbooks and press reports) and tertiary sources (analytical articles) were consulted (see Mouton, 2005). The following were the main sources of information that was accessed and the locations where they were sourced:

- Books, journal articles, as well as theses and dissertations were sourced from the libraries of the University of Stellenbosch and the Journalism Department at the University of Stellenbosch.
- Online library databases were also consulted, especially EBSCOHost, ERIC, and JStor. Theses, dissertations, conference papers and refereed journal articles were consulted through the internet.
- US government, White House and Department of Defense policy papers, speech transcripts and other official documents were accessed via the internet.
- Google was invariably used as search engine, as it consistently produced the most useful sources.
- Hard copies and internet media archives of national and international newspapers, magazines and academic journals were studied.
- Approximately 170 hours of video recordings of mostly CNN coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* (own collection) was studied.
- Five interviews were conducted, four by e-mail and one telephonically.

3.3 Scholarship review

3.3.1 News flow and gatekeeping

In this study news flow and gatekeeping will be treated as an integrated field of research, as news flow even in its most basic form refers to the transfer of newsworthy information from one person to another, both of whom can be considered to be gatekeepers (Sparkes & Winter, 1980:150; Wu, 2003:9; Nossek, 2004:346).

In the flow of news from its sources to the audience reporters and editors are responsible for the selection of news; therefore they are gatekeepers (Nossek, 2004:346). Journalists and editors are employed by media organisations, with their own priorities, and which form part of the greater media as institution. In turn, the media as a whole is part of the social structure, and as such interacts with and is influenced by other societal constructs.

Although news flow and gatekeeping will be treated as a unit, research articles dealing with the two concepts will be reviewed separately, as the approach to these studies differ. When relevant news flow studies were identified, studies dealing with news flow to South Africa were also considered, even though none of them deal with news flow during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. The gatekeeping studies that were reviewed only refer to *Operation Iraqi Freedom* coverage.

3.3.1.1 News flow

As no comparable research results were available on the news flow from Gulf War II to South Africa when the present study was conducted, general studies on news flow to Africa and South Africa in particular were examined. The most notable of these, e.g. De Beer, Serfontein, Naudé & Steyn (1996) and Eribo (1999) stemmed from the global news flow study of British media scientist Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi (1995), which in turn was based on the 1953 news flow study International Press Institute (cited by Robinson & Sparkes, 1976:203-204). Because they form the basis of the analyses in the present study, the work done by the International Press Institute and Sreberny-Mohammadi (1995) is discussed briefly.

One of the earliest news flow studies was undertaken by the International Press Institute (1953, cited by Robinson & Sparkes, 1976:203-204). It examines the way in which international news is reported and circulated, and notes that globally news flows irregularly, and that international agencies tend to concentrate on hard news and on "elite nations". War, politics and foreign relations are covered most frequently, while cultural activities and smaller nations as a whole are mostly ignored. This led to a number of studies that focused on the flow of news from First World to Third World countries such as Africa, Asia and Latin America (e.g. Cutlip, 1954; Markham, 1961), and eventually the seminal selective news flow study by Galtung and Ruge in 1965 (Robinson & Sparkes, 1976: 204).

One of the biggest international news flow studies is the joint IAMCR/Unesco study of 1979 on foreign news in the media, in which researchers of 29 countries participated. Of this study Sreberny-Mohammadi as central editor/author wrote:

... we would suggest that it is time to move away from this kind of study, since the accumulated data are vast and the central findings reasonably validated (1995).

Two of these findings are that politics and political actors dominate international news reporting everywhere, and that media across the globe tends to focus on events taking place in its immediate geographical region (Stevenson, 2004a). The latter did not apply to *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, when the South African media, like that of hundreds of nations across the globe, enthusiastically covered a war that was geographically and politically far removed from the audience itself; the reasons for this could be the subject of a separate study on news values, news flow and gatekeeping.

Despite Sreberny-Mohammadi's comments, she also participated in the second, even bigger global news flow study, which took place in 1995. This study, involving researchers in nearly 50 countries (Stevenson, 2004b), was seen as needed due to drastic

changes in global politics during the 1990s, as well as economic changes causing political and social upheaval in especially Third World countries (De Beer *et al.*, 1996).

The results of the 1995 news flow study were never published *in toto* (Schreiner, 2003:41), but some participants decided to publish their "national" results, such as De Beer *et al.* (1996) from South Africa and Festus Eribo (1999) from Nigeria. These results represent two of the very few international studies of news flow to Africa (Schreiner, 2003:10-11). Eribo (1999:160) found that in Nigeria the source of most foreign reports could not be identified, as the newspapers did not credit news agencies. This study also showed that compared to the global news flow study of 1979 coverage of international trade and sports increased while global politics received less attention.

In their study of international news flow and events covered by African media, De Beer *et al.* (1996) asked whether the media would mainly focus on negative, disruptive news, whether most stories carried a Western dateline and whether the four big Western news agencies (Reuters, AP, UPI and AFP) were responsible for most of the news. They found that the media did not overly depend on the four agencies and that they used more stories from their own reporters and correspondents. This implied a shorter news channel with fewer gatekeepers to influence agendas and frames of the coverage.

A more recent news flow study in South Africa is the comprehensive work of South African media analyst Wadim Schreiner (2003) who did a quantitative study of news flow to, from, and within Africa. He noted that although South African news coverage of events outside of Africa is decreasing, intense news incidents such as the attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon on 11 September 2001 tend to confuse the picture of news flow to Africa (Schreiner, 2003:164-165).

Internationally, a number of news flow studies were conducted since *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, such as Hamilton and Jenner (2004), Nossek (2004) and Horvit (2006). These studies look at the news flow phenomenon from a widely divergent range of viewpoints.

In their study of the changing face of foreign correspondence, American mass communication scholars John Maxwell Hamilton and Eric Jenner (2004:301,303) delineate changes in international news flow with the aim of elucidating the implications of such changes for future researchers who want to study the interplay between news and international policy. Based on literature and survey reviews, as well as interviews with prominent reporters, media executives, leaders of industry and public officials, the authors present three important changes that have impacted on how international news and information is circulated (Hamilton & Jenner, 2004: 303-312):

- current financial implications of foreign correspondence, i.e. increased salaries and support costs, and competition from other media, including the electronic media;
- global interdependence at the community level, i.e. the blurring of international borders which enables local reporters to access foreign sources, and
- technological innovation, in particular the internet, which makes it financially possible for practically anybody to publish or broadcast and gives the audience the opportunity to choose as well as to shape the news.

Hamilton and Jenner (2004:312) propose a "new typology of foreign correspondence" as a first step towards a new model of foreign correspondence. Eight types of "new" foreign correspondents are identified (Hamilton & Jenner, 2004:313-14):

- *Traditional foreign correspondents* – reporters who live in and report from foreign countries.
- *Parachute journalists* – reporters who are sent to foreign locations to temporarily cover events in the area.
- *Foreign foreign correspondent* – a foreign national hired to cover events in his/her country.
- *Local foreign correspondent* – local reporters covering the global angle of a local story.
- *Foreign local correspondent* – foreign correspondents who works for a foreign news organization and whose reports are globally available on the internet or via satellite.
- *In-house foreign correspondent* – a person who works for a business enterprise and reports on the company's affairs.
- *Premium service foreign correspondent* – reporters providing high-quality, specialized news in real-time to an audience who pays a premium to receive the information on their computer terminals.
- *Amateur correspondent* – unaffiliated and mostly untrained persons reporting on international events, especially via the internet.

The authors of the study might have added a category for "expert non-affiliated foreign correspondents", that is, foreigners who are experts in their field, but not journalists *per se*, hypothetically for example, if South African naturalist conservationist Lawrence Anthony would write a report for the *Washington Post* about the plight of the animals in the Baghdad Zoo.

Because the term "foreign correspondent" no longer defines the traditional concept, Hamilton and Jenner (2004:315-316) concludes:

We cannot assess the health of foreign correspondence merely by counting the number of reporters sent abroad by major dailies and the networks or by only analyzing stories in The New York Times, Newsweek and CBS News.

In a news flow study of particular importance with regard to the embedded media policy during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, Israeli media specialist Hillel Nossek (2004) addressed the issue of patriotic reporting in the 1995 coverage of three incidents of political violence by three newspapers "regarded as 'elite' or 'quality press' and the finest models of Western journalism" (Nossek, 2004:353), namely

- *The New York Times* (US),
- *The Times* (London, UK) and
- *Ha'aretz* (Israel).

Newspapers from these three countries were chosen since the countries had "an indirect national connection to some events and no direct connection to others" (Nossek, 2004:353). None of the incidents occurred in the selected countries, which means that they all can be regarded as foreign news.

Nossek's theoretical assumption was that when journalists identify foreign news events as their own ("ours"), their professionalism is superseded by patriotism, but when an event is defined as "theirs", traditional journalistic professional practices are followed (2003:343):

Expressed as a rule, we would say that the more 'national' the report is, the less 'professional' it will be, i.e. the closer the reporters/editors are to a given news event in terms of national interest, the further they are from applying professional news values.

Nossek's analyses indicate that (2004:631-634):

- After an event has been defined as terrorism, war or violent protest, journalists determine whether it is "ours" or "theirs". When it is neither, coverage conforms to traditional norms of foreign news coverage.
- The location of the event is of no special importance as a news value.
- Not all incidences of political violence become foreign news – it depends on the nature of the event and whether it is "ours" or "theirs" according to the nationality of the reporter and the editorial board. This belies the common notion that acts of terrorism guarantees publicity, which is the purpose of the deed.
- While the victim or target of the act may have an influence on the coverage, the perpetrator has no control over whether or how the act will be reported on.

The study is interesting in terms of the flow of foreign news, but it is a pity that more recent acts of violence, such as the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US and the 2003 war in Iraq were not included; not only for the sake of recency, but because the media landscape – especially in terms of technology – had changed drastically during the past decade. Nevertheless, the study gives insight into the logic of reporters during times of national crisis.

American journalism academic Beverly Horvit conducted a study from another angle, namely to examine how six international news agencies reflected the international structure of political power in the period prior to Gulf War II (2006:438). This is done to determine in what ways the news that most probably have reached the American public differed from news that flowed to the rest of the international community: whose perspectives were most salient, and was the coverage for or against the Bush administration's foreign policies?

Analysing reports from international news agencies – AP, AFP, Reuters, Xinhua, ITAR-TASS and the Inter Press Service (IPS) – Horvit (2006:435) determined that all agencies except IPS and ITAR-TASS cited US official sources most frequently, and that all six agencies used "said" as the most common verb of attribution when citing American officials. According to Horvit (2006:436), this is an indication that

the news agencies did not work to cast doubt on a source's credibility by using more loaded terms of attribution.

Horvit also notes that contrary to the views of some critics, Western news agencies cover a broader geographical area than their non-Western counterparts, and also provided news much more frequently (2006:441). However, the non-Western agencies reported on countries that would rarely be covered by Western agencies, such as Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and the Ukraine, as well as Cuba, Cyprus and Nicaragua (Horvit, 2006:434).

Four of the agencies reported most frequently from the US and cited US officials more often than any other source (Horvit, 2006:441). The study suggests that the Western news agencies are even-handed in their reporting, with especially AP, AFP and Reuters getting "much closer to balancing positive and negative statements toward the US" (Horvit, 2006:442).

Horvit (2006:444) concludes that

[w]hile researchers have long studied the imbalance in the flow of news about particular countries, research into source dependency suggests the imbalance within the flow of international news should be addressed, as well ... An imbalance in sourcing practices is as problematic as – and is a reflection of – an overall imbalance in the flow of news.

This study gives a good idea of the leanings of the different news agencies, and it would be interesting if this study could be expanded in future to determine how the agency stories were eventually used by the media in different countries across the globe. The news analysis of the current study partially addresses this issue. The Horvit (2006) study also illustrates the importance and effect of news agencies as gatekeepers in the channel of news flow.

3.3.1.2 Gatekeeping

Gatekeeping studies on Gulf War II coverage is not as abundant as expected, although several studies deal with the agendasetting phenomenon without direct reference to the concept. When reading these articles, however, it is clear that gatekeeping is addressed. Two examples of such studies are those by Indian newspaper editor and Fellow at the Shorenstein Center at the Kennedy School of Government Narasimhan Ravi (2005) who looks at how national interests, patriotism, and cultural values shaped the coverage of Gulf War II, and the 2007 study of Jerry Palmer from London Metropolitan University and Victoria Fontan, Director at the University for Peace in Costa Rica, on the role of translators and/or fixers who work alongside the Western media in Iraq since 2003.

Ravi (2005) studies the gatekeeping role of nationality and elite opinion in the flow of news from its sources to the audience. To determine the quality of the reporting in terms of truth, independence, scepticism, balance and sensitivity, the author qualitatively analyses coverage of seven major incidents during Gulf War II, as well as pre-war speeches of Secretary of State Colin Powell and President Bush, in five prominent newspapers from the US (*New York Times*), UK (*The Times* and *The Guardian*), India

(*The Times of India*) and Pakistan (*The Dawn*) (Ravi, 2005:45, 48). The selected incidents and public addresses offer valuable points of reference to determine whether the newspapers accepted, rejected or digressed from the official US war frame, as well as to establish how national points of view and cultural and political differences shaped coverage of the war (Ravi, 2005:48).

Seven significant issues emerge from the study (Ravi, 2005:58-61):

- The US war frame dominated coverage, as the rapid advance of the Anglo-American forces showed that they had the upper hand both strategically and operationally.
- The maxim that history is written by the victors proved true: the Iraqi war frame, with statements of fierce resistance and the coalition forces being halted in their tracks, was either ignored or derided.
- Reports seem to echo the values and views of the societies they belong to: US and UK coverage avoided images and reports of civilian deaths, as this "would represent a callous disregard for innocents and seem out of character with their own notion of their countries and their values". Indian and Pakistani reports made civilian deaths much more salient "which fitted in with the image of a harsh and cruel war".
- Patriotic coverage is a reality – even reporters opposed to the war became more compliant after the war started for fear of being branded unpatriotic: "When a nation's troops are on the ground in a war, support for the troops becomes a value that is accepted without question."
- Elite opinion directly affected coverage, especially in the US where it was divided before the war, but unified behind the war effort once the attacks on Iraq began.
- Specific cultural and societal orientations are reflected in the coverage. Western society's emphasis on the individual was mirrored in reports on individual casualties or rescue operations, while the South Asian emphasis was on the collective, which is in line with the value this society sets on the community, rather than the individual.
- Truth and transparency pay off in information management: the Embedded Media Program and high-profile US briefings enhanced the credibility of the US military.

Ravi did not consider the possibility that the "openness and truth telling" (2005:60) of the US administration's information management was part of a carefully planned strategy, aimed specifically at influencing public opinion in favour of the US war effort (Rumsfeld, 2003a).

Palmer and Fontan (2007) look at a completely neglected role-player in the gatekeeping process, namely the fixer, and examine how this additional link between the source and the reporter impacts upon newsgathering in Iraq.

Traditionally, the relay between an event and the reporter is seen as the "source" – the person or organisation that gives information about an event or organises a visit to the event so that the reporter can experience it first-hand, but whose motives for facilitating the reporting are often questioned (Palmer & Fontan, 2007:5-6). Because of the

breakdown of security in Iraq since the 2003 war, as well as the language barrier, the Western media became highly dependent on fixers, local citizens and reporters to report from Iraq. These Iraqi's also form a relay between the event and the reporter.

The interaction between the reporter and the fixer has for various reasons been the cause of some concern (Palmer & Fontan, 2007:6-7):

- The safety and security of reporters and their colleagues: between March 2003 and mid-2006, 80 reporters and 28 interpreters, drivers and fixers were killed in Iraq and many more were abducted (CPJ, 2006 cited by Palmer & Fontan, 2007).
- The reliability of interpreters and translators: in the light of the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US there are doubts about the trustworthiness of Arabic-speaking personnel hired in Iraq, as well as the linguistic competence of the fixers, as they act as interpreters in a country where few Western reporters understand the local language.
- The reduced quality of the reporting resulting from the relationship with the fixers.

To determine the key issues in the minds of reporters and fixers Palmer and Fontan (2007:7) conducted semi-structured interviews with 17 French and British reporters and 14 Iraqi fixers working for US, UK and Japanese print and audio-visual media.

The interviews highlight five key issues (Palmer & Fontan, 2007:8-21):

- Language: hardly any of the Western journalists spoke Arabic.
- Recruitment: in most cases competent fixers were employed after coincidental or friendship-based meetings.
- The fixer's role: fixers are needed where reporters work in unfamiliar areas, in dangerous situations and they interact with ordinary Iraqi citizens. They arrange and even conduct interviews, translate, explain context to reporters, assess the security situation, handle dangerous situations and have access to networks of local contacts.
- The perception of risk arising from dependence on fixers: journalists fear mistranslation and omission of important information, that they will not blend with and understand the local population, and that the fixer will determine the reporters' view of people and events (i.e. abuse gatekeeping powers).
- Parachute journalism and changes in foreign newsgathering: the traditional way foreign reporters operated had changed and now they seldom live long enough in an area to get to know the culture of their hosts, building up contacts, etc. (like Robert Fisk in Lebanon), but are rather sent on assignment to cover certain incidents. Fixers help bridge the knowledge gap that is created by this practice.

Palmer and Fontan conclude that the traditional foreign correspondent had changed dramatically during Gulf War II (2007:22). Media bureaus in Iraq are staffed by a rotation of reporters, who do not know the country and its people and are unable to speak Arabic, which makes fixers indispensable. Although Western reporters fear that their fixers would harm the quality of their reporting, an independent analysis is necessary to substantiate such a claim.

The Palmer and Fontan (2007) study does groundbreaking work on the role of the fixer in the channel of news flow. The field of research begs to be expanded upon, for example, to determine the extent of the actual gatekeeping done by fixers. It is clear that they are invaluable to especially unilateral reporters, but it is also obvious that hostile fixers might have a significant impact on the agenda set by a journalist's reports.

Also, in view of the strict rules applied by the US military with regard to what embedded reporters were allowed to do, it makes sense that locals who lead reporters to stories the military would have preferred to be ignored, might cause problems. It would be interesting to study the stresses between the US military's media policies and the fixer-phenomenon.

3.3.1.3 General discussion of news flow and gatekeeping studies

A number of papers on gatekeeping as a theory was published since *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, that is, studies on the theory and not its application to war coverage, for example Bruns (2003) and Roberts (2006). Despite the controversy about the gatekeeping function of the US military, little research has been done on it. Furthermore, research on people in gatekeeping positions does not explain the phenomenon in terms of the gatekeeping as a theory, e.g Morris (2005). The reasons for this can only be speculated about.

3.3.2 Agendasetting

In Chapter 2, five stages of McCombs's agendasetting theory were explained. However, this study will focus on only two of those stages, namely first and second level agendasetting. Also, although agendasetting is an effects theory, the reaction of the audience to the set agendas is not tested as the focus of the study is on the flow of news. Agendasetting is a popular field of research, and during the period 2001 to 2005 scholars published the highest number ever (43) of international journal articles that refer to agendasetting (Weaver, 2007: 143-144). Obviously, not all of these studies refer to Gulf War II, but the controversial nature of the US government's media policies during the war proved fertile ground for scholarly studies on agendasetting.

Due to the number of studies that were published since the start of Gulf War II, the current study will only focus on agendasetting research done on coverage during the war. Research dealing with the period preceding the war includes studies by St. Clair & Tajima (2003), Park, Tajima, Nah & Nichols (2004) and Groshek (2005).

3.3.2.1 Agendasetting studies on Gulf War II coverage

Some of the most recently published studies on agendasetting during Gulf War II were conducted by Ayeni (2004), Kang (2006) and Zayani & Ayish (2006).

American mass communication and media scholar Olugbenga Christopher Ayeni (2004) examines the agendas set by Fox, CNN, ABC, CBS and NBC before, during and after the war, with special attention to the role of official sources. The main issue addressed in this study is the sources cited in coverage by the selected television broadcasters. Five distinct groups of sources were identified (Ayeni, 2004:9):

- official
- unofficial
- military
- non-military
- expert

The study shows that the five broadcasters consistently relied heavily on "official" and "military" sources, with a total of 59% of all sources cited belonging to these two groups (Ayeni, 2004:11). This highlights an interesting and very important aspect in the debate about partiality in reporting: while reporters may be unbiased in their presentation of information, the slant of the story may be determined by the sources they choose to cite (Ayeni, 2004:13).

Ayeni (2004:15) notes that the disproportionate number of government and military officials cited may be an indication of covert propaganda on the part of the Bush administration's "power brokers", which does not bode well to the general public who have to accept media reports reflecting the agenda set by the US government. This is a reasonable conclusion, although an in-depth study of the government's media strategy may prove that this specific matter, namely the number of official sources cited, forms part of the more overt part of the US strategy.

Speech, Theatre and Journalism Professor Seok Kang (2006) examines the news agendas of three US television news programmes, ABC World News Tonight, CBS Evening News, and NBC Nightly News during the war in Iraq. Using second level agenda setting and framing Kang (2006) examines whether:

- war coverage was more episodic than thematic
- war coverage was framed as positive rather than negative
- positive coverage was more likely to slant public opinion than negative framed.

Results show that the news agenda before the war was dominated by war plans and diplomacy issues. After the start of the war the news agenda consisted almost entirely of war reports, although in April 2003 criticism of the war plans was high on the agenda. In June and July 2003, war intelligence and US casualties were added to the agenda.

The results from Kang's (2006) study shows:

- war coverage was more episodic than thematic, with news viewers assigning responsibility for national problems to the actions of particular individuals
- extensive coverage of the dominant themes, namely war plans, progress of the war and US forces, was patriotic and positive rather than negative, but coverage of war intelligence, insurgency, US casualties, the economy and antiwar protest was more negative. While individual reports seem balanced, the mass of positive reports is responsible for the slant of the public opinion
- all the war news themes were related to public opinion, as both the government and leading media emphasized safety and security and broadcasts tended to be patriotic.

Kang (2006:p.n.) concludes that

the media, under the control of government in news coverage during a war time, can be utilized as a sophisticated propaganda tool, which helps to legitimize the administration's policy and plans on the conflict with positively framed news.

Just like Kang (2006), Critical Theory Professor Mohamed Zayani and Communication Professor Muhammad I. Ayish of the United Arab Emirates, also examine the way in which three television stations covered the war, but they concentrate on the way the Arab media, in particular Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya and Abu Dhabi Channel, covered the fall of Baghdad and the end of Saddam's government in Iraq (2006:473).

A narrative analysis of broadcasts by these three channels shows a number of common trends, notably (Zayani & Ayish, 2006:487):

- agendasetting
- framing
- lack of depth
- dearth of analysis
- fragmentation of the news
- slippage between fact and opinion
- disproportionate allocation of time to news items
- lack of contextualization
- sensationalism

Referring to agendasetting, Zayani and Ayish say that coverage of certain issues to the exclusion of others "should not go unnoticed" and that silence about others "is meaningful in and of itself" (2006:487). Neither Abu Dhabi Channel nor Al Arabiya reported on anything but the war in Iraq, while Al Jazeera reported on Palestinians who were killed and injured in Bait Hanoon in clashes with Israelis, as well as an explosion at a Palestinian high school that injured 27 pupils. Furthermore, the increased coverage of the implication of and accusations against Syria "is also a case of selectivity and salience" (Zayani & Ayish, 2006:487).

Zayani and Ayish (2006: 493) conclude that the three television channels established themselves as the main Arab source of information on the war and that the mobilisation of the channels is seen as a direct challenge to especially the US hegemony. They have the power to balance patriotic American coverage (Zayani & Ayish, 2006:494):

... the news values of the Arab satellite channels under consideration were also tainted, to various degrees, with cultural, political and historical considerations. While no tears were shed on the fall of Saddam (if anything the notable condemnation of the toppled Iraqi regime is a significant departure from Arab media's tendency to look the other way when it comes to the abuses of Saddam), there is also a felt sadness and even disappointment.

Zayani and Ayish (2006:494) say the Arab view of reports on the fall of Baghdad

amounts to a visually enhanced narrative about subduing Iraq rather than liberating it. Behind the perspective that transpires from the coverage of the fall of Baghdad lies arguably a sense of malaise, resentment and frustration that emanates from several decades of defeat.

3.3.2.2 General discussion of agendasetting studies

While reviewing literature on *Operation Iraqi Freedom* agendasetting studies, an interesting phenomenon emerged. From a theoretical perspective, authors often seem to drift between theories, especially between second level agendasetting and framing, sometimes treating them as variants of the same theory, for example the study by Kang (2006). This results in what Dietram Scheufele of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and David Tewksbury refer to as "a confusing set of concepts and terminologies" (2007:12), which seems to be quite common in literature on this field of study.

Of course, second level agendasetting and framing are interrelated and involves very similar, yet distinguishable cognitive processes and effects (Weaver, 2007:142,145). Both refer to *how* issues are covered, rather than *which* issues are covered. This makes it all the more confusing. The problem is enhanced by the fact that not even the experts in communication research seem to agree about the distinction between the two concepts (Weaver, 2007:143).

Because there is no clear, generally accepted definition that distinguishes between especially agendasetting and framing (priming also comes into the equation, but is not included in the present study) (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:12; Weaver, 2007:143) researchers tend to only superficially link their studies to a particular theory; sometimes they do not mention any news theory at all. For example, both Ayeni (2004) and Lars Nord and Jesper Strömbäck of the Mid Sweden University and the Swedish Centre for Political Communication Research (2006) studied the role of sources in the coverage of the war. Ayeni referred to the "agendasetting role" (referred to by name) of the sources cited by American television channels, while Nord and Strömbäck, who studied the sources cited by Swedish newspaper and television reports, did not even mention the existence of an agenda. American Strategic Communication Professor Frank Dardis (2006) referred to a "paradigm" when writing about what other scholars would have called either an "agenda" or a "frame", depending on the definition they accept.

Because of this conundrum, an attempt will be made – at least for the purpose of this study – to clarify the differences between the theories.

3.3.2.3 Personal interpretation

McCombs (2000) explained that while the first level of agendasetting refers to the transmission of *object* salience, the second level involves the transmission of *attribute* salience, which may guide people in what to think. An "object" refers to topics, issues, and persons, which each have various attributes, i.e. characteristics and properties that form the multi-dimensional image of an object. Like objects, attributes may also vary in salience, which makes them equally powerful as agendasetting tools.

In terms of this study, it would mean that *Operation Iraqi Freedom* was a single object in the universe of news items that might have been reported on, and that according to the theory of second level agendasetting, coverage of the war will have certain characteristics, e.g., is it positive, up-beat, pessimistic or indifferent. However, when the war as object is examined closely, it becomes apparent that McCombs's (2000) first level of agendasetting in fact consists of multiple telescopic tiers, and that each tier focuses ever more closely on a particular aspect of the war.

The war itself was just one issue of a multitude of news events that could have been covered during that period of time and consisted of various incidents, such as the reasons for the attack, the much reported official beginning of the war, less reported incidents such as the marketplace bombing, hyped issues like the rescue of US Army Private Jessica Lynch, and the eventual toppling of the Saddam statue on Al Firdos Square, which signified the "capture of the castle" and therefore, the end of the war.

A closer study of these incidents revealed that they too involved different issues. Coverage of the beginning of Gulf War II, for example, dealt with the number of missiles that were launched, how spectacular the pyrotechnics were, and the depleted uranium in some of the rounds that were rained upon the city. The success of the operation constituted the second level of the agenda, which was created by frames such as myth (the US army as the liberating saviour, striking selected targets with almost super-human precision), rites, rituals and traditions (the ever-present American flag), jargon ("shock and awe"), and spin (direct declarations by leaders of the positive outcome of the operation).

Figure 22 is an attempt by this author to illustrate the perceived multiple tiers that were identified within the two levels of agendasetting proposed by McCombs (2000).

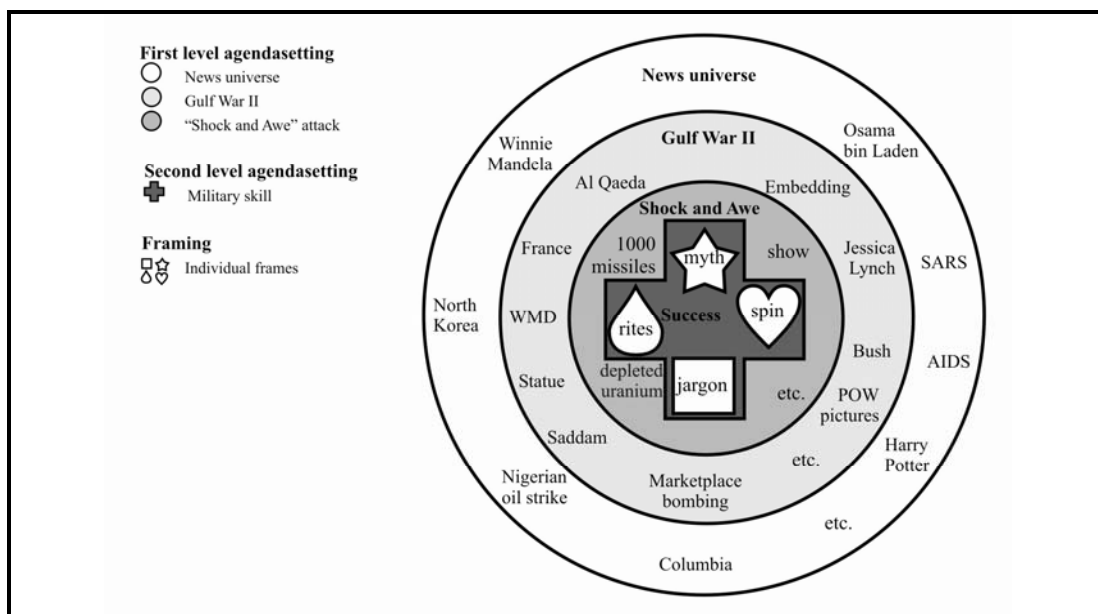


Figure 22. A telescopic view of multiple tiers of agendasetting and framing embedded in the two levels of agendasetting proposed by McCombs (2000).

3.3.3 Framing

As seen above (Chapter 3.3.2.2), there still exists controversy about what framing exactly is. Because of this lack of agreement amongst even the experts, the prolific volume of framing research published during the first five years of 2000 – an astounding 165 papers (Weaver, 2007:143) – represents a widely divergent spectrum of approaches to the concept. Interestingly, prior to 2000, few academic papers were produced that dealt with framing theory (Berenger, 2004:2). The growing popularity of the theory in media research may be attributed to its being so well suited for studies in propaganda and public relations – issues that became especially prominent because of Gulf War II.

3.3.3.1 Framing studies on Gulf War II coverage

Because of the abundant framing literature available on Gulf War II coverage, it was decided to focus on studies that only dealt directly with the war itself. American Journalism and Mass Communication professor Ralph Berenger (2004) for example attempts to "lay the theoretical and conceptual groundwork to better understand global media's reporting behaviour *before, during and after* the 2003 Gulf War" (emphasis added), and is consequently excluded from the discussion. This still produces a vast number of papers, of which only a few of the most applicable studies will be discussed, namely Sivek (2004), Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005) and Lee, Masog and Kim (2006).

Susan Currie Sivek of University of Texas at Austin (2004) compares the way embedded and unilateral newspaper reporters framed the 2003 war in Iraq and attempts to explain why the frames differed. Three research questions are addressed:

- How did newspaper reporters in Iraq frame their stories?
- Did the use of particular frames differ based on reporters' status as embedded or unilateral?
- Do other characteristics of the reporters or their newspapers correlate with the use of particular frames?

To answer these questions, Sivek (2004) analysed war reports by 57 journalists (whose status as "embedded" or "unilateral" is known) that were published in the US, UK, Canada and Australia. Eight topic categories are identified:

- Soldiers' lives
- Reporters' lives
- Update on movements
- Iraqi-American relations and future of Iraq
- Iraqi daily life
- Surrounding countries and Kurds' concerns
- Editorial or news analysis
- Military capability and strategy

Subsequently, Sivek (2004) categorised the reports according to three dominant frames that emerged from a pre-test of randomly selected reports, namely:

- Liberation
- Invasion
- Mixed

The results of the analysis consistently shows that embedded reporters tended to adopt the "liberation" frame that was promoted by the US military, while unilateral reporters preferred either the "invasion" or "mixed" frames (Sivek, 2004). This suggests that one of the most important factors determining the frame of the war reports is the status of the reporter as either embedded or unilateral.

Sivek (2004) concludes that reporters and editors involved in embedding programmes, whatever its nature, should be conscious how they frame their reports and to make sure that it does not merely reflect the viewpoint of those they are embedded with:

The distinctive situation of embedded war correspondents, plunged into a situation dangerous both to the quality of their reporting and their lives, deserves special attention and even unique training so that these journalists can continue to report from a critical standpoint and utilize a variety of frames in their work. That attention is especially required given evidence of framing effects found in some studies.

In a similar study, American Journalism and Communication scholar Daniela Dimitrova and Jesper Strömbäck (2005) look at war coverage from a European perspective when they examine the differences between framing Gulf War II in the high quality US newspaper *The New York Times* and the similarly elite Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*.

Dimitrova and Strömbäck start the paper by highlighting the differences between the US and Sweden, especially in terms of government and the media (2005:401-404). From this explication it is clear that fundamental cultural differences exist between the US and Sweden. For example, Sweden has a high newspaper readership, while the US has a low readership. Conversely, Sweden has a low level of television viewing, while the US has a high level of television viewing. Sweden saw the war as a violation of international law; the US led the "coalition of the willing" against Iraq.

Furthermore, Swedish reporters regard "objectivity" as finding the hard facts on both sides of a dispute; US reporters see "objectivity" as remaining impartial (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005:403):

That understanding might lead to the consequence that US journalists become more dependent on their official sources, and that, when no dispute is perceived, they let the official sources set the media agenda.

Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005:405-406) note that the way news is framed depends on the national context in which the reporters operate, therefore it was expected that US and Swedish reporters would use frames matching the political culture of their respective countries. They predicted that war reports in the US and Sweden would differ significantly in terms of tone, frames and sources.

To examine the way US and Swedish reporters framed the war, Dimitrova and Strömbäck sought to answer two research questions (2005:408):

- Can the differences/similarities in news framing be attributed to the perspectives of the political leaders in the US and Sweden?
- Can the differences/similarities in news framing be attributed to the journalistic norms and values in the US and Sweden?

Using quantitative content analysis, reports that were published in *Dagens Nyheter* and *The New York Times* during the period 20 March 2003 to 1 May 2003 are categorised according to specific news frames, which include (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005:408-409):

- military conflict frame
- human interest frame
- responsibility frame
- diagnostic frame
- prognostic frame
- violence of war frame
- anti-war protest
- media self-referential frame

According to the results of the study, both newspapers published predominantly neutral reports, but the tone in *Dagens Nyheter* is more negative than the tone in *The New York Times* (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005:409-411). The newspapers differed significantly with regard to the military conflict, responsibility, anti-war protest and prognostic frames, but both used the human interest frame in 17 percent of the stories. They equally used the violence of war, media self-referential and diagnostic frames. Neither of the newspapers often used the diagnostic frame. Results also showed that *The New York Times* relied much more on official and military sources (92 percent) than *Dagens Nyheter* (40 percent). Interestingly *The New York Times* cited anonymous sources in as many as 78 percent of the reports, while *Dagens Nyheter* did so in only 54 percent of the stories.

The study provides evidence of the differences between the Swedish and US newspaper's coverage of Gulf War II in terms of tone, war framing and sources cited (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005:413). The authors propose that these differences in coverage may ultimately reinforce and possibly increase global divisions about the war. The similarities in reporting, especially about human interest and media self-reference, may "suggest a trend toward Americanisation of the journalism process".

Dimitrova and Strömbäck (2005:414) conclude with the suggestion that as the war in Iraq is still unfolding, new frames might be introduced by the various national media.

As in the two studies above, Seow Ting Lee of the School of Communication, Illinois State University, Crispin C. Maslog of the Department of Mass Communication, Minnesota State University, and Hun Shik Kim of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Colorado (2006) also examine news frames that were

dominant during Gulf War II, but from the perspective of Asian countries. They compare 1 558 reports on the war in Iraq and other Asian conflicts published by eight newspapers from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Philippines in terms of national and international conflict coverage (Lee *et al.*, 2006:499). The "national conflicts" conflicts refer to:

- Pakistan and India's clash about Kashmir
- the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka
- the Muslim separatist movement in the southern Philippine province of Mindanao
- the Aceh and Maluku civil wars in Indonesia

The war reports are analysed according to Galtung's (1998) war and peace journalism frameworks (cited by Lee *et al.*, 2006:503), which are oriented along the lines of war/violence, propaganda, elites and victory in the case of war frames, and peace/conflict, truth, people and solutions in the case of peace frames.

With the above classification in mind, Lee *et al.* (2006:503) posed three questions:

- Are there significant differences between coverage of the war in Iraq and coverage of local conflicts by Asian newspapers, and if so, what are they?
- What are the most important indicators of war and peace journalism respectively in the coverage of the Iraq war and the Asian conflicts?
- Is there a correlation between war/peace journalism framing and story-specific characteristics such as story type, length and source?

Results show that a disproportionate number of stories were framed as war journalism and fewer as peace journalism in local Asian reports, while the opposite is true of coverage of the war in Iraq (Lee *et al.*, 2006:507-508). According to the study the strongest indicators of the war frame in both the coverage of local Asian conflicts and in coverage of Gulf War II are:

- a focus on the here and now, which confines the conflict to a particular space and time without considering the long-term effects
- an elite orientation, which focuses on politicians and military leaders, without paying attention to the soldiers and civilians who suffer the consequences of elite decisions
- a dichotomy between the good and the bad, which promotes shallow moral judgments and blame to whoever started the war.

The strongest indicators of the peace frame that emerged from the analysis of reports on both the local Asian conflicts and Gulf War II are (Lee *et al.*, 2006: 508):

- avoidance of emotional language, which implies the use of neutral language
- non-partisanship, which refers to the avoidance of bias to any side
- multi-party orientation, which allows all parties to express their views.

With regard to story characteristics and war/peace journalism framing, Lee *et al.* (2006:510) found that the majority of the reports were hard news, with a dominant war

frame. Most of the features and opinion pieces have a peace frame. The results also show a positive correlation between story length and the peace frame: the longer the story, the more likely that it used the peace frame; the shorter the story the more likely it is to be framed as war journalism. It also seems that reports from foreign sources are more likely to contain war frames and fewer peace frames than local Asian stories.

Other framing studies referring to the war in Iraq were conducted by Fahmy (2004), Giffen (2004), Lin (2004) and Boaz (2005).

3.3.3.2 General discussion of framing studies

There is an abundance of literature on the concept "framing", the different approaches to and theories of frames, framing devices, models of framing, framing analyses, and framing effects. Some of the authors agree with one another, others disagree, and many more write about completely divergent concepts, all referred to as "framing" (Scheufele, 1999:18). This disparity of approaches is exemplified by the dissimilarity of framing studies on war reporting. For example, Denise St. Clair & Atsushi Tajima of the School of Journalism at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2003) examined the correlation between the ideological orientation towards the war in Iraq of six different countries and the frames used by their newspapers, while Sivek (2004) compared the frames used by reporters in Iraq during the war. In a study of media coverage before and during Gulf War I, American Philosophy of Education Professor Douglas Kellner (1991) found that the war was framed as "a simple conflict between good and evil", which agrees with only one of the aspects addressed by Lee *et al.* (2006).

A review of the most recent framing analyses on Gulf War II creates an impression of a multitude of researchers all working towards a collective goal, but with none knowing what the others are doing – which most likely is true. If the same research could be undertaken using common parameters for delineating frames, a much better picture would emerge of how the war was framed on a global scale. As it stands now, frame research on Gulf War II is a collection of disparate and disconnected – albeit often excellent – facts and figures.

Because of the confusion about framing (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:12; Weaver, 2007:142, 245) it is not the purpose of this study to propose an ultimate model of framing, but rather to explore one of the many paths created by the media towards the contextualisation and eventual understanding of the events in Iraq. Suggestions by scholars such as Hallahan (1999:207-208), Alan Knight, Australian Journalism, Media and Communication scholar (2004), Berinsky and Kinder (2006:641,654) and film maker and media critic Peter Watkins (2007) about the "story" side of news prompted the exploration of the use of the story – as in "folk tale" – as a frame used by US government officials and reflected by the media during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*.

3.3.4 Story frame

The presentation of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* as a "Hollywood movie", complete with heroes and villains and damsels in distress (e.g. Pfc Jessica Lynch), prompted this researcher to look into the possibility of using a story frame for the analysis of war coverage. The idea is supported by Berinsky and Kinder (2006), Casebeer & Russell (2005) and UN spokesperson Jamie Shea (Berlin Online, 2000) (see Chapter 2.4.1).

3.3.4.1 Review of the story frame

Not many news studies have been done that use the story as a frame for analysis. Interesting work has however been done in other fields, such as political studies and military studies.

For example, in his book *War stories* American political scientist Bruce D. Larkin (2001) looks at accounts of war from a political – not a media – perspective. According to Larkin, "[a]ccounts of wars are 'stories', akin to other kinds of stories" (2001:13). He continues to assign events during Gulf War I to the categories suggested by Propp (1968) and concludes that "[t]here are startling parallels".

This salience of a story frame in times of conflict is also highlighted by military scholars Casebeer and Russell (2005), who look at the attacks of 11 September 2001 as

part of a narrative – or a story – for the American public that shall exist in some form forever ... While the public regarded the attacks as defining – and a break somehow from the past, the elements of the story making up the September 11th attacks are slowly being pried apart and reconstituted by a variety of different “communities,” including intelligence professionals, academics and the news media.

Casebeer and Russell (2005) propose the creation of a comprehensive "counter-narrative strategy" to oppose the "Al Qaeda narrative". The Al Qaeda narrative includes (Vlahos, quoted by Casebeer & Russell, 2005):

- an heroic journey and a mythic figure – Bin Laden, who portrays himself as following in the footsteps of Muhammad. He is on a heroic journey and struggles against great odds in a way that makes him almost as mythic in stature as Muhammad himself
- the rhythm of history captured as epic struggle and story – Bin Laden presents himself as part of a heroic battle against Western imperialism and decadence, a story that forms part of the very fabric of Muslim history
- the commanded charge of renewal – it is only by opposing the dark forces of the West that one can be renewed. "To fail to struggle is to fail to play your part in a narrative that ends with Islam triumphing over the infidel West"
- history revealed and directed through mystic literary form – the mystical component of the story, e.g. rewards in the paradise hereafter, means that worldly successes do not matter: the struggle should continue despite current triumphs.

The authors suggest that the countering of the Al Qaeda narrative should be

a critical mission requirement of any strategy to confront the organization ... Myth creation usually involves the effective use of narrative. As we formulate an “affective strategy,” we should keep the elements of a narrative in mind, for it is only by disrupting the story that you can interfere with myth creation. Good stories need protagonists, antagonists, tests for the protagonist, a promise of redemption, and a supporting cast of characters (at the very least).

In one of the few media studies on news and the story frame, British political scientist Erik Ringmar (2006) analyses news about the pre-amble to Gulf War II according to different types of stories, or narratives. He explains that by treating decision makers as storytellers, it is possible to see the conflict between them as a problem of intertextuality (2006:404). Ringmar notes that while narratives are often based on the same facts, their interpretations and thus their conclusions differ (2006:404):

stories present different agendas for action and thereby different moral choices. Consequently, it is not surprising that decision-makers who tell different stories end up disagreeing with one another.

Ringmar points out narratives have always followed a predictable plot, which is why it grabs and holds the attention of the audience, and why the audience is able to make sense of it (2006:404). Four classical types of narratives are examined, namely

- romance
- tragedy
- comedy
- satire.

Romance, the most common fairytale, is currently famous as Hollywood love stories, but is best illustrated by the adventure story (Ringmar, 2006:404-405):

a quest undertaken by a chivalric knight, a brave explorer, an ardent lover, or some other heroic figure. The hero is dashing and daring ... and the story unfolds as he searches for something or someone, or tries to conquer something or someone. Often there are three stages to the quest: first the perilous journey, next the struggle or the conquest, and finally the exaltation of the hero. In all these respects the enemy is the hero's opposite ... The remaining characters are either for or against the hero, and obviously there is never any doubt about whose side the audience is on.

According to Ringmar romance is the story type favoured by "idealists and world-improvers of all kinds", such as free-market enthusiasts, anti-Communist crusaders, Greenpeace activists, Esperanto-speakers and anti-globalization protesters, as well as politicians and social elites (2006:404-405):

These are people who believe that evil can be defeated, that the world can be made into a better place, and usually also that they are the very instruments chosen by God, Providence or History to carry out this task. Occasionally, the romantics are pacifists, but more often they are warlike and fully prepared to fight for their beliefs. The world as they see it presents a struggle between good and evil, and evil must be annihilated for good to prevail.

During Gulf War II, the Bush and Blair administrations represented the romantics (Ringmar, 2006:407). The story frame based on Propp's (1968) folk tale analysis that will be used in the present study falls in to the "romance" category.

Tragedy follows an entirely different plot, with the hero rebelling against the *status quo* only to be destroyed in the end (Ringmar, 2006:405):

The tragic hero ... has a 'flaw' that sets him apart from others; he is proud, passionate or obsessed with some fanciful idea. Following his own mind, he comes into conflict with the laws of society or nature, and as the social or natural order is re-established the hero is relentlessly crushed. In the end no one escapes and no one gets away with anything, no matter how good the intentions. In fact, the better the intentions, the more decisive the defeat will be.

In the war in Iraq the tragic narrative was promoted by the traditional American foreign policy establishment who declared that "[i]f we want peace we have to prepare for war, and only we ourselves can guarantee our own preservation" (Ringmar, 2006:405, 407).

Comedy commonly refers to an act designed to elicit laughter, but as a narrative type it refers to "a comedy of errors", an account of conflicts and misconceptions that are accidentally resolved during the course of the story (Ringmar, 2006: 406-407). In Gulf War II, the so-called "old Europeans" were the "comedians" (Ringmar, 2006: 406):

As they see it, the problems of the world are mainly the results of misunderstandings, and for that reason the most important task is to provide some means by which states can sort out their differences. Our enemies should not be destroyed, but instead engaged in conversation; hence the importance of international organizations and fora. Working through the European Union, the United Nations or the International Monetary Fund, a new and better world can indeed be created but only in small steps and through painstaking and profoundly non-glamorous effort ... One by one our enemies will come to see the advantages of our social model and abandon their old ways. Our enemies are mistaken rather than evil, and we should interact with them rather than kill them.

Satire refers to an ironic world view which ridicules the established social order, exemplified by the other narrative types, and is consequently subversive rather than constructive (Ringmar, 2006: 406-407). This was the narrative followed by critics of the war in Iraq as well as the newly liberated Iraqis:

The basic strategy is to turn other plot structures inside-out, upside-down, or to deconstruct and reassemble them in unrecognizable patterns ... Since romance is the narrative that takes itself most seriously, it has always been the satirists' favourite target ... While political and social elites may dismiss these accounts as 'irresponsible' or 'obscene', they are also often afraid of them. They know that if the official narrative fails to unfold as the leaders envisioned the satirical narrative will quickly gain credence. The moment politicians are made into fools, their power quickly dissipates.

Ringmar (2006:413-414) concludes that variant narratives are not necessarily bad and that it is to be expected that there will be different views of an issue as complex as Gulf

War II. Such disagreements contribute to the plurality of viewpoints, which ultimately improves the global ability to assess a situation.

Other studies that refer to the use of story elements in the analysis of news were done by American Journalism and Communication scholar Jack Lule (2001) and Australian communication researcher Peter Pugsley (2006).

Lule (2001) explored the differences between news as information and news as myth or a story complete with characters, a plot and a theme. Stressing that according to his definition news as myth does not suggest a false belief, or a biased, slanted, spun or untrue tale (2001: 15), he argued that news stories offer "sacred, societal narratives with shared values and beliefs, with lessons and themes, and with exemplary models that instruct and inform: they are offering myths" (2001:18).

Pugsley (2006) examined how in China the "hero narrative" is deliberately employed by the media during difficult times to mobilise the public and to ultimately create a positive outcome in which "the enemy", be it foreigners, corrupt government officials or even nature, is defeated. The whole of China's struggle against the enemy is represented by the valiant actions of a chosen person or group. According to Pugsley (2006:78) this is purposefully done to control the Chinese mass audience.

3.3.4.2 General discussion of story frame studies

Despite the general recognition that stories offer a universal structure to understand and make sense of complex international political issues (Ringmar, 2006:404), a surprisingly small number of media studies examine this phenomenon. The few studies that were published give valuable perspective on the way the complexities of world politics – and especially Gulf War II – were made comprehensible to world audiences. Because of the danger this approach implies in terms of perception management from the global political elite (Casebeer & Russell, 2005), more research is needed and the results thereof ought to be included in the training of journalists.

3.4 Summary

In Chapter 3 scholarly papers on the key research areas covered by this study, namely news flow and gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing, with special reference to the story frame, were reviewed. Most of the papers that used Gulf War II as research case were produced not before the present study, but at the same time. The present study therefore does not expand on the reviewed literature, but acknowledges it for its contribution to the available body of knowledge on news analysis of the war in Iraq.

* * * * *

In Chapter 4, the research design and methodology followed in this study is discussed.

Chapter 4

Research design and methodology

4.1 Introduction

During *Operation Iraqi Freedom* it was the US government's stated objective to "occupy the media territory" (see Urrutia-Varhall, 2002). For this purpose they implemented the Embedded Media Program, which allowed some 700 selected, trained and contractually bound reporters – most of them American – to accompany the military to the war front. The new media policies became the subject of much debate amongst academics, social commentators as well as the media itself due to its potentially propagandistic implementation (Diemand, 2003; Hafez, 2003; Miskin *et al.*, 2003; Robinson, Goddard, Brown & Taylor, 2006).

As only one South African newspaper reporter was present in Iraq during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* – he operated as a unilateral – the local press had to rely on foreign sources for information about the war. This begged the question: where did these reports originate and what were the tone and general message of these reports?

In order to find an answer, these policies as well as the historical relationship between the US government and the media in times of conflict are examined in this study and an attempt is made to determine whether and to what extent the American view found its way to war reports published by four major South African newspapers. All relevant news reports published in four leading South African newspapers as well as news briefings by the White House and Pentagon during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* were analysed in terms of gatekeeping, framing, and agendasetting using the story frame, which is an adapted version of Propp's fairytale analysis, as a yardstick.

In Chapter 4 the aim of the research and the research questions pertaining to the above are stated. Key concepts are defined and the instruments used to measure these variables are explained. Next, the sample design and sampling methods are discussed, along with an explanation of the key variables used in the analyses.

4.2 Objective

The aim of this study is to determine whether and to what extent the novel media policies implemented by the US during Gulf War II had resulted in pro-American coverage by South African newspapers.

4.3 Conceptualisation

The key concern of detractors of the new US media policies centred around the Department of Defense's Embedded Media Program which allowed hundreds of selected reporters to accompany the US forces to the war front to "tell the factual story – good or bad – before others seed the media with disinformation and distortions, as they most certainly will continue to do" (Rumsfeld, 2003a). The US made no secret of its desire to gain the support of the international community for the American led war on Iraq and critics were of the opinion that this policy in particular was designed to saturate the international media with news reports biased towards the American point of view (Diemand, 2003; Miskin *et al.*, 2003).

To understand the current relationship between the military and the media, a media historiographical study is done on the origin and evolution of war reporting as a distinctive news genre. This is augmented with a focused examination of the interaction between the media and the US military during various conflicts since the American Civil War up to *Operation Iraqi Freedom*.

This examination is highlighted the views of international war correspondents, namely Peter Arnett, Paul Watson, Martin Savidge, Robert Fisk, and Bonny Schoonakker, who personally experienced the outcome of the US media policy during different conflicts. US media policies during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* is the focus of this study, and are assessed with special reference to the Embedded Media Program, its ground rules and the media boot camp.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods are used to analyse the content of all *Operation Iraqi Freedom* news reports that were published by the leading English and Afrikaans daily and Sunday newspapers, namely *The Star* (English, daily), and *Die Burger* (Afrikaans, daily), as well as *Sunday Times* (English, Sunday), and *Rapport* (Afrikaans, Sunday) between 21 March 2003 (the day after the commencement of *Operation Shock and Awe*) and 2 May 2003 (the day after the announcement of the end of major combat operations) to establish whether and to what extent the US government's take on the war found its way to South Africa. The newspaper reports are classified into news agency reports, reports written by own reporters or local experts, and reports compiled from various news sources.

The content analyses are done using selected theoretical models of gatekeeping, agenda-setting, and framing as parameters. Propp's (1968) fairytale analysis is employed to enumerate elements in the news agenda of major role players during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, as well as to investigate the "story" as a news frame.

Thus, this study comprises two main sections:

- A historiographical overview of the development of war reporting as a separate news genre, with special attention to the US government's policies towards the media during war or war-like situations. This was done by studying books, journal articles and internet archives, as well as interviewing five international war reporters who covered military operations that the US was involved in
- An in-depth study of the result of these policies and interactions on the news reports that were eventually published in South African newspapers. This was done by means of content analyses of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* reports published by four leading South African newspapers.

4.4 Research questions

In order to achieve the objective stated above, the following research questions are addressed:

- What are the origins of war reporting and how did functions of this news genre evolve through history?

- How did the relationship between the US and the media evolve during conflicts prior to *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, and what are the origins of US media policies during this war?
- How did war correspondents perceive the media policies and the relationship between the military and the media during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, as well as previous conflicts?
- Where did the reports on *Operation Iraqi Freedom* originate and through which nodes of gatekeeping did the news flow before reaching the South African public?
- How can the presence of a story frame be tested in news coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*?
- What elements of this framing model were present in US governmental speeches and news briefings? Which ones were the most salient? Were the same elements evident in news agency reports published by the South African newspapers, and in the overall coverage by these newspapers?
- Did the content and orientation of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* reports printed in Afrikaans newspapers differ from those published by the English papers?
- Did the daily newspapers present the same profile in terms of issues and orientation as the Sunday newspapers?
- What first and second level news agendas emerged from US government officials' speeches, news agency reports and selected South African newspaper reports?

4.5 Key concepts

Because of the jargon inherent to the military and the media as social institutions, some of the terms used in this study may be unclear to members of either community. Therefore, an extensive list of terms will be supplied in the next chapter. Following in the present chapter, the most important concepts referred to in this study, namely news flow, gatekeeping, agendasetting, framing and the story frame, as they are understood by the author, will first be discussed.

4.5.1 News flow

Since the publication of French journalist and researcher Jacques Kayser's comparative study called *One week's news* and the International Press Institute (IPI)'s study titled *The flow of the news* in 1953, numerous researchers have investigated the news flow phenomenon and they all came to the same conclusion, namely that the dominance of Western news agencies was a vital issue (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985:9-10). This is still the case (Kleinstauber, 2002:9). Despite more than half a century's research on news flow, apparently no formal definition has yet been formulated (Archetti, 2007:30).

Therefore, for the purpose of this study the term "news flow" will be used in its most basic sense, referring to the transfer of newsworthy information from the event through various gatekeepers to the audience (derived from Sparkes & Winter, 1980:150; Wu, 2003:9; Nossek, 2004:346 and others).

4.5.2 Gatekeeping

During the process of news flow, information about an issue or event is transferred from one "gatekeeper" to the next. A gatekeeper is a person in the channel of news flow who sorts, selects and rejects information on news stories by dismissing unwanted,

uninteresting and unimportant information and focusing on important or interesting stories (Franklin, Hamer, Hanna, Kinsey & Richardson, 2005:92). For a message to reach a target audience, it has to pass through numerous gates (Watson & Hill, 2003:114-115).

In this study, the term "gatekeeping" will refer to the actions taken by the "gatekeepers" in the news flow process, namely the source (e.g. US government officials), reporters (embedded and unilateral), sub-editors and editors who "man the gates" at various points in the news flow channel, e.g. news agencies, news bureaus and home offices.

4.5.3 Agendasetting

The media's very powerful ability to focus public attention on specific issues is referred to as "agendasetting" (McQuail & Windahl, 1981:62). According to Lazarsfeld and Merton (1971:560-561) the media has the ability to give prominence to issues, people and social institutions through coverage thereof. The emphasis placed by the news media leads the public's understanding of the salience of an issue and ultimately lays the foundation for the public's opinion on that matter (McCombs, 1999).

According to McCombs (2000) the term "agenda" is not intended to imply that a news organisation has an evil premeditated schema that it pursues relentlessly. It is purely a descriptive term which refers to the result over time of numerous day-to-day decisions by all the gatekeepers in a news organisation, from the reporter in the field to the sub-editor and the editor. This is the definition of agendasetting that will be used in this study.

This study will address two types of agendasetting, namely first and second level agendasetting. While first level agendasetting refers to the transmission of *object* (topics, issues, and persons) salience, second level agendasetting involves the transmission of *attribute* (characteristics and properties) (McCombs, 2000).

4.5.4 Framing

Despite the large corpus of papers on framing, a single universally accepted definition of framing still does not exist (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007:12; Weaver, 2007:143).

When people do not have first-hand knowledge of issues or events they rely on the news media for information, but also for the clarifying and interpretation of the information (Franklin *et al.*, 2005:84). This is done by finding a common ground, which is essential to gain the interest and attention – even the assent and approval – of the audience for successful communication to take place (Watson & Hill, 2003:110). The communicator presents the information in such a manner that it fits into the audience's existing frame of reference.

Framing is understood in this study as the selection of certain aspects of an issue to promote a particular view of the problem (Entman, 1993:52).

4.5.5 Story frame

The media appeared to have presented *Operation Iraqi Freedom* as a story akin to a Hollywood action film complete with heroes and villains, which led critics to accuse the

media of the "Hollywoodisation" of the war (Knight, 2004; Watkins, 2007) and consequently, the presence of a story frame.

For this reason, the general elements present in most stories were sought and found in the seminal work by Vladimir Propp, who in 1928 analysed a collection of 100 Russian fairytales. He deconstructed the stories into their "small component parts" and identified 31 basic elements or "functions" (Table 1, p. 38) and eight character types (Table 2, p. 39) that occurred in the collection of stories (Propp, 1968:25-65, 71-91).

For the purpose of this study, these elements and character types are distilled to find the single most common story. This was done by comparing the frequency that elements and characters occurred in stories according to Propp's analysis (1968:135-143). These story elements are used as markers in the identification of a story frame.

4.6 Issues of measurement

4.6.1 Coding instrument

The instrument used to code the key variables in this study is based on the instruments applied by Sreberny-Mohammadi and co-workers in 1985 to analyse international media reports from 29 countries. That instrument which Sreberny-Mohammadi referred to as "a general purpose technique for quantification of news content" in turn had its roots in the 1979 International Broadcast Institute's study by British communication scientists Peter Golding and Philip Elliott, and communication theorist Denis McQuail's 1977 *Analysis of newspaper* for the Royal Commission (quoted by Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985:14-15).

While there are obviously many ways to categorise news content (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985:14), the instrument used in this study was selected because it was tried and tested over time in decidedly more extensive research projects.

4.6.2 Sampling

4.6.2.1 Newspapers

The newspapers included in the study are the daily newspapers *The Star* (English) and *Die Burger* (Afrikaans), as well as the Sunday newspapers the *Sunday Times* (English) and *Rapport* (Afrikaans). In accordance with the instructions for the 1985 Unesco study, the newspapers are selected by including those with the largest circulation (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985:13). Thus, the selected newspapers are respectively the largest English and Afrikaans daily and Sunday newspapers in South Africa during the period of study (Table 3).

Table 3. *South African newspapers included in the study*

| Name | Language | Publisher at the time | Circulation* |
|--|-----------|------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Sunday Times</i> | English | Times Media | 504 295 |
| <i>Rapport</i> | Afrikaans | RCP Media | 338 702 |
| <i>The Star</i> | English | Independent Newspapers | 164 364 |
| <i>Die Burger</i> | Afrikaans | Media 24 | 106 499 |
| *Audit Bureau of Circulation figures quoted in the South Africa Yearbook 2003/2004 (Burger, 2003: 148-149) | | | |

4.6.2.2 News reports

The basic unit of analysis is a news report, which is selected by using the internet archives of the four newspapers included in the study, as well as transcripts of US officials' speeches and public briefings that are obtained from the White House and Pentagon archives. All relevant news reports available in these archives were analysed and compared to one another as well as to transcripts of public appearances by President George W. Bush and White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer, as well as by the Pentagon's Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Victoria Clarke (Table 4a and Table 4b).

Table 4a. Location of newspaper reports in the internet archives

| Newspaper | Internet location | Keywords | No. of reports |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| <i>Sunday Times</i> | Special report: War in Iraq | - | 43 |
| <i>Rapport</i> | Argiewe (Archives) | Irak, Bush, Saddam | 56 |
| <i>The Star</i> | Advanced search | Iraq, Bush, Saddam | 85 |
| <i>Die Burger</i> | Argiewe (Archives) | Irak, Bush, Saddam | 183 |

Table 4b. Web addresses of archives

| Institution | Web address |
|---------------------|---|
| <i>Sunday Times</i> | http://www.sundaytimes.co.za/specialreports/iraq-sreport-template.aspx?Page=ST6P14480 |
| <i>Rapport</i> | http://152.111.1.251/cgi-bin/rapport.cgi?cs=iso-8859-1&ul=http%3A%2F%2F152.111.1.251%2Fargief%2Fberigte%2Frapport%2F%25&s=date&ad=off&ps=50&dx=1&dd=&dm=0&dy=2006&dt=range&db=21%2F03%2F2003&de=03%2F05%2F2003&q=iraq+%7C+bush+%7C+saddam |
| <i>The Star</i> | http://www.thestar.co.za/index.php?fPage=0&fSectionId=2522&fSearch=1&fQuery=saddam&fSearchType=1&fStartDay=21&fStartMonth=3&fStartYear=2003&fEndDay=3&fEndMonth=5&fEndYear=2003&fAuthor=&fSites%5B%5D=7 http://www.thestar.co.za/index.php?fPage=0&fSectionId=2522&fSearch=1&fQuery=iraq&fSearchType=1&fStartDay=21&fStartMonth=3&fStartYear=2003&fEndDay=3&fEndMonth=5&fEndYear=2003&fAuthor=&fSites%5B%5D=7 http://www.thestar.co.za/index.php?fPage=0&fSectionId=2522&fSearch=1&fQuery=bush&fSearchType=1&fStartDay=21&fStartMonth=3&fStartYear=2003&fEndDay=3&fEndMonth=5&fEndYear=2003&fAuthor=&fSites%5B%5D=7 |
| <i>Die Burger</i> | http://152.111.1.251/cgi-bin/dieburger.cgi?cs=iso-8859-1&ul=http%3A%2F%2F152.111.1.251%2Fargief%2Fberigte%2Fdieburger%2F%25&s=date&ad=off&ps=50&dx=1&dd=&dm=0&dy=2006&dt=range&db=21%2F03%2F2003&de=03%2F05%2F2003&q=iraq+%7C+bush+%7C+saddam |
| White House | http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/briefings/ |
| Pentagon | http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/archive.aspx |

With the publication cycle of the newspapers in mind, reports in the daily newspapers were analysed in the period 21 March 2003 (the day after the war began) to 2 May 2003 (the day after Bush announced the end of major combat operations). The dates were adjusted for the Sunday newspapers to include the first publication dates after these marker events, namely 23 March to 4 May 2003.

For the purpose of this study the term "news report" precluded financial news (e.g. stock market fluctuations ascribable to the war), sports news referring to the war, letters to the editor and personal musings along the lines of "I look at the stars and know somewhere in Iraq a child is dying", as well as single paragraph briefs. However, Bonny Schoonakker's personal experiences in Iraq were included because he was the only South African newspaper reporter in the country during the studied period.

4.6.2.3 Variables

The method of measuring adapted for this study attempts to track the flow and slant of news on *Operation Iraqi Freedom* using the following variables (Table 5):

- the name of the newspaper
- date of the report
- headline
- author – own, compiled or agency
- sources of information
- slant
- story element

Table 5. An example of a datasheet used for analysis

| 3 THE STAR | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|
| Date | Headline | Author | O/C/A/? | Source | +/- | Frame |
| 28/3 | War on Iraq: who is the greater evil? | Jovial Rautao | O | Opinion | - A | Evil |
| 30/3 | Sian protestors could haunt UK | Phil Reeves (IFS) | O | Civilians, US colonel | - A | Scared, trigger-happy |
| 31/3 | Bombing Israel 'our gift to Iraqis' | Sapa-AP | A | Israelis, Palestinians | - A | War affects everybody |
| 31/3 | Pieces of history | ? | ? | ? | + I | Valuable hist. sites |
| 31/3 | Protestors rally to condemn conflict | Reuters | A | Civilians | - A | Anti. A. war |
| 31/3 | This is just the start | IFS; Agencies | C | Islamic Jihad, Ramadan, Myers | + I | Stronger than expected |
| 31/3 | War could mean cultural genocide | Thomas M. Maugh | O? | Civilians, archaeologists | - A | Careless damage to artefacts |
| 31/3 | We can't help victims - Red Cross | Sapa-AFP | A | Red Cross | - A | Destroy Iraq |
| 2/4 | How long is a piece of string? | Alkareem Teyfelen | O | Opinion | - A | A out of control |
| 2/4 | How to trip up the world's giant | Chris Landberg | O | Opinion | - A | Needs to be contained |
| 2/4 | Pupil's prayers are with embattled children | Noor-Jehan Yaro Baidat | O | Children | - A | Against war |
| 2/4 | The face of fear | Sapa-AFP, IFS, Reuters | C | Civilians, Red Cross, Myers | - A | Mindless killers |
| 2/4 | The unholy coalition | Editor | O | Opinion | - A | Closes hegemony |
| 3/4 | A city under siege | Sapa-AFP, Sapa-AP, Reuters | A | Beats, Pentagon, Saddam | + A | All powerful (SA) |
| 3/4 | Iraq: envoy's conspiracy, say SA | Sapa | A | Court spokesman | + I | Out legal |
| 2/4 | Rejecting exile can't justify war | ? | O? | Opinion | - B | Go away; trigger-happy |
| 3/4 | Sleepless in Iraq | Editor | O | Opinion | - B | Bombs babies |
| 4/4 | Baghdad in Darkness | Sapa-AFP, IFS, Sapa-AP, Reuters | C | ABC TV, US commander, US officers | + A | In control |

The *publication*, *date* and *headline* are obvious and easy to categorise, but the *author*, *sources* of information, *slant* and *story element* are more involved.

The *authors* of the reports were noted and categorised as "own", "compilation", "news agency" and "unknown" based on the story by-lines:

- *own* (O): a newspaper's employees, but also to contributing experts such as Lizette Rabe, head of the Journalism Department of the University of Stellenbosch (2003), Chris Landsberg, director of the Centre for Policy Studies (2003). Syndicated reporters such as Robert Fisk, who worked for the Independent Group, were regarded as one of *The Star's* "own" reporters.
- *compilation* (C): reports written by an identified individual reporter, but compiled from various sources, for instance where a report by *Die Burger's* Deon Lamprecht directly quoted Reuters and *The Washington Post*.
- *news agency* (A): reports attributed to Reuters, Sapa (South African Press Association), Sapa-AFP (Agence France Presse) and Sapa-AP (Associated Press).
- *unknown* (?): reports without a by-line.

The *sources* of the reports were varied. The transcripts came from the US officials who delivered the speeches, namely Bush, Fleischer, Rumsfeld and Clarke. The sources of the news reports included US, UK and Iraqi officials, experts, civilians, spokespeople from various organisations, soldiers and interestingly, other media.

The last two variables, namely *slant* and *story elements*, are closely related and are determined through a careful qualitative reading of the news reports and transcripts and therefore depend on a subjective judgement.

The *story elements* are categorised according to Propp's fairytale analysis. The most common story according to this analysis is about a *villain* who causes harm to a *victim*, prompting the *hero* to go on a *quest*. The hero receives a *magic agent* from a *donor*, which he uses to achieve *victory* over the villain in order to right a wrong and ultimately to win the hand of the *princess* (1968:135-143) (Table 6, next page).

While these elements were all present in the speeches of the US government officials, Bush, Fleischer, Rumsfeld and Clarke adapted their stories to suit different audiences. For example, when Bush addressed the Lima Army Tank Plant where Abrams tanks were constructed, he emphasised the role of these tanks as the magic agent in the war, and not the military personnel who built them (Bush, 2003i):

[I]t is this facility that has provided the American military with the most effective armoured vehicle in the history of warfare – the mighty Abrams tank.

Bush often referred to himself as the one to fight the evil villain (e.g. Bush, 2003a, b & c), yet he touted the Marines as the heroes when he addressed the Marine Corps's Camp Lejeune (Bush, 2003j): "Marine units were ordered ... And that mission was accomplished".

Such variations necessitate the creation of more categories, such as "Hero – Military" and "Magic agent – Arms" (Table 7). Other extensions include "Hero – Saddam" and "Villain – Bush/USA", which were added when the analysis of news agency and newspaper reports indicated the necessity thereof. It was also decided to combine Bush/USA and Saddam/Iraq in the "villain" category as these terms were often used as synonyms, especially when condemned.

Table 6. *Abbreviated list of functions of Propp's most common story elements (1968)*

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Villain | <p>his role is to disrupt the peace of a happy family, to cause some form of misfortune, damage or harm (p.27) by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kidnapping (p.150) • plundering in various forms (p.150) • maiming, mutilation (p.150) • murder (p.150) • imprisonment, detention (p.150) • threat of cannibalism among relatives (p.150) • fights the hero and is defeated (p.152) |
| Victim | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has to be rescued • often rewards the hero and/or punishes the villain • kidnapped • maimed • killed • imprisoned • tormented (p.150) |
| Hero | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suffers from actions of the villain (p.149) • is aware that something is missing (p.150) • agrees to fight for the sake of another (p.150) • performs pious deeds (p.151) • may be supplied with a magic agent (p.151) • is victorious (p.152) • hero flies though the air (p.153) • marries the princess (p.154) |
| Quest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the hero is called upon to help • the misfortunes in various forms is announced • the hero is dispatched (p.150) |
| Magical Agent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transforms hero by giving him supernatural powers objects possessing a magical property (pp.43-44) • the agent is prepared (p.152) • agent offers it services, places itself at someone's disposal (p.152) |
| Donor | provides hero with magic agent that will that eventually end misfortune (pp.39, 151) |
| Victory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the hero is victorious in an open battle • shows superiority in a contest • kills or expels the villain (p.152) • flies through the air (p.153) |
| Princess | the princess brings luck and a "happy ever after" when she marries the hero (p.154) |

Table 7. *Extended range of story elements based on the analysis of Propp (1968)*

| Element | Extended range |
|----------------|--|
| Hero | Hero - Bush Hero - Military Hero - USA Hero - Saddam Hero - Iraq |
| Villain | Villain - Saddam/Iraq Villain - Bush/USA |
| Victim | Victim - Iraq Victim - USA Victim - World |
| Magic agent | Magic agent - military Magic agent - arms |
| Quest | Quest - WMD Quest - Liberation |
| Donor | Donor – US Govt Donor - Bush |
| Victory | Victory |

Determining the *slant* of the reports and transcripts relied heavily on the story elements that could be observed. For example, many reports focused on American political and military power: its position as the world's only superpower, its large fighting force, its superior arms, etc. Without any negative comments added, these qualities constituted a "hero", which is indicative of a positive slant. However, where the same attributes were referred to but criticised, the slant was indicated as negative.

It is clear that for categorisation, the story elements necessarily have to be evaluated in the context they were used. Therefore, the quantitative analyses of these documents were fully based on a qualitative assessment and interpretation of the reports. As such, this study can neither be regarded as purely qualitative or quantitative, but must be seen as a fusion of the two methods of research. To exclude either method would have been vastly detrimental to the scope of the research.

This study uses these eight most common story elements as a yardstick to measure the extent of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*.

For the full coding schedule and datasheet, see Appendix I.

4.7 Summary

In this chapter the study's objectives and research questions were stated and the key concepts explained as they are interpreted for the purpose of this study. Issues of measurement were addressed, namely the coding instruments that are used as well as how sampling is done, with an explanation of the key variables used in the analyses.

* * * * *

In Chapter 5 the history of the war correspondent and war reporting since the earliest days is examined. Next, the evolution of the relationship between war correspondents and the US government and military is tracked from the Crimean War up until the war in Afghanistan.

Chapter 5

War reporting as news genre

Now in these modern times a class of men have been begotten and attend our camps and armies and gather minute information of our strength, plans and purposes, and publishes them so as to reach the enemy in time to serve his purposes. Such publications do not add a man to our strength, in no ways benefit us, but are invaluable to the enemy.

William Tecumseh Sherman (1863),
Civil War Union General

5.1 Introduction

War reporting is one of the oldest news genres. It was a dynamic force in the historical development of newspapers, and ultimately, the mass media as a whole. The singular relationship between the military and the media as seen throughout Gulf War II has its roots in the earliest days of journalism, and played a decisive role in the gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing of news about the war. When the course of this relationship over time is studied, it is clear that the fundamental obstacles have largely remained the same: while it is crucial to the survival of the military in times of war to keep information about their capabilities, strategies and positions secret, it is at the same time crucial to the survival of the media to publish exactly that information. Only recently did the US military start to realise the value of the commercial news media, and that information can be used as a strategic weapon through the news media: "Media shapes world opinion. World opinion can greatly influence military actions" (Martin, 2003:9).

To understand how the US government came to the point where it now regards the media as an important weapon in its arsenal, it is necessary to study the genesis and development of the relationship between the US military and the media through the ages. It is important to note that any form of military or governmental censorship, diversion of reporters to or away from newsworthy incidents, misinformation, disinformation, restriction of access, intimidation of reporters, or the flooding of the news with information promoting a specific point of view is regarded by the author as a fundamental form of gatekeeping, agenda-setting and framing. Therefore, the following historical evolutionary timeline served to demonstrate the prevalence and metamorphosis of these theoretical constructs in the practical interactions between the military and the media.

The inclusion of incidents of media management – especially in accounts of the wars since World War II – is in itself recognition of the incidence of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing in that context, and will not necessarily be explained as such.

5.2 Early history of the press and war reporting

The conception of the newspaper as we know it today took place in 59 BC when Julius Caesar ordered that reports on the major social and political events of the day must be made publicly available (De Beer, 2004: 164, Pauw, 1980:4). The *Acta Diurna* was surprisingly similar to modern newspapers, as it reported on senatorial decisions, the reigning consuls' official duties, trials, executions and the Roman elite, as well as the

results of gladiator contests – but also, importantly, of the Roman wars. For three hundred years, copies of these documents were distributed to the rest of the Roman Empire in Europe and the Middle East (Sussman, 2001:11), making it the prototype of modern international newspapers (Pauw, 1980: 5).

One of the first recorded "news magnates" was an enterprising Roman named Chrestes, who collected local and international news stories, which included anything from the merchandise on ships that have landed to witches that were burnt at the stake, and then sold these hand-written pages, known as the *Chresti compilationem*, at local markets (De Beer, 2004:164). Also during this time Titus Pomonius Atticus employed slaves to copy manuscripts which he then sold to literate Romans (Saul, 2004).

Unfortunately, the decay and disappearance of the Roman Empire during the fifth century halted this promising development of news recording, and for several centuries afterwards there was no impetus for the regular publication of news in Western Europe (Unwin, Unwin & Tucker, 2004). There are no records of any written news reports that originated during this time (Pauw, 1980:6), which makes sense, as the ordinary people of Europe were virtually illiterate; they had no access to any scripted material, except for the odd Church pamphlet which was written in Latin and therefore completely incomprehensible to them (Manchester, n.d.). For a long time the only form of news distribution in Western Europe was word of mouth: through gossipmongers, town criers, and travellers (Stephens, 1999), as well as troubadours who travelled from town to town, performing their songs and poems about recent events in the world outside – news, in other words – in exchange for money (Jacoby, 1998).

By the 13th century, news was again published in England, and a 1275 royal decree stated:

It is commanded, that from henceforth none be so hardy to tell or publish any false News or Tales, whereby discord or (occasion) of discord or Slander may grow between the King and his People, or the Great Men of the realm; and he that doth so, shall be taken and kept in Prison, until he hath brought him to Court (which was the first author of the Tale) (Pauw, 1980:6).

Gradually, more European merchants started to publish written news accounts, containing information about war, but also of politics and commerce, as well as human-interest stories: tales of hardship, massacres, murders and executions, piracy, plagues, religion, witch-craft, miracles and royal conspiracies (Sussman, 2001:18). By the end of the fifteenth century, highly sensationalised accounts started to appear in these hand-written news sheets, like a report on the cruelty of Vlad Tsepes Drakul, also known as Count Dracula, towards the Germans in Transylvania (World Association of Newspapers, 2004a). However, these news pamphlets were still quite rare, as paper was scarce and very expensive, and the manual reproduction of the information was a long and laborious undertaking (Donovan, 2003).

Then, sometime between 1450 and 1455 in Mainz, Germany, the goldsmith Johann Gutenberg unveiled the first workable printing press with standardised, movable type

(Jacoby, 1998). Although the Chinese used a form of printing as early as 200 AD, the type could not be moved or replaced (Ayers, 1944). The Koreans invented a viable copper type in 1392, but due to a governmental ban on commercial printing, the technique was never implemented (Jacoby, 1998). Gutenberg's printing press consisted of a converted wine press and equal-sized stamps displaying the letters of the alphabet which were arranged into pages of literature, of which many copies could be made. After using these reverse-cast high relief lead alloy stamps for the successful printing of several books, Gutenberg started printing a 42-line Bible (Wright, 2004a). When 12 copies of this Bible was shown to the book trade guilds in Paris, the merchant was chased out of town, as the guild believed that such a number of identical copies could only be the work of the devil (Jacoby, 1998).

In 1476 William Caxton took the first printing press to England and before the end of the century, printing presses were operating in every major European city (Wright, 2004a). To cater for the tastes of the newly literate but less scholarly types, many popular ballads illustrated with suitable pictures were printed. These plebeian works moved Erasmus to lament in *Adages* in 1508:

To what corner of the world do they not fly, these swarms of new books? It may be that one here and there contributes something worth knowing, but the very multitude of them is hurtful to scholarship, because it creates a glut, and even in good things satiety is most harmful . . . [printers] fill the world with books, not just trifling things (such as I write, perhaps), but stupid, ignorant, slanderous, scandalous, raving, irreligious and seditious books, and the number of them is such that even the valuable publications lose their value (Kitsch, 2003).

Not all "new information" was as frivolous, however, one example being the printed accounts of Christopher Columbus's voyages of discovery in 1493, that were published in Barcelona, Rome, Paris, Antwerp, Basel, and Florence, and carried the tales of his travels and the new world he had encountered in his own words (Stephens, 1999).

Even in these embryonic stages of the development of news publication, reports on wars and battles played a central role (Unwin *et al.*, 2004). For example, *The Trew Encountre*, published in September 1513, was a four-leafed pamphlet giving an eye-witness account of the Battle of Flodden Field and included a list of the English warriors. In 1563 the Venetian government published a hand-scripted newsletter, the *Notizie Scritte*, to report on its war with the Turks (World Association of Newspapers, 2004a). With the government in charge of the content, there is no doubt that these war reports were selected and framed to serve a very specific agenda. It was read out loud in public places where the audience had to pay one "gazetta", a small Venetian coin, for the privilege of hearing the government's take on the war. Also, in 1588 Michael Entzinger of Cologne, Germany, reported on the defeat of the Spanish Armada in his 24 page news book (World Association of Newspapers, 2004b). The front page of the news book carried a woodcut illustrating the Armada sailing off the coast of England. Although this news book was published several months after Spain's defeat, it remains one of the earliest printed and illustrated news reports of a major historical battle.

Gradually, more and more newsletters appeared on a regular basis (World Association of Newspapers, 2004a). The newsletter commonly regarded as the first true newspaper is the Strasbourg *Relation aller fürnemmen und gedenckwürdingen*, first printed in 1609 by Johann Carolus, who had the idea to collect hand-written news and print this in weekly instalments (Totosy de Zepetnek, n.d.). This was rivalled closely by Heinrich Julius, duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel's *Avisa Relation oder Zeitung* which was founded also in 1609 (Unwin *et al.*, 2004). Although the *Nieuwe Tijdingen* was reportedly published as early as 1605 by Abraham Verhoeven of Antwerp, the earliest surviving copy is dated 1621. During this time France introduced its *Gazette* in 1631, and England founded the *London Gazette*, which is still published as a court journal, in 1665 (World Association of Newspapers, 2004a). The oldest continuously published weekly paper is the *Post-och inrikes tidningar* of Sweden, which was founded in 1645, while the oldest surviving daily newspaper is the Austrian *Wiener Zeitung*, which began publication in 1703 (Unwin *et al.*, 2004).

These early European newspapers mainly covered news from their own continent, with very little attention to what was going on in America and Asia (World Association of Newspapers, 2004a), although the Dutch, being geographically and commercially in a strategic position, initialised international journalism through their "corantos", or "current news". The weekly or twice-weekly *Courante uyt Italien, Duytsland, & C.*, started publication in 1618 (Unwin *et al.*, 2004). Generally, however, European newspapers did not cover national news: French papers typically reported on the British royal scandals, while their English counterparts covered France's military blunders (World Association of Newspapers, 2004a). Only during the late 1600s did the focus shift to include more domestic issues.

The newspaper industry in Western Europe boomed and in 1690, a doctoral student at the University of Leipzig, Tobias Peucer, investigated this new phenomenon called "news" (De Beer, 2004:165). In his dissertation *De Relationibus Novellis* ("On news reporting") Peucer considered, amongst other things, what today would be referred to as the definition of the word "news", the origin and history of the phenomenon, as well as news values and the different types of newspapers. According to Peucer, the purpose of news reporting was to communicate recent events that are either useful or in some form attractive or of interest to the reader who is searching for an answer to the age-old question "Ecquid novi" – anything new? (De Beer, Van Ryneveld & Schreiner, 2000:9).

The booming newspaper industry was aided by a number of new inventions, such as Alois Sedenfelder's lithograph (1798), Friedrich Koenig's steam powered cylinder press (1812), and the telegraph (1844), with photographs used in newspapers for the first time in 1880 (World Association of Newspapers, 2004b). The first tabloid, *The Daily Mirror*, appeared in 1903 and introduced a new concept in journalism, namely the "exclusive interview", the first of which was with Lord Mint, the new viceroy of India, two years later. By 1994, the first independent on-line daily "newspaper" appeared on the internet.

5.3 Modern mass media and the US military

Since the implementation of satellite technology in the 1960s as part of the space race, there has been an unstoppable growth in the science of electronics, introducing communication devices such as fax machines, video recorders, the internet, digital

camcorders and mobile phones (Taylor, 2003). The invention of electronic communication technology, which includes radio, television and the internet, had an evolutionary effect on the dissemination of news from the war front, including that of the printed media, and played a definitive role in the changed face of war reporting – especially in the relationship between the military and the media during Gulf War II.

5.3.1 Early days

In American society, hostility between the press and the military precedes the founding of the nation (Aukofer & Lawrence, 1995:34). During the American Revolution, colonial news media were regularly subjected to harassment and censorship by the military, mostly because of a disparity between the opinions they expressed, and the sentiments of the military. These newspapers however did not have war correspondents, but relied on letters from soldiers on the war front and official documents. This situation prevailed during the War of 1812, when news was still collected at random, and inadequate funds, military interference and poor technology hindered the timely publication of reports. Being "old news", the reports were of no value to the enemy, and security reviews and military censorship were therefore not required. That war produced what may be regarded as America's first war correspondent: James M. Bradford, editor and publisher of the *Orleans Gazette*, who enlisted with General Andrew Jackson in New Orleans, and subsequently described his military adventures in letters to his newspaper (Military Channel, 2006).

By the start of the Mexican War in 1846, improved technology – first the Pony Express¹ and then the telegraph – allowed civilian correspondents to report from the battlefield (Aukofer & Lawrence, 1995:35). George W. Kendall, founder of the New Orleans newspaper *Picayune*, set up a system of couriers and steamboats which enabled him to consistently deliver dispatches from the war front ahead of military messengers, thereby scooping his competitors (*The Times-Picayune*, 2003). Kendall himself accompanied Major Benjamin McCulloch's Texas Rangers on their long and dangerous scouting missions as probably the first reporter "embedded" with the US military, his reports bringing him instant fame (Cutrer, 2003). Also during this war, camp newspapers were first published by military printers, which could be considered as the US military's public affairs effort: these newspapers were used by the civilian press as a prime source of information on the conflict (Aukofer & Lawrence, 1995:35).

5.3.2 Crimean War (28 March 1853 - 1 April 1856)

Although the American military was not involved in the Crimean War, during this war William Howard Russell of *The Times* of London had set an international standard for modern war reporting, and his example would be followed by correspondents reporting all subsequent US conflicts (Mooney, 2004:14). Also, the traditional animosity between the military and the media in general – not only in America – can be traced to the war coverage of Russell.

¹ The Pony Express was the first fast mail service across the North American continent, and operated between the Missouri River and the Pacific coast. By using horses, important messages were rushed across the vast plains, deserts, and mountains of the western United States. This journey took ten days to complete (*Encarta World English Dictionary*, 1999).

During this war the implementation of the newly invented telegraph, the predecessor of all new electronic media technology, coincided with the appearance of the first true war correspondents (Dyas, 2004a), making it the first "media war". Because of the advantages that it offered the military, a telegraph line was established between Balaclava (in Bulgaria) and Varna (in the Ukraine) in 1855².

Although Russell realised the potential of the telegraph for reporting news, he rarely had the opportunity to use it, as its use was dictated by Lord Raglan, the Commander-in-Chief, who had total disregard for Russell (Dyas, 2004b). Raglan therefore acted as a prime gatekeeper by regulating the flow of news from the war front. The tense relationship between the two men prefigured the strained relationship between the media and the military in subsequent wars, including Gulf War II (Malkin, n.d.).

Because of Raglan's animosity, Russell's reports were dispatched to London by means of a combination of ordinary land mail, boats and occasionally, when the commander felt like it, the telegraph (Dyas, 2004a, Dyas, 2004b), a situation which vastly differed from the war correspondents who during Gulf War II had the ability to instantaneously dispatch their reports from practically any location to the outskirts of the earth.

William Russell was frustrated by limited access from the moment he set foot on the Crimean peninsula in 1854, as military officers scorned him and Lord Raglan refused to talk to him, a position shared by "unilateral" colleagues during Gulf War II (Malkin, n.d.). Lord Raglan not only denied Russell the facilities usually offered to reporters, but even the means to draw rations (Russell, 1966:13). Despite this, Russell continued to report on the logistical and strategic failures of an inept leadership, how the soldiers had to make-do without essentials such as adequate arms and ammunition, tents in raging rainstorms, warm and waterproof clothing in winter, even food, but especially the lack of proper medical facilities (Russell, 1966:67, 151, 152, 179).

As the military banned him from the battlefield, he interviewed soldiers returning from combat, but grew frustrated by their contradictory reports (McLane, 2004:79). After an appeal by his newspaper, Russell was allowed to observe the battles from higher ground. This gave him a bird's-eye view of the action and enabled him to see the poor leadership displayed by the British commanders, a matter he reported on relentlessly. This, however, caused the military to question the loyalty to the Crown of both Russell and *The Times*, which forced the very patriotic paper to agree to self-censorship and to report only on completed military operations.

Russell's exposés of the conditions that British soldiers had to endure, as well as reports on both military and political incompetence, was directly responsible for the downfall of the Earl of Aberdeen's government in 1855 (10 Downing Street, n.d.; Baldwin, 1982; British History, n.d.).

² The first attempt to use *wireless* telegraphy in a conflict situation was during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 (Baker, 1995). Paul Kruger's Boer Republic ordered six wireless telegraphy sets from the German company Siemens and Halske in August 1899. The wireless telegraphs, which transmitted signals (not voices) within a range of 15 km, were intended for communication between the fortifications around Pretoria, but were confiscated by customs in Cape Town.

After Lord Raglan's death in June 1855 his successor, Sir William Codrington, issued history's first censorship order on 25 February 1856, prohibiting the press from publishing reports on military morale, criticism of the commanders, or on military movements (Malkin, n.d.).

The Crimean War was also the first to be systematically photographed and produced the famed war photographer Roger Fenton, who arrived in Crimea in March 1855 (Dyas, 2004a). Fenton was commissioned by Thomas Agnew & Sons of Manchester to compile a photographic record of the war. For this, Fenton travelled with two assistants, five cameras, 700 glass plates and a mobile darkroom. Because the existing photographic technology prohibited him from taking action shots, he photographed landscapes, scenes in the military camps, and portraits of important people.

Compared to what a single reporter embedded with the military during Gulf War II was able to do with the minimum of equipment, this state of affairs is almost incomprehensible to the modern war correspondent.

5.3.3 American Civil War (12 April 1861 – 9 April 1865)

The professionalism William Howard Russell had brought to reporting during the Crimean War was applied by other reporters soon afterwards, with the outbreak of the American Civil War (Mooney, 2004:14). This was the first American conflict to be covered by large numbers of correspondents (Terry, 1996:5-6). Some 500 male journalists, known as the "Bohemian Brigade", reported mostly for foreign newspapers and papers from the Northern states, as the Southern press generally based their reports on letters and telegrams from soldiers (Mooney, 2004; Shepard, 2004:17-18). Russell himself also spent a brief period in America covering the war, but had to return to England due to problems with his editor (Mooney, 2004).

The war affected virtually every American family in some way, causing an almost insatiable thirst for news from the battlefield (Mooney, 2004:15) – much as Gulf War II did in 2003. Both Confederate and Union newspapers obliged, not least because of the boost in circulation this implied. General William Tecumseh Sherman, who epitomised the military's disdain for the media, described the media reports to news-hungry civilians in a letter dated 13 July 1864 as "scattering [information] piecemeal to satisfy the greedy curiosity of a gaping public" (Sherman, 1864, as cited in Ewing, 1987).

Due to advances in telegraph technology and railroads, correspondents were able to transfer their stories to the newspaper offices within hours after an event took place (Snyder, 2003:7-8). This gave rise to a new problem, namely the notion amongst many correspondents that accuracy and operational security were less important than the speed at which reports could be filed – again a reflection of what critics of the Embedded Media Program in Iraq said had happened there.

The first-hand accounts of the horrors of war shaped the public's view of the conflict, which in turn infuriated commanders on both sides of the conflict (Shepard, 2004:17-18). Of reporters General Sherman said

I hate newspapermen. They come into camp and pick up their camp rumours and print them as facts. I regard them as spies, which, in truth they are. If I killed them all there would be news from Hell before breakfast (Newseum, n.d.).

For the first time, there was a concerted effort by the American government to censor news reports (Terry, 1996:6). President Lincoln gave the Secretary of State and the Secretary of War permission to exert censorship as they saw fit. This included military control over telegraph lines, which meant that reporters were unable to file reports without military approval. Acting directly as a gatekeeper, agendasetter and framer of the news, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton used this opportunity for disinformation purposes, altering the number of casualties to create a more favourable image of their success in the war (Neuman, 1996a: 39).

By the time the war ended, the military had begun to understand the power of the press on public opinion, as well as its impact on troop morale (Snyder, 2003:8). The professional war correspondent literally came to age and with this, the traditionally hostile relationship between the military and the media became an institution.

5.3.4 Spanish American War (25 April 1898 – 10 December 1898)

Dubbed "a splendid little war" by American Ambassador John Hay in a letter to Theodore Roosevelt (Bethell, 1998), the Spanish American War is infamous for the role the media allegedly played in its inception (Blow, n.d.). With the outbreak of the second Cuban Revolution in 1895, reporters streamed to the region, but like the unilateral reporters "embedded" in the Palestine Hotel during Gulf War II, few of them ever ventured closer to combat "than Key West or the bar of the Hotel Inglaterra in Havana" (Giessel, 1998). From there they created reports based on information supplied by the Revolution's propaganda offices, spiked it with their own imaginings, and fed readers at home a steady diet of stories about phantom battles, imagined Cuban victories, Spanish cannibalism and torture, and beautiful and savage Amazons fighting with the revolutionaries against the hated Spaniard (Giessel, 1998).

An exchange frequently quoted by journalism scholars purportedly took place during this time (Campbell, 2005). Accompanying correspondent Richard Harding Davis, the artist Frederic Remington was sent to the Caribbean in January 1897, to do illustrations for a series of articles on the Revolution to be published in the *New York Journal*. According to the oft-repeated story, Remington soon became weary of the lack of excitement in Cuba and sent a telegram to the *Journal's* owner, William Randolph Hearst, reading: "Everything is quiet. There is no trouble. There will be no war. I wish to return." The publisher's infamous alleged reply: "Please remain. You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war", has become classical "proof" of the powerful effect the media have on world politics. An in-depth study by American journalism historian W. Joseph Campbell (2000) concluded that there is no credible evidence to support this story.

Nevertheless, together with Joseph Pulitzer's *World*, Hearst's *Journal* was foremost in the search for sensation (Bethell, 1998). Hearst was the new owner of the floundering *Journal*, and was set on overtaking Pulitzer and his *World* in popularity (Bethell, 1998;

Giessel, 1998). In their battle for circulation, the two newspapers spared no expense, and both published a mixture of fact, fantasy and fiction in the guise of "news" in order to attract readers (Giessel, 1998). The Cuban Revolution offered the perfect opportunity for such sensationalism and scandal-mongering, and their frenzied reports whipped up American public opinion to the point of near-hysteria (Baker, 2001).

When the American battleship the *USS Maine* exploded under mysterious circumstances in the Havana harbour on 15 February 1898, these newspapers, collectively known as the "yellow press", fanned the flames of anti-Spanish sentiment (Moritz, 2004). Marching to the war-drums banged by Hearst, Pulitzer and others, the public pushed Congress, and consequently also peace-loving President William McKinley, towards war with Spain (Baker, 2001). Ironically, this happened just as the new Spanish government reconsidered Cuban oppression and moved towards negotiations with America to prevent war (Moritz, 2004).

Hearst clearly enjoyed the feeling of political power his paper had given him:

Under republican government, newspapers form and express public opinion. They suggest and control legislation. They declare wars. They punish criminals, especially the powerful. They reward with approving publicity the good deeds of citizens everywhere. The newspapers control the nation ... (Bethell, 1998).

"How do you like the *Journal's* war?" Hearst's newspaper asked a month into the war.

On the battlefield, the relationship between soldiers and reporters was unlike anything seen before or since the Spanish American war, as the correspondents enjoyed tremendous prestige and therefore were generally allowed to do almost exactly what they pleased (Giessel, 1998). Still, some of the generals, such as General William R. Shafter, commander of the American expeditionary force to Cuba, saw the media as nothing more than a nuisance (Felman, 1992). When the legendary Richard Harding Davis asked to go ashore with the first wave of troops at Daiquiri, Shafter exclaimed: "I don't give a damn who you are. I'll treat you all alike!" The reporters never forgave him for this and gave him very poor press.

War correspondents such as Davis, Stephen Crane and James Creelman proved to be quite valuable to the military, although their presence and opinions were not always fully appreciated (PBS, 1999). Crane for example warned Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt that he kept hearing a dove cooing, which he thought could be a signal from the Spanish scouts. Roosevelt ignored him, and led his men into an ambush. During another battle Creelman tried to retrieve the Spanish flag from a hill. He got carried away, pulled his pistol and started shooting as he ran up the hill. Unfortunately, he was shot in the back, and as he lay on the ground, thinking that he was dying, William Randolph Hearst himself leant over him, saying: "Well, I'm sorry you're shot, but wasn't it a splendid fight? We beat all the other newspapers" (PBS, 1999).

Richard Harding Davis accompanied the 1st US Volunteer Cavalry, better known as the "Rough Riders", and became close friends with Theodore Roosevelt, the second in

command of the unit (Cresswell, 1998). During the battle at Las Guasimas, Davis became directly involved in the fight, an event Roosevelt (1899) described in his book *The Rough Riders*:

It was Richard Harding Davis who gave us our first opportunity to shoot back with effect. He was behaving precisely like my officers, being on the extreme front of the line, and taking every opportunity to study with his glasses the ground where we thought the Spaniards were ... Davis suddenly said: "There they are, Colonel; look over there; I can see their hats near that glade", pointing across the valley to our right. In a minute I, too, made out the hats, and then pointed them out to three or four of our best shots, giving them my estimate of the range.

Davis did not shrink away from joining the fight either. In a letter to his brother Charles, he wrote how he "borrowed a carbine and joined Capron's troop ... we ran forward cheering across the open and then dropped in the grass and fired. I guess I fired about twenty rounds and then formed into a strategy board and went off down the trail to scout" (Davis, 1864-1916). Roosevelt had subsequently offered him a commission in the unit, which Davis declined, but he did accept one of only three honorary memberships ever given by the Rough Riders (Cresswell, 1998).

5.3.5 World War I (1 August 1914 – 11 November 1918)

Because of the British military's deep-grained antagonism towards the press following their experience with William Howard Russell during the Crimean War, British Secretary for War Horatio Kitchener unconditionally banned all reporters from the battlefield during World War I (McLane: 2004:79; Morgan, n.d.). Correspondents who attempted to report from the war front were arrested on sight (Morgan, n.d.). This initially prompted American journalists to cover the war from the German side, as they had better access that way. After some time a mere six correspondents were embedded with the army on the Western front, but because of their absolute loyalty to their units, they produced "the worst reporting of just about any war and were all knighted for their services" (Knightley, 2003a). For example, pressures from home offices for sensational reports on enemy atrocities resulted in contrived reports of German soldiers tossing Belgian babies into the air and catching them on their bayonets, and the boiling down of German corpses to obtain glycerine to be used in ammunition (Shah, 2005).

Upon entering the war, the US military employed a primitive form of embedding, allowing unlimited war zone access to uniformed reporters accompanying the fighting forces, but with obligatory censorship imposed on them (McLane, 2004:79). Because of their patriotism and gratitude for having the opportunity to accompany the soldiers, few journalists complained about this arrangement.

However, the congenial relationship between the US military and the media only lasted until Congress passed the Espionage Act in 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918 (Pritchard, 2003). The first Act prohibited the publication of information that might in any way be regarded as useful to the enemy, and the second banned criticism of the government and the military, as well as adverse remarks about the flag, military uniforms, and other symbols of national value. This was the beginning of the most

restrictive period in the relationship between the military and the media in American history. Reporters had to be certified as either accredited or visiting correspondents, pledge to report only the truth, put up a \$10 000 bond which could be lost if the journalist reported anything that could embarrass the government, and sign a contract to submit all correspondence to the press office.

The US government and War Department (which later became the Department of Defense) realised the potential of managed information dissemination (Defense Science Board, 2001:19). For this purpose, President Woodrow Wilson appointed journalist George Creel to head his newly formed Committee on Public Information (CPI), which had about 150 000 employees in the US and abroad, including public relations heavyweights Ivy Lee and Edward L. Bernays (Aldridge, 2003). The purpose of the CPI, also known as the Creel Commission, was to cultivate the conviction internationally and in the US that the American cause was virtuous, and that its foreign policy goals were selfless (Defense Science Board, 2001:19). At home, the commission promoted unity and loyalty, and internationally they encouraged appreciation and support for their war effort. This was done through the establishment of "country bureaus" to co-ordinate its activities, as well as numerous foreign offices.

The CPI used all media available at the time to convey their message. They recruited artists to produce patriotic posters which were displayed all over the country, and millions of pamphlets and leaflets were printed and dropped from planes all over the world (Aldridge, 2003). Equally large numbers of booklets printed in the red, white, and blue of the American flag expanded on the British image of the Germans as bloodthirsty, cruel and barbaric Huns – an idea that was carried through to the movies they produced – and were distributed across the globe. The CPI also organised some 7.5 million short public speeches delivered by 75 000 men, who got up during movie or theatre intermissions to deliver the government's message. So successful was the CPI's techniques of mobilising the public that Germany's leading World War I strategist General Erich von Ludendorff said it was the Allies' most significant accomplishment and that it was the direct cause of the disintegration of German soldiers' morale (Defense Science Board, 2001:19). Consequently, Hitler copied these strategies during World War II (Aldridge, 2003). The CPI laid the foundation on which marketing strategies for subsequent wars, including Gulf War II, would be built (Rose, 2000).

After World War I, Guglielmo Marconi was instrumental in the introduction of short-wave radio in 1924 (Headrick, n.d.). Short-wave transmitters were about a twentieth cheaper than equally powerful long-wave transmitters, used only about 20% of the electrical power, and most importantly, it was also much faster than long-wave-radio. For a long time, neither broadcasters nor advertisers were very fond of news programmes, typically devoting only 15 to 30 minutes a day to it (Kierstead, 2007).

5.3.6 World War II (1 September 1939 – 2 September 1945)

From the American perspective, World War II was almost synonymous with *Daily News's* roving reporter Ernie Pyle (Gelfand, 2005). However, it is important to remember the role of the radio, which realised its full potential as news medium during this war. Politicians rapidly grasped the mass appeal of the new medium, and began using it as a tool to win over the public opinion.

In Germany, the Nazi government employed the centralised broadcasting system, the *Volksempfänger* (People's Receivers), for propaganda purposes from late 1933, making it the duty of every German to listen to the radio (Briel, n.d.). Early in the war the German programmes of the BBC and Radio Moscow were still transmitted to Germany, but from 1939 it became a capital crime in Germany to listen to foreign broadcasts.

World-wide, however, the radio brought the sounds of the Battle of Britain, Pearl Harbour, and D-Day into the homes of the ordinary people through reports on incidents such as these (US News, 2004). Wearing short-wave transmitters in backpacks, radio reporters were able to report live from the war front, but such reports were rare as broadcasters did not want to risk a reporter being killed while live on air (Sullivan, 2003). Also, live broadcasts from the battle field were frowned upon by censors. During the war in Iraq these same issues were put on the table, but apparently the advantages of having access to the battlefield by far outweighed the potentially negative reactions from the public should something have happened to a reporter – especially a television reporter – while he was live on air.

Overall, the US government managed the dissemination of information through the Office of Co-ordinator of Information (COI), which President Roosevelt established in July 1941, shortly before Pearl Harbour (Defense Science Board, 2001:19). The director, Colonel William Donovan, created two major divisions, namely Research and Analysis, and Foreign Information Service (FIS). FIS (also referred to as the Psychological Warfare Division) propagated the American view by means of 11 commercial short-wave radio stations broadcasting more than 300 programmes a week in Europe and Asia.

American society during World War II was characterised by strong patriotism and pro-government sentiment, a mood that was reflected by the media and which gave rise to the view – at least from the military side – that it was the golden age of military-media relations in America (Porch, 2002:88). Censorship rules were more relaxed than during World War I (McLane, 2004:79), but President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Offices of War Information and Censorship still enforced severe restrictions on the publication of any military information, ranging from the identity and movement of military units and material, casualties, and locations of archives and art treasures, to weather forecasts and temperatures in major cities (Pritchard, 2003). The publication of photographs of dead American soldiers was absolutely forbidden (Jackson, 2003). Such images were only published 21 months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and Germany's declaration of war against the United States, when the authorities decided that the images of the fallen soldiers would help mobilise public support.

As was the case during Gulf War II, the military used accreditation to control media access to the battlefield, and correspondents were expected to first obtain a press pass from the War Department and a passport from the State Department (Pritchard, 2003). At the war front, typically about 50 correspondents were consigned to a press camp that formed part of the regular military forces and moved with the army through Western Europe. The army seldom tried to suppress bad news, but rather kept the media "reasonably satisfied" by releasing enough information (McLane:79, 2004). Reports on maritime operations in the Pacific theatre were however heavily censored, especially

early in the war, and unfavourable news was often held back until it could be countered by positive reports (Pritchard, 2003). This situation improved after correspondents, editors and publishers objected strongly enough at the Office of War Information.

The press willingly accepted the War Department's press codes in exchange for accreditation and relatively free access to the war front (HRW, 1991; Porch, 2002:88). Wearing the uniforms of officers, but without rank insignia (Pritchard, 2003), correspondents accompanied military units on patrols, sailed with them on destroyers, flew in bombing raids, and accompanied assault teams to the invasions of North Africa, Sicily, Guadalcanal, the Philippines, and Iwo Jima (HRW, 1991; Porch, 2002:89). When the forces landed on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day, 24 war correspondents landed with them to report on the events. The BBC's correspondents were heavily criticised for providing a running commentary of an aerial dog-fight during the Battle of Britain, as if the life-and-death situation was "a cricket match or a horse race" (Bowen, n.d.). Contrary to the often over-enthusiastic and long-winded reports that were broadcast from Gulf War II, BBC's news controller A.P. Ryan warned correspondents before the D-Day landings at Omaha Beach in Normandy in 1944:

Never "jazz up" a plain story. You are not dramatists ... You are broadcast reporters sent out to observe and tell us what you have seen ... If a correspondent is in the front row on an historic occasion - as some of you will be with luck - then he should let his story run ... [but] it is a very good broadcast indeed that stands more than five minutes (Bowen, n.d.).

The friendly relationship with the military did not mean that the media was uncritical or that they were prepared to act as government propagandists (Rather, 2001). Correspondents often questioned censorship decisions, and if they were able to convince their "handlers" that reported information would not endanger military security, such decisions were frequently retracted.

While the military generally treated reporters as part of "their team" (Porch, 2002:88), not everybody bonded with the war correspondents. A Washington censor, when asked in 1943 how the media should be kept informed about the progress of the war effort, replied: "Tell the bastards nothing till the war's over and then tell them who won" (Knightley, 2003b).

5.3.7 Korean War (25 June 1950 – 27 July 1953)

When North Korea launched an attack on US controlled South Korea in 1950, the US military was caught completely off-guard, and attempts by reporters who wanted to witness the North Koreans entering Seoul were the last of their concerns (McLane, 2004: 79). This resulted in no military restrictions on either access to the war front, or on the content of dispatches (Pritchard, 2003). Without military guidance, correspondents reported according to their own set of guidelines and also voluntarily censored themselves. At this point General Douglas MacArthur praised the press for its good coverage without "a single security breach" (McLane, 2004:79-80).

It was the first war where reports were televised, but television was still in its infancy and because few people owned television sets, the audience was still relatively small (Taylor, 2003; Humphreys, n.d.). Satellite technology was not yet available, therefore footage had to be airlifted to broadcasters, causing a delay of several days and even weeks before the newsreels were screened in cinemas, before the start of the main film (Taylor, 2003). Consequently newspapers and radio broadcasts remained the preferred sources of news (Humphreys, n.d.).

A growing number of reports on the desperation and disorganisation of the US forces who suffered one setback after the other inevitably caused the American public opinion to turn against the war (Greenway, 1999; Pritchard, 2003). The military was unable to provide the media with guidelines on admissible coverage and therefore grew increasingly frustrated by reports on US defeats after China entered the war (McLane, 2004:79-80). General MacArthur called those who reported on the military woes "traitors", and in December 1950 he imposed strict censorship rules which were upheld until the end of the war (Jackson, 2003). Thus, a system similar to that existing in World War II was instituted, with censors reviewing each story (Pritchard, 2003). These included a ban on any form of criticism of military misfortunes, food shortages, inferior equipment, corruption in the South Korean government, and especially MacArthur's leadership (Porch, 2002:90; Pritchard, 2003). He also prohibited the publication of reports that either he or his censors thought would harm the morale of the troops or cause embarrassment to the US, its allies, or the United Nations. The military hence assumed the role of gatekeeper, agenda setter and framer in determining exactly what would be reported and how it would be reported.

War correspondents were no longer permitted to talk to negotiators and had to rely on what was told to them at a daily briefing by the United Nations command (Greenway, 1999). Reporters were expected to submit their reports to a field censor who in turn submitted it to senior officers in Tokyo for yet another review (Mordan, 1999). Despite these obstacles, most correspondents still believed that the military and the media were on the same side and few of them questioned whether or not the US should at all be involved in a war in Korea (Greenway, 1999).

Attempts to co-ordinate the dissemination of information during this war include the establishment of Psychological Operations Co-ordinating Committee in March 1950, the Psychological Strategy Board in April 1951, and Operations Co-ordinating Board – which lasted eight years – in September 1953 (Defense Science Board, 2001:19).

5.3.8 Vietnam War (1959 – 30 April 1975)

World War II was viewed by the military as "the golden age of military-media relations", and in the same way the media regarded the war in Vietnam as the golden age of war reporting (McLane, 2004:80).

The US did not attack Vietnam with one swift strike, but gradually "slipped" into the country over a period of several years, often acting clandestinely, until 1962 when it publicly committed several thousand military "advisers" to the country (Arnett, 2005 – see Appendix II for full interview). This number grew to half a million regular ground troops in 1965, when the main conflict began. In 1969, this number started to go down

until the last troops were pulled out in 1973, leaving only a small number of advisers. The war officially ended on 30 April 1975, when the last of the American officials were airlifted to safety from the roof of the embassy in Saigon.

This war was the first conflict to be covered extensively by television (Hall, 1995) and for the first time ever Americans reported that they received most of their news through television and not newspapers or magazines (Howell, 1984).

The media started reporting in earnest in 1962, when reporters for the AP, UPI, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines, as well as NBC and CBS TV took up residence in Saigon (Arnett, 2005):

These dozen or so young reporters dominated the coverage of the story for the first two years ... Vietnamese urban society was open and hedonistic, a heritage of 100 years of French colonialism. The South Vietnamese city dwellers, many business-oriented, were generally supportive of American military initiatives and welcoming to foreigners. ... For the reporters working in Saigon, the exciting environment gave them an enjoyable private life in addition to the challenging professional requirements. Many married local women and stayed for years.

War correspondents had unrestricted access and could go anywhere at any time, welcomed by soldiers who recognised the reporters' willingness to tell their stories to the people back home, while suffering the same hardship they had to endure (Pyle, 2000):

We drove down roads until the emptiness told us not to go any further. We trudged and sweated with the infantry and Marines, made harrowing helicopter assaults into landing zones, cowered behind paddy dikes as bullets cracked overhead. We waited long hours at isolated helicopter pads, saw B-52 strikes blossom like giant brown flowers, learned the culinary tricks of a C-ration diet, interviewed generals, lieutenants, sergeants and privates in their natural habitat, where the truth at least was bullet-proof.

Although lighter equipment enabled television crews to report from anywhere in the war zone (US News, 2004), these reports initially did not contain much footage of actual battles, but typically showed reporters standing in front of arriving or departing helicopters, or with American patrols marching through rice paddies, or with small villages in the background (Hayward, 2004).

The press was allowed to freely dispatch stories, photographs, and film from the battlefield, unimpeded by security inspection (Pritchard, 2003). Only two rules applied: that no troop movements should be disclosed prior to an operation, and that the identity of dead or wounded soldiers should not be disclosed in any way before their next of kin had been notified (HRW, 1991). These restrictions were accepted as reasonable and American news organisations respected them. Moreover, in the early years of the war, before the introduction of satellite communication systems which radically increased the

speed of broadcasting, it took at least twenty hours to dispatch televised footage from Vietnam to New York (Howell, 1984). The news was old and of little use to the enemy.

There are many reasons for the absence of censorship. One was that the US was a guest of South Vietnam and it was therefore not their right to impose restrictions on news coverage (Riechers, 2003). Also, the US government for a long time did not want to admit that there was war in South Vietnam, a fact that would be confirmed by censorship of the media. Another factor which is often forgotten, is that prior to the war in Vietnam, hundreds of US reporters had done at least two years compulsory military service, as had all American males during that time in history (Arnett, 2005). "This shared experience engendered an easy familiarity between the media and the soldiers at the basic level".

However, as the discrepancy grew between the military's official rendition of events and what the reporters observed on the ground, this relationship soured dramatically. The daily military briefings in Saigon where American and Vietnamese officers provided news releases and verbal accounts of land and air battles to some 400 accredited correspondents became a farce (Galloway, 2003; Pyle, 2000). The irreverent name "Five O'Clock Follies" was "partly a reflection of the combativeness of the Vietnam press corps" (Arnett, 2005):

By the time Saigon's daily five o'clock briefings were instituted in 1965 relations were already bad between the media and US government officials. A year-long series of Saigon coup d'etats by competing South Vietnamese military officers, along with the rising capabilities of the Vietcong guerrillas, had meant a constant flow of bad news back to the public in the United States, resulting in a bunker mentality by the American officials in Saigon whose job it was to positively influence the reporting. From the beginning in Saigon there was a confrontational cast to the daily briefings.

These briefings were widely ridiculed by the media, and the officials were accused of being either uninformative, or downright deceptive (Porch, 2002:91). *The New York Times'* Gloria Emerson (2003) recalled:

The Five O'Clock Follies? Oh, it was ludicrous. It was painful to see. Some briefer, a colonel, would get up there and you'd watch his trial by fire as reporters would taunt him. He was hardly responsible for the mess, but they gave such duplicitous information and figures, and after a while it was just part of the heavy sadness of it all. It was impossible even to laugh at them and their loony tunes.

It was clear that the military tried to stay "on the message" as conveyed by the US Administration, which maintained that the South Vietnamese military was an effective fighting force, that the US humanitarian aid improved the living conditions of the Vietnamese peasants, and that the US military was making progress (McLane, 2004:80).

Peter Arnett (2005) recalled:

At the beginning the Kennedy Administration was anxious to portray success in its policy against the then secretive Vietcong guerrillas. But the reporters were discovering that the "counterinsurgency" campaign was seriously flawed because of corruption and the ineptness of the South Vietnamese army. Reflecting the exasperation of the authorities, at a press conference in Saigon late in 1962 the then commander of US Forces in the Pacific, Admiral Harry D. Felt, demanded that I "get on the team" when I insisted in asking challenging questions. This "get on the team" philosophy flowed from the military's World War Two experience where everyone, including the reporters, was anxious to "get on the team". This phrase became a frequent challenge to reporters from the military as the war widened and worsened.

Vast improvements in electronic communication technology led to an increase in the number, size, and quality of colour television sets, and by the middle of the war, there were about 10 million television sets in America (US News, 2004). This brought the realities of the war right into American living-rooms, and as the war dragged on, public sentiment increasingly turned against the war effort (Hall, 1995). Nevertheless, President Lyndon Johnson tried three times to impose censorship rules on the media in Vietnam, but he did not succeed, as there were just too many foreign journalists who could not be commanded by the US – "the genie was already out of the bottle" (Jackson, 2003).

Coverage was not censored by the US military or government, yet reporters and photographers were frequently frustrated by the censorship imposed by their own editors and publishers who were often "frustrating and capricious gatekeepers" (Jackson, 2003). Furthermore, when correspondents realised what kinds of stories would be censored at home because of their editor's or publisher's patriotic agenda, political interests or understanding of the public's preferences, they stopped filing such stories or images and essentially censored themselves (Jackson, 2003). For example, because of self-censorship, not government restrictions, no bodies of fallen American soldiers were shown on US television until the Tet offensive in 1968, and even then images were carefully selected not to upset the public.

This was the turning point in the war and media coverage of this battle is widely attributed with the American nation's loss of confidence in the war, as well as the final breakdown of relations between the media and the military.

On 30 January 1968, in the middle of the Tet New Year holiday, the North Vietnamese launched a synchronised surprise attack on 36 of South Vietnam's 44 provincial capitals, 70 smaller towns, as well as on the American base at Khe Sanh and the American embassy in the Saigon city centre (Hayward, 2004). Televised images of the offensive showed Americans at home that despite official briefings which claimed US success on the battlefield, the enemy was much more formidable than they had been lead to believe (Riechers, 2003). CBS anchor Walter Cronkite, who was regarded as "the most trusted man in America", visited Vietnam soon after the offensive and in an unprecedented move, delivered a personal commentary on television in which he urged the American leaders to cease fighting and to negotiate for peace. Such was the regard for Cronkite

that the politically astute Lyndon Johnson reportedly remarked: "If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost the country" (Riechers, 2003).

After the Tet offensive relations between the military and the media broke down completely (Porch, 2002:91). Most of the officers blamed their defeat on the media (Pritchard, 2003). They decided that the press was an adversary not to be trusted, that reporters were politically liberal, sceptical of authority, and invariably disrespectful to military values and operations, resulting in the military maxim that "real men don't talk to the press" (Porch, 2002:91).

While it is understandable why this view was held by the military, the blame must be shared by government spokesmen who framed the enemy as weak before the Tet offensive, while television coverage of the battle made it obvious that they were much stronger than suggested by the spokesmen (Moïse, 1998). When the same spokesmen truthfully reported heavy North Vietnamese losses during the battle, nobody believed them. A request by US commander General William Westmoreland for an additional 200 000 soldiers further discredited the victorious frame. Media images of the Air Force bombing South Vietnamese cities, or a South Vietnamese General shooting a handcuffed prisoner through the head, also broke down the frame of the US and its allies as the noble heroes and contributed to the public's increasing resistance to the war (Moïse, 1998, Riechers, 2003).

The war in Vietnam had a lasting effect on both the American military and the media: the media still regard the unrestricted access and lack of censorship as the standard against which all war coverage should be measured, while the military still regard the media as their enemy, which should be kept on a short leash (McLane, 2004:80).

Between 1966 and 1973 four national level psychological operations committees managed public opinion, but afterwards this type of formalised governmental interference ceased (Defense Science Board, 2001:19-20). The Department of Defense immediately saw the weakness, but the government ignored calls for the co-ordinated management of information dissemination. For the next 25 years, *ad hoc* committees were responsible for providing pro-US messages to the rest of the world.

5.3.9 Grenada (25 October 1983 – 15 December 1983)

The October 1983 invasion of Grenada, known as *Operation Urgent Fury*, brought the animosity between the US military and the media to a head (Venable, 2002:67). The senior officers serving in Grenada served as junior officers in Vietnam, and brought with them the resentment they felt for the press (Felman, 1992:23). The ground rules between the Pentagon and the media agreed upon in the 1980s, which included and acknowledgement of the public's right to "timely and accurate information", rules on media accreditation, battlefield support, security reviews and the standard of reports, fell by the wayside when the military invaded Grenada (Porch, 2002:94).

During the first two days of the invasion the US government barred the news media from the Caribbean island (Venable, 2002:67). Reporters who got wind of the military activity tried to reach the island on their own, and in a move that unequivocally demonstrated the US military's aversion of the media, the operational commander, Vice-

Admiral Joseph Metcalf III, not only established an exclusion zone around the island, but also ordered patrol boats to fire at unauthorised craft bringing journalists on the island (Lian, 2003). Several reporters who managed to make it to the island were arrested "for their own safety" (Felman, 1992:23), and detained *incommunicado* on the *USS Guam* for several days (HRW, 1991).

Surprisingly, the American public had no sympathy for the press, as they concluded that the media wanted to get into Grenada not to report on the operations, but to sabotage it (Van Hook, 1986). Of the approximately 500 letters and telephone calls received by NBC, more than 80 percent supported the press restrictions.

The military's total lack of assistance to the media – to get on the island, as well as their refusal to allow them on their amphibious and airborne assaults – caused a media outcry (Felman, 1992:23). Only then, on the third day of operations, did the military allow a single press pool of 15 reporters, accompanied by military escorts, on the island (HRW, 1991; Venable, 2002:67). The rest of the 600 correspondents remained in "comfortable exile" in their hotels in Barbados, waiting with mounting frustration to cover the unfolding story (Porch, 2002:94). This "pooling-system" continued until more than a week after the invasion, despite the fact that by that time the fighting was already over (HRW, 1991).

The poor treatment of the media can be ascribed to the military's decision not to integrate them in their operational planning, but to assign them to their corps of public affairs officers, who themselves were not informed about the military operations in Grenada (Porch, 2002:94). It is alleged that the reason for the media black-out was to promote the perception created by the Reagan government that Grenada was teeming with Cuban soldiers ready to roll out the Communist ideology in the region (Tegally, 2002).

The media's vociferous objections to the way they were treated during the invasion forced the military to re-evaluate their press policies (Pritchard, 2003; Venable, 2002:67). The next year General John W. Vessey, Jr., Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, appointed a panel of experts from both the military and the media headed by retired Army Major General Winant Sidle (Venable, 2002:67). The panel had to answer the question "how do we conduct military operations in a manner that safeguards the lives of our military and protects the security of the operation while keeping the American public informed through the media?" Included on the so-called "Sidle Panel" were the heads of organisations such as the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the Radio-Television News Directors Association, and the National Association of Broadcasters (Pritchard, 2003).

The panel's answer, contained in eight recommendations, laid the foundation of the media-military relations as seen during Gulf War II. The purpose of these recommendations was to guarantee news coverage of US military operations "to the maximum degree possible consistent with mission security and the safety of U.S. forces" (Pritchard, 2003). The Sidle Report recommended media pools in battle zones when access was otherwise not possible. It also recommended that reporters who were allowed access would voluntarily comply with security ground rules established by the

Department of Defense, the violation of which would lead to the immediate cessation of further access to the military operations. Pools, according to Robert Fisk (2006) "meant that you were taken with the military and lived with them".

5.3.10 Panama (20 December 1989 – 3 January 1990)

The first real opportunity to test the recommendations of the Sidle Panel came in December 1989, when the US invaded Panama to remove General Manuel Noriega in an operation known as *Just Cause* (McLane, 2004:81). It was a fiasco (Pocock, 1991).

Because Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney still held the media responsible for turning public opinion against the war in Vietnam and "did not look on the press as an asset", he delayed calling out the press pool (Porch, 2002:94). The pool arrived too late to cover the initial invasion, but independent reporters who arrived by commercial flights were confined to the Howard Air Force Base to protect the interests of the pool reporters (Combelles-Siegel, 1996). When the pool eventually arrived, they received a series of lectures by personnel of the US Embassy who had no knowledge of the military operations. Then, on the first day when all the major battles took place, the 19 reporters were "herded like sheep" away from the battle ground to selected locations where the fighting had already stopped (Pocock, 1991).

Because of the poorly equipped media centre, pool reporters were unable to file reports in a timely manner (Combelles-Siegel, 1996). The Pentagon's fax machine was defective, and it took a full day to fax reports to Washington, while photographic material reached the US capital only four days after the initial invasion. Paradoxically, although the pool system was supposed to offer the pool reporters the unique opportunity to observe military operations up close, it only served to constrain them while they had to watch hundreds of independent reporters filing their stories first (McLane, 2004:81). This made the media outlets realise that if they wanted to cover military operations, they needed to become self-sufficient in terms of access, transport, and communication technology. Despite these handicaps, this was the first war that CNN presented as a media event, which greatly frustrated the military.

After *Operation Just Cause* both the Pentagon and the media blamed the US Southern Command for the failed press pool exercise (Ben-Zedeck, 2003). They cited four major failures: the pool was too big; the military did not plan for its deployment; the reporters had to rely on the military for transport; and reports took too long to reach the home-offices in the US. However, the main reason for the failure was the fact that the Panama invasion was an open war, which meant that anybody who wanted to could cover it in any way they chose, while the pool reporters were restricted by their agreement with the military.

These failures prompted the Pentagon to perform a critical introspection (Pritchard, 2003). Commissioned by Assistant Secretary of Defense Pete Williams, former Associated Press Pentagon reporter Fred S. Hoffman analysed the events in Panama and concluded that "excessive concern for secrecy prevented the Defense Department's media pool from reporting the critical opening battles" and that the pool produced reports and photographs of "essentially secondary value" (HRW, 1991). His emphasis on the need for the military to assist the press pool in its war coverage, as well as

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell's instruction to his commanders to include public affairs planners in the preparations for military operations, dramatically improved the military's attitudes towards the media (Pritchard, 2003).

5.3.11 Gulf War I (2 August 1990 – 28 February 1991)

The American reprisal against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait provided a testing ground for the Hoffman Report's recommendations (Combelles-Siegel, 1996). The war consisted primarily of two parts, namely *Operation Desert Shield*, which was the build-up operation in Saudi Arabia, and *Operation Desert Storm*, the coalition war against Iraq (Ben-Zedeck, 2003).

While planning the operation to drive Iraq out of Kuwait, the Pentagon made a concerted effort to accommodate the media in order to ensure satisfactory coverage of the developing conflict (Oehl, 2004). They also established an *ad hoc* committee known as "3PD" (Psyop, Propaganda and Public Diplomacy) which co-ordinated official messages from the various military agencies (Defense Science Board, 2001:20). The committee considered the themes and objectives of their messages, the situation with the media, Iraqi information or disinformation, vulnerabilities, target audiences, and the timing of messages.

During *Operation Desert Shield* everything initially seemed to go according to plan: US Defense Secretary Dick Cheney activated the 17 member pool of reporters and technicians two days after the first American soldiers arrived in Saudi Arabia (Mordan, 1999; Porch, 2002:95). However, they only managed to arrive on 13 August, as King Fahd of Saudi Arabia at first rejected the US's application for visas for the reporters and granted the visas only when CNN started broadcasting from Baghdad after the US accepted responsibility for the pool members (Ben-Zedeck, 2003; Porch, 2003:95).³

The next day Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Pete Williams published his instructions to the media at the same time as US Central Command (Centcom) announced their ground rules (Ben-Zedeck, 2003). The press accepted the regulations, but were not happy about it, and added the phrase "Cleared by the Pentagon" to their reports to express their dissatisfaction.

For the next three weeks the pool system functioned fairly satisfactory to both the military and those included in the press pool (Combelles-Siegel, 1996). The military provided the press with exclusive access to locations and situations, ensuring positive coverage from the media despite some apparent flaws in the military deployments. It was not long before approximately 1 600 non-pool reporters started to enter Saudi Arabia illegally in defiance of King Fahd's ban by flying to Bahrain and then crossing the border into the country (Porch, 2002:95). These "unilaterals" managed to cover the conflict from the sidelines while constantly fearing prosecution by either the Saudi police or the American military.

³ Contrary to the general perception, CNN initially did not use satellite technology, but rather used telephone lines so that viewers heard their voices reporting while watching still images of their faces (Sullivan, 2003).

Improved broadcasting equipment enabled correspondents to report live from the battlefield (Belknap, 2002). The computer and satellite technology eventually used to transmit audio and video material revolutionised the speed of coverage (US News, 2004), but was also cumbersome and potentially dangerous: to broadcast live, television convoys had to stop to set up equipment, and the 1 000 kg satellite dishes, packed into 16 crates, alone took two people several hours to assemble (Pennington, 2003). Portable video phones also became available during this war, but the technology was relatively crude and unreliable (US News, 2004). These satellite connected devices weighed as much as 40kg and needed an electrical outlet or a generator as power source, which complicated live coverage of the war and therefore in a way determined the news agenda (BBC News, 2003a).

In the early stages of the war nearly all Western journalists left the country because of the danger posed by bombers and cruise missiles, as the war was fought almost entirely from the air (Higham, 2003). Despite the risk, CNN managed to stay in Baghdad thanks to the efforts of producer Robert Wiener in the run-up to the war (Arnett, 2005).

Wiener lobbied the Iraqi officials involved with the media, and persuaded them to co-operate and allow CNN to stay during the war. One reason was that CNN was the only international television organisation in existence at that time. The Iraqis could watch CNN in the foreign ministry and the information ministry... They became familiar with CNN's operations and realised the potential. Peter Jennings of ABC came in to interview Saddam as did Dan Rather of CBS, but the Iraqis had no immediate access to watch the broadcasts. ... The authorities could clearly see that CNN would be a very important opportunity for them to counter American commentary.

Officially, the US military had a negative view of Arnett's continued reporting:

The view of military spokesmen was that any coverage from the enemy side would hurt the US because it would give the Iraqis an opportunity to communicate to the world through a credible news organisation. The CNN view was that as long as that viewpoint was clearly established that it came from the Iraqis, there could be no great harm in it. After the war however senior military officers expressed their appreciation of the coverage "because it allowed them a close-up view of their targets, particularly in Baghdad" (Arnett, 2005).

When the military operations changed from defensive to offensive, with *Operation Desert Shield* going over into *Operation Desert Storm*, the relationship between the military and the media broke down again (Combelles-Siegel, 1996). Some senior officers such as General Norman Schwarzkopf, the Commander of US Central Command, still harboured an inherent mistrust of the media since the Vietnam war – the prevailing military credo seemed to have been "Duty, honour, country, and hate the media" (Oehl 2004). It must however be noted that when the Information Operations planners suggested the use of deception through the media, Schwarzkopf (interviewed by Aukofer & Lawrence, 1995:156) refused:

One of the principal proposals was that we would plant false stories in the newspapers. Then the enemy, reading these newspapers, would be led to believe them. But a decision made in Washington, which I supported, was that's not the way we do things in the United States of America. We don't lie to the press. We do not put false stories in the newspaper to manipulate the enemy. We're not going to do that.

Because of the lingering mistrust, the press was denied full access to the war front, and in turn they denied the military due credit for successful operations (Holm, 2002:60). This mutual wariness, coupled with technological advances that enabled the almost immediate transmission of news reports, set the stage for another showdown between the military and the media (Oehl 2004).

The military was overwhelmed by large numbers of reporters who all wanted to report from the battlefield, and who needed to be both accommodated and controlled but without endangering or burdening the military units on the battlefield (Crumm, 1996; Mordan, 1999). The only realistic solution to this problem was to either restrict all media access to official military sources, or to once again use the pool system. The military chose the latter, organising new *ad hoc* press pools that allowed for small groups of accredited reporters who agreed to obey security regulations to be escorted to military positions and addressed by unit commanders (Porch, 2002:95).

The new "non-competitive" ground rules ensured that non-pool reporters had equal access to the reports, photographs and notes gathered by the pool reporters (Porch, 2002:95). This arrangement was unacceptable to the media, as only between 10 percent of the approximately 1 600 correspondents and technicians were allowed to travel with military units to the war front (Mordan, 1999). Those lucky enough to be included in these pools had no choice in their destination but had to be satisfied with the slots assigned to them (Combelles-Siegel, 1996). If they wanted to report anything at all, the reporters excluded from the pools were forced to cover a mass of uninformative military briefings, which caused further irritation (Mordan, 1999).

This arrangement also strained relationships within the press corps, as media organisations depend on competition, definitely not co-operation, for survival (Porch, 2002:96). According to Robert Fisk (2006) "journalists fought like tigers to be on duty with pools". Consequently, larger news organisations schemed to push smaller competitors out of the pool, non-news publications such as fashion magazines competed for pool positions, and some reporters became "pet journalists" to a commander or unit by reporting favourable on their "master" in return for battlefield access (Porch, 2002:96).

A further strain to the relationship between the military and the media was the military's promise to take care of the dispatch of pool reports to news organisations (Porch, 2002:96). A decision to courier pool reports by ground vehicles – despite the availability of satellites, fax machines, and laptop computers – caused much frustration, as it resulted in delays which made the reports dated, and therefore worthless (Fisk, 2006; Mordan, 1999). In one case a reporter's story took two weeks to reach Dhahran, from where it would be sent to the US (Combelles-Siegel, 1996). A photographer's film

took 36 days, while some television footage never reached the US. The Department of Defense admitted that during the ground war almost 70 percent of the pool reports took approximately two days to reach Dhahran, thus arriving as old news after the offensive was over. Also, because of the number of correspondents, restrictions by host nations, and extremely dangerous conditions, Centcom instructed public affairs officers to review all dispatches before release to ensure that they complied with the security guidelines (Venable, 2002:69). The media argued that this strictly controlled set-up impacted on their coverage of the conflict and could therefore be regarded as indirect censorship (McLane, 2004:81).

Despite the reporters' protestations, outright censorship was rarely an issue during Gulf War I (Venable, 2002:69). Of the 1 351 pool reports filed during *Operation Desert Storm*, only five were sent to be reviewed by the Department of Defense, and of these, four were cleared for publication. The editor of the publication whose reporter wrote the fifth story agreed that it violated the security regulations and that it should therefore be changed. Because there was no alternative, the media mostly went along with the pool system and its restrictions, but insisted to further discuss their accommodation and support by the military with the Department of Defense (Bruner, 1997).

Most of the reporters, those who were not in the pools assigned to combat units at the front line, were not subject to the military's security restrictions, and they could do what they wanted (Mordan, 1999). One such example was Robert Fisk (2006): "... I travelled on my own and I saw things for myself, so I had no censorship and I didn't have any soldier delaying my copy. I was in the paper every day." Also, the new portable satellite technology further enabled these reporters to bypass the military's regulations (Crumm, 1996). While Vietnam was the first televised war, the Persian Gulf War was the first to be broadcast live, a capability that was fully exploited by CNN whose non-pool reporters broadcast continuously from Baghdad (McLane, 2004:81). A drawback of the newly gained ability through satellite technology to give live coverage blurred the lines between reporting news and making news (Mordan, 1999). Real-time reports often focused on reporters involved in non-events, such as them struggling to put on gas masks, due to a lack of real newsworthy events.

On the war front, the different service groups were found to treat their pool reporters very differently (Oehl, 2004). General Schwarzkopf only granted interviews to reporters he liked and the largest tank battles since World War II went uncovered because of the Army commanders' reluctance to accommodate the media. The Navy gave the commanders of every ship the choice whether or not to allow the press onboard. The *USS Iowa* for example played an important role in the offensive operations through Naval gunfire, but the commander refused to allow the media on his ship, denying his crew and ship coverage of their actions.

The Air Force, on the other hand, continuously provided the media with footage of precision-guided bombs striking their targets, and the Marine Corps seemingly couldn't get enough reporters to tell their story (Oehl, 2004). Their units carefully looked after the media, and in turn received coverage like none of the other services (Holm, 2002:60). Unfortunately, this accommodating attitude backfired when some of the reporters later alleged that the Marines used the coverage of the amphibious forces off

the coast to distract Iraq from the military's true objectives (Porch, 2002:96). This was not denied by the military, which argued that they could not allow the media to reveal their plans, especially not the "left hook" manoeuvre through Iraq's southern desert into Kuwait.

A major complaint about the coverage of the war was that especially the televised images did not expose the ugly side of war, where civilians died and communities were devastated (Ben-Zedeff, 2003). While Gulf War I was no less bloody than any other war, the perception was created that it was a clean technological war in which computers operated "smart" munitions, with hardly any casualties. In lieu of real on-the-ground coverage from the war front, commentary of retired generals was broadcast, leading Robert Goldberg of *The Wall Street Journal* to write:

For all the air time, there was, and is, surprisingly little information. The Pentagon is keeping a tight lid on the US side, and over the weekend, both Israel and Iraq imposed censorship. Combat pictures are in even shorter supply than facts. Mostly, this is news by press release (HRW, 1991).

This sterile image was created as much through the military's news management efforts, as by the news networks' realisation that America was watching their footage real-time (Ben-Zedeff, 2003).

Critics from the other side of the political spectrum claimed that CNN and other international media gave Saddam the opportunity to directly and instantaneously disseminate propaganda messages to the American people (Crumm, 1996). A classical example cited by such critics was the bombing of the Abu Gharib baby milk plant. However, Peter Arnett (2005), who reported the story for CNN, described the events as follows:

On Day Six of the first Gulf War the Iraqi authorities took me and a camera crew to an industrial site west of Baghdad near the Abu Gharib prison. The small signpost at the entrance bore a crudely lettered sign "Baby Milk Plant" in English and Arabic. The structure beyond was barely recognisable as a building. The sheet aluminium walls and roof had been ripped off and scattered across the yard. The steel roof girders were twisted and blackened. The machinery underneath was a tangled molten pile.

Officials at the scene claimed that this baby milk plant had produced twenty tons of milk formula each day, and had been destroyed in US bombing raids the previous Sunday and Monday. The officials asserted that President George H. Bush had reneged on his promises not to hit civilian targets, and this was proof of American indifference to the Iraqi people.

After I reported the story that evening, the White House responded publicly with anger, asserting that the plant was a cover for producing biological weapons and that Peter Arnett was playing into the hands of the Iraqi Government. This statement from the White House spokesman was repeated by Republican Party senators and the conservative media. There was

enormous pressure on CNN to pull me out of Baghdad, but the company stood firm. I stayed.

History has clearly shown that the plant was simply producing baby formula. But the charges against me tend to stick. I believe that US officials put enormous pressure on me and CNN because they feared that credible reporting would reflect negatively on their war effort.

In a later report by the CIA it was confirmed that it was indeed a baby milk factory as Saddam insisted, and not a key biological weapons plant as the US had believed when they bombed it (CIA, 2004).

After the war, news organisations again strongly expressed their dissatisfaction with the way that they were treated by the military, due in part to the persistent suspicion from commanders (Venable, 2002:69). And once again, media and military leaders sat down to work out guidelines that would satisfy all, resulting in the *DOD principles for news media coverage of DOD operations*, which was published in 1992 (Pritchard, 2003). This document simply repeated previous guidelines, although it did emphasise the need for military commanders to get personally involved in the planning of media access in the future.

Three important issues came to the fore, namely that in future conflicts transparent and independent reporting would be the norm, that press pools would be an exception rather than the rule, and that compliance with the Pentagon's security guidelines would be a condition of access to the military forces (Venable, 2002:69). These principles formed the bedrock of the relationship between the military and the media in subsequent wars.

5.3.12 Somalia (4 December 1992 - 31 March 1994)

Almost as soon as the new guidelines for military-media co-operation were signed into policy, they were put to the test (Venable, 2002:69). In the early 1990s UN humanitarian aid missions delivering food and supplies to starving Somalis were severely disrupted by the deteriorating security situation in the country (Hendrickson, 1995). Planes bringing relief aid were looted as soon as they landed, convoys carrying food and medicine were robbed, and aid workers were attacked, prompting the UN to request member nations to send their military forces to protect the aid operations (PBS, 2005). Media images of emaciated infants dying in refugee camps increasingly prompted the American public to put pressure on their government to do something about the situation (Martin, 1995). In the last few weeks as president, George Bush Senior responded to the UN's request and on 4 December 1992, he announced that the US would deploy 25 000 troops to Somalia to lead *Operation Provide Relief*, a multinational humanitarian relief effort.

The media played a significant role during this operation, as well as the subsequent *Operation Restore Hope* and *Operation Continued Hope* (Martin, 1995). In a bizarre incident that has been described as a "DoD sponsored media circus" American Marines

and Navy Seals landed on the moon- and Klieg⁴-lit beaches of Mogadishu on 9 December 1992 (Hendrickson, 1995). While the perception still exists that the media acted irresponsibly by being present at the famed landing, the truth is that the military told them exactly where and when the troops would land (Strobel, 1998).

In the pre-dawn hours the American soldiers stepped from the waves onto a beach "that looked more like a movie set than a real beach" (Belknap, 2002:9). This was part of a military plan to use the media to send a signal to the Somali militias about the power of US forces, as well as to let the American public know about the heroic actions of their soldiers (Porch, 2002:100; Strobel, 1998). The media presence created a dangerous situation for the soldiers in an unexpected way. While it appeared as though some of the marines were practising their acting skills for the television cameras (Belknap, 2002:9), others wore night vision goggles that magnify even the smallest amount of light, blinding them when the Klieg lights were turned on (Strobel, 1998).

In an interview with the author, journalist Paul Watson whose photographs of a US soldier's body being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu earned him a Pulitzer Prize, described the landing as follows:

I was on the beach the night the US troops landed and I thought it was a circus. I'll never forget the SEAL digging into the beach only to be surrounded by reporters, in the glare of TV lights, and being asked questions like what his name was, and where he was from – no small humiliation for a Special Forces commando trained for covert missions. Of course it was a show put on for media consumption. We were alerted to the likely landing time well in advance. And since there was a huge contingent of unarmed journalists who moved around Mogadishu every day, and the US forces' arrival had been discussed with and approved by the main militia leaders, there was no need for a dramatic landing in the middle of the night (Watson, 2005 – see Appendix II for interview).

Throughout the Somalia intervention the military did not exercise much control over the media (Paul & Kim, 2004). Because the operation started off as a humanitarian intervention, the press enjoyed more freedom than in a combat situation, and as the media settled in Somalia before the military, there was no need for the implementation of any form of pool system. The military did however provide unprecedented support to the media in the form of transportation, briefings and assistance with the filing of reports, as well as meals and medical assistance (Belknap, 2002:9; Hendrickson, 1995).

At times, however, the relationship between the media and the military was still strained, especially when the media refused to submit to military authority (Porch, 2002:100). Reporters and photographers moved virtually unrestricted throughout the Somali capital, often in areas deemed too dangerous by the military, interviewing both sides of the conflict with equal ease (Stockwell, 1995). The media were more mobile than the military and had access to people and places that the military did not, resulting

⁴ A Klieg light is a powerful electric lamp used in filming, named after its inventors, Anton T. Kliegl (1872-1927) and John H. Kliegl (1869-1959) (Compact Oxford Dictionary, 2007).

in having more information about the people and events in Somalia than the military (Strobel, 1998). An example of this was the military's search for clan leader Mohamed Farrah Aidid: while they didn't know where he was, any member of the media was able to interview him. Between March 1993 and March 1994 about 600 correspondents from 60 countries covered the hostilities in Mogadishu without any security review of their stories (Stockwell, 1995).

This media access to the Somali war zone directly influenced military operations. For example, after international media coverage of an inept raid by the US military on a UN compound in Mogadishu in August 1993, the military changed their approach (Stockwell, 1995). Three days later, when they wanted to search a compound that they suspected of housing a militia mortar firing position, the soldiers politely knocked at the gate and asked the owner's permission to search the property.

Reporters were often frustrated by the military's stance at press briefings:

When the foreign press corps got down to around a dozen people, the media was very adversarial. The afternoon briefings frequently erupted in shouting matches over the latest killing of civilians by US-led forces, for instance. [Chief UNOSOM II military spokesman, as well as spokesman for US Forces Somalia and Task Force Ranger, Major David] Stockwell was friendly behind the scenes, but reporters were angry at the lies and since we moved on our own, taking risks just to get back and forth from the daily briefings, I think most took personal offence to being treated as if we were blind and deaf to the reality we lived with outside the walls of the U.S. compound every day and night (Watson, 2005).

The media's unrestricted access was frowned upon by the military, especially when the escalating violence between the US military and the Somali militias resulted in increasingly negative press (Paul & Kim, 2004). Watson, for example, was denounced by the military "on various levels" (Watson, 2005). They blamed their very presence in Somalia, as well as the increasing expansion of their responsibilities known as "mission creep", on the media, as well as, ironically, the public's withdrawal of support after reports about American casualties in Somalia (Porch, 2002:100).

By October 1993, the media was no longer interested in publishing images of starving Somali children (Martin, 1995). On 3 October, when US Task Force Ranger was sent on a disastrous mission into Mogadishu in search of Mohamed Farrah Aidid, there were few reporters left in the city, none of them American (Bowden, n.d.; Richburg, 1993, Watson, 2005). According to Watson (2005) Reuters evacuated its office after journalists were killed when they tried to cover

what was effectively a massacre of Somali clan and religious leaders by US Apache helicopters, which destroyed the house they were meeting in. When reporters and photographers showed up, an enraged mob killed them. Of course, the story became murdered reporters instead of massacred Somalis (Watson, 2005).

Shortly thereafter AP recalled its reporters after the US warned that they had "credible evidence" that Americans were in danger of being kidnapped. By September 1993 only Watson, three British reporters and a Greek correspondent representing AFP were left in the part of Mogadishu where the "Baffle of 3 October" took place (Watson, 2005).

During this incident, which was later portrayed in the Hollywood film *Black Hawk Down*, 18 American servicemen were killed and another 77 wounded (Martin, 1995). At the time, not much was published about the incident itself, as news reports were dominated by images of an enraged crowd of Somali's dragging the body of a serviceman through the streets of Mogadishu (Stockwell, 1995). This memorable image was photographed by *Toronto Star* reporter Paul Watson, who won a Pulitzer Prize for the photographs. Answering a question about the Somali's reaction to his presence on the scene that day, Watson (2005 – See Appendix II for interview) said:

I worked with good fixers in Mogadishu, and had covered the place for a long time before October 1993, so I and my car were pretty well recognized. That helped, but did not guarantee safety. I had two bodyguards armed with assault rifles (I usually only travelled with one) and the fixer was armed that day too. But the whole crew didn't want to be on the streets and that it was suicidal. After telling the crowd who I was, they agreed to let me photograph and I got out of the car. I took a few frames before others arrived and the crowd got angry. My guards pulled me back into the car, but I realized the full-body pictures I'd taken were probably unusable because the corpse's green army underwear was slightly askew, exposing a bit of his genitals. I jumped out of the car, took a few more frames of half the body only, and those were moved by AP, which later told me they wouldn't have touched the full-body pictures. I definitely felt endangered, but was determined to get photographic proof to report desecration of American bodies. I'd reported it before, in September, and the Pentagon denied it.

Although many US soldiers were killed in Somalia, the military prohibited the publication of images of the wounded and the dead (Stockwell, 1995). In fact, the US public had not seen images of their fallen soldiers since Vietnam. Therefore, despite reports by people like Watson (2005) who wrote about the desecration of the bodies of American soldiers, the photographs came as a complete shock to the unprepared American audience who immediately demanded the withdrawal of US soldiers from Somalia (Martin, 1995). On 7 October 1993 Clinton addressed the American nation:

A year ago, we all watched with horror as Somali children and their families lay dying by the tens of thousands – dying the slow, agonizing death of starvation, of starvation brought on not only by drought, but also by the anarchy that then prevailed in that country. This past weekend we all reacted with anger and horror as an armed Somali gang desecrated the bodies of our American soldiers and displayed a captured American pilot – all of them soldiers who were taking part in an international effort to end the starvation of the Somali people themselves. These tragic events raise hard questions about our effort in Somalia. Why are we still there? ... And when will our people come home? (Clinton, 1993).

Within a week after the Mogadishu incident, the US government announced that all its forces would be recalled from Somalia by 31 March 1994 (Martin, 1995). Other countries soon followed their example, effectively ending *Operation Restore Hope*.

It is popularly accepted, also by senior government officials such as Colin Powell, that media images of starving babies got the US military into Somalia, and media images of a dead American soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu by the very people they were supposed to help, got them out of the country (Conetta, 2004; Stockwell, 1995). Others, like Steven Livingston (1998), contested this view of the events in Somalia.

The purported effect that the media had on government decisions was named "the CNN effect", which refers to "the collective impact of all real-time news coverage" (Belknap, 2002:1), or the impact that the accelerated free flow of information and shortened news cycles of media such as CNN have on public opinion and consequently on the government's foreign policy (Nye, 1999). Due to its immediacy, modern broadcast media force politicians to quickly make foreign policy decisions about the conflicts or humanitarian crises on the media agenda. This view is based on the widely accepted notion that CNN's footage of starving children motivated US President George Bush Senior to send his troops into Somalia, and that images of triumphant Somali's dragging the corpse of an American Ranger through the streets of Mogadishu compelled President Bill Clinton to recall US soldiers from Somalia (Mermin, 1997:385; Schraeder & Endless; 1998:29).

More than a decade after the "birth" of the CNN effect, there is still little agreement amongst scholars about the concept, how it should be defined, and the ways it should be researched (Gilboa, 2005:37). For this reason, and because the effect of media coverage on policy is not the focus of this study, the different arguments pertaining to this phenomenon will not be further explored.

5.3.13 Haiti (30 September 1991- 18 September 1994)

On 30 September 1991 Haiti's elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown in a military coup led by Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras (Robyn, 2004). The US administration – first under Bush Senior and then under Clinton – did not accept the military junta or the newly installed president as legitimate government of Haiti and tried to force the illegitimate leaders out to re-instate Aristide through economic sanctions, threats and eventually by initiating a full-scale invasion of the island. On 18 September 1994 the military rulers agreed to hand over the government only hours before the US was to invade the country (Robyn, 2004).

Prior to the US intervention in Haiti, the National Security chaired an *ad hoc* committee to manage the dissemination of information on the island by co-ordinating the themes, objectives, media, audiences, and timing of messages (Defense Science Board, 2001:20). The Foreign Information Subgroup, later renamed to "Broadcasting to Haiti", for example conducted unilateral US radio and TV broadcasts, air-dropped radios to the Haitians, and broadcast President Aristide's radio and TV messages. The effort was a success and resulted in a proposal by the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy for the creation of a standing International Information Committee for future crises. However,

when the US entered Haiti, the Foreign Information Subgroup disbanded without establishing such a committee.

The relationship between the military and the media during *Operation Restore Democracy* can be described as cordial: well in advance of the operation, the military planned for the incorporation of the media, working out ground rules which the media willingly accepted (Belknap, 2002:9). A unique approach to military-media co-operation during this operation was the inclusion of the media in operational units before the commencement of the invasion (Venable, 2002:69). This practice, now known as "embedding", means that news reporters were accepted as part of the fighting unit and were therefore allowed to accompany the units on their missions.

The embedding of reporters in fighting units came after media objected to the pooling system (Porch, 2002:97). The strategy of assigning a reporter to a unit with whom he or she lived and travelled throughout an operation, was first used in World War II and Vietnam, and allowed the military to exercise control over the media (Paul & Kim, 2004). The established set of ground rules ensured a more positive relationship between the military and the media in Haiti: the correspondents respected most of the military's operational security concerns, and in turn were allowed to report the conflict as they observed it (Paul & Kim, 2004).

The military shared top-secret plans with reporters before the invasion and according to an agreement, the media exercised a self-imposed embargo on the broadcast of video footage during the first hour of the invasion (Belknap, 2002:9). As both the press and the marines were harshly criticised – and ridiculed – after the spectacle in Mogadishu (see Chapter 6.3.12), the media agreed not to use lights during the operation. Still, General John M. Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, declared that a nocturnal airborne assault on Port-au-Prince was called off only hours before US paratroopers would have landed, for fear that "the sky would have been illuminated with a thousand white lights, making floating ducks of our soldiers" (Shalikashvili, 1995).

This was refuted by Venable (2002:70), who maintained that the "forced entry into Haiti" was not called off because of fears of irresponsible actions by the media, but because former US President Jimmy Carter and Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras reached an agreement before the attack could take place. Throughout the operations in Haiti there were no breaches in the fragile trust between the military and the media, despite the media's knowledge of planned operations (Venable, 2002:70). This proved that amicable co-operation between the US military and the news media covering their actions was possible (Venable, 2002:70).

5.3.14 Bosnia (20 December 1995 – 20 December 1996)

The origin of the conflict in Bosnia is particularly complex (Metz, 2001:2). It has its roots in the artificial formation of Yugoslavia after World War I, when a collection of divergent ethnic groups were thrown together to form one country. Yugoslavia was held together by President Josip Broz Tito, but when he died in 1980, the country started falling apart as ethnic and other tensions built up. Between 1990 and 1992, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia all became independent, leaving only Serbia and Montenegro as part of Yugoslavia (Metz, 2001:3).

In contrast to the other states which mostly had one dominant ethnic group, Bosnia is split between ethnic Serbs (40 percent), Bosnian Muslims (38 percent) and ethnic Croats (22 percent) (Metz, 2001:4). When the Bosnian government held a referendum on independence in 1992, the Serbs, supported by neighboring Serbia, tried to divide the country along ethnic lines through armed resistance, driving other ethnic groups off the land they owned (Metz, 2001:4). The 38 percent Bosnian Muslims and the 22 percent ethnic Croats agreed to create the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1994, but war between the Muslim Croat Federation and the Serb-dominated Republika Srpska continued until the Dayton Accord was reached in December 1995 (Metz, 2001:5).

The US became involved in the war when the UN Security Council awarded NATO – led by the US – the directive to implement the military phase of the Dayton Accord: to maintain peace, keep the armed forces of the Federation and the Republika Srpska apart, transfer land between the two warring parties and to move military arms and units into approved locations (Metz, 2001:5).

The Bosnian War can best be described as "a struggle for perception", with the media being manipulated by political leaders on both sides to encourage and exploit latent ethnic tension (Collins, 1999). The Serbs directed their perception management campaigns at the people of their country, while the Bosniacs (Bosnians of Albanian descent) successfully targeted the international media, resulting in the publication of a number of definitive media images which framed the Bosniacs as the helpless victims of the evil Serbs.

One of the most memorable of these was that of "thin man" Fikret Alic, photographed by an ITV news team at Trnopolje (Figure 23). These images presented an opportunity that was quickly jumped upon by US public relations firm Ruder Finn, hired by the Republics of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Albanian opposition in Kosovo, to win the support of the Jewish community (Merlino, 1993: 127-129). The frame used in media reports immediately afterwards changed by the use of emotionally charged phrases such as "ethnic cleansing" and "concentration camps", which "evoked images of Nazi Germany and the gas chambers of Auschwitz. The emotional charge was so powerful that nobody could go against it", according to James Harff, former director of Ruder Finn, in an interview given to French public TV channel France 2.

Later analysis of the television footage, as well as investigations by various researchers, indicated that the men were in a refugee centre at a school, not a concentration camp, and that they were free to come and go as they pleased (Deichmann, 1997). The news crew itself was *inside* a small compound, which housed a tool shed, and was enclosed by barbed wire: the men were on the outside. The "starved" Fikret Alic was found to be the survivor of a 10-year affliction of tuberculosis.

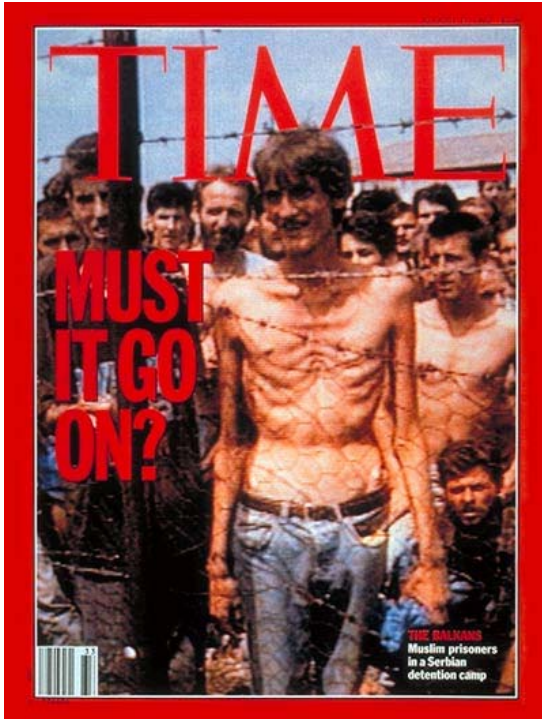


Figure 23. *"The shock of recognition is acute. Skeletal figures behind barbed wire. Murdered babies in a bus. Two and a half million people driven from their homes in an orgy of 'ethnic cleansing'. Detention camps, maybe even concentration camps. Surely these pictures and stories come from another time – the Dark Ages, the Thirty Years' War, Hitler's heyday"* (McAllister, 1992). *This is a prime example of framing: the photographer was inside a fenced enclosure, and not the subjects of this photograph, as is suggested.*

To further complicate the situation, the military also courted the media. Moving away from the traditional view that "the media represents a necessary evil for commanders to deal with" (Wentz, 1998), US peacekeeping forces this time recognised the potential that favourable media coverage offered in gaining an advantage militarily. Before the deployment of American forces in Bosnia for *Operation Joint Endeavour* in December 1995, Major General William Nash already had plans in place for the strategic use of the media (Lovejoy, 2002:56). His three main objectives were to cultivate American support for the operations, to persuade the various political interest groups in Bosnia to adhere to the Dayton peace agreement, and to boost the soldiers' morale.

The prototype of media embedding that was seen during the operations in Haiti was further developed and the term "embedding" was for the first time used to describe the assignment of a reporter to a military unit for an extended period of time (Paul & Kim, 2004). Thus 33 reporters from 24 American and nine British, German and French media organisations were embedded in 15 units of Task Force Eagle for approximately a month at a time (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1997). In total, more than 1 700 media representatives covered the operations in the part of Bosnia where the American military operated.

By giving correspondents full access to the soldiers and allowing them to report on anything they heard – unless specifically told that it was off the record – the military hoped to foster a relationship between the reporters and their units that would lead to a better understanding of the mission, and more depth in the reported news (Lovejoy, 2002:51-52).

This openness resulted in a number of embarrassing reports on the US military, one of which was a story in December 1995 by *Wall Street Journal* correspondent Tom Ricks on a meeting he attended with battalion commander Colonel Gregory Fontenot (Lovejoy, 2002:51-52). During this meeting, Fontenot remarked that he doubted that the US military would stay in Bosnia for only 12 months, which was the expressed opinion of the President. He also warned his African American troops against Croatian racism. Within hours after this report was published, Fontenot was heavily criticised by senior officials in the Clinton government, and was later officially reprimanded.

The consequent outcry in military circles produced what is commonly known as the "Ricks Rule" (Porch, 2002:98). According to these new Pentagon rules, embedded reporters – that is, reporters staying with units for longer than 24 hours – were no longer allowed to quote soldiers by name, all conversations with soldiers were to be regarded as "off the record" unless agreed otherwise, and a soldier had the right to retract anything he had said at any time if he realised after a conversation "that he gave erroneous information" (Eagle Base Joint Information Bureau, 1996). According to the Pentagon this policy was proposed to safeguard the media's access to the battlefield, as military units increasingly resisted the idea of embedded reporters in their midst.

The military also experienced some problems because their processing of information often could not keep up with that of the media (Wentz, 1998). Over time the military realised the potential power of global media networks, including the internet, and utilised them as key strategic tools.

Despite some initial problems, the embedding of journalists in military units was judged to be a success by both the embedded media and the military, and specifically the 1st Armoured Division's commander, Major General William Nash (Belknap, 2002:11). Consequently, embedding was continued until the end of *Operation Joint Endeavour* (Ferrell, 2004).

5.3.15 Kosovo (24 March 1999 – 9 June 1999)

During the Kosovo conflict, the media reports on Serb massacres of civilians, such as the controversial attacks on the village of Raçak, helped to turn Western sympathies against Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic and in favour of a US led NATO intervention in Kosovo (Tait, n.d).

On 19 March 1999 President Clinton (1999) told the media at a news conference:

We should remember what happened in the village of Raçak back in January, innocent men, women and children taken from their homes to a gully, forced to kneel in the dirt, sprayed with gunfire – not because of anything they had done, but because of who they were.

Five days later, on 24 March 1999, the US-led NATO forces launched an air attack on Kosovo using sea- and air-launched cruise missiles, as well as a force of 400 aircraft which included American B-52 bombers, F-16 fighter-bombers, F-117 stealth fighters, Canadian F-18s, and other aircraft from 11 countries (BBC News, 1999).

On 30 April 1999, President Clinton ordered the creation of the International Public Information (IPI) system in a secret Presidential Decision Direction (PDD-68) (Federation of American Scientists, 1999). According to the IPI charter, international military information would be used to "influence the emotions, motives, objective reasoning and ultimately the behaviour of foreign governments, organisations, groups and individuals." The IPI Core Group, lead by the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs at the State Department, consisted of officials from the US Departments of Defense, State, Justice, Commerce and Treasury, as well as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Contrary to the relatively successful co-operation between the US military and the media in Bosnia, *Operation Allied Force* exposed an enduring rift which was increased by tighter than ever restrictions on the media, which regarded the regulations imposed by NATO's Supreme Allied Commander General Wesley Clark as a gag order (Belknap, 2002:11; Holm, 2002; Ferrell, 2004). As in Bosnia, reporters were embedded with the military, but this time they had significantly less access to the war front (Paul & Kim, 2004).

Notwithstanding these frustrations, the Western media still seemed to uncritically accept the peacekeeping forces' actions. Fisk (2006) recalled an incident where the 1st Battalion of the British Parachute Regiment shot a Serbian policeman in Pristina:

I found at once the same old situation applied: that journalists would go along with what the British wanted. I remember that an officer came down and said "A Serb policeman had been shot. He'd endangered the lives of British paratroopers". This was the First Battalion, the Parachute Regiment, who were known in Northern Ireland for being pretty brutal. I was covering Northern Ireland, so I knew this regiment pretty well from far away. The situation was that a sergeant said "No more questions!" and the cameras immediately went down and all the journalists started leaving immediately. And I said "Why no questions? What have you got to hide? Why no questions? Had he been armed? How many shots were fired?" And the cameras just went up again and the officer was forced to continue talking. But there was a classic example: the journalists were prepared to lower their cameras when told "no more questions". Our job is to ask questions - not accept tamely when we are not allowed to (See Appendix II for interview).

Despite his critical approach, neither the British nor the American military showed any overt hostility towards Fisk (2006): "I don't think they even knew who the reporters were who were reporting from the other side of the line, so to speak". In fact, he experienced more animosity from his media colleagues:

A few of the embedded correspondents were quite rude to me. They had already taken the side of NATO, you see. I remember one of them coming in and castigating me for writing about Serb civilians, as if I had not also been writing about Kosovo Albanian civilians, which indeed I had at great length.

News coverage was also complicated by the fact that the operation in Kosovo was almost exclusively an air campaign, which by nature produces very few opportunities for media embedding (Paul & Kim, 2004). Once again the press was forced to rely fully on the military for information (Porch, 2002:99). Even when a reporter was allowed to fly along on a bombing raid, the effects of such a campaign remained largely invisible from the air (Paul & Kim, 2004). This created the perception of a sterile war fought by faceless and nameless warriors, which failed to capture the American public's interest in and support for of the war effort (Holm, 2002).

The uninformative daily briefings where the military showed the media what they wanted them to see, i.e. videos of precision strikes, frustrated reporters and motivated them to go out on their own to find the true facts (Belknap, 2002:11; Porch, 2002:99). Despite apparent restrictions "we could travel more freely than you would imagine", having been authorised by both the government and the military to work as journalists and issued with military press cards to help them get through checkpoints (Fisk, 2006).

The lack of information from US military sources therefore compelled the Western media to "cross the lines to get the other side's version", giving Slobodan Milosevic the opportunity to promote his point of view (Belknap, 2002:11; Porch, 2002:101). However, according to Fisk (2006) Milosovic's main concern was not as much propaganda, as it was security:

The key thing if you wanted to report from the Serb side was not that they would force you to write what they wanted you to write, but what they wanted to be sure of, was that you were not a spy working for NATO. Once they were sure that you were not sending military information to NATO, they gave you a lot a freedom and left you alone to do as you wished.

This resulted in very graphic coverage of the effects of allied attacks on civilians, described by the US military as "collateral damage", such as the mistaken air raid on a refugee convoy near Djakovica in April 1999 (Paul & Kim, 2004). When contradictory responses from the Supreme Allied Commander and spokesmen for NATO and the Pentagon undermined any sense of credibility, the media chose to report the Russian and Serbian accounts of the tragedy (Porch, 2002:101). These reports raised questions about the morality of NATO's campaign and nearly ended the operations because of the withdrawal of public support (Paul & Kim, 2004).

US Navy Admiral James Ellis, who was in charge of NATO's Southern Command in Kosovo, acknowledged that the Serb media campaign was much more successful than that of NATO:

[T]he enemy deliberately and criminally killed innocents by the thousands, but no one saw it. We accidentally killed innocents, sometimes by the dozens, and the world watched on the evening news (Ellis quoted in Pounder, 2000:58).

Angered by what he regarded as Milosevic's disinformation campaign, General Wesley Clark demanded a NATO air strike on the Serbian television station (Belknap, 2002:11).

At 02:06 on the morning of 23 April NATO bombers launched a planned attack the headquarters and studios of *Radio Televizija Srbije* (RTS), the Serbian state television and radio broadcaster in central Belgrade (Amnesty International, 2000: 46). At that time of night, the building was still occupied by approximately 120 civilian production staff and technicians, of whom 16 were killed and a further 16 were injured. The raid resulted in a three-hour blackout of broadcasting, but by daybreak, the RTS newscasts had resumed. Responding to the attack, NATO spokesman Jamie Shea maintained that "Radio Television Serbia, despite the appearance, is an instrument of war. It has nothing to do with journalism as you or I would recognise that" (Sadler, Vinci, McIntyre & Plante, 1999). The attack was denounced by Amnesty International as "a direct attack on a civilian object, killing 16 civilians. Such attack breached article 52(I) of Protocol I and therefore constitutes a war crime" (Amnesty International, 2000:28).

The sinister aspect of this incident was that CNN had invited Serbian Information Minister Vucic to the studios for an interview at exactly the time the missiles struck the studios.

As I remember, CNN's get-out clause was that it was on a different date. In fact it wasn't. The missile hit the building in the early hours of the morning. And in America, of course, it was still the previous day. So they said he wasn't asked to go to the studio on this day. It was the previous day he was asked, but in fact, that previous day in Yugo time was the day the missile hit. So they tried to get out of it by manipulating the date issue and in fact it was all about the international time-line. It wasn't anything to do with a different date at all, it was exactly the same time (Fisk, 2006).

After the air campaign ended in June 1999, reporters were allowed limited access to military units, but the perception that the military was not prepared to co-operate with the media could not be dispelled (Ferrell, 2004). The Kosovo experience showed the impossibility of restricting the media in this technological age, as even the direct denial of access to information by the US military did not deter the media, but rather resulted in unfavourable coverage as they sourced information elsewhere (Paul & Kim, 2004).

Nevertheless, NATO spokesman Jamie Shea regarded his media campaign in Kosovo as a huge success, which he attributed to his ability to frame the conflict as a story, complete with mandatory heroes and villains (Berlin Online, 2000).

5.3.16 Afghanistan (7 October 2001-present)

The US launched *Operation Enduring Freedom* against Al Qaeda and the Taliban government of Afghanistan on 7 October 2001 in retaliation against the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington. Central to the attacks on America was the realisation by the US government that parts of the global population actively despised them, and that they urgently needed to work on international perceptions of the country and its policies (Gough, 2003:29).

Previously, most efforts by government agencies such as the Department of Defense, Department of State, the White House, and other agencies to co-ordinate their image building messages to international leaders and communities took place on an *ad hoc* basis (Ford, 2004:10). Strategic communication became a priority only after the September 11 attacks (Defense Science Board, 2004a:20). Due to a variety of factors, including the gargantuan and utterly disparate nature of the US government strategic communications network, these efforts were not very successful (Lamb, 2006:7). It resulted in considerable friction between different communication agencies, especially between the Department of State, and the Department of Defense, which had very different approaches to strategic communication.

In an effort to co-ordinate their messages to the international community, the White House and the Department of Defense immediately turned to The Rendon Group, a private Public Relations company already contracted by the government to promote its image abroad (Foer, 2002:29). The firm previously worked extensively with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Kuwaiti royal family and the Iraqi National Congress, the opposition group who sought to oust President Saddam Hussein (Dao & Schmitt, 2002).

Rendon's first step was to employ the 24-hour news cycle to align international sentiments with the American cause, and to aid in the creation of the Coalition Information Centers (CIC) in Washington, London and Islamabad (Conetta, 2004:5). It was the responsibility of the CICs to immediately react to inaccurate news stories from hostile sources, to anticipate and proactively deal with potentially damaging news reports, and to vigorously promote news items that cast a positive light on US policies and actions (Ford, 2004:10). The messages were coordinated in such a way as to dominate the news cycle in all the different time zones (Foer, 2002:29).

At the same time, the Department of State instituted a public diplomacy co-ordination group in its Operations Centre, which was linked to the White House, Department of Defense, and American embassies across the globe, as well as to relevant US military commands (Defense Science Board, 2004a:21). To further advance the American image abroad Secretary of State Colin Powell appointed Charlotte Beers, a highly successful advertising executive and specialist in public relations, as Undersecretary of State for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy in October 2001 (Conetta, 2004:5; Gough, 2003: 29). Although Beers was regarded as "the most powerful woman in advertising", her appointment was greeted with criticism. *The Economist* (2002) portrayed her as somewhat frivolous for the position by reporting that

she ate dog food to woo product men at Mars; she wowed managers at Sears by casually dismantling and reassembling a power drill during her pitch. That was in peacetime. But this is war.

She was especially criticized for "trying to adapt flashy Madison Avenue techniques to the subtle art of diplomacy" (Omar, 2003:3).

Also in October 2001, the Department of Defense established the controversial and very secretive Office of Strategic Influence (OSI) (Lamb, 2006:7), which hired The Rendon

Group at about \$100 000 a month to assist them in their international communication efforts (Dao & Schmitt, 2002). Referring to the OSI, the *New York Times* on 19 February 2002 broke the news that

the Pentagon is developing plans to provide news items, possibly even false ones, to foreign media organizations as part of a new effort to influence public sentiment and policy makers in both friendly and unfriendly countries (Dao & Schmitt, 2002).

According to this report (Dao & Schmitt, 2002), critics of the OSI argued that

mingling the more surreptitious activities with the work of traditional public affairs would undermine the Pentagon's credibility with the media, the public and governments around the world.

They also feared that

disinformation planted in foreign media organizations, like Reuters or Agence France Presse, could end up being published or broadcast by American news organizations (Dao & Schmitt, 2002).

A week later, on 26 February 2002, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced the closure of the OSI (Rumsfeld, 2002a). He said that

notwithstanding the fact that much of the thrust of the criticism and the cartoons and the editorial comment has been off the mark, the office has clearly been so damaged that it's ... pretty clear to me that it could not function effectively. So it's being closed down.

By this he implied that the OSI was shut down because it had been sullied by false media reports. At a press briefing in November that year Rumsfeld (2002b) said of the OSI incident:

You may recall that. And "oh my goodness gracious isn't that terrible, Henny Penny the sky is going to fall." I went down that next day and said fine, if you want to savage this thing fine I'll give you the corpse. There's the name. You can have the name, but I'm gonna keep doing every single thing that needs to be done ... That was intended to be done by that office is being done by that office, NOT by that office in other ways.

According to the Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting web site, not one of the major American television news programmes, newspapers, news agencies or news magazines have reported on these contentious remarks (FAIR, 2002).

On 30 July 2002 Press Secretary Ari Fleischer confirmed the White House's intention to set up a permanent Office for Global Communications (OGC) that would work closely with the Department of State's Office of Public Diplomacy (Fleischer, 2002). The principal reason for the establishment of the OGC was the belief that

better co-ordination of international communications will help America to explain what we do and why we do it around the world. It's important to share the truth about America and American values with other nations in the world (Fleischer, 2002).

The mission of the OCG was to

co-ordinate the formulation among appropriate agencies of messages that reflect the strategic communications framework and priorities of the United States, and [to] facilitate the development of a strategy among the appropriate agencies to effectively communicate such messages (Bush, 2003k).

Tucker A. Eskew (2003), director of the OGC, said the aim of the office was

to coordinate across agency lines and integrate [Bush's] themes into the communications of our government – the communications we engage in around the world in speaking about international issues, and speaking about our own domestic policy to the rest of the world.

The OGC was based on the formula of the CICs that had been set up in Washington, London and Islamabad, and would "go to international hot spots, areas of high international media interest" (Eskew, 2003). In short, the focus of the OCG was

the short-term goal of winning the evening news cycle rather than making any long-term effort to change attitudes and opinions. Its messages are more informative, more journalistic, than persuasive (Gough, 2003:30).

It is clear that the military's involvement in the media's coverage of the war was starting to take a whole new shape. Their issue was no longer only with the reporters on the battlefield, but increasingly involved a multi-pronged approach, the extent of which can only be guessed.

On the battlefields of Afghanistan, however, media access to military units was extremely limited throughout the conflict, resulting in a very little coverage of the American operations (CPJ, 2001; Powell, 2004). Unprecedented restrictions on media access to the American forces were enforced especially during the first three months of operations (Hickey, 2002). Reporters had no reasonable access to bases on land and sea from where operations against the Taliban were launched, and were not allowed near the aircraft carrier *USS Kitty Hawk* that served as command base for Special Forces operations. While 30 pool reporters from 26 news organisations were aboard American Navy vessels at the time of the first air strikes, they were not allowed to interview pilots returning from their bomb runs (Clarke, 2002a; Hickey, 2002). The reporters complained about being isolated and therefore unable to file timely reports (Cloud, 2001). The Pentagon also failed to provide a central facility in the region to which reporters could turn to for information (Hickey, 2002).

There were various reasons for this policy towards the media. The military action mostly consisted of small-scale operations primarily conducted by US special forces together with so-called Afghan "friendly forces" (Savidge, 2006 – see Appendix II for interview):

The US military has always been reluctant if not downright opposed to allowing the media along on such missions. It might compromise the operation to have members of the media inserted awkwardly into a small team of professionals that have been together in some cases for years. It could be dangerous since such missions are risky. And there simply may not be space to add people. Finally the US would not want to give away how such units operate believing secrecy is part of their success. I think in addition to these logical issues there was still a hesitancy within the military command of allowing the media such close access ... these are long standing issues of how the media might overemphasize the negative of combat and as a result harm morale in the military and on the home front.

Robert Fisk (2006) offered a different perspective:

You have to realize something. In Afghanistan ... journalists can't move around freely. Because of the dangers of moving freely around in the Kandahar region, for example, journalists can't go there without armed guards.

I travelled on my own with Afghan friends who where also my translators, because I don't speak Pashtu. When we wanted to go to a particular village far out in the desert we would go to the local Afghan governor and ask if he could send some guards with us. This is not to protect us from kidnapping or Al Qaeda. It was to protect us from being robbed by bandits who had weapons.

Although the Pentagon proposed the use of a press pool system as was suggested after the Grenada invasion, the official pool was never activated during the campaign in Afghanistan (Powell, 2004), despite a belief by pool members that "they won't start the war without us" (Thompson, 2002). Consequently, the media were conspicuously absent from military bases during the build-up of the US and allied forces along the Afghan border prior to the invasion (Taylor, 2002). For reports on the progress of military operations, the media mostly had to rely on briefings by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Victoria Clarke, and other Pentagon staff in Washington (Taylor, 2002).

This was a never ending aggravation. Here we were living under harsh conditions while our counterparts stayed at their Washington homes and continually scooped us. We had a saying ... Khandahar. So close and yet so clueless (Savidge, 2006).

Independent reporters however entered the country via neighbouring Tajikistan well before the first strikes (Hickey, 2002). They were aided by the opposition Northern

Alliance, who were known to be friendly to the media, although they were suspicious of Arab reporters after two Arabs posing as journalists killed military commander Ahmed Shah Massood on 9 September in a suicide bomb attack (CPJ, 2001). To cover the American insurgence, reporters were prepared to pay as much as \$300 for a helicopter ride, \$3 000 to hire a car, and even to put their life on the line by travelling the treacherous mountain paths in truck convoys and donkeys. Several reporters slipped into the territory dressed in the traditional burkhas worn by local women (Hickey, 2002). These clandestine measures were necessary as the Taliban suspected journalists, as all foreigners, of spying for the United States and Britain, resulting in the arrest of four reporters and their guides within the first two months of conflict (CPJ, 2001). The Taliban did on occasion escort a small number of foreign reporters to witness the destruction left in the wake of the American bombing raid.

Al Jazeera was the only television broadcaster tolerated in Afghanistan by the Taliban during the first phase of the war, and therefore a crucial source of information about the war (CPJ, 2001). The station's critical coverage of the war, and its interviews with Osama bin Laden and other al Qaeda leaders, irritated the US government to such an extent that on 3 October 2001 Secretary of State Colin Powell requested the Emir of Qatar, who partly finances Al Jazeera, to exercise more control over its reports (James, 2001; Zednik, 2002). Al Jazeera's response was to promptly publish the demand.

Less than six weeks later, on 13 November, an American bomber dropped two 500-pound bombs on Al Jazeera's television bureau in Kabul (Zednik, 2002). Nobody was injured, as the news team was warned by their head office to evacuate the premises before the Northern Alliance entered the city (Gowing, 2005:188). In an interview with foreign correspondent, commentator of media ethics and BBC World presenter Nik Gowing (2002) US Deputy Assistant Defence Secretary for Public Affairs Rear Admiral Craig Quigley justified the attack by stating that the site "had been, and was at the time, a facility used by Al Qaeda" and that this "military significance" made it a "legitimate target". Gowing (2005:188) observed:

Incredibly, they even claim that, with all their intelligence gathering capacity confirming the "Al Qaeda facility", they never knew the compound was Al Jazeera's broadcast office (even though it had been open for 20 months).

With the Pentagon doing nothing to ease media access to the battlefield, the Marine Corps took the initiative in November 2001 to embed reporters with Task Force 58 at Kandahar in Southern Afghanistan (Powell, 2004). Even so, the reporters' activities were severely restricted: no accompanying troops on operations, no reporting on what they saw, no observing from the side-lines, no photographs, no interviews with senior commanders, pilots, doctors, or the wounded (Morello, 2001:43). They were allowed to report on church services and promotion ceremonies, but were asked not to report on the speeches. Correspondents complained that their colleagues in Washington were able to break significant stories about the American campaign in Afghanistan by merely attending official Pentagon briefings (CPJ, 2001). Despite these complaints, they published more than 350 stories about the Marines at Camp Rhino and Kandahar, and,

importantly, proved to the Department of Defense that reporters can be embedded successfully with units during military operations (Powell, 2004).

The Pentagon's decision to restrict media access to the battlefield at times cost them dearly. For example, journalists were not allowed to accompany the Army's 10th Mountain Division when it raided the remote village of Danditemur, believed to be a Taliban settlement (Powell, 2004). This gave the Taliban the propaganda advantage: after the media visited the village the next day, they reported on allegations that US troops had run down and killed a small child, and that they killed an octogenarian with the butts of their guns.

Only after Kandahar, the last major stronghold of the Taliban, fell on 7 December, did the Pentagon move to ease restrictions on the media. More than two months after the first attacks, on 13 December, the Pentagon announced the establishment of three coalition press centres in Afghanistan at Mazar-e-Sharif, Bagram and Kandahar Airport, where public affairs officials would assist reporters with access to the coalition forces and help them to get interviews, photographs, and whatever else they needed to cover the war (Clarke, 2001a). While the information centres were established as promised, the reporters have already left the area, making these facilities redundant (Taylor, 2002).

By mid-December 2001, hostile fire had killed more war correspondents than it did American troops (Hickey, 2002).

Victoria Clarke also proposed the implementation of a C-130 cargo plane to serve as a shuttle service for the media. Two weeks later on 27 December, even before the implementation of the shuttle service, she declared the end of the pool system: "Consider it disbanded. Go crazy," she told the national media pool bureau chiefs at a Pentagon meeting (Clarke, 2001b).

This did not mean that the battlefield opened up to the media, and complaints kept mounting: Marines locked up reporters in a warehouse to prevent them from covering "friendly fire" incidents; troops encouraged Afghan fighters to terrorise photographers and confiscate their digital photographs; military officials led reporters away from the action (Taylor, 2002).

Operation Anaconda was a 12 day campaign in the desolated mountains around the Shah-e-Kot Valley in Eastern Afghanistan, launched on 2 March 2002 (Miracle, 2003:42). A few days before *Operation Anaconda* was launched, military commanders and public affairs officers decided to embed a small pool of reporters with the troops entering the war zone (Pool, 2002). Among the eight-member pool (Miracle, 2003:42) was CNN reporter Martin Savidge, who was secretly invited by the US military to accompany them on the mission (Savidge, 2006):

It began when an officer in Khandahar one day pulled me aside and said, "let's go look at the mountains". If you have ever been to that part of Afghanistan you would know they are nothing worth looking at, so it was clearly just a ruse to get me outside to talk in private away from the other journalists.

Once alone he said, "There's going to be a mission" and if I wanted to be on it I could tell no one. Not fellow journalists not even my bosses. If I did I would be "out". Of course I agreed. I said CNN would have to be told something I couldn't just very well vanish without a trace ... he agreed and said my producer who would remain behind could notify them that I had gone on a mission, but only after we had departed.

The reporters were prohibited from reporting any details about the operation until after they had returned from the mission, which caused "a bit of angst initially" (Marye, 2004:29).

The initial agreement was I would file no reports or have any contact with them or CNN until the mission was completed. Operation Anaconda was to last 48 to 72 hours ... instead it went on for nearly 2-weeks. Eventually that part of the rules had to change (Savidge, 2006).

Savidge and the other media representatives gave their full co-operation, and by not compromising operational security, they were able to report independently and comprehensively on the mission, which was the largest American ground operation since the first Gulf War (Isaacson & Jordan, 2003).

I found the access to Operation Anaconda to be extraordinary ... in fact it was stunning. We were not only allowed to sit in on intelligence reporting and mission planning meetings but we were also allowed to film them. This was top down driven access, allowed because the agreement was not a single report would be made until the mission's completion ... Of course the purpose of the government in allowing media access was to show and witness an anticipated outstanding America success to be transmitted to the American people and the world. I do not believe such access would have been given if the US military had any doubts about the outcome of the operation. No one knowingly invites spectators to their own disaster (Savidge, 2006).

The Pentagon was very satisfied with their press policy (Clarke, 2002a). Clarke told the media that since the terror attack on the US, the Department of Defence had

responded to more than 42 000 media inquiries, hosted more than 5 000 media visits to military facilities, given more than 1 500 interviews, and conducted more than 225 press briefings (Clarke, 2002a).

They had also provided unparalleled media access to top officials, with Donald Rumsfeld giving more than 100 press briefings and more than seventy press interviews and General Tommy Franks, Commander of Central Command in Afghanistan, participating in live briefings and teleconferences with the media (Clarke, 2002a).

From the media's side, however, the picture is not as rosy, especially for the correspondents who operated from Afghanistan. At a bureau chief meeting with Clarke on 14 March 2002, frustration was expressed about everything from the confused

distribution of pooled news, and "minimal and difficult" access, to the fact that the regular pooled system was never implemented, and technological glitches preventing correspondents from filing reports (Clarke, 2002b). An interesting result of the media's isolation was that they turned their cameras onto themselves (*The Guardian*, 2001). They photographed their colleagues on horseback, striking macho poses on the deck of an aircraft carrier, in various uncomfortable positions wearing unusual outfits such as military fatigues, protective goggles "carelessly thrust, Eurotrash-style, into the hair-band position" (*The Guardian*, 2001). A number of reporters dispatched images of themselves wearing the flowing robes of the local population, with even male reporters sporting the female burkha.

This all was made possible by satellite video phones, which had been around since Gulf War I, but really came of age in Afghanistan (Hunt, 2001; US News, 2004). Transmitting fuzzy, jerky images along with the audio reports, reporters clearly chose to sacrifice picture quality for immediacy of reporting (Boyer, 2001; Wendland, 2003). The \$10 000 satellite video phone, popularised by CNN, looked like a briefcase and weighed only about 5 kg (Hunt, 2001). Where speed of reporting was not an issue, its camera could be replaced by a higher resolution digital camera, using the video phone to stream the visuals back to the network. This lighter, more mobile equipment freed war correspondents to report live from wherever they wanted – as long as they did not have to rely on the military to take them there.

The war in Afghanistan prompted the Pentagon to rethink their views about warfare and to acknowledge the importance of public diplomacy, public affairs and psychological warfare to achieve military objectives (Haddock, Thompson & Rabon, 2002:32). Despite satisfaction about their relationship with the media, the US military failed dismally to occupy this strategic territory, prompting Richard Holbrooke to ask in a *Washington Post* column: "How can a man in a cave out-communicate the world's leading communications society?" Holbrooke (2001:7) called for the recruitment of the "very best talent from outside the government ... as it was in World War II". Urrutia-Varhall (2002:31) suggested that private sector experts should be enticed to join the reserves to teach military personnel "the secrets of the trade".

Despite the shortcomings in their communication strategy, the military was sufficiently impressed by the outcome of the military-media synergy in Afghanistan to implement the novel – and very controversial – concept of large-scale media embedding during their next major conflict: Gulf War II.

5.4 Discussion

This part of the study showed that war news is not only one of the oldest forms of reporting, but that it also played a pivotal role in the development of the mass media, as the development of newspapers was to a large extent driven by the desire by especially merchants to gain knowledge about the state of war in the regions that were of commercial importance to them.

A survey of the history of the relationship between the US military and the media in times of war reveals that since the earliest wars in America, this relationship indeed showed an oscillating pattern (Figure 24).

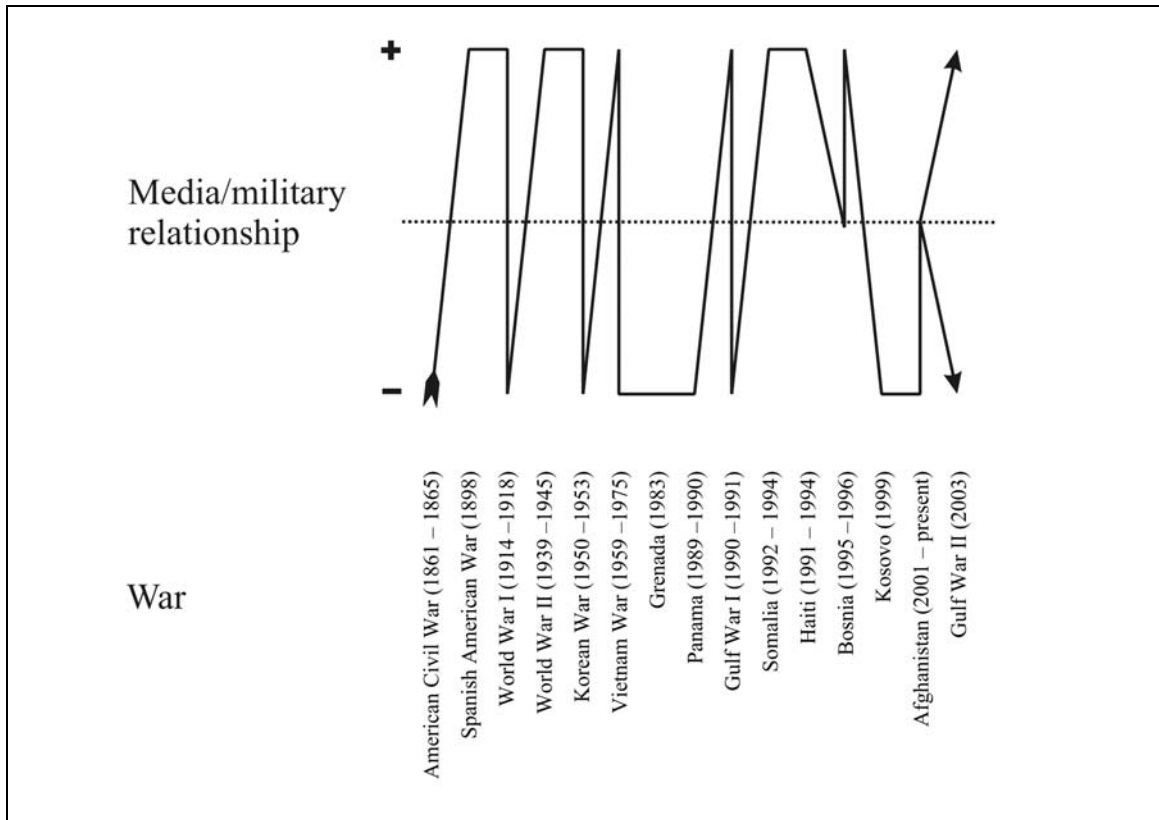


Figure 24. A simplified depiction of the oscillating relationship between the media and the US military during wars from the American Civil War up to Operation Iraqi Freedom, developed by this researcher.

As shown in Figure 24, the relationship between the US military and the media was strained during the American Civil War, but when the Spanish War began 33 years later, all the previous animosity between the military and the media was forgotten. In fact, war reporters were respected by the military and as such were allowed to do practically whatever they wanted.

This positive relationship continued during the onset of World War I, when the military initially allowed a rudimentary form of embedding, with obligatory censorship as part of the deal, but soured as soon as the US implemented the most restrictive measures in history against the press.

The relationship remained positive throughout World War II and into the Korean War five years later. However, negative press reports once again sullied the positive media/military relationship.

With the onset of the Vietnam War, the pendulum swung back again, and the relationship between the two institutions was once again positive. As in Korea, reports that emphasised military mistakes and shortcomings caused the breakdown of the relationship. The mistrust remained during the invasion of Panama.

Because of the concerted effort by the US military to rectify the failures in its media policies during the Panama conflict, the relationship between the media and the military improved dramatically during the early stages of Gulf War I, only to break down again when the military changed its strategy from defensive to offensive. The military re-employed the pool system, which was completely unacceptable to the media.

Once again representatives of the media and the military sat down to iron out the problems, and when the US became involved in Somalia the relationship was positive once more. This cordial relationship lasted through the conflict in Haiti.

From a situation where the media did not have much to do with the US military in Bosnia, the relationship improved when the military implemented a primitive form of embedding that allowed reporters to live and travel with military units. This positive situation was reversed in Kosovo, where correspondents were still allowed to embed with the media, but under restrictions that some equated with a gag order. Uninformative press briefings forced the media to find information elsewhere, which resulted in graphic coverage of the effects of the US led military campaign, which in turn antagonised the military.

This animosity remained throughout the initial stages of the "war against terror" campaign in Afghanistan, but improved somewhat when the military allowed a handful of reporters to accompany them on a campaign in the mountains.

5.5 Summary

In this chapter a broad examination was done of the history and evolution of war reporting in general. To explain the foundations of the sometimes strained relationship between the US government and military and the media, as well as to understand the evolutionary development of the US's military/media policies, a brief overview was given of the policies and interactions between the US military and the media since the earliest conflicts that the US was involved in.

* * * * *

In Chapter 6 the relationship between the media and the US government, and in particular the military, is further explored. Special attention is given to the US government's strategic communication network and the Department of Defense's media policies during the *Operation Iraqi Freedom* phase of Gulf War II. The experiences and working conditions of both embedded and unilateral reporters under the media policies will be examined.

Chapter 6

Operation Iraqi Freedom

(20 March 2003 – 1 May 2003)

Think of them as an offensive weapon. Plan for their employment just as you would plan for any of your other supporting arms — your artillery, your close air support and your naval gunfire. They'll be there and there's nothing you can do about. It's a fact of life.

Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Broeckert (2003),
US Marines Corps Public Affairs Officer.

6.1 Introduction

Arguably, the most outstanding feature of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* was the United States of America's very successful media campaign. In an historically unprecedented move, the US Department of Defense (DoD), in conjunction with the White House, afforded hundreds of selected international reporters the opportunity to accompany American troops to the war front. In what was known as the Embedded Media Program, reporters were invited to "live, work and travel as part of the units with which they are embedded", according to US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld (2003a).

The rationale behind this programme was apparently very simple: in order to counteract Saddam's propaganda, "we need to tell the factual story - good or bad – before others seed the media with disinformation and distortions, as they most certainly will continue to do" (Rumsfeld, 2003a). Hereby the US government, and specifically the Department of Defense, placed itself very strategically in terms of the gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing of the primary reports on the war that originated in the Gulf region.¹

Gulf War II started with *Operation Iraqi Freedom* – also referred to as *Operation Iraqi Liberation* by White House spokesman Ari Fleischer (2003a; 2003b) during press briefings – while the US was still heavily involved in Afghanistan. Within a day after the September 11 attacks on the US, both Bush and Rumsfeld mentioned the possibility of linking Iraq with the tragedy (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004:334-335). This focus on Iraq did not come out of the blue, but "has been among the earliest issues for the Bush foreign policy team" (Lieber, 2001). A month after Bush took office as president, he told the media that his

¹ The author regards all forms of military or governmental censorship, diversion of reporters to or away from newsworthy incidents, misinformation, disinformation, restriction of access, intimidation of reporters, or the flooding of the news with information promoting a specific point of view as a fundamental form of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing. Therefore, the inclusion of incidents that construe any form of media management by the military, and even by the media itself, is recognition of the incidence of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing in that context, and will therefore not necessarily be indicated as such.

primary goal is to make it clear to Saddam that we expect him to be a peaceful neighbour in the region and we expect him not to develop weapons of mass destruction. And if we find him doing so, there will be a consequence (Bush, 2001).

During the incursion in Afghanistan, American influence operations targeting national and international audiences through the news media had grown exponentially because of the US government's policy to add "weapons of mass communication to weapons of war" (Hoffman, 2002:1).

Remarkably, during the Iraq escapade the depth, range, and intricacy of these perception management efforts expanded even further.

It took place on various levels, both overt and covert, with a variety of interconnected government and non-government agencies participating (Figure 24, p. 185). To unravel this crow's nest of public and secret associations and networks of influence is far beyond the scope of this study, but to give a glimpse of the extent of this phenomenon, one such line of influence will be briefly examined.

There was no evidence that Iraq was in any way involved with 9/11 (Cheney, 2001), but powerful non-governmental think-tanks such as the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (Jinsa) immediately called on the US government to "confront the terrorists and their supporters". In a document titled *This goes beyond Bin Laden*, released on 13 September 2001, Jinsa (2001) asked the government to

halt all US purchases of Iraqi oil under the UN Oil for Food Program and to provide all necessary support to the Iraq National Congress, including direct American military support, to effect a regime change in Iraq (emphasis by Jinsa).

This request is significant, as influential advisors to the Bush government such as Richard Perle and Douglas Feith were associated with Jinsa (Jinsa, 2006a; Jinsa, 2006b).

Richard Perle was Chairman of the Department of Defense's Defense Policy Board, an extremely powerful group advising Bush and the Pentagon on military policy (Jinsa, 2006a). He was also chairman and CEO of the media company Hollinger Digital, director of *The Jerusalem Post*, and a prolific contributor to the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Washington Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Jerusalem Post* (Benador Associates, n.d.). He was often interviewed on ABC's *Nightline* and *This Week*, CBS's *Face the Nation*, NBC's *Meet the Press* and *Today Show*, and PBS's *NewsHour*, and produced *The Gulf Crisis: The Road to War* for PBS in 1992. In short, he had a very strong presence in the media. His view of strategic communication was that there is nothing wrong with mixing public diplomacy with psychological operations, as long as it was to the advantage of the American people (Perle, 2002b).

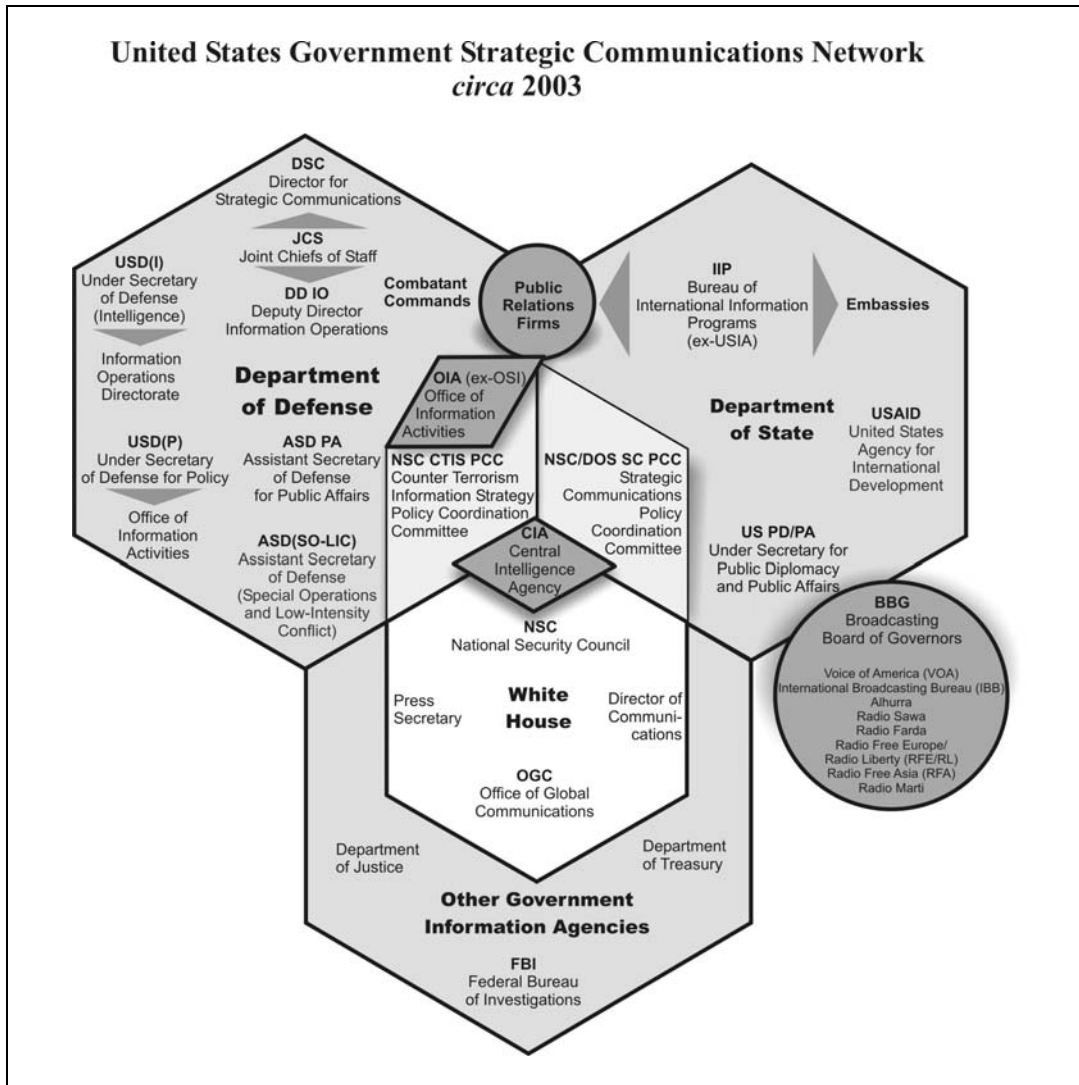


Figure 25. This is a simplified depiction of the complicated strategic communication network of the US Government around the time of Gulf War II, compiled by the author from information obtained from Defense Science Board (2004a&b), Broadcasting Board of Governors (n.d.), Department of State (2005), Joint Chiefs of Staff (2003) and Gardiner (2003). The White House functioned autonomously, but had direct jurisdiction over the strategic communication efforts of the Department of Defense, Department of State, and other government information agencies. The two Policy Coordination Committees (PCC) functioned independently of one another, but both had representatives of the National Security Council (NSC), the Department of Defense and the Department of State. The NSC consisted of representatives of the White House, Department of Defense, Department of State, and the CIA. The CIA functioned autonomously, but had a say in most of the departments. The Office of Information Activities (OIA) resorted under the Department of Defense, but its functions were mostly unclear/secret. The Secretary of State served on the board of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), although the BBG is considered to be an independent organisation. Various civilian public relations firms were co-opted by especially the Department of Defense and the Department of State, but other departments used their services as well.

Douglas Feith, as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, was responsible for the "development and oversight of offensive IO (Information Operations), Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) and International Public Information (IPI)" (Armistead, 2002:20). During Feith's tenure in the Department of Defense, two particularly controversial offices were established (Conetta, 2004:5-6). The secret Office of Strategic Influence (OSI) was opened shortly after he was appointed, and was meant to manipulate foreign public opinion through disinformation and the covert placement of false or misleading reports by third party agents in international media. The OSI was closed down within six months, but its activities were usurped by other groups, such as the disbanded but still inscrutable Office of Special Plans (OSP) (Conetta, 2004:5), which was apparently "used to manufacture propaganda for internal and external use, and pseudo war planning" (Kwiatkowski, 2004).

Like Perle and Feith, the Iraqi National Congress (INC), which worked for many years to oust Saddam, was also closely associated with Jinsa (Jinsa, 2005). Funded by the US Department of State, the INC launched a major media campaign, and in a letter to the US Senate Appropriations Committee, dated 26 June 2002, they claimed to have planted 108 articles discrediting Saddam in the international media to influence global opinion in favour of an American war against Iraq (Landay & Wells, 2004). Targeted media included *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Time*, the BBC and CNN, Agence France Presse, Associated Press, United Press International, Czech News Agency, *Moscow News*, *The Independent* (London), *The Wall Street Journal* and *Vanity Fair*. The existence of this document was confirmed by the INC's Washington office (McCollam, 2004).

This example clearly shows that numerous interrelated individuals and institutions – not only the Department of Defense – had the will, the means and the opportunity to manage the news media prior to as well as during Gulf War II. Due to the secretive nature of many of the organisations that generated information that was used by the media, it is obvious that the origin of a lot of information pertaining to the war in Iraq would also be obscure.

6.2 Department of Defense policy

The non-secretive part of the Department of Defense's media strategy was overwhelmingly transparent and became a hallmark of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. An earlier report by the Defense Science Board (2001:50) stated that "a coordinated capability to manage the dissemination of information to foreign audiences in support of US interests is necessary, feasible, and an urgent national priority".

The Pentagon listened: months before the final decision to attack Iraq the Department of Defense already had contingency plans in place regarding the role the media would play in the event of a war (Department of Defense, 2001). It included the "aggressive use of information operations", with strategic communication teams assigned to Central Command to ensure that the message of American superiority in Iraq is broadcast to the international community (Ferrell, 2004:10).

This entailed complete media coverage of the war by means of what is known as the Embedded Media Program.

6.2.1 Embedded Media Program

The Embedded Media Program was an inspired public relations move by the Department of Defense's newly appointed Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, the public relations expert Victoria Clarke (Hume, 2003). She previously held the position of general manager in the global public relations and marketing firm Hill and Knowlton, was president of the leading issue advocacy and corporate communications company Bozell Eskew Advertising, and was also vice-president for Public Affairs and Strategic Council for the National Cable Television Association (Department of Defense, 2003b). Although she had little knowledge of military culture, Clarke knew the world of public relations and the media, and she and her deputy, former army officer Bryan Whitman, realised that a war in Iraq would be big news, whether the military decided to accommodate the media or not (Shepard, 2004:11-12). The only way to counteract Iraqi propaganda, they believed, was to "take offensive action to achieve information dominance by means of robust media access".

The Embedded Media Program therefore was a deliberate move by the Pentagon to dominate media coverage of the war, counter hostile propaganda and disinformation efforts, and at the same time to garner public support both in the US and the rest of the international community (Rumsfeld, 2003a).

Although Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney were initially against the idea of embedding, Rumsfeld agreed that it might work (Shepard, 2004:13). The huge success of very limited embedding in Afghanistan advanced the case for large-scale embedding in Iraq (Shepard, 2004:21).

I do believe media inclusion during Operation Anaconda became a model for embedding of journalists in the war in Iraq. And from the stand-point of the US military they must have been pleased with the initial outcome from the Afghan experiment. From 6 journalists the number was expanded to well over 600 by the time the ground war began in Iraq. As I joked the media was no longer imbedded instead, there were so many journalists it was more as though soldiers were embedded with the media (Savidge, 2006).

6.2.2 Ground rules

In what was the most evident policy mechanism for controlling the media during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, the Pentagon compiled a set of strict ground rules which had to be signed by members of the media who wished to be embedded with the military (Villarreal, 2005:51). Violation of these rules would result in the immediate termination of the reporter's stay with the unit (Rumsfeld, 2003a).

In brief, the ground rules contained in the *Public Affairs Guidance (PAG) on embedding media* (Rumsfeld, 2003a) stated that:

- All interviews with military personnel would be "on record", and interviews with pilots and air crews would only be allowed after the completion of missions.
- Embeds were not allowed to be armed.
- The unapproved use of lights for filming or photography during nocturnal operations was prohibited.

- Embargoes may be imposed to protect operational security.
- The release of information that might jeopardize operations or endanger lives was proscribed. This included the numbers of for example troops, aircraft, artillery, and ships; the names and locations of units as well as visual material from which these could be identified; information camp security and force protection measures; and also rules of engagement, future operations, and techniques of intelligence collection.
- To retain the surprise factor, embeds were required to take extra precautions at the beginning of own and friendly operations, and they were prohibited from broadcasting from airfields on land or sea until the safe return of the initial strike force.
- Embeds were not allowed to describe the movements or methods of special operations units, including angles and speeds of air attacks, and tactical and evasive naval manoeuvres.
- The effectiveness of e.g. enemy electronic warfare, camouflage, and targeting could not be reported.
- Photographs and film of identifiable enemy prisoners of war, as well as custody operations and interviews with detainees were disallowed.
- Embeds could not report on postponed or cancelled operations, and missing or downed aircraft while search and recovery operations were still in progress.
- They were required to be sensitive about the identity of fallen, wounded, or ill military personnel until their next of kin had been informed or the information was released by the Pentagon, and to respect the privacy and welfare for personnel in medical treatment facilities.

The proposed embedding of reporters received mixed reactions from military commanders (Shepard, 2004: 22). Some were reluctant to allow the media into their fold; others resignedly accepted the inevitability of the programme, while a number had a genuine desire to make it work. However, both the military and the media agreed with the ground rules and considered them fair, reasonable and logical, although there was a general feeling that it could have been simplified to a short list of do's and don'ts (Wright, 2004b:IV-16).

6.2.3 Media boot camp

A second move to indirectly control the media came in the form of the unofficial requirement for all embeds to attend specifically designed boot camps where they could become familiar with and incorporated into the fighting units (Villarreal, 2005:51).

A week-long programme was presented at a range of locations, such as Quantico in Virginia, Fort Dix in New Jersey, and Kuwait (McLane, 2004:81-82). More than fifty representatives of various news organisations attended the first camp at Quantico (DeFoore, 2002). To develop a relationship with the military and to prepare them for the rigours of battle, prospective embeds were familiarised with direct fire, instructed on chemical weapons protection, how to navigate minefields, and how to apply battlefield first aid (McLane, 2004: 81-82; Miracle, 2003:45). The reporters were taken on tactical marches, experienced staged capture by the enemy, and were taught military jargon. Like the soldiers they would be embedded with, they slept in barracks bunks, rose at 05:00, and were equipped with military backpacks and Kevlar helmets.

Many reporters were sceptical about the boot camp, as they expected its aim was to condition them to obey orders from the military, as well as to get rid of candidates unsuitable for embedding (Branigin, 2003). The latter suspicion was true: according to Shepard (2004:280)

they weeded out those who mistakenly thought covering a war would be a heck of an adventure. After barely surviving pretend war, some opted to not experience the real thing.

The promise that embeds would automatically have the honorary rank of major during a war, with all the privileges this entailed, somewhat sweetened the deal for some (Knightley, 2003b), although this offer created new concerns regarding the danger reporters would potentially be exposed to (Cramer, 2003). Dressed in fatigues like the fighting forces, it was feared that they might be mistaken for soldiers and become a target for hostile troops (Ricchiardi, 2003).

The army drill sergeants responsible for the training of the prospective war correspondents, on the other hand, had their own concerns and frustrations to cope with, namely the correspondents themselves. At one occasion a drill sergeant compared the supervision of reporters to "herding cats" (Ricchiardi, 2003).

6.3 Reporters in Iraq

6.3.1 Embedded reporters

The Embedded Media Program in Iraq enabled the unprecedented number of 692 journalists, photographers, videographers, producers and technicians of 224 media organisations to live and travel with units of all the different departments of the military (Wright, 2004b:S-1–S-6). Embeds were allowed to stay as long as they wanted and therefore their numbers fluctuated as they joined or left their allocated units. When the war started there were 408 embeds with the ground forces, when Baghdad fell there were 422, and a day after Bush declared victory, this number dropped to 108. Eventually 64 percent of the media personnel who were embedded were American (national/regional), 27 percent international, and 9 percent local.

Most embeds arrived at their allocated unit, ship, or air base a week to 10 days before *Operation Iraqi Freedom* began, which gave them the opportunity to become familiar with the environment – both geographical and military – and to establish a mutual relationship of trust with the soldiers (Wright, 2004b:S-5–S-6). The rest of the embeds signed up at the units' home bases, where they could witness deployment preparations and meet the soldiers' families. A number of reporters were embedded after the start of the war, but this generally caused problems and was therefore not considered to be a very effective move.

Many questions were asked about the Embedded Media Program. Critics pointed out that there is a thin line between "embedding" and "in bed with" (Cramer, 2003). Fears were that the reporters' reliance on the military would result in a too familiar relationship between correspondents and their units, leading to overly positive reports on military operations (Owens, 2003). This concern was not unfounded. While the program presented the media with fairly unrestricted access to "the factual story – good or bad"

(Rumsfeld, 2003a), the architects of the policy knew very well that correspondents whose safety depended on their units would probably bond with the troops and that it would most likely result in more positive coverage. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Larry Cox (2003), chief of the press desk, said in a *Columbia Journalism Review* interview:

We knew that some members of the press were going to experience that. That is an aspect of the situation that we felt was going to be important for the press to experience.

A clear indication of the embedded correspondents' alliance with their units was their use of the pronoun "we" in their reports, which for some critics was indicative of the loss of objectivity (Owens, 2003). As the military had expected (Cox, 2003) the "enthusiastic embrace of the plural pronouns 'we,' 'our,' and 'us' to describe the progress of the units to which they're attached" was understandable, considering the embeds' "strong stake in the outcome of any hostile action they might encounter" (Shafer, 2003a).

A favourite example of such a bond often quoted by critics and proponents alike (Owens, 2003; Kincaid, n.d.), is the story of Martin Savidge of CNN, embedded with the 1st Marine Battalion, who reportedly offered his satellite phone to four troops, who chose to use it to phone the parents of a fallen comrade. Savidge (2006) denied that this ever occurred, or that he would have made a report of such an incident, but added that he and many other embedded reporters regularly made their satellite phones available to soldiers who needed to call home. In fact, most embedded correspondents acted as a direct link between the troops and their families, either through their satellite phones, or e-mail messages (Marlantes, 2003).

Savidge (2006) admitted that it was very difficult to separate his loyalty towards his adoptive unit from his professional duty as a reporter:

It is not possible to live and face danger with a unit and not develop a deep personal connection with those who are a part of it. Under those circumstances it is extremely difficult if not impossible to maintain the objectivity a journalist normally tries to have. I struggled with this every single day and I know I did not always succeed. That is part of the reason I believe that embedded journalism by a news organization must be done in conjunction with independent reporting whenever possible. I would try to carefully monitor my words and reports to guard against bias but it's damn difficult.

Savidge (2006) denied that it was ever expected of him to serve as a "cheerleader" for the military:

There was never any time I was told or pressured to report anything other than what I saw or experienced by members of the unit or commanders or officers.

Nevertheless, when he reported on 22 March 2003 that the US forces hit Safwan Hill with napalm, the military denied it and said that it did not have "napalm" in its arsenal.

A documentary titled "*Fallujah, the hidden massacre*" aired by Italian Public Television however forced the Pentagon to admit that it indeed used white phosphorous, or so-called "Shake and Bake" munitions, in their operations against Fallujah (Heard, 2005).

The implication of this is that while Savidge – and other embeds, for sure – were not prevented from reporting what they saw, the military did not hesitate to contradict true reports with false information. By the time the validity of the reports could be verified, the newsworthiness of the event had passed. All that remained was the image that reporters such as Savidge at best did not know napalm (which is a generic term for all "fire bombs") from white phosphorous, or at worst that he was not a reliable reporter. This way, it can be concluded that the military actively served as gatekeepers and determined the frames and general agenda of the reports filed by "their" embeds.

Detractors of the embedding policy also cautioned against the so-called "soda straw" view of the war, without any context of events being offered. This implied nothing else than very restricted framing of news. According to Jack Schafer of *Slate* (2003a)

battlefield reporters are viewing the war through soda straws – the soda straws of their specific, narrow battlefield locations and the soda straws of their self-preservation.

Correspondents were aware of this danger, and some worried that their narrow view of events would cause them to write slanted reports (Marlantes, 2003:1).

The military realised that lack of context could distort media reports, and Rumsfeld (2003b) himself cautioned that

what we're seeing are slices of the war in Iraq. We're seeing that particularized perspective that that reporter, or that commentator or that television camera happens to be able to see at that moment.

Cox (2003) stressed that embedded coverage would have been insufficient had it been the only coverage of the war:

But it's not. It's one element. The others balance it and broaden it and lead to the overall goal for both the military and the journalists, which is to provide an accurate picture of the war.

Schoonakker (2006), himself a unilateral, conceded that embedded reporters had far greater access to the battlefield than he and the other independent reporters had and that they consequently saw much more of the war than the reporters in Baghdad who had to rely on the Ba'athist government for news.

However, as to the accuracy of reports from embedded journalists, I don't think that is the salient point. The Western media that sent their reporters off for embedding with the coalition had already accepted the US administration's rationale for invading Iraq. The great failure of journalism

in the case of the invasion of Iraq was the lack of any critique as to why the US should invade in the first place.

6.3.2 Unilateral reporters

The "other" reporters Cox (2003) referred to were the "unilaterals", the 1 500 to 1 600 journalists and news crews who covered the war independently from the military. Having a "slightly broader picture of the war to look at" (Cox, 2003), it was expected that unilaterals, who operated in Iraq and neighbouring countries, would serve a crucial role in the conflict, namely as "a true audit of just how honest the embedding process is", and "what kind of access is being granted to the embedded correspondents and camera crews" (Lewis, 2003). Yet, due to the dangers unilaterals had to face trying to get into and surviving in Iraq, while evading capture by and dodging bullets of both the coalition and Iraqi forces, their coverage was also restricted and "in its own way a soda straw" (CPJ, 2003; Donovan, 2003).

Peter Arnett (2005) noted a clear distinction between the type of stories filed by embedded and unilateral reporters, which is likely the reason for the military's hostility towards unilaterals:

Non-embedded reporters cover the Iraqi side of the story. They will write about politics, tribal and ethnic issues, human interest stories about Iraqis impacted by the war and so forth. Main stream news organisations will embed their western reporters to cover the US military operations, and use local Iraqis or Arab staff to cover the Iraqi side.

Even if reporters embedded with an advancing military unit wanted to stop and report on the results of his unit's actions, it is not practically possible – there was no time to talk to the injured or observe the humanitarian implications of such an attack (Turnley, 2003). Reporters travelling independently to catch the slack were therefore essential for balancing media reports.

Like the embedded media, unilaterals who wanted to report on the activities of the coalition ground forces had to register with the Coalition Press Information Centre (CPIC)-Kuwait (Wright, 2004b:S-3). That seems to be where the similarity in treatment ended, as the military frowned upon the presence of independent reporters in Iraq. They repeatedly urged unilaterals to stay out of the country, and warned that the military could not guarantee their safety (CPJ, 2003).

All reporters were required to carry numerous identifications, but "only one mattered: the brown 'embed' ID. Without this, entry is forbidden into Iraq except by invitation" (Wilson, 2003). Generally, embedded reporters were regarded as "official journalists", deserving of military interviews, while unilateral reporters "were often treated as pests with no right to the battlefield" (Shafer, 2003b). *The Guardian* reporter Jamie Wilson (2003) felt that in the eyes of the "the coalition military press machine", unilateral reporters were "one step down from being a member of the Republican Guard".

The British and US military, as well as the Kuwaiti border guards, actively prevented unilateral reporters from entering Iraq to cover the war (Donvan, 2003). This was

especially true for unilaterals who wanted to follow in the wake of the military as they invaded and passed through the southern cities of Basra, Umm Qasr, Nasiriyah, and Safwan (Shafer, 2003b). Independent reporters who presented their unilateral accreditation badges at the checkpoint on the two highways into Iraq from Kuwait were told to turn back as they had no right to enter Iraq (Turnley, 2003). To complicate their entry into Iraq, a military exclusion zone of 120 km wide was enforced in the northern third of Kuwait where the American troops were based (CPJ, 2003). Reporters who wanted to approach the Iraqi border had to obtain permission from the Kuwaiti government, which approved hardly any of these requests.

Hundreds of unilateral reporters were "embedded ... in the million-dollar press centre" in Doha, Qatar, an "over-air-conditioned warehouse (a virtual sensory-deprivation chamber), with only microwavable mini-pizzas to eat" (Wolff, 2003a; Wolff, 2003b). Here they believed they would get fresh information on the progress of the war during daily press briefings (Rice, 2004) which, it turned out, was "ably engineered and precisely scripted to tell you as little as possible" (Wolff, 2003b):

It takes about 48 hours to understand that information is probably more freely available at any other place in the world than it is here. At the end of the 48 hours you realize that you know significantly less than when you arrived, and that you're losing more sense of the larger picture by the hour. Eventually you'll know nothing. This may be the plan, of course (Wolff, 2003a).

The first missile attack on Baghdad came and went with hardly any information passed to the reporters waiting at the Centcom Information Centre (Ramshaw, 2003). When the war "officially" began questions to the press officers were almost invariably answered with "no comment", or "we don't want to endanger the troops" (Rice, 2004). Even as the reporters watched the bombing of Baghdad on the centre's six television monitors, the press officers had "no comment" on whether or not the war had officially begun.

Gradually, it dawned on me that the military had herded us into the press centre so that we could be kept away from information (Rice, 2004).

This pattern of information deprivation prevailed, prompting Michael Wolff of the *New York Metro* to ask Brigadier General Vincent Brooks, one of the command's chief spokesmen: "Why are we here? Why should we stay? What's the value of what we're learning at this million-dollar press centre?" (Wolff, 2003b). This question "drew [a] hearty applause" from Wolff's colleagues (Rice, 2004).

The Centcom reporters were further irritated by "the crude efforts at manipulation": each briefing beginning with video clips showing "precision bombing" and US soldiers being greeted by waving children, as well as the increasingly derogatory labels applied to the opposing Iraqi forces (Massing, 2003). At first they were called "armed thugs", then "terroristic behaving paramilitaries" and "terrorist-like cells" and finally "death squads".

Despite consensus that the daily briefings were "ably engineered and precisely scripted to tell you as little as possible" (Wolff, 2003a), and the general dismay about "the level of distortion, obfuscation and misinformation served up to them" (Massing, 2003), the flow of "news" from the unilaterals at Centcom never stopped (Ramshaw, 2003):

No matter how jaded these reporters were, when the lights went on, they knew their roles. They had producers and an audience. The show must go on. If everybody here seemed privately to accept that the process of reporting war was a crock, publicly they accepted the war as a coherent event that they had some mastery over—they had inside sources, they had the general's ear. They were war reporters. We'd reached the point where reporters were interviewing other reporters in the most media-scrutinized war ever fought (Wolff, 2003b).

"All-news, all-the-time TV reporters" stood in the empty briefing room and "filled air-time with poise and smooth authority" (Ramshaw, 2003). Massing (2003) noted that although the "briefers and spinners" were to blame for the situation, the reporters themselves were only too ready to accept whatever was they were fed (Massing, 2003). While they were openly contemptuous of the set-up at Doha, they did not report on it:

[t]here were no publishers making angry phone calls to the Pentagon or the White House – no letters, no outrage. In this, we all failed the American public (Rice, 2004).

Unilateral reporters in Kuwait also complained about the military breaking promises to fly them into southern Iraq by helicopter to observe the aftermath of their attacks (Shafer, 2003b). Instead of being ferried about in helicopters, only a handful of the thousand-plus reporters were picked up at their five-star hotels in Kuwait City every day for the 90 minute drive into Iraq in an air-conditioned tour bus (Shafer, 2003b; Wilson, 2003). They were not allowed to see the "collateral damage" of the coalition attacks, but were taken to a few towns deemed safe, where they could report on aid convoys, US forces supplying water and restoring the electricity supply – "think of it as the Disney Tour War" (Wilson, 2003).

In some cases unilateral reporters managed to convince military units to take them along with them, "praying that the press handlers don't get wind and shut us down", but mostly they were forced to enter the country without permission (Wilson, 2003). Some chose unconventional ways to cross the border: it was rumoured that despite the Geneva Conventions forbidding it, a number of independent reporters concealed their vehicles in Red Cross guise in order to cover the invasion (Shafer, 2003b). Others were smuggled across the border, like Paul McEnroe of the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* who entered Iraq "embedded under a load of potatoes" (Wilcock, 2003).

Once they managed to get into Iraq, unilaterals could freely pursue their stories (CPJ, 2003). In many instances they saw a completely different war from the one embeds reported on, and not only because embeds experienced frontline action with the troops (Donvan, 2003). For example, early in the war embeds reported that Iraqis were waving

and cheering at the American troops, while unilaterals visiting the same towns a short while later found that the Iraqis were not happy at all.

They were not happy with us, the Americans. They were not happy with the British. They were not happy that five people in town had been killed. They were not happy that their electricity was off. They were not happy that big guys wearing camouflage helmets were telling them where in their town they could go. They were not happy that I was there asking them questions (Donvan, 2003).

Also, where embeds told how an Iraqi slapped a picture of Saddam with a shoe, unilaterals heard the rest of the story, that both that man and his mother were killed by the Baathists that same night: "So the story of this triumphant move and this welcoming of liberation, was not at all the story I was picking up" (Donvan, 2003). John Donvan, a correspondent for ABC News Nightline, had a hard time convincing ABC that he had an important story to tell, as they had seven embedded reporters feeding amazing scenes of jubilation back home. His story clashed directly with those reports, and he only got on air to share his experiences some 12 hours later.

Unilateral reporters in many ways remained partly dependent on the US military for security and supplies (CPJ, 2003). Some US and coalition units were accommodating and allowed unilaterals to join their convoys through dangerous regions (Wilson, 2003). It was often higher officers who objected to the presence of the unilaterals and in some cases ordered that they should be escorted back to the border, the pretext being that it was too dangerous for them to be there (CPJ, 2003). To scare unilaterals away from the battlefield, the death of ITN reporter Terry Lloyd and the disappearance of his crew – later established to be dead as well – were used as a "vulgar justification of censorship and control" (Wilson, 2003).

When the military refused to let unilateral journalists camp near their units, the reporters had to find a relatively safe place to spend the night, where they would not be attacked by pro-Saddam militia (Turnley, 2003). Carloads of unilateral journalists would "circle the wagons" at night by parking their cars together and as close as possible to the coalition's military camps.

There were several cases of non-embedded reporters being harassed and abused by the military (CPJ, 2003). On 25 March 2003, American troops captured two Portuguese and two Israeli reporters near Baghdad and accused them of being spies (Scemama, 2003). The Portuguese reporter José Castro was assaulted, and all four men were denied food and water for 48 hours. In a separate incident, *Christian Science Monitor* reporter Phillip Smucker was held at gunpoint by the US military after discussing the position of a US unit during a CNN interview (CPJ, 2003). Although the unit's position had previously been discussed in the media, Smucker was escorted out of Iraq and threatened with detainment when he re-entered the country a few days later.

Distressing accusations were made that especially the US military deliberately targeted the media (FAIR, 2003; Fisk, 2003; Reporters Without Borders, 2003; Schechter, 2005). These accusations were based on the fact that during the *Operation Iraqi Freedom* phase

of the war, 12 media employees were killed, eight of whom were not embedded with the military (AFP, 2005; Reporters Without Borders, 2006: 11,13). Of these eight, six were killed by the US military (CPJ, 2003). They were Terry Lloyd, Fred Nérac and Hussein Othman, all three from ITN, who died when their vehicle came under fire from US marines; Tareq Ayyoub, who died when a US missile struck the *Al Jazeera* bureau in Baghdad, and José Couso (Agence France Presse) and Taras Protsyuk (Reuters), who were killed when a US tank fired a shell into Baghdad's Palestine Hotel where foreign reporters stayed during the early stages of the war (CPJ, 2003). The number of reporters killed made it the deadliest war for journalists ever (Wiltenburg, 2003).

Schoonakker (2006), on the other hand, did not feel that the military went out of their way to make life difficult for him.

The Americans behaved like they had nothing to hide, and as soon as I could satisfy them that I was a journalist, they were always co-operative. Getting to that point could be tricky, though. They kept their firearms pointed at you, fingers on the trigger, while you tried to explain and demonstrate. One night I came within a split second of being shot at a roadblock, when my driver panicked and reached under the dashboard for his passport. The nervous soldier (about 18, 19) thought my driver was reaching for a car bomb switch. The only reason he did not open fire was because I called him "dude", as in "Hey, dude, take it easy", when he lifted up his rifle to start shooting. I don't think the American authorities cared too much whether you were embedded or not.

Contrary to the generally well-behaved embedded journalists, who often surprised unit commanders by knowing the ground rules better than they did themselves (Wright, 2004b:IV-16), unilaterals were accused of recklessness and inaccurate reporting (Sperry, 2003). Major General James N. Mattis (quoted by Sperry, 2003), Commanding General of the 1st Marine Division, accused unilaterals of routinely breaching security, and especially condemned their cutting into convoys and getting in between enemy and friendly units during fire-fights, in one instance resulting in the death and injuries of the unilateral reporters. This referred to the incident where US marines shot at and killed Terry Lloyd and two members of his crew, while the fourth was wounded.

Unilateral reporters also had a different opinion of when the war ended. Because he knew what happened once the tanks passed through a town or village, Donvan (2003) felt that as a unilateral reporter he was much more aware that military operations not only continued, but that fighting actually increased after Saddam's statue fell in Al Firdos Square, while most embeds – and consequently the American public – were under the impression that the war ended then, "and everybody went home". Many ground commanders had the same objection, as most of the embeds left their units after the fall of Baghdad, when it became safer to move freely throughout Iraq and many news organisations established their own bureaus in Baghdad (Wright, 2004b:S-6). The commanders felt that by leaving the units, reporters missed many important incidents during the transition to the Stability and Support-Operations (SASO) phase of the war.

Afterwards, the media and the military agreed that the Embedded Media Program was successful (Wright, 2004b:S-9). The relationship between the two traditionally hostile institutions improved and many enduring reservations about one another was laid to rest. A protracted period of close interaction and shared hardship during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* resulted in relationships that might last for many years to come – "when young commanders become senior commanders and reporters become producers, editors, and bureau chiefs" (Wright, 2004b:S-9).

Schoonakker (2006) summarised the advantages and disadvantages of the Embedded Media Program as follows:

Access to information is the prize but being led astray is the risk. It's like, if you want to dance to the music you will need a partner ... Ever since Vietnam, the US military has learnt how to deal with the media far more intelligently (in terms of achieving their goals) than the media have learnt how to deal with the military. Journalism is a flawed and superficial business. Overall, the coverage of the Iraq war reminds me of something someone once said about bribing journalists: why pay them when you see what you can make them do for free?

With such a concerted effort to "occupy the media territory" as one would a piece of foreign land, the crucial question remains: what was reported by the South African media in general and how was it reported? How effective was the US military as primary gatekeepers? Did the reports generated under the system of embedding serve the American agenda? Were the stories framed to show the USA, Bush and the military as the heroes rescuing the world, or what were the salient points?

6.4 Discussion

In the previous chapter it became clear that over time, relationship between the US military and the media in times of war revealed a clear oscillating pattern (Figure 24, p.117). Only during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* did this pattern change, when there was a positive relationship between one segment of the media and the US military, but a negative relationship between another segment of the media and the US military. Clearly, forces different to those present during other wars were in action during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*.

Referring to Figure 24 (p.117) it is clear that something drastic and quite new happened during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*: right from the onset, the new US media policies caused a split in the media opinion: some were very positive about the policies and decided to participate, others saw it as a way to control the press, and declined the opportunity to be embedded with the military. There were also media organisations that agreed with the new policies, but did not participate, or used both embedded and unilateral reporters. Ultimately, when war coverage and the relationship between the media and the military were evaluated after the initial offensive stage of the war, there were two clear points of view:

- **embedded** reporters generally regarded the relationship with the military in a positive light, and were in turn overwhelmingly praised by the military.

- **unilateral** reporters mostly regarded the relationship with the military as negative, and were strongly criticised by the military.

The unusual pattern in the relationship between the media and the US military shows an indisputable correlation with whether or not the reporters acted within the scope of the military media policy. It is therefore clear that the military's novel policies during *Operation Iraqi Freedom* had a positive impact on the relationship with the segment of the media that complied with the rules, namely the embedded reporters, while the relationship with the rest of the reporters, the unilaterals, remained strained and in some cases even hostile.

Based on the historical pattern depicted in Figure 24 (p.117) it is possible to make the assumption that the positive attitude of the military towards the embedded media is a reaction to positive coverage, while the military's negative attitude towards unilateral reporters is a reaction to unfavourable coverage. This would be an indication that on the level of the war correspondent, at least where these reporters are under the control of the military, the policy that was crafted to "tell the American story" as Rumsfeld (2003a) suggested, was an unqualified success.

6.5 Summary

This chapter looked deeper into the US policies that resulted from the historically capricious relationship between the media and the US military, and how it developed during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. The US government's strategic communication network and the Department of Defense's media policies were examined, as were the opinions and experiences of the media policies of both embedded and unilateral reporters.

* * * * *

In Chapter 7 news reports pertaining to *Operation Iraqi Freedom* published by four leading South African newspapers, as well as transcripts of public addresses and news briefings by prominent US government officials are analysed in terms of gatekeeping, framing and agendasetting, using an adapted version of Propp's elements of a fairy tale as a standard.

Chapter 7

Content analysis

7.1 Introduction

The preceding chapters aimed to show how war correspondence has evolved as a separate news genre, the flux in the relationship between the US military and the media in times of war through the years, and ultimately how the US media policies manifested during Gulf War II. The question, however, remains: where did war reports that were published in South Africa originate, what were the content of these reports, and whether and to what extent did the content and slant of these stories agree with the sources?

In order to find an answer, all relevant news reports pertaining to *Operation Iraqi Freedom* published by four leading South African newspapers, namely the English and Afrikaans Sunday newspapers *Sunday Times* and *Rapport*, as well as the English and Afrikaans daily newspapers *The Star* and *Die Burger* are analysed. Also, all relevant transcripts of public addresses and news briefings by White House and Pentagon officials, namely President George W. Bush and White House spokesman Ari Fleischer, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Victoria Clarke are analysed. These transcripts were included in the study to compare the content and slant of the war message at its source with war reports that were ultimately published by the South African newspapers. All reports and transcripts are analysed in terms of gatekeeping, framing and agendasetting.

7.2 Analysis

7.2.1 Gatekeeping

In 1991, Shoemaker reviewed and combined various gatekeeping theories to form one comprehensive model (Shoemaker, 1991:74-76). The model accommodated the various nodes of gatekeeping, such as news agencies, newspapers and broadcasting corporations, where reports were selected and adjusted before being sent down the news channel to the next node. The model acknowledged the effect of correspondents' personalities and personal history, as well as that of their employers, on their news judgements. According to this model news messages are repeatedly subjected to similar decisions until it finally reaches the audience.

Reports about *Operation Iraqi Freedom* published in the South African newspapers can generally be divided into three categories: they either came from news agencies, or were compiled by an own reporter from different combinations of agency reports, other media reports and own reports, or were completely written by the newspaper's own reporters (Figure 26, next page).

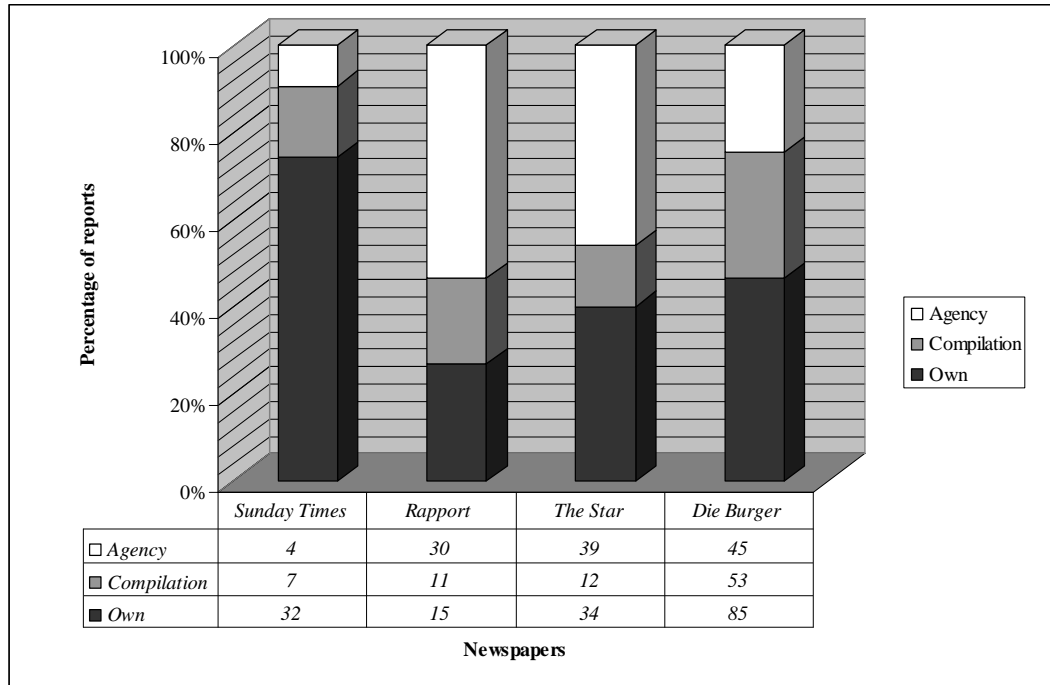


Figure 26. The frequency of agency, compiled and own reports published by the four South African newspapers based on the relative percentages of the total number of reports analysed in each separate newspaper.

Sunday Times used very few agency reports and compilations, but the dispatches of its "own" reporter in Iraq greatly influenced its coverage. More than half of the reports in *Rapport* came from news agencies, while approximately an even number of the rest came from "own" sources or were compilations. Just under half of the reports in *The Star* were obtained from news agencies. It used many "own" reports, which included syndicated material from its sister publications in the Independent Group. *Die Burger*, on the other hand, produced a significant number of "own" reports, which they augmented with reports written and compiled by their own reporters based entirely on various external sources, and relatively few agency stories.

7.2.1.1 News agency reports

The four newspapers relied to varying degrees on news agency reports, which were predominantly hard news stories (Figure 26). In the *Sunday Times*, only 4 of the 43 analysed reports came from news agencies, and all four originated from Sapa-AFP (Figure 27, next page). About half of the 30 news agency reports published by *Rapport* were compilations of information supplied by more than one agency. *The Star* published almost an equal number of Reuters and Sapa-AP reports, but none from Sapa *per se*. By far the most of *Die Burger's* 45 agency reports also came from Reuters and Sapa-AFP.

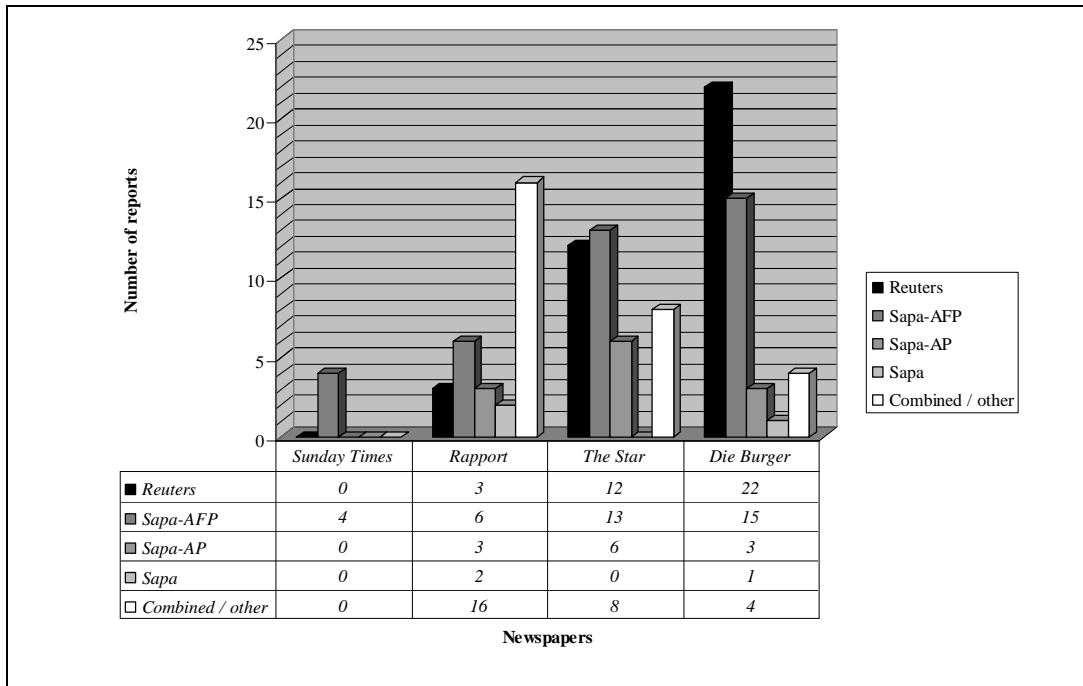


Figure 27. The number of reports from the different news agencies that were published in each of the four South African newspapers.

An analysis of the sources quoted in the news agency reports published by the four newspapers indicated that all the agencies showed a distinct preference for US sources (Table 8, next page). Bush, Rumsfeld, Powell, Franks and Brooks, as well as US officials, the US military, US marines, US analysts, the US government, US experts, the US ambassador, and US media are freely referred to by all five news agency groups.

On the Iraqi side, Saddam was quoted once. *The Star* (2003d) reported on 21 March:

After the strike, Saddam appeared on Iraqi TV, calling on his people to "go draw your swords" and condemning the US and Britain for "shameful crimes against Iraq and humanity. ... Iraq will be victorious and with Iraq, our nation and humanity will triumph and evil will be defeated," Saddam said.

Iraqi officials were quoted just as often as pro-American Israeli and Kuwaiti officials, who were considerably less frequently quoted than Americans. Not once was an Iraqi General, a member of the Iraq Royal Guard, or an Iraqi analyst quoted.

The frequency that US sources were quoted in reports published in South Africa compared to the frequency that Iraqi sources were quoted, is an indication that the American government succeeded in their quest to "occupy the media territory" (Rendon, quoted by Urrutia-Varhall, 2002), yet this fact does not give an indication of whether they succeeded in occupying this territory to their advantage, in other words, whether the coverage was supportive of the American view of the war.

Table 8. News sources that were cited by the different news agencies, in no specific order, as they were published in the four newspapers.

| | <i>Sunday Times</i> | <i>Rapport</i> | <i>The Star</i> | <i>Die Burger</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Reuters | | Franks, Iraqi official | Kuwaiti official, Centcom, Rumsfeld, UK military, Bush, Brooks, civilians, Blair, "reports", US commanders, Franks, Iraqi officials, US and UK officials. | Middle East media, Rumsfeld, bankers, military analysts, Arab leaders, Putin, civilians, Brooks, US commanders |
| Sapa-AFP | Pentagon, Centcom, US government, US marines | Clinton, US officials, US military, UK military, art experts | Civilians, Franks, Pope, Iraqi officials, Red Cross, BBC, Israeli military official, US embassy personnel, Chalabi | Catholic press, Bush, Kuwaiti official, Washington Post, Russian minister, Blair, South Korean President, civilians, Web media, US experts, World Bank, Powel, Rumsfeld, Iraqi Sheik, civilians |
| Sapa-AP | | Centcom, civilian, Rumsfeld, marines | Israeli official, US officials, Israeli's, Palestinians, US & UK commanders, Bush, Blair | US analysts, Kofi Anan, Centcom, US ambassador, US officials |
| Sapa | | SA government, Pentagon | | Middle East media |
| Other agencies, combinations | | US media, Centcom, Rumsfeld, Fox News, US officials, art experts, US military analysts, intelligence sources | US officials, Bush, Centcom, marines, reporters, US/UK military, Kuwaiti official, Saddam Iraqi official | UK officer, civilian, environmental expert, BBC reporter |

7.2.1.2 Compilations

The compilations printed by the newspapers were in essence an identified reporter's own take on agency news, which in turn consisted mostly of hard news. An example of this is a report by *Die Burger's* Sarel van der Walt (2003:2) in which he quoted Agence France Presse, CNN, the paper's Washington correspondent Deon Lamprecht, Reuters and British Defense Minister Geoff Hoon. *Sunday Times* used more compilations than agency reports, but both were largely outnumbered by its own reports. Both *Rapport* and *The Star* published relatively few compilations, but *Die Burger* extensively used this type of report in lieu of "own" reports.

7.2.1.3 Own reports

Four broad categories of own reports were identified, namely news, interviews, opinion pieces and personal experiences (Figure 28).

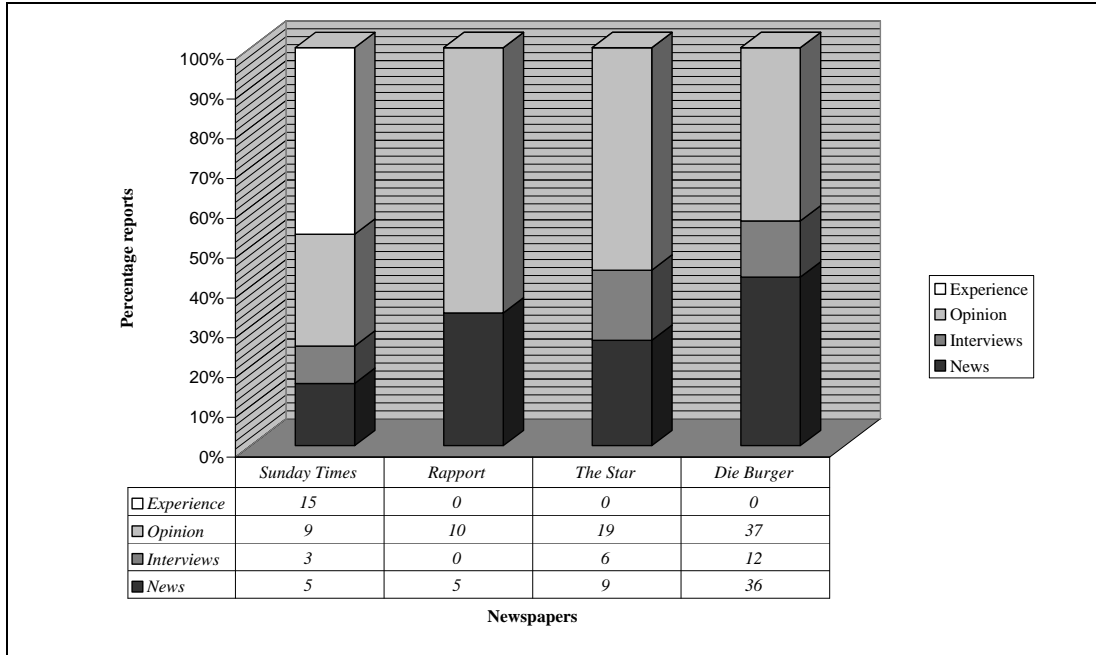


Figure 28. The frequency of news, interviews, opinion pieces and personal experiences occurring in the "own" reports of each newspaper investigated, expressed as relative percentages of the total number of "own" reports in each separate newspaper.

- News referred to "hard news": what happened, where it happened, how many were killed, what did Bush say?
- Interviews included conversations between a reporter and a news subject, such as a minister, a human shield or military expert.
- Opinion pieces were written especially by editors and expert commentators from universities, research institutes, humanitarian organisations, and the like.
- Personal experiences involved reports written by a reporter while physically present in Iraq during the war, which applied only to Bonny Schoonakker of the *Sunday Times*.

Only the *Sunday Times* could publish an "own" reporter's experiences, but it also printed a large number of opinion pieces. *Rapport* did not publish any interviews, but printed more opinion pieces than news stories. *The Star* mainly printed opinion pieces, while *Die Burger* used almost an equal number of news reports and opinion pieces.

The case of Bonny Schoonakker as an "own" reporter in Iraq is interesting in terms of Shoemaker's model (1991). The first part of Shoemaker's model deals with the personal aspects that impact on decisions made by a reporter: his/her personality, personal history, circumstances, etc.

Here Schoonakker (2006) serves as an example: because of his personality and personal circumstances he applied when the *Sunday Times* indicated that they wanted to send somebody to Iraq. His employer was prepared to pay the equivalent of only about US \$7 000 for his stay of 2 months – about the same amount that would have been paid if he "went to Australia on a wine-tasting freebee" – which meant that he was not able to hire bodyguards or an armoured vehicle, as other correspondents had. This effectively prevented him from going where he had wanted to. *Sunday Times* also told him that as he had "volunteered" to go, he would have been held partially responsible should anything happen to him.

These internal and external variables determined that he went to Iraq, stayed in Baghdad, and reported only on matters that would not physically endanger him. The impact of these gatekeeping choices was that "own" reports dominated the *Sunday Times'* coverage. Schoonakker contributed 15 of the 19 "own" reports on *Operation Iraqi Freedom* that were published by the paper. This demonstrated the effect of a single reporter in the field on the profile of the newspaper's news sources.

These reports significantly impacted on the number of gates information had to pass through, but nevertheless, *Sunday Times* itself "gatekept" Schoonakker's contribution to such an extent that he told the researcher in an interview:

I was dismayed by the manner in which some of my stories were presented. To this day, I cannot bear to look at those back copies. My complaints and criticisms in this regard were not taken seriously, and sometimes with irritation. Ultimately, this led to a situation in which it became impossible for me to continue working at the Sunday Times (Schoonakker, 2006).

7.2.2 Agendasetting

According to McCombs (2000) agendasetting is not about a premeditated story or political frame "concocted" and "relentlessly pursued" by the media, but rather about the result of an infinite number of gatekeeping decisions over time.

He distinguished between two levels of agendasetting, namely the object agenda (first level) and the attribute agenda (second level). This refers to the characteristics of the object.

When Gulf War II news reports were studied with McComb's model of first and second level agendasetting in mind, it is obvious that the first level of agendasetting was greatly determined by the US government and the Pentagon, which flooded the media with daily briefings from important officials, added to the wall-to-wall coverage by a bevy of reporters who more often than not filled the media space with useless text and images. The US government also decided who could go where and report on which aspects of the war. The narrative that they promoted was one where Saddam was a treacherous villain who stockpiled weapons of mass destruction intended to destroy the American society, and also, that he was a despot who did not hesitate to kill his own people, therefore the heroic United States, the leader of the world, strong and powerful with the indisputable right to force its values upon the rest of the world, had to intervene (Figure 29, next page).

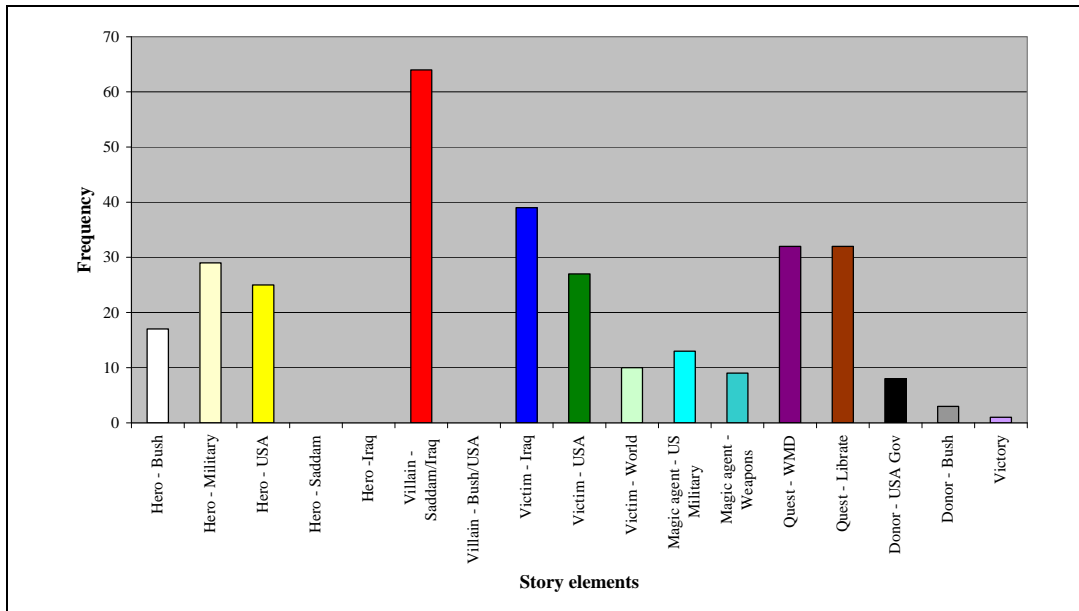


Figure 29. The frequency of references made in 70 speeches and news briefings by the selected US government officials to different identified fairytale elements, expressed as a relative percentage of the total number of references (309).

Sunday Times relied mostly on their own reporters and South African commentators for stories on the war, and of these almost half came from the pen of Bonny Schoonakker (Figure 26, p.136).

While the war itself represented the first level of agendasetting, it was the characteristics attributed to Saddam and his government in Schoonakker's coverage that represented the second level of agendasetting. It is significant that when Schoonakker's reports were removed from the equation, *Sunday Times'* second level agenda swayed towards a very critical view of Bush and his government (Figure 30, next page).

Rapport used few "own" reports and the largely supportive coverage of the American point of view would suggest that they were "closer" to the source of the information in the channel of news flow. However, such an assumption is belied by the fact that *Rapport* used material from the same agencies as *Sunday Times*, *The Star* and *Die Burger* did, and furthermore, that judging by the reports published by the newspapers, all the news agencies promoted an agenda that was very critical of the US (Figure 31, next page). The slant of the reports published by *Rapport* is obviously the result of an internal policy, as it could not logically be traced back through the news agencies to the original sources.

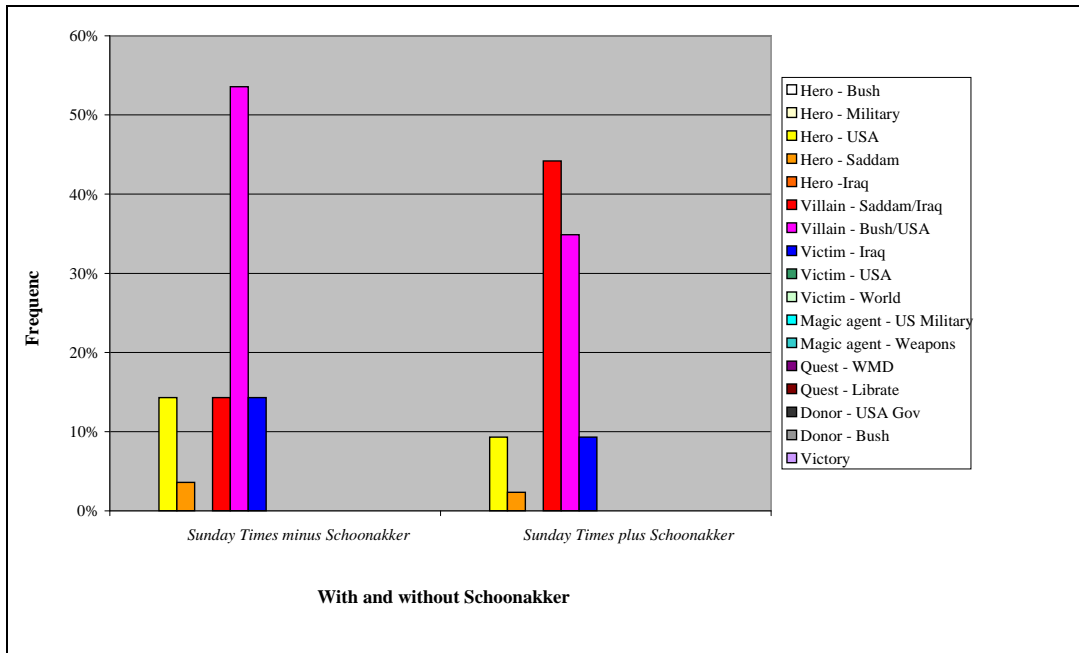


Figure 30. The frequency that the 17 story elements occurred in the Sunday Times calculated without and with reports by Schoonakker, expressed as a relative percentage of the total coverage by the newspaper.

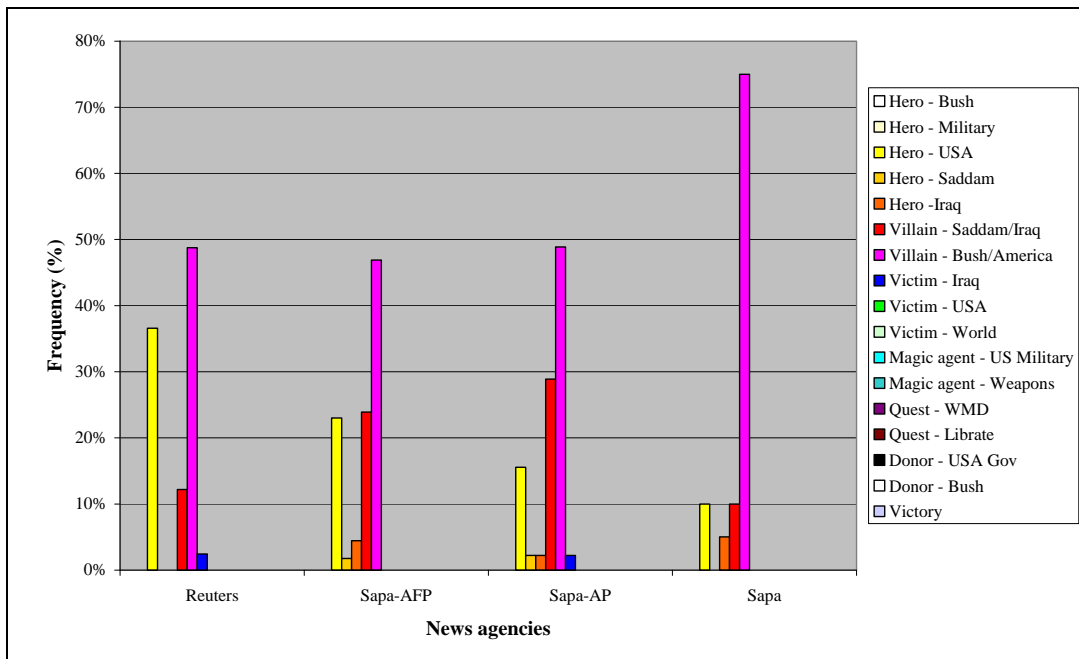


Figure 31. The frequency of references to 17 identified story elements in stories by the four main news agency groups that were published in the newspapers examined, expressed as a relative percentage of all the references made by each agency.

The agendas set by *The Star* and *Die Burger* were very similar, with a tendency to portray the US as strong, but dead wrong (Figure 32).

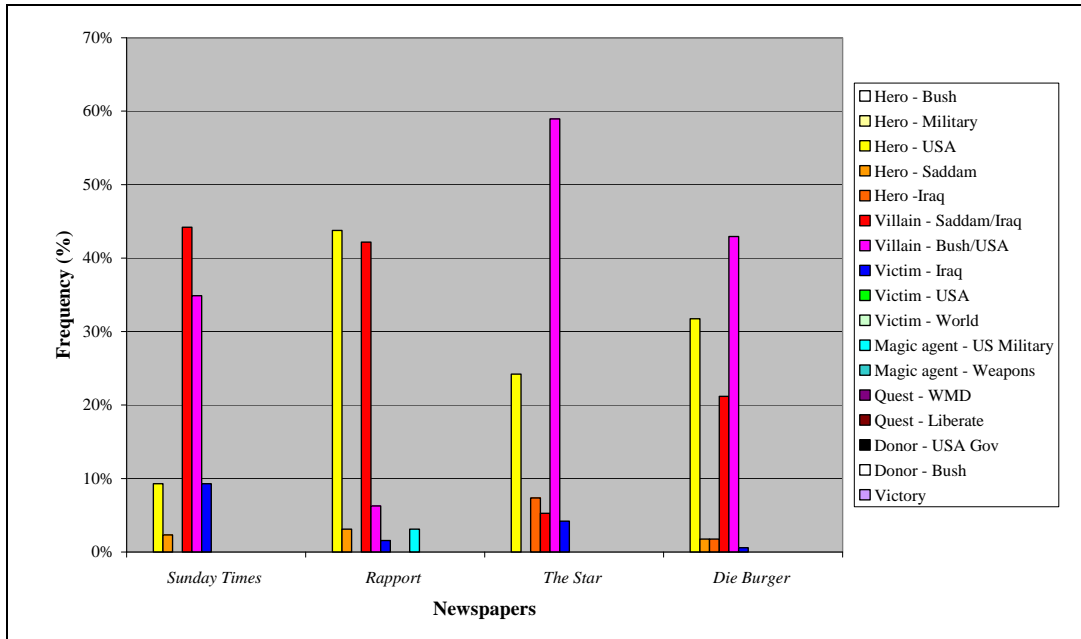


Figure 32. The frequency of references to 17 identified story elements in stories by the four newspapers examined, expressed as a relative percentage of all the references made by in each newspaper.

The Star hardly paid any attention to Saddam's misdemeanours but were overall extremely critical of the US and Bush. In a scathing editorial column called *US double standards*, *The Star* (2003e) writes:

The US has shown little respect for multilateralism. It has eschewed international obligations such as the Kyoto treaty and has shunned the International Criminal Court. ... But perhaps even more importantly, the war on Iraq is a violation of international law. ... To add insult to injury, the US also fired cruise missiles on areas in Iraq populated by civilians, including women and children. ... Americans are known for their double standards - do as we say and not as we do. ... The US has a poor record of observing rules that it wants others to conform to.

Die Burger, while also very critical of American actions and decisions by for example referring to the US belief that "might is right" (*Die Burger*, 2003c:8), tended to offer a better balance between the salience of both Saddam's and Bush's negative attributes, but also emphasised the American hegemony and role as the world's only remaining super-power.

The US government's policy of "occupying the media terrain" bore fruit in cases where the press relied mostly on reports generated under the influence of the US government press machine, but from the South African perspective their machinations in most cases failed miserably. While they might have managed to occupy the media terrain, they were not celebrated as the heroes, but rather as the treacherous villains in the tale.

7.2.3 Framing

A preliminary study of various media sources indicated that Gulf War II was presented to the world as a fairytale, or a story. The "picture" that was created in the public's head, to quote Lippmann (1922), was that of a hero being sent out on a quest to save a victim from an evil villain.

The White House and Pentagon made it clear that they planned to get their side of the war story told. Various sources indicate that the US military had knowledge of the value of storytelling as a technique of public influence. Bennett (2001), Deputy Chief Information Officer of the US Department of the Navy, wrote:

Conveying information in a story provides a rich context, remaining in the conscious memory longer and creating more memory traces than information not in context. Therefore a story is more likely to be acted upon than normal means of communications.

According to the US Air Force's Air University web site (Air University, n.d.):

Another way of creating change and sharing understanding is through the effective use of the time-honoured process of storytelling. Storytelling is a valuable tool in helping to build a common understanding of our current situation in anticipating possible futures and preparing to act on those possible futures. Stories tap into a common consciousness that is natural to all human communities. Repetition of universal story forms carries a subliminal message, a sub-text that can help convey a high level of complex meaning. Since common values enable consistent action, "Story in this guise creates a heuristic framework to allow decision-making in conditions of uncertainty."

The use of the story frame in times of war has been done before: NATO spokesman Jamie Shea attributed the success of his media campaign in Kosovo to his giving the public a daily "soap opera" to watch, frequently reminding them who the hero and who the villain was (Berlin Online, 2000). The idea of winning over the public by framing news as a story is also advocated by US military scholars Casebeer & Russell (2005).

It is therefore not unthinkable that the idea of framing the war as a "story" might have originated somewhere in the US government's complex strategic communication network (see Figure 25, p.121).

Without access to official documents confirming it, it was impossible to prove that the US government had the intent of specifically using a story frame to sell the war to the American and the global public, but by examining transcripts of speeches and news

briefings by US government officials, it was possible to determine whether or not elements of Vladimir Propp's (1968) fairytale analysis were present, and if so, how frequently. This served as a control against which the analyses of the South African newspapers and news agency reports could be measured.

7.2.3.1 US government frames

The analysis of the US government's transcripts showed that most of the elements identified by Propp were present (see Table 7, p.70), but that especially one dominated: Villain – Saddam/Iraq (Figure 29, p.141).

Obviously absent was the reference Villain – Bush/America. Other elements that featured strongly were the military as the hero, Iraqis as the victims and the quests to find the weapons of mass destruction and to liberate the Iraqi nation.

The government communications were subsequently deconstructed to portray the contributions by each of the officials (Figure 33). The frequency that a particular story element occurred during media appearances by Bush, Fleischer, Rumsfeld and Clarke were expressed as a percentage of the total number of times that the fairytale elements were mentioned by a specific individual.

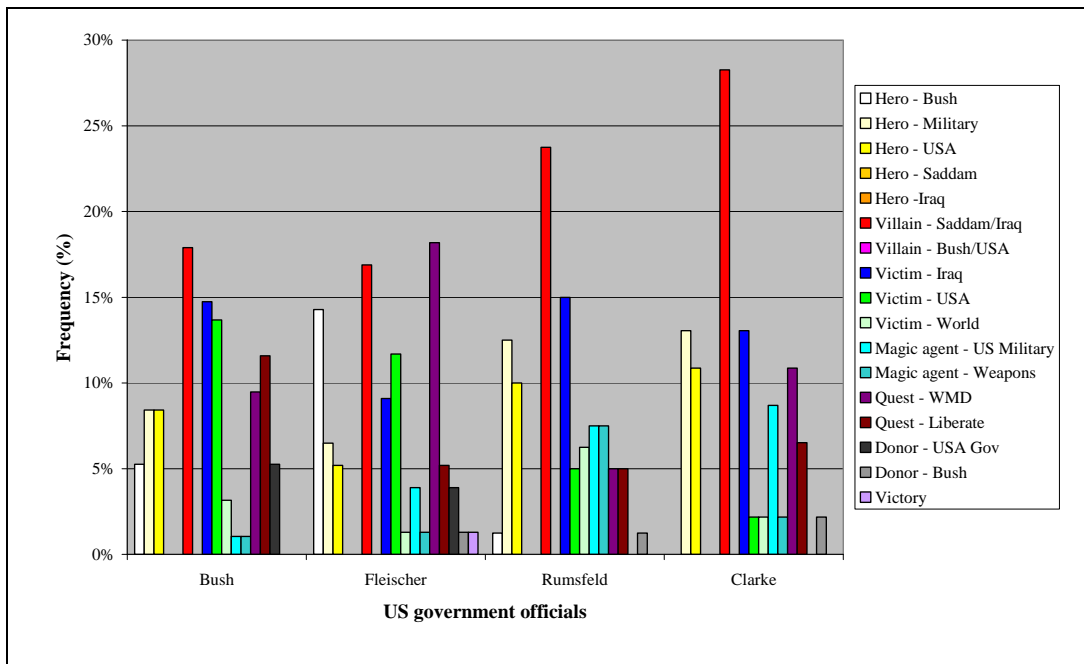


Figure 33. The frequency of references made to 17 identified story elements made in speeches and news briefings by White House officials Bush and Fleischer, and by Pentagon officials Rumsfeld and Clarke, expressed as a relative percentage of the total number of references made by each official.

The strongest story emerging from the Bush transcripts was that Iraqi and American victims had to be liberated from the villain Saddam. Rumsfeld told the same story: that the heroic US military/Americans had to save the Iraqi victims from Saddam and his villainous regime. Of the four officials, Rumsfeld put the strongest emphasis on the role of the magic agent, which, considering his position as Secretary of Defense, makes perfect sense. Clarke told the same story, but gave the most prominence to Saddam as the villain and also stressed the quest to find weapons of mass destruction. Interestingly, Fleischer strongly focused on Bush as the hero, Saddam as the villain, the American people as the victim, and the importance of finding the weapons of mass destruction. His message offered by far the strongest incentive for the American people to go to war.

7.2.3.2 News agency frames

These messages were only partially assimilated by the news agencies (Figure 31, p.142). All the reports published in the four South African newspapers that were clearly attributable to Reuters, Sapa-AFP, Sapa-AP or Sapa were analysed for the presence of the story elements evident in the government transcripts.

It was found that only the most basic of these elements were retained, namely the hero, the villain and the victim, with the victim generally receiving very little attention.

The result is an interesting triptych featuring Hero – USA, Villain – Saddam and overwhelmingly, Villain – Bush/USA. All the news agencies most strongly emphasised Villain – USA, but in the Sapa reports this aspect is the most evident of all. In fact, Sapa hardly reported on anything *but* the negative aspects of the American conduct.

The score for Reuters, Sapa-AFP and Sapa-AP on this aspect was very similar, but without access to the original reports from Agence France Presse and Associated Press it is not possible to comment on the effect, if any, that Sapa and the newspapers themselves had on the contents of the Sapa-AFP and Sapa-AP reports. Reuters commented positively on the strength and leadership of the USA, while Sapa-AP frequently referred to the undesirable characteristics of Saddam. Sapa-AFP mentioned the heroic properties of the USA almost as often as the villainous characteristics and deeds of Saddam and his government.

7.2.3.3 Newspaper frames

As in the news agency reports, the total analysis of the *Sunday Times*, *Rapport*, *The Star* and *Die Burger* also found significant emphasis on Hero – USA, Villain – Saddam/Iraq, and Villain – Bush/USA (Figure 32, p. 143). In the newspaper reports, Iraq as the victim, but also Saddam as the hero, emerged more strongly than in the news agency reports. Notable in this figure is the way *Rapport's* coverage differed from that of the other three newspapers in terms of its apparent support to Bush and the USA and its criticism of Saddam. Reports from both Sapa-AFP and Sapa-AP contained positive comments about Saddam, for instance that he was alive and well and urging Iraqis to fight to the last, promising them victory over the Americans (Sapa-AFP, 2003).

The most striking feature of Figure 32 (p. 143) is the dominance of *The Star's* negative reporting on Bush and the USA, with a much smaller but still considerable number of reports dealing with the positive aspects of the United States, such as its power and

unquestioned dominance. Next to *The Star*, *Die Burger* offered the most criticism against Bush and the US, but at the same time also reported positively about the country's hegemonic international status. Conversely, *Die Burger* was much more critical of Saddam than *The Star*. *Rapport's* analysis indicated that it strongly agreed with Bush and the USA, which it framed as very much the heroes, and that it just as strongly condemned Saddam and his government as the villains. *Rapport* published the view that

The American president will maintain world peace in the future ... We should embrace the new world order (Roodt, 2003 - translated).

The *Sunday Times* proved to be the harshest critic of Saddam and his government, a position which is juxtaposed to Bush and the USA as the villain, with negative coverage of the Iraqis dominating. However, it is important to remember that Bonny Schoonakker, the newspaper's reporter in Iraq, contributed overwhelmingly to this emphasis on the negative aspects of the Iraqi government. In his "War Diaries", Schoonakker mercilessly criticised all aspects of the Iraqi leadership. Of the 15 articles he wrote, 13 dealt with the negative aspects of the life under Saddam and his government. The other two dealt with his frustration with not being able to watch a cricket match, and his final departure from the city – both reports are quite neutral in terms of the story frame. When Schoonakker's views were removed from the equation (Figure 30, p. 142), the *Sunday Times* produced an image somewhat similar to that of *The Star* (Figure 32, p.143), albeit without the emphasis on Hero – Bush.

7.2.3.4 A comparison of newspapers

In a multi-cultural society such as South Africa it is reasonable to wonder whether the frames presented by each newspaper might not in some way be connected to its historical and cultural background.

Sunday Times was first published in 1906 Sir Abe Bailey (Times Media Limited, 1998; IMC, 2004). Before 1994 the English newspaper market was dominated by Anglo American Corporation, which controlled both Times Media Limited and Argus Newspapers – not because of its investment value, but because owner Harry Oppenheimer accumulated newspaper shares in the 1970s to prevent Louis Luyt from acquiring the newspapers on behalf of the National Party (*Business Times*, 1996). In 1996, Anglo American's Omni Media Corporation sold TML, now known as Johnnic Publishing, to the National Empowerment Consortium, a coalition of black interest groups (IMC, 2004).

Rapport was at the time of the study the only Afrikaans Sunday newspaper in South Africa and belongs to the Naspers group (*Rapport*, 2000). The newspaper was founded in 1970 when the Nasionale Pers-owned Sunday newspaper *Die Beeld* merged with the two Perskor Sunday newspapers *Dagbreek* and *Landstem*. *Rapport* was owned on a 50/50 basis by Nasionale Pers and Perskor. In 1998 Caxton took over Perskor and with it, the company's 50 % share in *Rapport*. In 1999 Naspers bought out the Caxton share to become the sole owner of the newspaper, which together with Naspers's other Sunday publications, *City Press*, *Sunday Sun* and *Sondag* are published by RCP Media, a fully owned subsidiary of Media24.

The Star was first published on 6 January 1871 as *The Eastern Star* and was instrumental to the outbreak of the South African War of 1899 to 1902 due to its affiliation to Cecil John Rhodes and Barney Barnato, who were the majority shareholders in the press company that owned at least six newspapers across the country, including *The Cape Times*, *The Cape Argus*, and *The Star* (Staley, 1935; Marks, 2003; Smith, 1996:215). Tony O'Reilly, owner of Independent Newspapers and Media of Ireland, bought the Argus Newspapers in 1994 from the Anglo American Corporation subsidiary Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company (JCI), which was founded by Barney Barnato in 1889 (Brink, 2002). Because of this acquisition, the one of the biggest newspaper publishing companies on the African continent, now called Independent Newspapers, has its headquarters in Dublin, Ireland (Naughton, n.d.). Publishing 15 daily and weekly newspapers, Independent Newspapers in South Africa had a 60% share of English language newspaper readership and 64% of metropolitan newspaper readership at the time that Gulf War II took place (Caslon Analytics, 2003).

The original mission of *Die Burger*, established in 1915, was to serve as the official mouthpiece of the National Party in the Cape Province, which was founded in the previous year (Naspers, 2006; South African History Online. n.d.). Today, *Die Burger* is completely independent of any political party (Scholtz, 2007: personal communication). In 2000, Naspers consolidated all its printing concerns under the Media24 banner, which currently publishes more than 50 newspapers countrywide, which includes five daily and four Sunday newspapers, as well as 71 magazines (Media24 Magazines, 2007). The company dominates the South African book publishing market, and other divisions within Naspers also has ownership in pay-television, internet, telecommunications and educational concerns both locally and globally (IMC, 2004). It is therefore surprising, considering the size of the media group, that the company preferred not to send any reporters to Iraq during Gulf War II, but rather relied on agency reports (Harber, 2003). Despite the obvious advantages of having an own reporter on the spot, who knew the audience's preferences, the organisation regarded the investment in terms of resources required to send a reporter to the war zone as too high (Jeffries, quoted by Harber, 2003).

Judging from Figure 31 (p.142), there was very little correlation between the language groups the newspapers represented, and the positions they held during Gulf War II. In fact, the greatest similarity existed between the English and the Afrikaans dailies, namely *The Star* and *Die Burger*. The greatest dissimilarity in the expressed views was apparent between the two Afrikaans newspapers, *Die Burger* and *Rapport*. In terms of Propp's model *Die Burger* told a very simple story about two bad leaders with bad governments who were at war with one another, but the less savoury of the two was more powerful than the other. *Rapport's* story according to Propp's model was even simpler: There once was a very powerful hero who went to war against an awful villain. The end.

It was possible to strongly identify the presence of story elements in the public engagements by the selected US officials, and that a strong coherent "fairytale" emerged when their appearances were analysed separately as well as when they were considered as a single unit, namely the US government. Although the main story elements were

picked up by the different news agencies, the agencies presented a surprisingly uniform story of the US being very wrong, though very strong. The hegemony of the USA and the misdeeds of Saddam both received a lot of attention, but varied from one organisation to the next.

This was also true for the total war coverage by the different newspapers. They too generally focused on the same three aspects that were present in the agency reports, namely Hero – USA, Villain – Bush/USA, and Villain – Saddam/Iraq. However, the way these three elements were framed differed vastly from one newspaper to the next, with no apparent correlation between the newspapers' cultural and ideological background and the ultimate coverage of the war.

7.3 Discussion

There are undoubtedly many ways to approach a study such as this.

One way would be to base a study on an existing paradigm, for example the systems approach, which essentially promotes a view that every aspect of society attempts to reach a state of equilibrium (De Beer, 2003:9-11). Next, according to De Beer (2003:9) a particular theory, embedded in the paradigm, must be selected in order to "improv[e] our understanding of the process of mass communication", for example the functionalist approach to mass communication, as explained by Laswell (1948) and Wright (1960). Within this chosen paradigm and theory, a communication model would be a simplified reflection of reality (De Beer, 2003:10). Examples of models are gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing.

However, this approach is applicable to purely qualitative studies, where "one brings to the research process a certain world and life view", and not to the scientific method which strives for objectivity (De Beer, 2003:10).

Conversely, the study could have been approached from a purely quantitative perspective, such as the study on pre-*Operation Iraqi Freedom* coverage done by Park *et al.* (2004), who refer to Kracauer's (1993) definition of content analysis as "a qualitatively oriented methodology used to characterize and compare documents through standardized measurements and metrically defined units" (Kracauer, quoted by Park *et al.*, 2004:5).

Yet, as Park *et al.* rightfully note, this manner of content analysis can be criticised for its inability to reflect the "broader context within which media content is created" (2004:6). Moreover, counting sources or headlines or column-centimetres cannot portray the context or slant of news reports.

This might have been rectified by counting idea elements, as was done by Archetti (2007). But again, counting words does not provide for the "feel" of a report: too often, reports seem "neutral" in terms of language use and stated facts, but do in fact reflect an uncritical support of a certain point of view. The "meaning" of the reports disappears.

For example: In a report on US commander in Iraq General Tommy Franks's first public address since the start of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, *Rapport* (2003:2) quoted him saying

that the assault will be "characterised by shock, by surprise, by flexibility and by the employment of precise munitions on a scale never before seen, and by the application of overwhelming force". He was also quoted as saying that the campaign was especially designed to protect civilians. It is a fairly straight-forward report on an important US official's view of the war.

The "feel" or "meaning" of the report is that the US military is very powerful and "good" in the sense that they would do anything to protect Iraqi civilians: the US military is the hero. Interestingly, the report failed to mention references made by Franks to civilians who were in fact killed and maimed by the US assault, despite the carefully crafted war plan (Associated Press, 2003b). Such a reference would have cast the US military in a more negative light.

To allow for this "feel" or "meaning", the present study was done in line with the global news flow study led by Sreberny-Mohammadi in 1985, who recognised that *validity*, obtained through qualitative content analysis, "is often at the opposite pole" from *reliability*, obtained through quantitative content analysis (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985:11).

The present study sought to analyse news content objectively while still providing for context and meaning, which is normally lost in purely quantitative studies (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1985:11). Consequently, a combination of the two approaches was followed for the analysis of news reports on *Operation Iraqi Freedom*.

With this in mind, reports published in *The Star*, *Die Burger*, *Sunday Times* and *Rapport*, as well as transcripts of public speeches and press briefings by Bush, Fleischer, Rumsfeld and Clarke were categorised according to the story frame on the basis of a qualitative evaluation of the content. This categorisation made it possible to enumerate the content of the reports for a quantitative analysis. Thus being quantified, variations in the content of the news reports could be observed.

This combined approach to content analysis showed that for its coverage of *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, *Rapport*, *The Star* and *Die Burger* relied heavily on news agency reports, which were augmented with opinion pieces and commentary by experts. A small number of interviews with local personalities were also included. Few of the *Sunday Times* reports came from news agencies, as the newspaper rather published Bonny Schoonakker's personal accounts of his experiences in Iraq.

News agency reports were mostly based on American sources, such as government spokespeople, military commanders, soldiers, US analysts and several humanitarian organisations like the Red Cross. Few Iraqi sources were consulted and although a small number of the reports referred to *Al Jazeera*, they were by far the minority. If the newspapers' aim was to give a balanced view of the conflict, it would have been sensible to at least consult sources of a similar number and status from both sides of the conflict.

The agendas of both *Sunday Times* and *Rapport* showed a strong anti-Saddam slant, but there was a huge discrepancy between their portrayals of the USA: *Rapport* revealed a

significant pro-USA orientation while *Sunday Times* disclosed a comparably strong anti-USA leaning. Judging by the number of news agency reports used by *Rapport*, this might seem as if the differences originated from the news agency reports. This is not true, however. *The Star* and *Die Burger* used reports from the same news agencies as *Rapport*, yet the two dailies both followed an anti-Bush/USA line. *Rapport's* orientation apparently did not stem from reports that trickled down past the news agencies' gatekeepers.

Following the channel of news flow back through the agencies to sources in the White House and Pentagon, it became clear that the US government had touted itself as a hero that had to slay the villainous Saddam in order to liberate the Iraqis and to save the American people from Saddam's weapons of mass destruction. *Rapport* largely held this same view despite the fact that news agency reports in general held a strong anti-Bush/US view. It must therefore be inferred that *Rapport* used the agency material in a manner as to serve an internal agenda.

If, according to McCombs (1999, 2000), the agenda is a product of gatekeeping decisions over time, this must mean that the gatekeepers within *Rapport* operate very differently from those of *Sunday Times*.

The knee-jerk reaction would be to attribute it to the historical and cultural differences between the two newspapers, but when *Rapport* is compared to *Die Burger*, which is also an Afrikaans language newspaper and belongs to the same media group, there is a similar discrepancy.

Like *Rapport*, *Die Burger* emphasised the role of the USA as the hero, mostly focussing on how powerful it is, but unlike *Rapport*, the strongest line of thought in *Die Burger* was one of disagreement with Bush and the American policies.

The force behind *Rapport's* news agenda resides in one person, namely Z.B. du Toit, just like *Die Burger's* international news agenda is determined by Deputy Editor Leopold Scholtz. (Scholtz, 2007: personal communication). According to Scholtz, political expertise in these newspapers is "gossamer thin", resulting in the particularly strong effect of a single person on the gatekeeping process.

This is obviously a deficiency in South African journalism that needs to be addressed by journalism schools which should make the training of expert political reporters a priority.

Coverage by the two English newspapers *The Star* and *Sunday Times* were similar in that both promoted a critical view of Bush and his government – as did the Afrikaans *Die Burger* – while *Sunday Times* put emphasis on the Iraqi government's negative aspects. Coverage by *Die Burger* and *The Star*, the two daily newspapers, were very similar.

By studying transcripts of public addresses and press briefings by Bush, Fleischer, Rumsfeld and Clarke, it was easy to recognise numerous elements identified by Propp (1968) in his analysis of a hundred Russian fairytales (Figure 29, p.141).

All four officials consistently hyped Saddam's villainous nature as the biggest issue, but while Bush, Rumsfeld and Clarke emphasised the plight of the Iraqi people as the real problem, Fleischer repeatedly stressed weapons of mass destruction and the danger thereof to the American people. Speculation about the reasons behind his somewhat divergent take on the reasons for going to war with Iraq is beyond the scope of this study, but it must be noted that logically, Fleischer's view offered the best justification for engaging another sovereign government in combat.

The first and second level agendas as defined by McCombs (1999) were easily distinguishable by using a story frame based on Propp's fairytale analysis: The "objects" that were addressed by the newspapers, news agencies and US government officials were largely the same: the USA, its president, government, military and its people; Iraq, its president, government, military and citizens, and the reasons for going to war. The second level of agendasetting according to McCombs, the properties or characteristics of each of the above, were just as easily distinguishable, as is discussed previously.

This study showed that despite numerous theoretical models that may prove or disprove gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing as elements of the process of news flow, news content in itself is an extremely dynamic force. Because of the infinite number of variables impacting on news flow and the selection and presentation of news, the eventual agendas that had emerged from content of the studied news reports could not be predicted on the basis of gatekeeping.

The framing model that was used offered a surprisingly versatile tool to monitor not only framing, but also first and second level agendas.

7.4 Summary

In this chapter, an attempt was made to find an answer to the question of where reports on Gulf War II that were published by four leading South African newspapers originated, what the content of the reports was and whether and to what extent the South African reports mirrored the sources' point of view. For the latter purpose, transcripts of public speeches and press briefings of four prominent US government officials, namely Bush, Fleischer, Rumsfeld and Clarke, were analysed. The classical news models of gatekeeping, agendasetting and framing were used in the analyses, together with a story frame that served as a yardstick against which to measure the content of the reports.

The analyses indicated that although much of the coverage came from US sources, the reports generally did not mirror the US point of view. Neither the frequency (daily or weekly) of the newspapers, nor its language (English or Afrikaans) showed any with the way the war was depicted by the different newspapers.

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In the final chapter, a few concluding remarks will be made, together with suggestions for further studies that may flow from the present one. Recommendations will also be made to how the news media might approach similar international events in future.

Chapter 8

Conclusions and recommendations

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the answers to the initial research questions will be summarised, the implications of the study in terms of professional practice will be discussed, and recommendations will be made for further study. The chapter will be concluded with final remarks.

8.2 Concluding answers to research questions

The aim of this study was to test the hypothesis that the novel media policies implemented by the US during Gulf War II had resulted in pro-American coverage by South African newspapers. To achieve this aim, research questions were posed in Chapter 1.3. In terms of these questions, the following conclusions can be made:

- War reporting is one of the earliest forms of news and the genre was instrumental to the development of the mass media, as merchants needed information about wars in regions they traded with or their wares had to pass through. Initially in the US, war correspondents were soldiers who sent letters notices about the hostilities to newspapers, but they were replaced by reporters employed by the press.
- The relationship between the US and the media showed a definite oscillating pattern during wars prior to Gulf War II. These oscillations correspond with the slant of the war coverage, which in turn affected the US media policies. The general pattern that emerged was that when reporters operated outside the military's sphere of control, coverage of the wars cast the military in a negative light. This antagonises the US officialdom (government and military) and leads to a change in policy, restricting the media. Restrictive measures in turn alienate the media. New conflicts bring a reconsideration of media policies, which may result in an improvement of the relationship between the two institutions. This was the case in *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, which showed a distinct change in the media's reaction to the military, yet although the media's opinion was divided, the relationship with the military still followed the line of "positive coverage equals positive relations; negative coverage equals negative relations".
- Most of the news reports published in South Africa originated from US sources – hardly any Iraqi officials, officers or experts were consulted. South African newspapers greatly relied on news agency reports, except for the *Sunday Times*, which sent their own correspondent to Iraq. Coverage by Bonny Schoonakker greatly influenced the slant of the *Sunday Times'* coverage. The newspapers augmented their war coverage with reports compiled from various sources, including other media, as well as the views of local experts.
- The analysis of the transcripts of US government officials' speeches and news briefings shows that most of the fairytale elements identified for the story frame were present. By far the most salient element is the depiction of Saddam as the villain and the Iraqi people as the victims. This was not reflected in news agency reports, which overwhelmingly focused on Bush as the villain. The pattern varied in the South African newspapers: both *The Star* and *Die Burger* were critical of

Bush, while *Sunday Times* and *Rapport* were most critical of Saddam and/or Iraq. When Schoonakker's reports are removed from the *Sunday Times*, this newspaper was also most critical of Bush.

- There was clearly no distinction between the content and orientation of *Operation Iraqi Freedom* reports printed in Afrikaans and English newspapers. In fact, the closest resemblance in news agenda is between *The Star* and *Die Burger*.
- The daily newspapers *The Star* and *Die Burger* presented a similar profile in terms of content and orientation, which differed from that of the Sunday newspapers *Sunday Times* and *Rapport*.
- In terms of agendasetting, the war itself represented the first level, with the attributes assigned to the two leaders mostly constituting the second level. According to the US officials, Saddam was treacherous, cruel and a menace that had to be eliminated. The US represented leadership, heroism and an incontrovertible right to act as global policeman. All the news agencies promoted an agenda that was very critical of the US, but the newspaper agendas were divergent. The *Rapport* agenda emphasised the power of the US, while the *Sunday Times* focused on criticism of Saddam and the Iraqi government. However, when Schoonakker's reports are removed from the *Sunday Times* coverage, this newspaper's agenda corresponds to that of *The Star* and *Die Burger*, which portrayed the US as powerful, but abusing its power. *The Star* barely mentioned Saddam's misdeeds, while *Die Burger* was much more balanced in its criticism of both Bush and Saddam.

While it was expected that this study would show that the US message about the war in Iraq had largely found its way to South African newspapers, resulting in coverage leaning towards the American government's point of view, the news analyses indisputably showed that this was not the case. Even *Rapport*, which followed the most pro-American line of all the newspapers, arrived at their conclusion on its own and not because of the information that flowed to the newspaper from predominantly US sources and through various nodes of gatekeeping.

The conventional view of the theories of news flow and multiple gatekeeping create the expectation that the reports that were ultimately published by the South African newspapers would at least be a semblance of the way the sources presented the situation. According to the Propp based story frame the US officials strongly depicted the war as a fairytale, with either Bush or the US military as the heroes, but this version of the "story" did not reach the South African readership. Generally, Bush was at best portrayed as an anti-hero – a strong man with probably good intentions, but with a severely flawed take on reality. At worst, he was depicted as the villain of the story. Frankly, there is little evidence of the war being presented by South African newspapers as "a Hollywood action movie or a kid's video game" (Knightley, 2007).

This shows that gatekeeping, especially multiple gatekeeping, is not a linear process, where bundles of information that survive the impact of the gatekeepers flow from source to audience without serious integral changes. What transpired, was that while the basic content of message, the "who, what, where, when, why and how", might have survived throughout the news flow channel, the orientation, or "so what", could change at every gate, and often did. It would be interesting to examine this phenomenon by

tracing specific news items from source to its publication in various newspapers, and note the way the message changes along the way.

8.3 Recommendations

The story frame designed in this study proved to be a versatile tool for content analysis as well as an indicator of changes in the news flow process. To test the validity of the frame, the same analyses should be done using multiple coders and also a wider range of media. It might further be interesting to test the frame in coverage of the war in Iraq after the studied period to see whether the trends continued. It would also be expedient to test this frame in other situations of conflict. One that comes to mind is the perpetual hostility between Israel and the Palestinians, or locally, to analyse coverage of the building tension between the ANC and the South African Communist Party. Because of similarities between this study and the research programme undertaken by Robinson *et al.* (2006) – who is collaborating with Professor Steven Livingston from the George Washington University in the US – co-operation may be sought on an international level.

8.4 Final remarks

If this study proves anything, it is that newspapers are like living organisms with their own choices, preferences and views of the world. No newspaper that takes any pride in what it stands for, would allow itself to be force-fed with information from any source.

Each one of the newspapers that were studied presented the material in its own individualistic way. In the final analysis, the local media's ability to remain independent in thought and report – despite the concerted effort by the US government to manage the flow and content of reports about the war in Iraq to international audiences by acting as source, gatekeepers, agendas setters and framers of news content – is exemplary. Of course there are a multitude of external forces that exert pressure on the newspapers, but in a relatively small media community like South Africa, forces impacting on news coverage are fairly homogenous for all the publications: the media all function under the same laws, advertisers are similar and even if the target markets may be somewhat different in terms of language preference and culture, it had no impact on the way that the war was covered.

On a different level, this study managed to prove by quoting directly from the Department of Defense policy documents that there was indeed a carefully planned and executed strategy by the US government and Pentagon to use the news media as a "weapon" in their war against Iraq.

Considering that US sources abounded in reports while few Iraqi sources were quoted in any of the newspapers, the US succeeded in its mission to "occupy the media territory". However, while the US managed to fill the media space, in South Africa it was not filled in the way that the US probably would have preferred.

During *Operation Iraqi Freedom* there was a rigorous attempt by the US government and/or military to get the American story told by the global media. Consciously or subconsciously the media – from the reporters on the ground through to editors and publishers – must have been aware of the dangers of propaganda from either side of the

war and were thus prepared for it. However, the US media strategy in Iraq defied all conventional understanding of propaganda as a concept.

This argument is best made by Miller (2004:7):

To say that it is about total propaganda control is to force the English language into contortions that the term propaganda simply cannot handle. Information dominance is not about the success of propaganda in the conventional sense with which we are all familiar. It is not about all those phrases "winning hearts and minds", about truth being "the first casualty", about "media manipulation", about "opinion control", or about "information war". Or, to be more exact - it is about these things, but none of them can quite stretch to accommodate the integrated conception of media and communication encapsulated in the phrase information dominance.

The latter phrase, "information dominance", is key to understand what transpired through the US's "media program" and how news flowed to the world's media. One can safely conclude that "information dominance" by the US – or any other country or coalition – is a threat to global press freedom in the 21st century. Yet it is unseen, unheard-of and undebated. The gravity of this threat is illustrated by a US Department of Defense issue paper (Winters & Giffen, 1997) on information dominance which states:

think of dominance in terms of "having our way" - "Overmatch" over all operational possibilities ... When dominance occurs, nothing done, makes any difference. We have sufficient knowledge to stop anything we don't want to occur, or do anything we want to do.

Information dominance is obtained through strategic communication (see Chapter 5:103; Chapter 7.1:164-167; Figure 25:167), which for the global media – including South Africa – means that the US uses both overt and covert organisations to feed information supporting the US way of thinking and promoting US interests into the international news channel. Of course, this does not end with the news media, but includes other media as well, such as the internet (e.g. web logs or "blogs"), Hollywood films (e.g. *Top Gun*, *Black Hawk Down*, *Iron Man* and *Transformers*) and television series (e.g. "24" and "CSI"), many of which are created in full co-operation with the Pentagon (Alvarez, 2006; Havenstein, 2007; Kosa, 2007; Miles, 2007).

The Defense Science Board (2004b) recommended that strategic communication should be subcontracted to

*the commercial and academic sectors for a range of products and programs that communicate strategic themes and messages to appropriate target audiences. ... Examples of products would be a children's TV series (*Arabic Sesame Street*); video and interactive games; support for the distribution and production of selected foreign films; and Web communications including blogs, chat rooms, and electronic journals.*

Programs might include training and exchanging journalists; providing support for selected foreign television documentaries; maintaining databases of third-party validators and supporters for conferences; and designing and implementing country and regional campaigns to support themes and messages and delegitimize extremism and terrorism. Note that we expect the products to include entertainment. Strategic communication products must be embraced as part of daily life for the people with whom the United States wants to communicate. One way to do that is to include entertainment in the portfolio. It is not possible to capture the attention of individuals and achieve credibility in the days, weeks, or even months just before a crisis: audience share has to be achieved and sustained years in advance.

This is an extremely important point for media managers in South Africa and the rest of the international media community to take note of. Without anybody noticing, the global community is slowly and purposefully being indoctrinated to "think like Americans" in order to support US interests. Purely for the benefit of the US and its citizens, the world is being Americanised.

This prompts the question: Is Americanisation a bad thing?

That is a question each news and media institution and each non-American government should answer for themselves. One could safely say that if they would prefer to remain independent and to maintain a media free from wilful attempts to sway the content of their coverage in favour of a foreign regime, a serious attempt should be made to put systems in place to consciously monitor the origin and flow of media content for the timely detection and countering of any endeavour to dominate the global information network.

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APPENDIX I

Appendix I.1 Coding schedule

1. Newspaper

Sunday Times

Rapport

The Star

Die Burger

2. Date

Sunday Times: 23 March to 4 May 2003

Rapport: 23 March to 4 May 2003

The Star: 21 February to 2 May 2003

Die Burger: 21 February to 2 May 2003

3. Headline

Full headline

4. Author

Name of author plus affiliation where known

5. Own, compiled, agency or unknown

Own O

Compiled C

Agency A

Unknown ?

6. Sources of information

e.g. Bush
civilian, military spokesman
Red Cross spokesman, *Washington Post*

7. Slant

| | | |
|--|-------------|--------|
| + or – , <i>plus indication of actant:</i> | Bush | B |
| | USA | US |
| | US military | US mil |
| | Iraq | I |
| | Saddam | S |
| | Royal Guard | RG |

8. Story element

Hero

Villain

Victim

Magic agent

Quest

Donor

Victory

plus indication of actant (see point 7), e.g.

Hero B

Victim I

Magic agent US Mil

APPENDIX II

Interviews

Appendix II.1 Peter Arnett

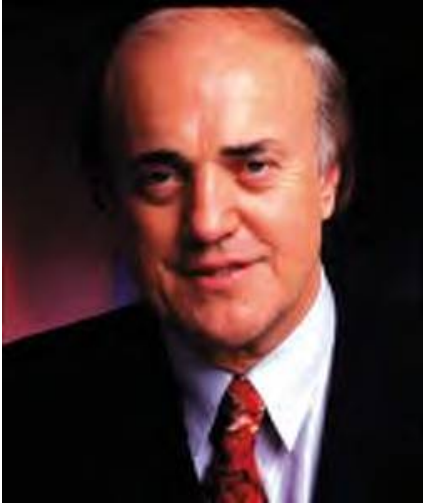


Photo: HWA, 2006

New Zealand-born journalist Peter Arnett has more than 40 years experience of reporting from 17 war zones globally (PBS, 2003; HWA, 2006). His Vietnam reportage earned him a Pulitzer Prize in 1966. In 1991 during Gulf War I he reported live from Baghdad, including an interview with President Saddam Hussein, for the fledgling Cable News Network company. For this, CNN was awarded both the Golden Cable ACE Award and George Foster Peabody Award. Arnett returned to Baghdad in 2003 to report on Gulf War II, but NBC, MSNBC and National Geographic severed their relationship with him after he criticised the US invasion of Iraq in an interview with the Iraqi state TV.

Arnett answered the questions (in bold) sent to him via e-mail:

From: PArnett348@aol.com

Sent: Thursday, December 01, 2005 1:27 AM

Vietnam

Apparently, the relationship between the military and the media initially was quite congenial. How were you and the other correspondents treated by the military (commanders and troops)?

At the beginning, the media in Vietnam benefited from the congenial relationship developed with officials in World War Two and the Korean War. In both those wars US media organizations cooperated with the government and the military because both wars were seen as "patriotic" and deserving of popular support. Censorship in those wars was not challenged by the media.

Also, most of the many hundreds of US reporters who would work in Vietnam had earlier served at least two years in the military prior to entering journalism, compulsory service being required for all American males in that era. This shared experience engendered an easy familiarity between the media and the soldiers at the basic level.

It is important to remember that unlike in Iraq where war began with the "shock and awe" bombardments of Baghdad, the US basically "slid" into Vietnam over several years with actions that were often clandestine. Only by 1962 did America publicly tip its hand with the commitment of several thousand military "advisers". These grew in number until 1965 when the first of half a million regular ground troops were committed to battle and the main war began. The troop numbers began decreasing in 1969, and by 1973 the last of US ground forces were pulled out, leaving the field back to a small number of advisers. The war ended in April 30, 1975, when the last US officials were pulled to safety from the roof of the Embassy in Saigon.

Major press coverage of Vietnam began in 1962 when reporters for the AP, UPI, the New York Times, the Washington Post, Time and Newsweek magazines, and NBC and CBS TV took up residence in Saigon. These dozen or so young reporters dominated the coverage of the story for the first two years. Saigon then was a very different city to Baghdad today. Vietnamese urban society was open and hedonistic, a heritage of 100 years of French colonialism. The South Vietnamese city dwellers, many business-oriented, were generally supportive of American military initiatives and welcoming to foreigners. Many had fled the North when the communist government consolidated its power. Many were to flee again after the war, nearly two million of them, to the US and other western nations. For the reporters working in Saigon, the exciting environment gave them an enjoyable private life in addition to the challenging professional requirements. Many married local women and stayed for years.

Would you say that the television coverage of the Tet offensive was solely responsible for the military's changed attitude towards the media, as is often suggested?

The first conflicts between the media and the US Government came in the "advisory" period of the war, from 1962 to mid-1965. But the momentum of these conflicts carried over into the bigger war to come and in the disastrous aftermath. At the beginning the

Kennedy Administration was anxious to portray success in its policy against the then secretive Vietcong guerrillas. But the reporters were discovering that the "counterinsurgency" campaign was seriously flawed because of corruption and the ineptness of South Vietnamese army. Reflecting the exasperation of the authorities, at a press conference in Saigon late in 1962 the then commander of US Forces in the Pacific, Admiral Harry D. Felt, demanded that I "get on the team" when I insisted in asking challenging questions. This "get on the team" philosophy flowed from the military's World War Two experience where everyone, including the reporters, was anxious to "get on the team." This phrase became a frequent challenge to reporters from the military as the war widened and worsened.

You might ask why the reporters didn't "get on the team" when to do so would have brought approval from and entree into US military and political circles in Vietnam? After all, it would also have aligned them with the actions of the reporters who had covered America's two previous wars. The answer to that is in the unique attributes the reporters took with them to Vietnam. They were the harbingers of a new generation of media, much better educated than in the past, and witnesses to important political and social changes taking place in the United States. Most had covered the black civil rights struggle in the south they had watched American policy falter over Cuba, particularly with the abortive "Bay of Pigs" invasion. They had lived through the Senator McCarthy "red" scare campaign. They took to Vietnam a great desire to discover the truth about American policy effectiveness and to demand accountability of those who were making the political and military decisions. They were also taking the craft of reporting to a hitherto unreached level of criticism of a nation going to war.

Reaction to such dynamic reporting came quickly. Establishment journalists such as Joseph Alsop and Marguerite Higgins ridiculed the Saigon media's "youthfulness and inexperience." They and others questioned our patriotism. When a major religious crisis threatened to destabilize the US-backed government of President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963, President Kennedy unsuccessfully endeavoured to persuade the New York Times to reassign their brilliant Saigon reporter David Halberstam back to the US. By mid-year, however, the reporting from the war theatre and from the political scene in Saigon pretty much discredited official claims of optimism. The machinery was set in place for a government change that came with a *coup d'etat* in November.

There are two issues that sometimes emerge from this period. One is that the media plotted to deliberately overthrow the Diem Government by exaggerating the effectiveness of the Vietcong guerrillas in the field and the Buddhist demonstrators in the cities. The other is that the reporters in those early years did not challenge the entirety of America's ambitions in Vietnam but were in fact supportive, challenging the policy only to improve efforts to bring success. The first issue can be dismissed out of hand because the media did not champion an alternative leadership.

The second issue has some validity. In those early years the American commitment to Vietnam was similar to actions in many post-colonial territories in the world. American assistance had helped the survival of an independent South Korea and a democratic Philippines, to name just two countries that had benefited. In 1962 through 1964 there seemed a chance that the South Vietnamese valued their freedom enough to fight for

it, particularly because at that time there was not great clarity about the intentions of the communist super powers, the Soviet Union and China. The reporters, and I was one of them, believed at that time that an honest aid effort could be an effective winning strategy in Vietnam. But neither the South Vietnamese authorities nor the US government would be honest about their future actions, or would prove to be capable of understanding the nature of the conflict. The media's growing awareness of these deficiencies led to the confrontations with the military that grew in fierceness as the war continued ... and in fact exist up to today.

Another other issue was their message to management back in the States. Up to the late-1960s the attitude was, "This is a patriotic war, we're all in this against the commies. Our boys are dying." You heard this message echoed about Iraq a few times by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld. "We've lost a lot of people in Iraq; we're committed a lot to it." That's what Robert McNamara said in 1966. He said, "We've lost a lot of people," to justify continuing the war. Rumsfeld has said, "We've lost fifteen hundred Americans. We're not going to betray their trust." He used similar words. Of course Rumsfeld says a lot of things to justify his criticized policies.

It's a little like the War on Terrorism today: Officials would say of the media, what are you bitching about, this is in our national interest to do what we have to do. Our view as journalists was, "Hey that's fine, but you're not doing it right. It's not working."

How did the "Five O'Clock Follies" differ from the press briefings that we see today?

The principle is the same; the briefings are a central location for the routine release of information relating to the war. However, the Baghdad briefings have not gained the notoriety of those given during the Vietnam war, not yet, anyway.

The irreverent name "follies" was partly a reflection of the combativeness of the Vietnam press corps. By the time Saigon's daily five o'clock briefings were instituted in 1965 relations were already bad between the media and US government officials. A year-long series of Saigon *coup d'etats* by competing South Vietnamese military officers, along with the rising capabilities of the Vietcong guerrillas, had meant a constant flow of bad news back to the public in the United States, resulting in a bunker mentality by the American officials in Saigon whose job it was to positively influence the reporting. From the beginning in Saigon there was a confrontational cast to the daily briefings.

In Baghdad the US media was initially supportive of the war effort, accepting the government's assertion that the overthrow of Saddam was a necessary requirement for US security. The briefings for the first year or so, then, were basically a clearing-house for information supportive of the US effort.

In Vietnam the media had unusually free access to American and South Vietnamese military operations. Unlike in earlier conflicts when military censorship was imposed on reporters, the US authorities allowed open coverage of the war because the Johnson

Administration was reluctant to concede that Vietnam required national mobilization, the only circumstance when press censorship could be implemented.

This enabled accredited reporters to cover all aspects of the war, routinely accompanying troops into action with a military press ID. I personally wrote more than 3,000 news stories on the war.

In Iraq a similar situation exists where reporters working for known news organizations are accredited to the US military command. But they must apply to be "embedded" with military units and sign an eight-page document that considerably restricts coverage. That's one sign of how the working climate has changed from the cautious tolerance of the media in the Vietnam years, to outright hostility and suspicion by the military in Iraq today.

The main reason the "five o'clock follies" became a synonym for US government deception was that in that pre-internet/cell phone era, the Saigon late afternoon briefing was the only occasion each day that the press corps could confront and demand answers from the officials running the war, that is the spokespersons from the US military, the US Embassy, and the South Vietnamese government. So in one often-explosive hour the media could, as it often did, challenge the official picture of the war. The media questions were fuelled from the findings of the many reporters who were reporting from the battlefields without the restraints of censorship. These findings were often at loggerheads with the official picture.

In Iraq today there is a central clearing house for official information at Baghdad's "Green Zone" press center, and regular briefings are held, but the physical environment is vastly different from Vietnam. Because of the real war dangers to a media that is directly targeted by the insurgents, there is a limited attendance at the Baghdad briefings, whereas in Saigon the "five o'clock follies" were a necessary part of a news organization's day and were always well attended. Saigon was never as dangerous in its worst days as Baghdad routinely is.

In Baghdad media queries are often handled with email and cell phone calls to spokespeople at any time of the day or night, necessitated also to some degree by today's 24-hour news cycle. This limits the potential for public confrontation between the media and US spokespeople.

I mentioned earlier that for the first year or so the Baghdad media was not that inclined to challenge the official picture of the war. That began to change with the revelations of the Abu Gharib prison abuses last year. The US media has since been much more challenging of the official picture, in line with the American public's growing discontent with the war.

Gulf War I

You were allowed to remain in Baghdad after the other correspondents were ordered out. What was the reaction of the American military towards you during this time?

A lot of those who discussed my coverage of the first Gulf War, of being the only TV correspondent in Baghdad during that time, speculate that CNN made a deal with the Iraqi government. I'll try to set the record straight.

CNN had a very smart producer, Robert Wiener, who was sent to Baghdad a few weeks after the invasion of Kuwait late in 1990. He, like all producers, sought access. Some of what he did was in the HBO TV movie "Live from Baghdad." Wiener lobbied the Iraqi officials involved with the media, and persuaded them to cooperate and allow CNN to stay during the war.

One reason was that CNN was the only international television organization in existence at that time. The Iraqis could watch CNN in the foreign ministry and the information ministry. They could see the reports. So when they had a demonstration in the streets opposing American policy, there it was, on CNN. When they gave an interview, it was on CNN. So they knew the informational potential of the network in the propaganda war with the United States.

The Iraqis learned that they could get their viewpoint across on CNN, with their live press conferences and interviews with Saddam Hussein. They became familiar with CNN's operations and realized the potential. Peter Jennings of ABC came in to interview Saddam as did Dan Rather of CBS, but the Iraqis had no immediate access to watch the broadcasts.

But they could watch CNN's broadcasts on satellite. So they became comfortable with it, particularly as they could see that CNN was having an impact internationally on the news.

As the war approached, producer Weiner talked the Iraqis authorities into letting us stay, and he obtained visas for a dozen or so staffers. It wasn't a matter of money; the Iraqis didn't need the money. They had so much money. The authorities could clearly see that CNN would be a very important opportunity for them to counter American commentary.

There were some dollar costs. CNN made a deal to pay for a hard line communication link between Baghdad and Amman. It was part of a military link, and cost \$4,000 to \$5000 a month, but this was in fact much less than normal commercial rates. The other networks didn't even plan anything like this, they were doing their two- minutes-a-day reports only. The network news organizations, as was CNN, were primarily covering the whole American build-up in the Gulf.

My involvement came when CNN asked me at the beginning of January to cover the Baghdad end of the war. I was the CNN correspondent in Jerusalem at the time. The CNN team that had earlier agreed to stay in Baghdad had decided to leave. I initially

used a satellite phone to cover the opening days of the war and shipped out video by taxi. Within ten days CNN shipped in a video uplink for live coverage, another major concession by the Iraqis to the demands of 24-hour news. Our coverage included an interview with Saddam Hussein

The official US military reaction was negative to my covering Iraq. The view of military spokesmen was that any coverage from the enemy side would hurt the US because it would give the Iraqis an opportunity to communicate to the world through a credible news organization. The CNN view was that as long as that viewpoint was clearly established that it came from the Iraqis, there could be no great harm in it.

After the war several senior US officers told me that they enjoyed the CNN coverage because it allowed them a close-up view of their targets, particularly in Baghdad.

To what extent was your coverage censored by the Iraqi government?

As far as censorship was concerned, the Iraqis would not allow me anywhere near any military units, something I pointed out regularly in my broadcasts. They did let me visit bombing sites in Baghdad and elsewhere in the countryside, and photograph downed bridges and civilian casualties. Initially the Iraqis insisted on my submitting written accounts of my reports, but later they permitted me to freely comment on live TV about what was going on in the war.

The perception was created in and by the media that Saddam Hussein is a brutish thug, a demon, a monster, a "miniature Hitler, cut-price Nero", and not exactly intelligent. What was your personal impression of him?

Saddam was an ally of the US up to his invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and was visited regularly by high Washington officials and congressmen. He was invariably friendly with visitors when he greeted them in his elaborate palaces and homes. He was equally cordial with me when I interviewed him during the war and answered all my questions, later posing for pictures with me and sending the prints to my hotel the following day. As far as he had to be, Saddam easily played the role of respectable international leader.

Of course, that was the face Saddam revealed to foreigners. With his family, staff and Iraqis, however, Saddam played the traditional Arab tribal leader, at times generous to a fault to those who pleased him, handing out houses and automobiles to brave soldiers or even to the poor when their cases moved him. At other times, Saddam played the thug, as his trial in Baghdad is, and will probably continue to, reveal. He saw himself embodying Iraq the Nation, and justified brutal repression against the Kurd and the Shiite populations who attempted to gain their own political footholds. There is little doubt that Saddam created a security/intelligence apparatus that successfully crushed any form of political opposition.

Why do you think do people still refer to the baby milk factory incident as if you did something wrong, even though the CIA itself has admitted that it was indeed an infant formula plant?

This story turned out to be one of the most controversial I have ever done, a fact that surprises me because it was just routine coverage.

On Day Six of the first Gulf War the Iraqi authorities took me and a camera crew to an industrial site west of Baghdad near the Abu Gharib prison. The small signpost at the entrance bore a crudely lettered sign "Baby Milk Plant" in English and Arabic. The structure beyond was barely recognizable as a building. The sheet aluminium walls and roof had been ripped off and scattered across the yard. The steel roof girders were twisted and blackened. The machinery underneath was tangled molten pile.

Officials at the scene claimed that this baby milk plant had produced twenty tons of milk formula each day, and had been destroyed in US bombing raids the previous Sunday and Monday. The officials asserted that President George H. Bush had reneged on his promises not to hit civilian targets, and this was proof of American indifference to the Iraqi people.

After I reported the story that evening, the White House responded publicly with anger, asserting that the plant was a cover for producing biological weapons and that Peter Arnett was playing into the hands of the Iraqi Government.

This statement from the White House spokesman was repeated by Republican Party senators and the conservative media. There was enormous pressure on CNN to pull me out of Baghdad, but the company stood firm. I stayed.

History has clearly shown that the plant was simply producing baby formula. But the charges against me tend to stick.

I believe that US officials put enormous pressure on me and CNN because they feared that credible reporting would reflect negatively on their war effort.

Gulf War II

The Pentagon is increasingly regarding the media as a strategic tool, or weapon. One military study refers to PR advisor John Rendon who said that the media is territory to be conquered, and if "we" (the USA) do not do it, "they" (Iraq) will. What is your opinion of this move to "conquer" the media? Was the Pentagon successful?

There was a lot more official censorship of information, controlling of information, and manufacturing of information post-Vietnam, during Gulf One and the Iraq War than during Vietnam.

For example, today for a reporter in Iraq or Afghanistan to get embedded with an American military unit he has to sign an eight-page closely typed document in which he

agrees to have all material looked at and all pictures approved. It started at one page, now it's up to eight. There was no such documentary requirement at any time during the Vietnam War.

Of course, much of the news in Iraq today is self evident, particularly the car and other suicide bombings that are publicly visible. But overall, the US authorities are in a position to control information, particularly reports on troop morale and tactical and strategic assessments.

While this system is working to some degree in the US, with news organizations more willing to be sympathetic to government policies than they were in the past, the controls are failing elsewhere in the world.

In today's media-savvy world, the insurgents have their own cameramen who send reports surreptitiously and routinely to *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabia* and other Arab TV outlets and viewed by millions. This is a new factor that has emerged to limit the Pentagon's efforts to control the flow of information from Iraq. Often these reports end up on US TV.

What are the main differences between the stories filed by embedded and non-embedded reporters?

Non-embedded reporters cover the Iraqi side of the story. They will write about politics, tribal and ethnic issues, human interest stories about Iraqis impacted by the war and so forth. Main stream news organizations will embed their western reporters to cover the US military operations, and use local Iraqis or Arab staff to cover the Iraqi side.

What were the greatest challenges to reporters in Iraq?

By far the greatest problem for reporters is the sheer danger of working in Iraq. Vietnam was never as dangerous as the streets of Baghdad. In Saigon life went on, restaurants were open and bombs were few. The war was in the countryside. In Iraq the primary battlefield of the war is Baghdad itself.

More than 50 journalists have died in Iraq since the war began in March of 2003. In Vietnam 64 journalists died during the whole ten year war. I move around Baghdad and the countryside discreetly because I don't have the immediate pressure of a deadline. But I am well aware that the unexpected could happen, and I could be injured or kidnapped.

The task is made tougher by the controversial nature of the conflict, the question of its international legality, the WMD and terrorist issues that quickly evaporated only to be replaced by concerns about the nature of the new Iraqi government.

Trying each day to track the direction Iraq is heading is an impossible task for the media to achieve with the security situation remaining as dangerous as it is, but it is still expected to do it. Consequently the Baghdad reporters for the US media have been in

the firing line from the political left and the right, just as they have been literally in the field.

The physical restraints, the political sensitivity of the coverage in these post 9/11 times, means that Iraqi reporting falls short of the ideal, and this is not meant to disparage the bravery or the ability of the many reporters based there. I live there myself but I've got no illusions that if I were with the mainstream media I'd be doing a better job.

To what do you attribute the flak you have received over the years from not only the government and the military, but your colleagues in the media as well?

The recent history of journalism and its confrontational approach to reporting on government and military activities often brings controversy because the journalist challenges the message put out by the authorities. I think in my comments on my early career it was clear that often what I wrote was on a collision course with the picture that US officialdom was painting.

As in Vietnam, so too in Central America in the 1980s where the US Government was supporting military dictatorships against local rebels. Reporters who drew attention to these actions were criticized – particularly when the Reagan Administration was found to be secretly supporting the Contra guerrillas against the Sandinista Government in Nicaragua.

In the first Gulf War, of course, there was my interview with Saddam Hussein, and the Baby Milk Plant story.

Was your contract with NBC terminated because of the company's misgivings about The Interview, public pressure, or maybe the fact that NBC is part of the GE stable, which is a major supplier to the Department of Defense?

I was in Baghdad at the time of the second Gulf War for National Geographic Explorer, a newly-established documentary group that marketed its stories on MSNBC, a cable news TV company owned by NBC. I'd done several documentary-style TV stories on the Afghanistan war for a satellite TV company and was doing the same in Iraq.

When the war began we were following three Iraqi families in Baghdad, planning to document their experiences before, during and after the conflict. I had no intention of covering the war on a daily basis, as I had for CNN in the first Gulf War. When the NBC news team, along with CNN, CBS and ABC, left Baghdad when the war started, NBC asked me to "help them out" with on-the-spot coverage. I did so initially on a limited basis, but as the war progressed I was drawn into coverage and commentary around the clock.

While most American journalists left Baghdad, many from other countries remained behind. Because of my earlier experience I was often interviewed by news teams in Iraq, sometimes four or five interviews each day. Iraqi Government satellite TV asked me for an interview about ten days into the war and I complied. I had been interviewed on Iraqi TV many times over the 13 years I had been covering that country.

The interview was only a few minutes long. In it I suggested that the US military drive towards Baghdad was being unexpectedly delayed at Nasariyah where suicide bombers and guerrillas were killing American troops. I thought the US might have to rewrite its war strategy. I also expressed concern about the possibility of growing Iraqi civilian casualties having a negative impact on the US war effort.

The AP picked up the broadcast from its monitoring station in Cairo and wrote a story. It was widely used in the US. Initially NBC put out a statement of support saying, "Peter Arnett can say what he likes. We don't feel his interview was that terribly outrageous and we're going to stick with him." I talked with NBC executives and the senior vice president said, "We're concerned about one thing, the reaction of Fox News, otherwise, you're clear."

It turned out Fox News did a whole hour attacking me; all day they were verbally kicking me to pieces. Next evening NBC called me and said, "Look, we're going to announce that we're not using you. It's just too hot." They got 30,000 emails in an hour from all their affiliates. They said, "The problem is not public relations, our affiliates don't want to use you. If our affiliates won't use you, they won't use the Today Show, it's that serious now." So I said, "OK," and then I said, "Look, I want to bow out on the Today Show," because I felt that I had a pretty good relationship with the network. It had really been a bold and exciting ten days. And they said, "What are you going to say?" I said, "I'm sorry that this happened."

When I was waiting to go on the Today Show that morning, the co-host Katie Couric was interviewing the wife of a serviceman who had been killed in Nasariya and she was crying and saying, "I'm pregnant and I'm going to have a baby in two months, but I know my husband died for a great cause." It was just the most soul-wrenching interview. So when the other co-host Matt Lauer came out and said, "I have to announce that we're not going to use any of Peter Arnett's material anymore. He did an interview with Iraqi television." It was with that woman's face in my mind that I said, "I'm sorry I did it, I'm sorry I made everyone so unhappy." I was ready to apologize. It was easy, it got through and I think it cut back any more controversy.

How do you see the road ahead regarding the relationship between the military and the media? The Department of Defense seems very happy with the embedding exercise, and will probably repeat it in future conflicts, but were the media equally happy with the arrangement, and did they get value for money?

Here are a few points on US journalism today and in the future. Today's new generation of reporters had an enormous amount of journalistic history to consider as they developed their careers. When I was a kid, the war correspondent Ernie Pyle and the British reporters who covered World War Two were heroic in my mind because they covered a war to save mankind. Some died doing it, further ennobling them in my mind.

Today's new generation of journalists is probably aware of the great World War II reporters as journalist icons. But now they have as examples the Morley Safers, the David Halberstams, the Dan Rathers, the Sy Hershes and the others important to journalism in the past 40 years, all of whom have been controversial for one reason or

another. These reporters were primarily products of Vietnam War coverage and later the Watergate investigation and its ramifications. This model challenged government and demanded accountability of officials in foreign affairs in particular. The earlier model of journalism, the patriotic model, tended to be uncritical and supportive of international government policies.

Looking back on my career, I've often thought what it would have been like if I'd been 15 years younger when I started my career, and may have been a reporter in World War II. As I looked into the history of World War II, I discovered there were some reporters at the AP, for example, and elsewhere, who had problems over their news coverage.

One AP newsman reported the official end of the war twenty-four hours before General Eisenhower had arranged to announce it. The reporter was fired and looked upon as having betrayed his profession. What did he really do? He reported the end of the war accurately, but twenty-four hours before the authorities had permitted. He was my kind of guy. There were other reporters in World War II who had problems, but overall, it was seen as a great patriotic war with journalists playing a very supportive role.

This was very different in the wars in Vietnam and Central America that followed over the next forty years. The reporters covering those new, smaller wars were aggressive in their approach, demanding accountability of the government and the generals fighting the war. This was a period of American involvement in wars that many saw as questionable, even illegal, activities.

So I don't think it's easy for young journalists today to pick a model. What model are they going to choose? The patriotic model of World War II? The critical model of Vietnam? I sometimes talk to journalism institutions. Students often ask, "Where do I go, how do I become a reporter? How can I be like you?" I don't think I am an adequate model. My career is admired by some who feel that it would be great getting out there and stirring up controversy. But I'm sure there are just as many who feel, "What he's done, who would we want to be there in his shoes?"

As far as the future for the American media is concerned, advances in technology have made information a very big business. Television news programs are more immediate and newspapers and magazines more attractive and interesting. The internet has added a whole new dimension to news dissemination by feeding news into personal computers and cell phones and other electronic devices.

The American media tended to cover the recent Iraq war in patriotic mode, mainly because of the shock of 9/11. But growing public discontent with the war has tended to bring the media back to a moderate, more critical course. The Bush Administration has tended to be secretive and uncooperative with the media, but with a congressional election due later this year the government has been forced to 'fess up to mistakes in Iraq and other policies. The future will continue to be confrontational between the government and the media. Which I believe is a good, necessary thing.

Where do you think the next conflict will be?

The "war on terrorism" is likely to be with us for the foreseeable future. Both Iraq and Afghanistan will require the continuing attention of US ground forces. While the US is signalling a gradual exodus from Iraq, this is expected to take several years.

President Bush has talked of Iran and North Korea as evil empires, and government spokesmen have issued threats, but I don't think the administration is in any position to attack either country. At this time any such US action would pre-emptive without much international help, and I think America has learned its lesson in Iraq against going to war again in this way.

However if Iran continues on a course towards building a nuclear weapon, you can expect a more belligerent attitude not only from the US but also from allies in Europe, and of course, Israel.

In talking about future conflicts that may involve the US, you need to consider the impact of the media, particularly the effect of twenty-four hour TV news. Policy is shaped on cable news in a way that it was never shaped during the Vietnam era. In Vietnam, I'd write controversial story and it would be two days before there'd be a reaction from Washington. Now, the reaction is instant.

A lot of shaping of controversial policy for public consumption is done on cable TV by senior government officials or ideologically inclined reporters or commentators. One feeds on the other. It's often been said, and I think it's true, that 24-hour news speeds up decision-making enormously. Whether this is a negative or a positive is open to question but I think it's inevitable. It speeds up reaction and it doesn't always bring the correct reaction, but you can't turn back technology.

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Appendix II.2 Paul Watson



Photo: *Los Angeles Times*, 2006.

Canadian Paul Watson is a seasoned journalist with almost 20 years experience of international and war reporting (McClelland & Stewart Limited, 2006). His social and cultural reporting earned him numerous National Newspaper awards while working for the *Toronto Star*. However, it was his photograph of a dead American soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu that won him international acclaim as well as a Pulitzer Prize in 1994. He currently covers Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India as the South Asia bureau chief of *The Los Angeles Times*.

Watson answered the questions (in bold) sent to him via e-mail:

From: Paul.Watson@latimes.com
Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2005 12:14 PM

According to Mark Bowden of "Black Hawk Down" fame, there weren't any American reporters in Mogadishu at the time (to his knowledge). Do you know if this is true, and if so, why?

I believe there were not any American reporters there at the time. Reuters evacuated its office following the murder of journalists in July 93 as they tried to report on what was effectively a massacre of Somali clan and religious leaders by US Apache helicopters, which destroyed the house they were meeting in.

When reporters and photographers showed up, an enraged mob killed them. Of course, the story became murdered reporters instead of massacred Somalis. AP evacuated its office some weeks after July--I can't recall precisely when--because the State department put out a warning that it had "credible evidence" of a threat to kidnap Americans. AP suffered badly in Beirut, so they ordered their people out.

By September, I was there, along with three Brits, a Greek woman with Agence France Presse, and an unknown number of Italians in North Mogadishu, a small zone under a different, pro-Italian warlord who wasn't relevant to the events of Oct. 3.

Were there any other reporters on the scene, apart from the Somali stringer who shot the video footage?

I was the only foreign reporter on the scene that I photographed. I didn't see any colleagues on the street that day. I always worked alone (with locals I trusted and worked a long time with), and usually still do.

Were you and that stringer in fact at the same scene? That is the general impression I get from reading various accounts, but Major David B. Stockwell (1995) wrote:

Canadian Paul Watson, correspondent for the Toronto Star, took this photograph with a pocket camera (he is a print journalist, not a photojournalist) of Somalis dragging the body of a dead U.S. soldier in Mogadishu after the Baffle of October 3, 1993.

and then

A Somali stringer had filmed a group of Somalis triumphantly dragging the body of an dead American soldier through Mogadishu streets on the morning of October 4 and an "interview" with captured American pilot Chief Warrant Officer Mike Durant.

I was never with the Somali stringer you mention. I worked with a Somali journalist who wrote for a local newspaper printed by mimeograph.

Why did you use a pocket camera?

Stockwell is also wrong about the camera. I used a Nikon SLR. I think its called an N8008. It's in storage at my home in New Delhi, but I'm in Pakistan now. If you can wait until mid-August, I can give you the precise model name.

How did the crowd react to your presence on the scene? In South Africa, during our tumultuous past, mobs often turned more violent in the presence of the media, posturing for the camera, so to speak. Did you personally feel endangered?

I worked with good fixers in Mogadishu, and had covered the place for a long time before Oct., 93, so I and my car were pretty well recognized. That helped, but did not guarantee safety. I had two body guards armed with assault rifles (I usually only travelled with one) and the fixer was armed that day too. But the whole crew didn't want to be on the streets and that it was suicidal. After telling the crowd who I was, they agreed to let me photograph and I got out of the car. I took a few frames before others arrived and the crowd got angry. My guards pulled me back into the car, but I realized the full-body pictures I'd taken were probably unusable because the corpse's green army underwear was slightly askew, exposing a bit of his genitals. I jumped out of the car, took a few more frames of half the body only, and those were moved by AP, which later told me they wouldn't have touched the full-body pictures. I definitely felt endangered, but was determined to get photographic proof to report desecration of American bodies. I'd reported it before, in September, and the Pentagon denied it.

How did the military react to your photographs?

The military, on various levels, denounced me and the photographs.

Generally speaking, what was the relationship between the military (UN and/or US) and the media like in Somalia? According to some accounts, the military supported the media in various ways, but according to others, the old resentment still remained.

When the foreign press corps got down to around a dozen people, the media was very adversarial. The afternoon briefings frequently erupted in shouting matches over the latest killing of civilians by U.S.-led forces, for instance. Stockwell was friendly behind the scenes, but reporters were angry at the lies and since we moved on our own, taking risks just to get back and fort from the daily briefings, I think most of took personal offence to being treated as if we were blind and deaf to the reality we lived with outside the walls of the U.S. compound every day and night.

Were you on the beach outside Mogadishu when the Marines and Seals landed in December 1992? If so, what were your impressions of the event?

I was on the beach the night the US troops landed and I thought it was a circus. I'll never forget the SEAL digging into the beach only to be surrounded by reporters, in the glare of TV lights, and being asked questions like what his name was, and where he was

from--no small humiliation for a Special Forces commando trained for covert missions. Of course it was a show put on for media consumption. We were alerted to likely landing time well in advance. And since there was a huge contingent of unarmed journalists who moved around Mogadishu every day, and the US forces' arrival had been discussed with and approved by the main militia leaders, there was no need for a dramatic landing in the middle of the night.

But, I'll admit, I'm not a general. So maybe they knew something I didn't.

Thanks for your questions. There is a lot of bad information out there about that day, so I appreciate you're checking with someone who was there.

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Appendix II.3 Martin Savidge



Photo: CNN, 2003e

American journalist Martin Savidge has more than two decades of television reporting experience. He has won various awards for his work, including nine local Emmy awards, six Associated Press awards, two United Press International awards, two Women in Communication awards as well as the prestigious Edward R. Murrow award. Working for CNN, he covered the American invasion of Afghanistan after the 11 September 2001 attacks on the US and became the first television reporter to accompany US troops during *Operation Anaconda*. During *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, Savidge was embedded with the 1st Battalion of the 7th Marines. He joined NBC News as a correspondent in March 2004 and reports for all the networks of NBC, including MSNBC and CNBC.

Savidge answered the questions (in bold) sent to him via e-mail:

From: martin.savidge@nbcuni.com

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2006 6:35 AM

Afghanistan

In the early stages of *Operation Enduring Freedom*, your access to the battlefield was practically non-existent. What would you say were the military's real reasons for preventing the media from reporting on the goings-on? And looking back, would you say that any of those reasons were valid?

The real reasons varied...

First of all remember what kind of military operation Afghanistan was... primarily Special Forces working with Afghan "friendly forces". These were not large set piece operations. The U-S military has always been reluctant if not downright opposed to allowing the media along on such missions. It might compromise the operation to have members of the media inserted awkwardly into a small team of professionals that have been together in some cases for years. It could be dangerous since such missions are risky. And there simply may not be space to add people. Finally the U-S would not want to give away how such units operate believing secrecy is part of their success.

I think in addition to these logical issues there was still a hesitancy with in the military command of allowing the media such close access... these are long standing issues of how the media might over emphasize the negative of combat and as a result harm morale in the military and on the home front.

What were your biggest frustrations?

The biggest frustration of course was the lack of access. I was living on base at the airfield in Khandahar. Those journalists who were with me were not imbedded but even so we lived just as the Marines and soldiers did. We were immersed in the daily activity on base but not in the operations. We could see helicopters come and go as well as witness the transfer of prisoners to aircraft for their journey to the states. (We were never allowed to film these up close) Such transfers were often done under the cover of darkness at the far end of the airfield.

The military PAO's often had very limited information even when we knew an operation was underway. Details were usually released in Pentagon briefings in Washington. This was a never ending aggravation. Here we were living under harsh conditions while our counter parts stayed at their Washington homes and continually scooped us. We had a saying ... "Khandahar. So close and yet so clueless".

The invitation to accompany the troops on their secret mission into the mountains must have come as quite a surprise. Can you tell me a little about that?

It began when an officer in Khandahar one day pulled me aside and said, "let's go look at the mountains". If you have ever been to that part of Afghanistan you would know they are nothing worth looking at, so it was clearly just a ruse to get me outside to talk in private away from the other journalists.

Once alone he said, "There's going to be a mission" and if I wanted to be on it I could tell no one. Not fellow journalists not even my bosses. If I did I would be "out". Of course I agreed. I said CNN would have to be told something I couldn't just very well vanish without a trace... he agreed and said my producer who would remain behind could notify them that I had gone on a mission, but only after we had departed.

The night before the appointed departure day I had the most difficult task of all... not telling my family anything. I knew once I failed to call my wife as I'd managed each day, she would become sick with fear... it was heart wrenching.

The initial agreement was I would file no reports or have any contact with them or CNN until the mission was completed. Operation Anaconda was to last 48 to 72 hours ... instead it went on for nearly 2 weeks. Eventually that part of the rules had to change.

Why do you think did the military suddenly decided to allow access to the battlefield and more specifically, why were you the chosen one?

I believe because this was "the big one" a real conclusive battle of the war... while its decisiveness is open to question it was certainly the biggest battle of the Afghanistan campaign. An air brigade assault had not been done since Vietnam. I think it was the size of the operation, its presumed success and constant pressure from media outlets for access that had the military give in.

They were aware that if an operation of this size were not open to some members of the press there would be media complaints. And when it was first revealed on Monday morning in a Pentagon briefing there were howls. To which Donald Rumsfeld smiling replied they had 6 journalists imbedded as he was speaking. Of course I was one of them.

As for why me... I was told because I was one of the few who had toughed it out by living on base. All of the 6 had been living in Khandahar for some time. I also represented CNN which of course can be seen and is respected round the world. Beyond that I'm not sure why I was chosen.

How did the troops and officers react to you during the mission? Did they trust you and did they hold your resistance to carrying a gun against you? Did you ever during the mission feel the need to be at least close to your gun?

I was originally placed with "Charlie Company" with the 10th Mountain. The Captain was very opposed to media presence within his unit. He was quite clear on this. He also had no choice. Distrust is always the greatest gap in these circumstances. I had been embedded with Australian forces in East Timor during that very violent uprising. So I was aware of this divide. The men and women in these units have trained together for months ... we, the cameraman and I, drop in over night. That isn't easy. So we immediately moved in with the unit, sleeping eating and training with them. This eased the situation a great deal. We began to lay the foundation of trust.

The weapon became a huge issue ... The argument was by accepting us the unit would be down two armed soldiers. To make up for this shortfall and because it was known the Taliban did not take prisoners for our safety and the safety of everyone else we had to be armed.

This violated everything I knew of journalism. I argued that and also it was not physically possible to carry a rifle along with the necessary TV gear. Then they offered an m-9 pistol which I could strap on. I refused again. This threatened to become a "deal breaker". Eventually we struck a deal, we would be instructed how to use the weapons but would not carry any. The thinking being if it came down to a life and death defence we would have basic instruction.

As for being close to a gun ... being imbedded with the military someone carrying a gun is always nearby ... my greatest concern on the battlefield in those conditions is "friendly fire" – so sometimes you can feel too close.

After being trained to handle a gun, do you think that next time around it would be easier for you to carry or even use one? (This question only because I was highly amused by your very honest comment to Paula Zahn that "if it really comes down to Marty armed with a pistol saving the day, things are pretty grim". While this is true for all of us ordinary folk, few would admit it!)

Not in my case. I have the greatest respect for guns and the greatest fear. I have too often seen what they can do. I don't like them personally so I am just as opposed now to carrying one as a journalist as I have ever been.

During the mission, did you ever feel that things were kept from you, or that you were in any way being manipulated to create a specific perception of the war, or at least Operation Anaconda?

No and yes. I found the access to *Operation Anaconda* to be extraordinary... in fact it was stunning. We were not only allowed to sit in on intelligence reporting and mission planning meetings but we were also allowed to film them. This was top down driven access, allowed because the agreement was not a single report would be made until the mission's completion.

Regarding manipulation, of course the purpose of the government in allowing media access was to show and witness an anticipated outstanding America success to be transmitted to the American people and the world. I do not believe such access would have been given if the US military had any doubts about the outcome of the operation. No one knowingly invites spectators to their own disaster.

How did your inclusion in the mission affect the way the rest of the media was accommodated afterwards? In other words: were you used as a guinea pig, and did this successful experiment result in better access for your colleagues?

I do believe media inclusion during *Operation Anaconda* became a model for embedding of journalists in the war in Iraq. And from the stand-point of the U-S

military they must have been pleased with the initial outcome from the Afghan experiment. From 6 journalists the number was expanded to well over 600 by the time the ground war began in Iraq. As I joked the media was no longer imbedded instead, there were so many journalists it was more as though soldiers were embedded with the media.

Iraq

What would you say caused the military's radical change in policy about access to the media?

I think it was understood that images transmitted from the battlefield of U-S forces in action would send a very powerful message to the Iraqi leadership as well as other potential U-S foes. In addition I do believe the Pentagon had concerns that Saddam might use his own troops dressed in American uniforms to commit atrocities and blame them on the United States as part of a propoganda campaign. Media presence with all U-S forces could be used to discredit any such claims.

I also believe like Anaconda the US had no doubt of success so why not let everyone see the result. At this point regardless of the self promotion aspect of the US government's decision I believe it was a very bold and laudable action. There are very few militaries in the world that would have made such allowances in the face of real combat. Everyone knows war is not pretty. I think the Pentagon believed that the dedication and good of the American soldier would come through more vividly then the horrible images of combat. In the beginning I believe they were right. At least to a home front audience. I hope the embed practice will continue.

What did it take to win the trust of the unit that you were embedded with?

Again trust is earned only over time. As you live an expose yourself to the same conditions and dangers as the troops you eventually begin to earn their trust ... assuming you don't do anything stupid to jeopardize the unit. Talk with the officers and the soldiers or Marines.

As an embedded reporter, was there ever a situation where you really felt morally torn between loyalty towards your adoptive unit, and your professional duty as a reporter? If so, how did you deal with it, and how did your unit react to it?

Every day. It is not possible to live and face danger with a unit and not developed a deep personal connection with those who are a part of it. Under those circumstances it is extremely difficult if not impossible to maintain the objectivity a journalist normally tries to have. I struggled with this every single day and I know I did not always succeed. That is part of the reason I believe that embedded journalism by a news organization must be done in conjunction with independent reporting whenever possible. I would try to carefully monitor my words and reports to guard against bias but it's damn difficult.

There was a specific incident regarding the questionable shooting deaths of two armed Iraqi's which we filmed. We transmitted the material back to CNN in Atlanta cautioning

about the graphic nature and circumstances of the deaths. For reasons I do not know CNN did not transmit those images at that time, but did use them months later as the subject of an hour long documentary.

Would you have agreed to be embedded with Iraqi forces and if so, do you think your attitude towards those soldiers would have differed?

No. Not specifically with the Iraqi forces. I would have had my doubts regarding personal safety or the intentions of the Iraqi government to allow access while not intentionally and overtly using my presence for strategic gain. I also would have serious concern for my well being, knowing the training and weaponry the United States was capable of using. Your survival chances would have been very low.

That is not to say there would never be an instance when I would agree to being embedded with an opposing force. I did this in East Timor for a time living under the shelter and protection of Indonesian forces. The TNI was suspected of actually abetting and taking part with the militias ravaging the island... this arrangement lasted for just over 24-hours until our lives were threatened and we were forced to flee.

How does being shot at affect one's objectivity/bias/sense of fairness? Does it influence your perception of, and reporting on, the "others"?

This may sound weird, but for me it did not alter my feelings or turn me against the others. Perhaps because I had been reporting for many years prior to this embed. Maybe also because by that time being shot at was not a new experience. Objectivity has been strongly imbedded in my practices as a journalist. I also understood that in conflict that is their "job". It is a consequence of war and I had purposefully chosen to put myself in the position of danger. So in times of fear... I often just cursed my own foolishness.

Did the troops in your unit ever discuss the reasons for the war, and if so, what were their opinions?

Very seldom. Most were simply concerned with the task or the day or the object at hand. The broader geopolitical issues rarely were discussed. For them it didn't matter but most felt they had a duty to do and were proud to be a part of the fight.

On March 22, 2003 you described how Safwan Hill was hit with napalm. Did the military react to this report in any way?

The U-S military denied that napalm was used. The Pentagon says it does not have "napalm" in its arsenal.

To what extent were you 'kept in line' by your unit? Did you at times get the feeling that you were expected to act as a 'cheerleader'?

No. There was never any time I was told or pressured to report anything other than what I saw or experienced by members of the unit or commanders or officers.

What would you say were the strengths and weaknesses of the practise of embedding?

The strengths of course are access to US forces and the battlefield that is rarely possible unilaterally covering a conflict. The downfall can be as I mentioned above the natural allegiance a journalist might feel to members of the unit which he or she is embedded with and how this could compromise objective reporting.

There is always the ability of the military to deny access at a moments notice or in retribution to a report the US might find unfavourable. There is the possibility that any protection offered by the military would be withdrawn if they didn't like your reporting ... In other words the soldiers could look the other way rather than run to assist you. I never experienced this with US forces ... but it could be a possibility in any conflict.

On several occasions at the outset of the war I was restricted or prevented from reporting over concerns the device or means of communicating my reports might give the unit's position away or expose it to attack. This was a great frustration though understandable concern. After all it's my butt that's on the line as well and I am not fond of risking it any more than I have to... but I was aware that the Army was allowing its embedded journalists to file while the Marines who I was with said I could not. This was eventually resolved.

Apart from the protection offered by the military, would you say that embedded reporters had an advantage over unilaterals in terms of the story they were able to tell?

Access, access, access. Often the images are much closer to the action and I can question the US forces involved. In addition many logistical issues are taken care off, such as food, housing and transportation.

Generally, how do you feel about the military's attitude towards the media, and vice versa?

I think outside the embed process there is a background level of distrust, which is healthy. But that distrust often fades in the heat of battle in the close confines of far off places where lives and not professions often count more.

When one Googles "Martin Savidge", you are inundated with hits referring to an incident where you reportedly offered your satellite phone to four troops, who chose to use it to phone the parents of a fallen comrade. Did this happen, and if so, what is the real story?

No. The specific story was written as a transcript of an actual live report I supposedly did. There was never any such incident nor would I have made report out of such a thing. However, every day we would make our satellite phones available to soldiers to use to call home. Who got to speak when was a decision process we left up to sergeants

or officers. We did not listen in ... and would immediately make a phone available for hardship or emergency needs. Many journalists did this.

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Appendix II.4 Robert Fisk



Photo: Lancaster University, 2006.

British journalist Robert Fisk is a veteran foreign correspondent with more than 30 years experience reporting from the Middle East (University of Adelaide, 2005; Lannan Foundation, 2007). He is Britain's most highly decorated international journalist, having received 28 British and foreign press awards, including two Amnesty International UK Press Awards and seven "British International Journalist of the Year" awards. Based in Beirut since 1976, he is a correspondent for *The Independent* newspaper in London, writing about troubled regions such as Ireland, Lebanon, Bosnia, and Iraq. He holds a doctorate in Political Science, as well as honorary doctorates from University of Lancaster, England, and the American University of Beirut, Lebanon.

Fisk answered the questions (in bold) during a telephone interview on Wednesday 23 March 2006:

What was the attitude of the military (soldiers as well as officers) towards the media in general, and to you in particular, during the war in Kosovo?

I was in Serbia and Kosovo throughout that war, for virtually all of it, and therefore my contact with the British and Americans was very little – I mean, the contact would be bombed by them fairly regularly, like all day and all night. And so I was very much writing about the consequences of what NATO was doing, which was what I intended to. That's what my editor wanted me to be doing. We had people with the military – I wasn't one of them.

But I didn't have any problems with the Brits. I hardly talked to them. When they were coming into Kosovo there was a ceasefire between the Yugoslav army and NATO and I left the Yugoslav army to the sound of the very first British paratroopers with helicopters over them physically marching down the road towards Pristina from all over Albania. I captured that moment for *The Independent*, the whole story about the very first British soldier walking down the road to Pristina. What we had there in fact was a situation in which he was so excited and that was it.

Afterwards once they got into Pristina there was a shooting of a Serb policeman. I found at once the same old situation applied that journalists would go along with what the British wanted. I remember that an officer came down and said "A Serb policeman had been shot. He'd endangered the lives of British paratroopers". This was the First Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, who were known in Northern Ireland for being pretty brutal. I was covering Northern Ireland, so I knew this regiment pretty well from far away.

The situation was that a sergeant said "No more questions!", and the cameras immediately went down and all the journalists started leaving immediately. And I said "Why no questions? What have you got to hide? Why no questions? Had he been armed? How many shots were fired?" And the cameras just went up again and the officer was forced to continue talking. But there was a classic example. The journalists were prepared to lower their cameras when told "no more questions". Our job is to ask questions - not accept tamely when we are not allowed to.

A few of the embedded correspondents were quite rude to me. They had already taken the side of NATO, you see. I remember one of them coming in and castigating me for writing about Serb civilians as if I had not also been writing about Kosovo Albanian civilians, which indeed I had at great length.

I had a very interesting experience. At one point I was going out of Pristina with a Serb family and we were being stoned by Albanian Muslims in front of British troops, who didn't do anything. It was an interesting experience to see what it was like being a Serb. My interpreter was a Muslim Albanian. I had many people working with me on the other side.

By and large, I did not find any overt hostility from the Brits or the Americans. I don't think they even knew who the reporters were who were reporting from the other side of the line so to speak.

In Serbia, we could travel more freely than you would imagine. The only thing we did have was press cards. We were authorized to work as journalists by the government and also by the military. I had a military press card because that helped getting through checkpoints, but it didn't mean that we were embedded in the sense that we were living with the Yugoslav army. I can't imagine that you would want to do that with all the bombing. But I was with them when they were bombed, of course. The key thing if you wanted to report from the Serb side was not that they would force you to write what they wanted you to write, but what they wanted to be sure of, is that you were not a spy working for NATO. Once they were sure that you were not sending military information to NATO, they gave you a lot a freedom and left you alone to do as you wished.

Do you have any idea what had happened at the village of Racak?

I was not in Kosovo then and I did not report on that. I was actually doing a story in the Middle East. I am aware that a French journalist took great issue with the version of the British journalist and of the OSCE monitors, but I did not investigate that story, and although I had been to Racak, I was not there on that occasion, so I am the wrong person to ask.

Much was written about the camp in Trnopolje. Most sources alleged that it was a "concentration camp", while some others refuted this. How did you experience it?

The incident was that they filmed them from the wrong side of the wire or that they filmed people who weren't actually in prison but they made them look as if they were behind the wire. I was at Trnopolje about the same time but I was not there when the crew was there and I did not actually work on the story of how they did that. You are aware that there was in fact a legal case in London about that, in which they appeared to win the legal case. But again I found a man who said they filmed these people through a wire that did not actually divide them from the prisoner. They just asked the prisoner to talk through the wire. Again, I wasn't there and I don't believe in commenting on things that I haven't actually investigated or reported.

Certainly, when I was at Trnopolje, the prisoners could walk out of the camp if they wanted. By and large, they were so frightened of the Serbs outside the camp that they chose not to. But it was an open door and I could go in and out as many times as I wanted, indeed. The Serb guards sat on the road opposite. But there were prisoners walking out and walking down the road and talking and going back in again. It clearly wasn't a prison camp like some of the other concentration camps where the most barbarous killings were carried out.

What can you tell me about the incident where a Larry King interview with Serbian Information Minister Vucic was arranged to take place at the time when the Serbian television station was eventually bombed?

I don't know if it was Larry King. It was certainly CNN, and they would have had one of the Serb ministers, who were a close ally of Milosovic, in the studio at the time. I

wrote about this at considerable length and you can look it up no doubt, through the Web, CNN's response was that they gave a different date. But of course, if I remember the situation again – look I'm driving in a car in Beirut, talking about something that happened years ago ...

As I remember, CNN's get-out clause was that it was on a different date. In fact it wasn't. The missile hit the building in the early hours of the morning. And in America, of course, it was still the previous day. So they said he wasn't asked to go to the studio on this day. It was the previous day he was asked, but in fact, that previous day in Yugo time was the day the missile hit. So they tried to get out of it by manipulating the date issue and in fact it was all about the international time-line. It wasn't anything to do with a different date at all; it was exactly the same time

If you're telling me did CNN set this up with the US security authorities, I'm sure they'll tell you no. But I was given CNN's request to the minister by the minister's people themselves, so that I would see it. I still have copies of it. They asked him to be there at a time during or after make-up when the missile would have hit. In fact, he turned the interview down, so it didn't matter.

You are probably aware that the families of the dead are now trying to sue the authorities of the time, because they claim that Milosovic's people were warned by NATO that their building would be bombed and that the authorities decided that they needed some martyrs. So they did not tell the staff to get out in time.

I think that quite possibly true, because on the previous evening they had also had a warning and they invited the international press, including me, to go and look at the studios and talk to the staff. And I think that they probably thought that if the missile came, we too would be in the building and we would die as well. And they'd kill all the international press, so I think they quite possibly did know in advance and NATO did warn them, but I can't prove it. You should keep that in mind – you shouldn't be too naïve or romantic about the Serb authorities or the Serb forces.

In Afghanistan during the early stages of *Operation Enduring Freedom*, media access to the battlefield was practically non-existent. What would you say were the military's real reasons for preventing the media from reporting on what was going on?

You have to realize something. In Afghanistan as in Iraq, journalists can't move around freely. Some journalists are very pro the American government and will only report on what the Americans want, but because of the dangers of moving freely around in the Kandahar region, for example, journalists can't go there without armed guards. In Iraq they can go virtually nowhere even *with* armed guards. The mere fact that we now had two incidents in Iraq of the Americans apparently murdering civilians and getting away with it was because there were no journalists to go and check out the story afterwards. We couldn't get there. When I travel outside Baghdad now – I am one of the few journalists who does, though I'm not the only one - I need two weeks to arrange it. I don't travel with armed men. I don't have security protection. But that's how bad it is.

The Americans benefit from this, because they can do things outside the watchful eye of the press, knowing that the journalists are more at risk than they are of being killed.

Apparently, some reporters camped outside the airport at Kandahar, hoping for a story, while others snuck into the country via Pakistan. What was your approach?

I travelled on my own with Afghan friends who were also my translators, because I don't speak Pashtu. When we wanted to go to a particular village far out in the desert we would go to the local Afghan governor and ask if he could send some guards with us. This is not to protect us from kidnapping or Al Qaida. It was to protect us from being robbed by bandits who had weapons. In many cases the guards who were paid by the governor knew we would give them lots of watermelons when we finished the journey. It wasn't a question of hiring armed guards. I actually sent in to my expenses in London a photograph of all these bearded and armed men holding their watermelons and smiling into the camera. Weirdly, the people in the accounts department said "Oh, well", and saved it as a further document to prove that Bob was spending the money on watermelons. It just went in the file with everything else. They didn't feel there's anything odd about handing out watermelons on behalf of *The Independent*. So there you go!

I also had people in the American military who knew what was going on, who disapproved of their mission. Because of them we could prove people were being tortured. They would come to me, sometimes not wearing uniform, in the villa where I was staying, to talk about what was going on. So no, neither in Afghanistan nor in Iraq do I have any armed protection.

Indeed, I paid the price for that when I was badly beaten on the Afghan/Pakistan border in December of 2001.

Have you recovered from that sufficiently to go on with what you are doing?

Oh, yes, I went back to the village the next day to try to find the people who did it. I've been working normally ever since. I still have headaches from time to time, and I had a slight vision impairment with my right eye which is now gone. I don't have that problem anymore. But I still have scars on top of my head and on my forehead.

And psychologically? How do you cope with this?

What is there to "cope" with? You've got beaten by people who lost all their family. They were much worse off than I was. When you are going to the Middle East you have to "cope" with the sticks and stones occasionally. Sometimes the real ones. I did knock a tooth out of someone when I started fighting back. I regret it very much, but I had to. It was the only way to survive. If you have to work in a place like this you've got to be strong. You've got to be tough. You can't go around talking about "coming to terms with", and "counseling", and all this bullshit. The people who are trapped there, the civilians, who have to live under the American bombs, they're the people you should ask how they cope with it psychologically. Not moderately well paid journalists who can fly home Club Class with a glass of champagne if they don't like the war.

I see the US military's large-scale embedding of the media with their units in Iraq as a strategic move to further their case. Do you agree with that?

Yes of course, of course. The mere fact that the press use "embedding" as their word for it, that they accept that phrase "embedding", tells you a lot about the osmotic, parasitic relationship between the journalists and the military when they perform these tasks.

The same thing happened during the 1991 Gulf Wars when journalists fought like tigers to be on duty with "pools". "Pools" meant that you were taken with the military and lived with them, and you had to fight to get onto them. Once you did, there was such censorship, delays and filing of copy, and so on. Once again I travelled on my own and I saw things for myself so I had no censorship and I didn't have any soldier delaying my copy. I was in the paper every day.

Ever since Vietnam the American military have tried to prevent the press reporting those elements of the war that would bring public opinion against the president, who is their commander-in-chief, and the military forces.

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Appendix II.5 Bonny Schoonakker



Photo: *Bonny Schoonakker*

Bonny Schoonakker was the only South African newspaper reporter in Iraq during *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. Working for the *Sunday Times*, he operated as a unilateral reporter from the Palestine Hotel in Baghdad. He currently resides in Hong Kong, China.

Schoonakker answered the questions (in bold) sent to him via e-mail:

From: skrikvirniks@hotmail.com
Sent: Sunday, September 03, 2006 11:10 AM

Having been an independent reporter in Iraq, what is your view of the US military's large-scale embedding of the media with their units?

It worked two ways: on the one hand it gave embedded reporters far greater access to the fighting, the war on the ground, but on the other it allowed the embedders to dictate how the war was covered. They saw lots more action than what I did, from behind the safety of American armour plating, whereas those like myself were kept in the dark by the Ba'athists and had to hope that the American bombs and ordinance were accurate, and did not fall on the Palestine Hotel. Unfortunately, once it did get hit, killing two journalists. However, as to the accuracy of reports from embedded journalists, I don't think that is the salient point. The Western media that sent their reporters off for embedding with the coalition had already accepted the US administration's rationale for invading Iraq. The great failure of journalism in the case of the invasion of Iraq was the lack of any critique as to why the US should invade in the first place. I know it is easy to say this with hindsight, but the lie on which the war was premised was there to be exposed long before the first shots were fired. In fact, the western media, including the newspaper that sent me, WANTED a war. Rather than seeking to intimidate the Iraqi regime, Rumsfeld's promise of "shock and awe" was intended to seduce the media – which wanted the show – and they (we) bought it hook, line and sinker.

When you returned to Baghdad after its "fall", did the military treat you and the other unilaterals the same as the embeds?

The Americans did not make anything especially difficult for me. In so far as they could help, they did. The commanding officer of Delta Force, whom I literally bumped into in Baghdad, when trying to find out about the apparent looting of the museum of antiquities, was particularly helpful. When I told him that I was from South Africa, he (a colonel) mentioned that one of his soldiers (one out of several thousand) was from South Africa, and I was impressed by the way he knew a lot about Private Billy Viljoen, from Alberton. The colonel knew that Viljoen's grandparents had been murdered in Durban, and stuff like that. He was also very co-operative in wanting me to find Viljoen, but I had already done so a few days earlier. The Americans behaved like they had nothing to hide, and as soon as I could satisfy them that I was a journalist, they were always co-operative. Getting to that point could be tricky, though. They kept their firearms pointed at you, fingers on the trigger, while you tried to explain and demonstrate. One night I came within a split second of being shot at a roadblock, when my driver panicked and reached under the dashboard for his passport. The nervous soldier (about 18, 19) thought my was reaching for a car bomb switch. The only reason he did not open fire was because I called him "dude", as in "Hey, dude, take it easy, when he lifted up his rifle to start shooting. I don't think the American authorities cared too much whether you were embedded or not. The worst trouble that any journalist could make for the US military would be in Washington, or London, not in Baghdad, where you needed their protection and assistance no matter how sceptical you were about their reasons for their presence in the city.

How do you feel about the military's attitude towards the media, and vice versa?

On the ground, the military I came across (whether US or Iraqi) looked at us people just doing their jobs, there was not much animosity or hostility. They were quite approachable. The journalists loved the military for the most part, except people like the hysterical Robert Fisk, who I remember on several occasions trying to provoke US soldiers into arresting him. He was determined to be a martyr. To this day, I am extremely grateful to the US Marines, because I think they saved me from being kidnapped when I sort of got lost in central Baghdad. The suspicious men in long leather coats and with AK-47s sticking out, who had trapped me and my guide in an alley way quickly disappeared when two Humvees drove into an adjoining street. But, much as I was grateful to the soldiers, I despise the likes of Bush, Rumsfeld and Cheney for sending them there in the first place.

Do you think the US military had set out to target unilateral reporters?

No, not really. They could just ignore us and hope the night would swallow us up if we became a nuisance.

What was your agreement with the newspaper regarding your angle of coverage?

There was no clear brief before I went, but it was always going to be the case that I would look for human interest type stories on the ground. Names, faces, situations. When I got back, however, I was dismayed by the manner in which some of my stories were presented. To this day, I cannot bear to look at those back copies. My complaints and criticisms in this regard were not taken seriously, and sometimes with irritation. Ultimately, this led to a situation in which it became impossible for me to continue working at the *Sunday Times*. I do not regret going, though. Even though I still have far too much to learn, the two months I spent in Baghdad taught me a lot about myself and the people whom I live among, even if these lessons can sometimes be sad and unpleasant.

How were your reports presented and how would you have liked it to be presented?

In some cases it seemed to me that there was a tendency to present the reports in a manner which emphasized trivial and sensational aspects. For example, while I was in Baghdad, the newspaper printed posters saying "Our man in Baghdad" or something like that, with a photograph of myself. I felt embarrassed and that this was absurd, particularly as I had requested before I left for Iraq that they do not use any photo bylines with any of my reports. In the end, someone took a photograph of myself and a friend that I had posted above my desk back in Cape Town and then cropped my face out of it. I pointed this out the *Sunday Times'* new editor some months later, but this criticism was not appreciated. In any case, I would have preferred the newspaper to focus more on what was happening in Iraq and put less emphasis on the "our man on the spot" approach, which is illusory. Given the nature of the circumstances in Baghdad at the time, "being on the spot" sometimes meant that you were less aware of what was going on than those elsewhere. Which is not to say that being there did not give you a

unique view, but it's just a matter of emphasis. I did not say anything immediately on returning from Iraq because everyone was being so hugely complimentary and nice to me when I got back. On the first day I got back, the editor of the newspaper at the time proclaimed to the assembled staff that "I had raised the standard of journalism on this newspaper", which was hugely flattering. Except, two weeks after that there began what I now regard as a long process of constructive dismissal. All that flattery made it difficult to think clearly at the time, I suppose, which made it difficult to understand what was happening and what people's true intentions were. Over the subsequent months things became more clear. Unfortunately, in these situations, hindsight is pretty useless as a form of insight or consolation.

Can you tell me how it happened that *Sunday Times* sent you to Iraq? Did you ask to go, and if so, why? Or did they ask you to go, and why?

Early in February 2003 an e-mail was sent to all staff stating that the newspaper was considering sending someone to Iraq, in anticipation of what by then seemed a likely invasion by a US-led coalition. I was among the many that applied, and got lucky. The assignment was offered on these terms so that, if anything went wrong in Baghdad, the newspaper could say, quite rightly, to the reporter's family/dependents/friends that he/she had volunteered for the assignment and should therefore accept some responsibility for any mishap. If, instead of a general offer to staff, someone had been chosen and asked to go, it may have exposed the newspaper to a greater liability. So whoever went would have to accept some responsibility for going. In any case, I was hugely excited to go, and willing to accept the risks and these terms. I still have absolutely no regrets about going there, and am still grateful for the opportunity, even though, ultimately, it led to a situation that made it impossible for me to continue working at the *Sunday Times*.

Did they have any concerns regarding cost, insurance or your safety?

Costs were a consideration, but to what extent I am not sure. I was given enough money to cover my expenses, which were significant for all sorts of reasons. This was at least partly because the Ba'athists imposed a heavy tax on those journalists lucky enough to get into Baghdad before the invasion, around US\$100 a day including a levy on those with a satellite phone, if I remember correctly. I was hoping that, after the US-led coalition took over, those of us who had lasted until then would be excused from paying the tax. But as I was expelled four days before Baghdad fell, in the final days of Ba'athist control, I had to pay this tax in order to get an exit visa. Either that, or find myself in Abu Ghraib. In the end, I think that the whole excursion cost the *Sunday Times* something of the order of US\$7 000, if I remember correctly, excluding the cost of buying a satellite phone (the only way to transmit text and pictures out of Iraq at the time) and personal insurance for myself in the event of death or accident. It seemed to me at the time that the newspaper was being generous in funding such an assignment, but later it became clear that the *Sunday Times'* expenses were much less than those of media represented in Baghdad, particularly the TV services, who spend millions of dollars on deploying journalists in Iraq, which include the costs of security consultants, bodyguards and armoured vehicles. I had to make do as best I could on expenses that would have been paid had I gone, for example, on a wine-tasting freebie to Australia.

I never knew how much the premiums of the insurance policy came to, and often told my handler that I did not think it was necessary to pay for this. If I got maimed there was no way I could have been flown out and would have to seek the help of the Red Cross in Baghdad, which was free. If killed, I saw no point to flying a corpse home. But they insisted on taking out this insurance, which I was told was very expensive. I would guess that it was something of the order of US\$200 a day. As for my safety, I am sure everyone was concerned as it would look bad for the newspaper if something tragic happened.

What would you have liked to do differently?

To have read more about Iraq's history before I went, to have placed more trust in my own judgments rather than seek corroboration from other journalists. The media contingent in Baghdad tended to consult with one another, to make sure we were all of a similar mind on things. It's a common phenomenon among journalists, but in Baghdad the stakes were higher. I was never afraid while being there, and only long after I got back to South Africa did I realize the risks that were in play there, and how easily it could all have gone wrong. It also became apparent to me that those who make it home from war may find that the most difficult battles and most dangerous treacheries still await them.

Have you ever spoken to any of the formerly embedded reporters, and if so, how did they feel about being embedded? Do you (or did they) feel they were in any way manipulated by the US military to project a certain image of the war?

I had very little contact with embedded journalists, if any. I only ever saw them from a distance.

What would you say were the strengths and weaknesses of the embedding exercise?

As I said above, access to information is the prize but being led astray is the risk. It's like, if you want to dance to the music you will need a partner.

Do you have any other comments about the relationship between the US military and the media in Iraq, or the flow of news from Iraq to the South African media during Operation Iraqi Freedom?

Ever since Vietnam, the US military has learnt how to deal with the media far more intelligently (in terms of achieving their goals) than the media have learnt how to deal with the military. Journalism is a flawed and superficial business. Overall, the coverage of the Iraq war reminds me of something someone once said about bribing journalists: why pay them when you see what you can make them do for free.

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APPENDIX III

Glossary of media and military terms

As the use of jargon is inherent to both the military and the media as social institutions, some of the terms used may be unclear to members of either community. This glossary will provide a list of media and military terms relevant to this present study.

Except where stated differently, definitions will be taken directly from three publications, namely

- *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Department of Defense, 2005)
- *Dictionary of Media and Communication Studies* (Watson & Hill, 2003)
- *Key Concepts in Journalism Studies* (Franklin *et al.*, 2005)

Entries are edited to conform to South African spelling and abbreviated to give the essence of each term.

accountability – In a democracy, media organisations and the journalists who work in them are accountable to their audience and to wider society in various ways. They are accountable to the law of courts, for example, if they libel someone or commit contempt of court (Franklin *et al.*, 2005:4-5).

audience – Students of media communication recognise the term audience as overarching all the reception processes of message sending. Thus there is the audience for theatre, television and cinema; there is the radio listener. There is the audience for a pop concert or at a public meeting. Communicators shape their messages to fit the perceived needs of their audience: they calculate the level of receptiveness, the degree of readiness to accept the message and the mode of delivery. Audience is readership too and the success in meeting audience/readership needs relies extensively on feedback (Watson & Hill, 2003:14).

bias – Implies that the "real world" constitutes an objective reality which the media persistently fail to represent accurately (Franklin *et al.*, 2005:24-25).

by-line – Use of the journalist's/author's name on a report or article. These are very common now in the press but at one time the granting of by-lines was a rare honour, to distinguish top writers or as a reward for outstanding reportage (Watson & Hill, 2003:31).

censorship

- **armed forces censorship** – The examination and control of personal communications to or from persons in the Armed Forces of the United States and persons accompanying or serving with the Armed Forces of the United States (Department of Defense, 2005:44).
- **civil censorship** – Censorship of civilian communications, such as messages, printed matter, and films entering, leaving, or circulating within areas or territories occupied or controlled by armed forces (Department of Defense, 2005:87).
- **field press censorship** – The security review of news material subject to the jurisdiction of the Armed Forces of the United States, including all information or material intended for dissemination to the public. Also called FPC (Department of Defense, 2005:200).
- **national censorship** – The examination and control under civil authority of communications entering, leaving, or transiting the borders of the United States, its territories, or its possessions (Department of Defense, 2005:359).
- **primary censorship** – Armed forces censorship performed by personnel of a company, battery, squadron, ship, station, base, or similar unit on the personal communications of persons assigned, attached, or otherwise under the jurisdiction of a unit (Department of Defense, 2005:423).
- **prisoner of war censorship** – The censorship of the communications to and from enemy prisoners of war and civilian internees held by the United States Armed Forces (Department of Defense, 2005:87).
- **secondary censorship** – Armed forces censorship performed on the personal communications of officers, civilian employees, and accompanying civilians of the Armed Forces of the United States, and on those personal communications of enlisted personnel of the Armed Forces not subject to Armed Forces primary censorship or those requiring re-examination (Department of Defense, 2005:87).

circulation – The number of copies of an edition in a particular print medium (e.g. a newspaper, a magazine, a book, etc.) sold or otherwise distributed (Franklin *et al.*, 2005:36).

civil affairs – Designated Active and Reserve component forces and units organised, trained, and equipped specifically to conduct civil affairs activities and to support civil-military operations. Also called CA (Department of Defense, 2005:86).

civil-military operations – The activities of a commander that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces, governmental and nongovernmental civilian organizations and authorities, and the civilian populace in a friendly, neutral, or hostile operational area in order to facilitate military operations, to consolidate and achieve operational US objectives. Civil-military operations may include performance by military forces of activities and functions normally the responsibility of the local, regional, or national government. These activities may occur prior to, during, or subsequent to other military actions. They may also occur, if directed, in the absence of other military operations. Civil/military operations may be performed by designated civil affairs, by other military forces, or by a combination of civil affairs and other forces. Also called CMO (Department of Defense, 2005:88).

conflict – An armed struggle or clash between organised groups within a nation or between nations in order to achieve limited political or military objectives. Although regular forces are often involved, irregular forces frequently predominate. Conflict often is protracted, confined to a restricted geographic area, and constrained in weaponry and level of violence. Within this state, military power in response to threats may be exercised in an indirect manner while supportive of other instruments of national power. Limited objectives may be achieved by the short, focused, and direct application of force (Department of Defense, 2005:113).

content analysis – Research into mass media content identifies, categorises, describes and quantifies short-term and long-term trends ... Content analysis serves an important function by comparing the same material as presented in different media within a nation, or between different nations; or by comparing media content with some explicit set of standards or abstract categories (Watson & Hill, 2003:64-65).

context – The situation(s) in which a message is conveyed and received, or in which a text is produced and consumed (Franklin *et al.*, 2005:48).

counterdeception – Efforts to negate, neutralise, diminish the effects of, or gain advantage from a foreign deception operation. Counterdeception does not include the intelligence function of identifying foreign deception operations (Department of Defense, 2005:126).

counterintelligence – Information gathered and activities conducted to protect against espionage, other intelligence activities, sabotage, or assassinations conducted by or on behalf of foreign governments or elements thereof, foreign organizations, or foreign persons, or international terrorist activities. Also called CI (Department of Defense, 2005:127).

counterpropaganda operations – Those psychological operations activities that identify adversary propaganda, contribute to situational awareness, and serve to expose adversary attempts to influence friendly populations and military forces (Department of Defense, 2005:130).

deception – Those measures designed to mislead the enemy by manipulation, distortion, or falsification of evidence to induce the enemy to react in a manner prejudicial to the enemy's interests (Department of Defense, 2005:145).

disinformation – Derives from the Russian, *Dezinformatsiya*, a term especially associated with the former Soviet Union's secret service, the KGB. It is applied to the use of forgery and other techniques to discredit targeted governments, persons or policies. The process of disinformation is, of course, as old as mankind, and sowing the seeds of disinformation is matched by accusing the opposition of spreading disinformation (Watson & Hill, 2003:88).

- effects** of mass communication – Can be broadly defined as any change induced directly or indirectly by the recording, filming or reporting of events. Analysts of effects, or impact, are concerned with the modification of attitudes and of behaviour of individuals and GROUPS, and the process of measuring these effects is immensely complicated, as the ground on which the measurements are taken is constantly shifting (Watson & Hill, 2003:93).
- embargo** – restriction set upon a news item, indicating when that item can be published or broadcast (Watson & Hill, 2003:96).
- embedded journalist** – journalists who live, work and travel as part of the units with which they are embedded to facilitate maximum in-depth coverage of US forces in combat (Franklin *et al.*, 2005:72).
- fixer** – In reporter-speak, a fixer is a translator, navigator and person finder for a journalist on unfamiliar ground. But in Iraq, where the streets are perilous, the fixer often is the unsung reporter who asks the questions and brings the answers back to his journalist boss. A great fixer can even save your life (Gladstone, 2006:p.n).
- gag/gagging order** – Issued by judges to restrain the publication or broadcast of information where it is considered that such information breaches the law (Watson & Hill, 2003:114).
- genre** – Term deriving from the French, meaning type or classification (Watson & Hill, 2003:116).
- Hollywoodisation** – By the time of writing, no clear definition existed for the term "Hollywoodisation" but it is understood by this author as the presentation of newsworthy events as a story, or Hollywood film, in order to make it more comprehensible to the public (No reference).
- jargon** – The specialist speech of groups of people with common identity – of religion, science, medicine, art, trade, professional, political party, etc. (Watson & Hill, 2003:149).
- joint information bureau** – Facility established by the joint force commander to serve as the focal point for the interface between the military and the media during the conduct of joint operations. When operated in support of multinational operations, a joint information bureau is called a "combined information bureau" or an "allied press information centre." Also called JIB (Department of Defense, 2005:285).
- Klieg light** - a powerful carbon-arc light formerly used in making movies (*Compact Oxford English Dictionary*, 2007).

news management – Refers to the tactics employed by those – usually in government or important positions in society – who wish to shape the news to their own advantage, or to control events in such a way as to win favourable publicity. In recent years the operative word to describe news management is *spin*. The so-called spin doctors, drawn almost invariably from the ranks of professional journalism, are essentially in the business of propaganda, that is talking up the good news and concealing as far as possible the bad (Watson & Hill, 2003:195).

news media representative – An individual employed by a civilian radio or television station, newspaper, newsmagazine, periodical, or news agency to gather and report on a newsworthy event. Also called NMR (Department of Defense, 2005:370).

node – A location in a mobility system where a movement requirement is originated, processed for onward movement, or terminated (Department of Defense, 2005:370).

operation

- A military action or the carrying out of a strategic, operational, tactical, service, training, or administrative military mission.
- The process of carrying on combat, including movement, supply, attack, defence, and manoeuvres needed to gain the objectives of any battle or campaign (Department of Defense, 2005:388).

peacekeeping operations – Peacekeeping operations are also conducted with the consent of one or all sides of the conflict and fall into one of two categories. The first includes operations that are a sort of logical or practical continuation of peacemaking operations. After an armistice has been signed, negotiations begin in order to bring about the peaceful resolution of the conflict (Demurenko & Nikitin, 1997).

perception management – Actions to convey and/or deny selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, and objective reasoning as well as to intelligence systems and leaders at all levels to influence official estimates, ultimately resulting in foreign behaviours and official actions favorable to the originator's objectives. In various ways, perception management combines truth projection, operations security, cover and deception, and psychological operations (Department of Defense, 2005:407).

pool

- Maintenance and control of a supply of resources or personnel upon which other activities may draw. The primary purpose of a pool is to promote maximum efficiency of use of the pooled resources or personnel, e.g., a petroleum pool or a labour and equipment pool.
- Any combination of resources which serves a common purpose (Department of Defense, 2005:415).

- pool system** – Practice, particularly in wartime, of governments channelling media access to news events through a regulated "pool" of reporters; and consequently the "pooling" of information for publication or broadcasting. This strategy of news management effectively censors journalists by corralling them, while at the same time claiming to offer prompt and reliable information on events (Watson & Hill, 2003:221).
- propaganda** – Any form of communication in support of national objectives designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes, or behaviour of any group in order to benefit the sponsor, either directly or indirectly (Department of Defense, 2005:430).
- psychological operations** – Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behaviour of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behaviour favorable to the originator's objectives. Also called PSYOP (Department of Defense, 2005:432).
- physical security** – That part of security concerned with physical measures designed to safeguard personnel; to prevent unauthorised access to equipment, installations, material, and documents; and to safeguard them against espionage, sabotage, damage and theft (Department of Defense, 2005:411).
- public affairs** – Those public information, command information, and community relations activities directed toward both the external and internal publics with interest in the Department of Defense (Department of Defense, 2005:433).
- public affairs ground rules** – Conditions established by a military command to govern the conduct of news gathering and the release and/or use of specified information during an operation or during a specific period of time (Department of Defense, 2005:433).
- public diplomacy** – Those overt international public information activities of the United States Government designed to promote United States foreign policy objectives by seeking to understand, inform, and influence foreign audiences and opinion makers, and by broadening the dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad (Department of Defense, 2005:433).
- public information** – Information of a military nature, the dissemination of which through public news media is not inconsistent with security, and the release of which is considered desirable or non-objectionable to the responsible releasing agency (Department of Defense, 2005:433).

security

- **communications security** – The protection resulting from all measures designed to deny unauthorised persons information of value that might be derived from the possession and study of telecommunications, or to mislead unauthorised persons in their interpretation of the results of such possession and study. Also called COMSEC. Communications security includes:
- **cryptosecurity** – The component of communications security that results from the provision of technically sound cryptosystems and their proper use.
- **transmission security** – The component of communications security that results from all measures designed to protect transmissions from interception and exploitation by means other than cryptanalysis.
- **emission security** – The component of communications security that results from all measures taken to deny unauthorised persons information of value that might be derived from intercept and analysis of compromising emanations from crypto-equipment and telecommunications systems.
- **physical security** – The component of communications security that results from all physical measures necessary to safeguard classified equipment, material, and documents from access thereto or observation thereof by unauthorised persons (Department of Defense, 2005:108).

security review – The process of reviewing news media products at some point, usually before transmission, to ensure that no oral, written, or visual information is filed for publication or broadcast that would divulge national security information or would jeopardise ongoing or future operations or that would threaten the safety of the members of the force (Department of Defense, 2005:478).

sources – The people, places and organizations that supply journalists with ideas and general information (and often quotes) for potential news stories and features (Franklin *et al.*, 2005:248).

special activities – Activities conducted in support of national foreign policy objectives that are planned and executed so that the role of the US Government is not apparent or acknowledged publicly. They are also functions in support of such activities but are not intended to influence US political processes, public opinion, policies, or media and do not include diplomatic activities or the collection and production of intelligence or related support functions (Department of Defense, 2005:493).

strategic communication (2004 definition) – The transmission of integrated and coordinated United States Government themes and messages that advance United States interests and policies through a synchronised interagency effort that includes public diplomacy, public affairs, and information operations, in concert with other political, economic, and military actions (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2004:GL-16).

strategic communication (2006 definition) – Focused United States Government (USG) efforts to understand and engage key audiences in order to create, strengthen or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of USG interests, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronised with the actions of all elements of national power (Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2006:GL-12).

stringer – Name given in the news reporting business to a non-staff reporter (Watson & Hill, 2003:279).

target audience – The individual(s) whom a speaker intends or desires to address with a text (Franklin *et al.*, 2005:260).

war – conflict between the armed forces of two or more states or coalitions, with this conflict being conducted in order to achieve certain political goals (Demurenko & Nikitin, 1997).

war

- **general war** – Armed conflict between major powers in which the total resources of the belligerents are employed, and the national survival of a major belligerent is in jeopardy (Department of Defense, 2005:223).
- **limited war** — Armed conflict short of general war, exclusive of incidents, involving the overt engagement of the military forces of two or more nations (Department of Defense, 2005:309).