BLOOD ON THEIR HANDS: MEDIA FRAMING OF THE AFGHAN WAR DIARY LEAKS

A Thesis by

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The following faculty members have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Communications

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DEDICATION

To my grandparents, Jerome and Mary Jo Potter

"A popular government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or, perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."
James Madison

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ABSTRACT

WikiLeaks.org has rapidly become the most important new medium for the publication of previously secret documents. Arguably most important among these documents is the *Afghan War Diary*: a collection of 91,000 classified reports (minus 15,000 deemed too sensitive to immediately release), allegedly stolen and sent to WikiLeaks by Pfc. Bradley Manning. Daniel Ellsberg, the source of the 1971 Pentagon Papers leak to the *New York Times*, appearing on a July 26, 2010, airing of NPR's *Talk of the Nation* described the leak as "the first unauthorized disclosure, I would say, in 30 years that is comparable in scale to the Pentagon Papers. And of course, actually it's very much greater, partially reflecting the technology of the day." This research asks the research question: What frames are used to represent the *Afghan War Diary,* Bradley Manning, Julian Assange, and WikiLeaks in American print journalism? Using inductive, qualitative analysis on three major American print news sources in the three months following the leak (July 25th, 2010-October 25th, 2010), this rhetorical criticism attempts to identify frames for future research on the WikiLeaks phenomenon's coverage, validate the constructivist of news framing paradigm, and broaden communication scholars understanding of news frame construction and media effects.

PREFACE

This thesis is the first serious investigation of WikiLeaks', Julian Assange's, or Bradley Manning's treatment by the media. I, as many others, was appalled by the information that has been systematically deprived of 99% Americans. I was further taken aback by the shamelessness of those in power, in how they handled the *Afghan War Diary* publication and those that would follow. But nothing upsets me as much as how journalists, who should have special normative obligations, have mostly failed in covering the content of the leaks; to use their power to pick up where the sacrifices of Manning, Assange, and countless hackers and activists left off.

This work is designed to illuminate the structures and mechanisms by which these problems go unaddressed. It seeks to understand the way in which news is created, transmitted, received, and understood. It seeks to illuminate how our reality is constructed and why, regardless of world view. My hope is that my efforts will be received as such.

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INTRODUCTION

John Dewey (1966) wrote that the basic principles of American-style democracy require a transparent government that is accountable to an informed electorate. Others, however, have described a different America, one that depends on the hegemony-based truism: "loose lips sink ships." Schlesinger, for example, has described an American "secrecy system" that is the "all-purpose means by which the American Presidency sought to dissemble its purposes, bury its mistakes, manipulate its citizens and maximize its power" (1973, p. 345).

Today, the U.S. defense and intelligence communities rely on secrecy and an overt lack of transparency to perform their roles. Regardless of the pros and cons of diplomatic intrigue, secrecy and deception have long been and continue to be employed to achieve particular policy outcomes and public perceptions. From the late eighteenth century to today, a tight lid on the supply of substantive, vetted information has been the linchpin to public perception in the United States. The ancient classic, the *Art of War,* makes it clear that basic proficiency in the art of statecraft and the medium of violence requires a mastery of information, proportionate to the speed and accessibility of that information. Thus, one must concurrently *know* and *deceive* to win on any battlefield, including those where the stakes are control over information.

The *Pentagon Papers* is a watershed event in the history of the United States that demonstrates what can happen when the federal government and military establishment's needs for secrecy clash with the citizenry's right to information. More specifically, it offers an example of what happens when a Xerox machine clones

classified information, originally typed up in the windowless offices of the Pentagon, and a national newspaper picks up the story. More important to the current digital revolution is the question: What happens when a confluence of Internet activists bent on protecting whistle-blowers provide the same service at fiber-optic light-speed? How do the press, policy makers, and the intelligence community react to the many stimuli of a whistleblower operating within today's digital media environment? This is the crux of the recent media-circus surrounding the *Afghan War Diary*, Pfc. Bradley Manning, who has been indicted as the alleged source of the massive 91,000-page document leak by WikiLeaks, and Julian Assange, the wiki's founder and current publisher.

The national press's handling of *The Afghan War Diary* can be seen as a sort of "dry run" for the treatment of future WikiLeaks and WikiLeaks-style leaks (used loosely, given the various websites now publishing previously secret documents in bulk) and the freedom of the press. While Daniel Ellsberg and *New York Times* editors involved in releasing the Pentagon Papers have become near folk heroes, one of the leakers of the Afghan War Diary—Bradley Manning—is in jail, and the other—Julian Assange—would be if governmental authorities had their way. Anyone following the WikiLeaks saga will remember the infamous statement of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen: "Mr. Assange can say whatever he likes about the greater good he thinks he and his source are doing. But the truth is they might already have on their hands the blood of some young soldier or that of an Afghan family" (Stewart & Entous, 2010). Mullen said this at a press conference called by former Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, four days after *The Guardian, Der Spiegel,* and the *New York Times* ran stories on the juiciest content from the Afghan War Diary, on July 25, 2010*. WikiLeaks*

simultaneously posted the diary in rescinded form (*i.e.*: less 15,000 records deemed too dangerous, even by *WikiLeaks,* to disclose, and the majority edited to remove as much personally identifying material as possible). The author of the original *New York Times*' story called the *War Diary* "an unvarnished, ground-level picture of the war in Afghanistan that is in many respects more grim than the official portrayal" (Chivers, et al., 2010).

In a world of secret drone strikes, extraordinary renditions, overt claims of assassination, and increasingly volatile international relations, scholars studying government would do well to analyze the information provided by *WikiLeaks* to better understand existing international structures and relationships. However, this thesis does not concern itself with analyzing the contents of the leaks. Instead, drawing on rhetorical framing studies, media ecology, and post-structuralism, it employs qualitative textual analysis to identify various elements in "a repertoire of frames" (Van Gorp, 2010) surrounding *WikiLeaks*, *The Afghan War Diary*, and the personalities who carry the weight of the leaks. More specifically, the thesis addresses the following research question: What frames concerning *The Afghan War Diary*, Bradley Manning, Julian Assange, and WikiLeaks have American newspaper journalists embedded in the news stories they wrote in the three months following the earliest publication of the documents? The remainder of next chapter provides background information that contextualizes WikiLeaks' release of the Afghan War Diary within a larger historical phenomenon.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1   Defense-Related Secrecy in U.S. History

The establishment of the United States, both as an idea and as a manifest,

sovereign entity, proposed an end to the unchecked power of government. In reality,

such ideals have never been fully realized. The U.S. Constitution provides for secrecy in

matters of diplomatic negotiation and espionage. In addition, American presidents have

created the well known "classified" and "top-secret" classifications have through wartime

executive orders. These labels have become so powerful that special legislation (The

U.S. Freedom of Information Act of 1966) was passed to provide citizens without

security clearance access to such documents, if only in heavily redacted form. Indeed,

the secrecy system is itself the legacy of a succession of Commanders in Chiefs who

kept information secret through use of executive orders, omissions from the public

record, or more indirectly, through implication of the selectively told truth, as suggested

by Slavoj Žižek in a recent public discussion with Assange broadcast online (Assange &

Žižek, 2011).

Schlesinger, in *The Imperial Presidency*, devotes a chapter to the secrecy

system, beginning with the allusion to Weber, that its very concept was, "the specific

invention of bureaucracy," and officials defend nothing quite as vehemently as these

secrets (1973, p. 337). Such secrecy has been "directed against the public and most of

all against the press . . . gloriously institutionalized in the vast and intricate machinery of

security classification" (Schlesinger, 1973, p. 331). Because the secrecy system has

been "controlled by those on whom it bestowed prestige and protection," it grew out of

control (Schlesinger, 1973, 344). To undercut such power, Americans have sought to expose government secrecy through the leaking of secret documents. Schlesinger cites the example as early as 1795, when Senator Stevens Thomson Mason had Philadelphia publisher, Benjamin Franklin Bache, publish a secret treaty with Great Britain negotiated by John Jay and presented in secret session to the Senate for ratification, by George Washington himself (Schlesinger, 1973). Similarly, in 1798, Bache published a secret dispatch from Talleyrand that proved the Adams administration's belligerence towards France, which desired peace; the opposite story being told to the late-eighteenth century American public. This earned Bache, the grandson of Benjamin Franklin, an arrest for "seditious libel under the common law." Authorities alleged that Bache was involved with the French government (Schlesinger, 1973, p. 333). Twenty days later, Congress passed the infamous Alien and Sedition Acts (Schlesinger, 1973). Thus began what Arthur Schlesinger calls the "recurrent pattern in American history" surrounding secret leaks:

> When the Republic faced a hard decision in foreign policy and the executive branch had not revealed facts that would enable the people to reach their own judgment, aggrieved citizens felt themselves morally warranted in violating a system of secrecy exploited (as they earnestly believed) by government against the national interest. (Schlesinger, 1973, p. 333)

The 20th century's tumult of total war bred the secret classification system that is still in use today. Though security markings were first called for by Department of Defense (then the War Department) in 1907 and a similar order in 1912 instructed military plans and deployments be kept secure, it was not until 1917 that the all-too familiar markings "secret," "confidential," and "for official circulation only" were first adopted by the Defense Department in 1917. As Schlesinger describes, "in 1917 a

general order from Pershing's headquarters in France instituted, in imitation of his British and French allies, the markings" (1973, p. 338). This system was not codified into law until 1921.

In 1940, the pressing threat of total war once again gave credence to secrecy. In response, President F.D. Roosevelt "conferred presidential recognition for the first time on the military classification system," in an executive order (Schlesinger, 1973, p. 339). FDR's order, tenuously justified by a 1938 law prohibiting only the creation of photos, maps, and sketches of "vital installations and equipment," gave him the power to define such images. Roosevelt declared this law to apply to:

> All official military or naval books, pamphlets, documents, reports, drawings, photographs, contracts or specifications, which are now marked under the authority or at the direction of the Secretary of War or the Secretary of the Navy as "secret", "confidential", or "restricted", and all such articles or equipment which may hereafter be so marked with the approval or at the direction of the President. (Roosevelt, 1940, §3)

Roosevelt's prior restraint on all military intelligence was based on a law not envisioned as applicable to documents. This fact Schlesinger attributes to a new, dynamic concept of "national defense," generated by the thinking that "total war made security a total concern" (1973, p. 339). The system soon spread to other bureaucracies, most notably the state department; it was the British creation of a new "Most Secret" classification that spurred the U.S. War Department to respond with the mythic classification of "Top Secret" (Schlesinger, 1973).

The Cold War and Hiss case gave Harry Truman impetus to further enshrine the secrecy system. On February 1, 1950, the President issued Executive Order 10104 (Truman, 1950), redefining vital documents and the authority under which they are made secret [with emphasis added]:

All official military, naval, or air-force books, pamphlets, documents, reports, maps, charts, plans, designs, models, drawings, photographs, contracts, or specifications which *are now marked under the authority or at the direction of the President, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, or the Secretary of the Air Force* as "top secret", "secret", "confidential", or "restricted", and all such articles or equipment which may hereafter be so marked with the approval or at the direction of the President. (Truman, 1950, §2)

Truman superseded his own order with another in 1951, extending the official powers of secrecy to "*any* executive department or agency to classify information when it seemed 'necessary in the interest of national security" (Schlesinger, 1973, p. 340). Eisenhower devised his own code in 1953, which raised the bar for classification, from national "security" to "defense," removing the "for internal circulation only" classification, defining "Confidential," "Secret," and "Top Secret" criterion for the first time, and limiting the number of agencies and individuals with the power to mark documents (Eisenhower, 1953).

Though this would seem to be an improvement, insofar as government transparency went, Schlesinger notes that the system had little oversight and no means of *de*-classifying such documents (1973). In other words, the head of any executive department even remotely responsible for national defense (say, the Central Intelligence Agency) could now classify any document as "Top Secret" without any review or chance that it would ever be opened for public inspection.

By the time the 1957 Commission on Government Security, chaired by Loyd Wright, reported that 1.5 million civil service employees across the government had one of the three stamps, it was already clear that "a legitimate system of restriction" had metamorphosed "into an extravagant and indefensible system of denial" (Schlesinger, 1973, p. 341). When John E. Moss, of the Government Information Subcommittee,

asked why the Defense Department thought it vital to national defense to classify the use of American simian astronauts (or, space-chimps), he was countered with the accusation that his request was akin to installing a communist in every department and disrespect to the secrecy system (Wise, 1973).

Though Eisenhower was known for declassifying documents as soon as he received them, he did nothing to fix the systemic problem. Kennedy, after realizing his mistake in the Bay of Pigs invasion may have stemmed from the groupthink within his administration, tried to establish automatic downgrading and declassification procedures with executive order 10964. In response, security officers sabotaged his efforts by selectively interpreting the command to not be retroactive (Schlesinger, 1973, pp. 342-343).

Richard Nixon was quoted in the *New York Times* as stating, "The whole concept of a return to secrecy in peacetime demonstrates a profound misunderstanding of the role of a free press . . . the plea for security could well become a cloak for the errors, misjudgments and other failings of government" (White House Doubts Need of New Rights Laws now, 1961). During the 1968 Senate Foreign Relations Committee's hearing over the Tonkin Gulf, McNamara revealed that there were classifications above Top Secret; the record of those classifications was also classified (Schlesinger, 1973). Four years later, after William Moorhead picked up John Moss's torch within the House Government Information Subcommittee, a former Pentagon security officer testified that out of 20 million classified documents:

> Less than one-half of 1 per cent . . . actually contain [*sic*] information qualifying even for the lowest defense classification under Executive Order 10501. In other words, the disclosure of information in at least 99 1/2 per

cent of those classified documents could not be prejudicial to the defense interests of the nation. (Schlesinger, 1973, p. 344)

By this point in time, the former disclosure supporter, Nixon, was pressed "to expend more energy in trying to convict [Daniel] Ellsberg than any President had devoted to a criminal case since Jefferson had tried to convict Aaron Burr" (Schlesinger, 1973, p. 348). The impetus for Nixon's action would come in the form of the Pentagon Papers, the largest classified leak in the history of the United States until the publication of the *Afghan War Diary*.

2.2   The Pentagon Papers

From 1969 to 1971, defense analyst and RAND Corporation employee Daniel Ellsberg took classified and damaging information from his place of employment and conspired with the *New York Times* to make it public. The documents Ellsberg leaked to the *New York Times*, eventually called *The Pentagon Papers*, changed American foreign policy in Southeast Asia and the world. Few documents, short of the Constitution or Declaration of Independence, compare in political import to this top-secret history of the United States' *actual* involvement in Southeast Asia.

Ellsberg has been stalwart in defending the congruency of the Pentagon Papers to the Afghan War Diary, as he did in one news release, co-written with members of the Sam Adams Association for Integrity in Intelligence (Institute for Public Accuracy, 2010). "The truth is," Ellsberg writes, "EVERY attack now made on WikiLeaks and Julian Assange was made against me and the release of the Pentagon Papers at the time" (Institute for Public Accuracy, 2010, para. 5). In 2001, Ellsberg explained that he leaked the Pentagon Papers because of the misinformation released by the Johnson, Nixon, and even earlier presidential administrations, which attempted to hide their own

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bellicose policies in Southeast Asia from the American public (Ellsberg, 2001). The papers are now available on the National Archive's website (Office of the Secretary of Defense, Vietnam Task Force, 1969).

Written by Ellsberg and 35 other analysts, the original documents were sanctioned by Robert McNamara, in 1967 (Correll, 2007). The 7,000-page study encompassed secret policy discussions, histories, and analyses, was overseen by Morton Halperin and managed by Leslie Gelb. Ellsberg's exposure to the project directly precipitated his hardening opposition to the Vietnam War, as well as his taking a job at RAND, a "federal contract research center that did a considerable amount of defense work" (Correll, 2007, para. 16). Ellsberg used this access to request a copy of the secret history he had worked on. Only his supervisor during the project, Gelb, objected, but Halperin apparently smoothed this over, allowing Ellsberg to check out the information to his office (Correll, 2007).

On October 1st, 1969, Ellsberg and Anthony J. Russo Jr., a former RAND employee, began photocopying the papers. Ellsberg would bring a section out of RAND each night and return them in the morning (Correll, 2007). In February 1971, Ellsberg made the papers available to Neil Sheehan of the *New York Times*. Sheehan eventually talked the publisher into to releasing 134 pages of the documents with a front-page headline on June 13, 1971 (Correll, 2007, para. 23-27). Correll stated, "Publication of all 7,000 pages in the newspaper was not possible" (2007, para. 21).

President Nixon's initial reaction was to ignore the papers because he enjoyed the fact that they embarrassed the Johnson administration. Kissinger, who eventually convinced Nixon he should be concerned, wrote: "The massive hemorrhage of state

secrets was bound to raise doubts about our reliability in the minds of other governments, friend or foe, and indeed about the stability of our political system " (Kissinger, 1979, p. 729). The U.S. Justice Department and the Nixon administration eventually began to take the leaks seriously. Indeed, 'the plumbers,' the group of specialized whistleblower detectives, employed by Nixon as a result of his new found paranoia surrounding the truth and lack of confidence in the Justice Department's ability to suppress leaks, were a result of *The Pentagon Papers* and the eventual downfall of Nixon himself. Many leaks would occur in the future, but other than a particularly disappointing one by Bill Clinton, none since the Pentagon Papers have unseated a President.

2.3 The Afghan War Diary

The story of the release of the Afghan War Diary begins with Julian Assange, who grew up poor in Australia. He and his mother moved frequently to avoid an abusive father. Assange made an art out of hacking and a (screen) name for himself, at age 19, in 1994, by opening a backdoor to the United States MilNet (Military Network). Two years later, he received a fine and a suspended sentence (Brånstad, 2011). Then, after setting up Australia's first Internet service provider (ISP), Assange faced further criticism for helping publish *The Manual of Scientology*; a hilarious legal battle if not for the massive amount the Church of Scientology spent on litigation (Brånstad, 2011). Assange's childhood not only led him to assist Victoria Police in catching child pornographers but also prompted him to co-organize the Parent Inquiry into Child Protection in Australia.

Having learned an important lesson about a hacker's place in the world, Assange registered Leaks.org in 1999, a precursor to WikiLeaks, which he would register in 2006. WikiLeaks was designed as a collaborative experience between those with access to data and those with the skills to get the data public and keep it that way. The site even anonymized users who submitted data, akin to a "digital dead letter drop" (Brånstad, 2011, n.p.).

By 2007, the site had published documents that exposed Daniel Arap Moi for embezzling gargantuan amounts of money from the Kenyan state treasury while he occupied the Kenyan presidency in addition to the revelation that Kenyan police were routinely employing "death patrols" to neutralize forces opposed to Arap Moi (Brånstad, 2011, n.p.). Though the general public was not receptive to the leaks, the world's oldest and largest hacker organization, the German Chaos Computer Club, was quite the opposite: Daniel Domscheit-Berg (who went by the pseudonym, 'Daniel Schmitt'), a long-time member of Chaos, began to hear about WikiLeaks in late-2007. He quit his consulting job to volunteer full-time for the new leak site (Brånstad, 2011).

Even with talented volunteers rushing to WikiLeaks' aid, the site still needed a physical base for their servers. The emergence of the Swedish Pirate Party (a futuristic political party whose key platform is freedom of information and net neutrality) and, to some extent, the country's liberal media regulation, brought WikiLeaks to a "suburban, Stockholm basement" where hosting company, PRQ, provided secure and stable servers for the world's secrets to filter into and out of. Michael Viborg, owner and operator of PRQ, who appeared in the PBS: Frontline documentary, *WikiRebels*, auspiciously commented: "This is a ticking information bomb, instead of conventional

weapons. Hopefully, this information can somehow stop some conventional weapons"

(Brånstad, 2011). PRQ refused to censor any information from their server that was

legal under Swedish law and refused to disclose the IP address of the individuals

operating the site; this gave WikiLeaks a wide berth to post leaks of political and moral

significance.

Though WikiLeaks stayed at PRQ for less than two years before moving to its

current site[1], it released a considerable body of previously-secret documents with mass

effect on the mainstream media from that location. These included: the Guantanamo

Bay handbook (United States Department of Defense, 2007); Sarah Palin's private

emails from two different accounts, proving the then-governor's malfeasance in avoiding

transparency laws (WikiLeaks, 2008); and the Minton report, proving the Multinational

Trafigura corporation was dumping toxic waste off the Ivory Coast (Minton, 2009). A

secret gag order prevented the *Guardian* newspaper from publishing the Minton report

or even mentioning the web address (also known as a uniform resource locator or URL)

for the WikiLeaks report. The gag order prevented the *Guardian* from publishing a

British Minister of Parliament's questions during a public session that mentioned the

report. The gag order was even used to sue foreign media broadcasters for libel in the

British high courts. WikiLeaks (predictably) published the "secret" gag order (Maddison,

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[1]WikiLeaks current home, the Pionen Data Center, is a self-contained, secure facility retrofitted into a Cold War-era military bunker carved out of solid granite, reportedly able to withstand a nuclear attack. Built underneath the bedrock of downtown Stockholm's Vita Berg Park, the space was retrofitted by architect Albert France-Lanord to literally look like a James Bond set. The Pionen Data Center could be interpreted to organically illustrate the reality of McLuhan's prediction that espionage would become an art-form as a result of electronic media artifacts, a theoretical proposition discussed below in the literature review and theoretical framework. Ironically enough, the move was prompted by the receipt and publication of leaked documents from the United States Army Counterintelligence Center, which not only called the web-based volunteer organization a threat to national security, but also explored options to neutralize WikiLeaks (United States Army Counterintelligence Center, 2008).

2009) once it was forwarded to them from Synnove Bakke, a Norwegian reporter (WikiLeaks, 2009), making the entire exercise pointless.

These actions were just the beginning pages of what was to become the WikiLeaks portfolio. In a message akin to a public service announcement, the site published the official lists of banned websites for a variety of countries, including Iran, Thailand, and the People's Republic of China (Brånstad, 2011). State-owned Internet service providers attempted to shut WikiLeaks down. WikiLeaks also published internal documents from Icelandic state bank, Kaupthing, exposing cronyism, complacency, and secrecy endemic to the bank was partially responsible for the Icelandic banking implosion of October 2008, resulting in millions of people losing their life's savings (Kaupthing Bank, 2009). Despite financial problems, at one point foregoing the more expensive hosting of documents and keeping only a submission and donation link on the WikiLeaks homepage, the organization made good on their mission statement. Within the first two years of the site going public, the organization had published well over one million documents of political and moral significance that had never before seen the light of day (Brånstad, 2011).

Despite WikiLeak's impact, only two figures from the organization had appeared publicly by 2009. Although it was Assange's "crazy, white-haired dude" personality that initially attracted the best and the worst kind of attention to WikiLeaks, a second character – U.S. Army Private First Class Bradley Manning – would eventually join him in the ranks of the notorious. The television documentary program *Frontline: WikiSecrets* has documented what they could about Manning, who claimed in web

chats to have had a somewhat-less-than-anonymous line of communication with Julian Assange (Gaviria & Smith, 2011).

Manning's military career was marked by a lack of discipline: At his first assignment to Ft. Drum, Manning was reprimanded for throwing chairs and getting into verbal altercations. He went off base for his mandatory counseling. Friends were worried that a picture of his boyfriend on his desk, his unwillingness to take the victimization and harassment dished out by his peers, and his "liking" gay marriage and joining the "End Don't Ask Don't Tell" group on Facebook would hinder his career (Gaviria & Smith, 2011). But Manning's technological skills apparently justified the risk of stationing him at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Hammer, where he arrived in mid-October 2009.

Manning was assigned at FOB Hammer to man a computer terminal at what is commonly known as a SCIF (Sensitive Compartmented Internet Facility), a multi-network terminal designed post-9/11 to rapidly share data by amalgamating it in the field. The same reforms that extended the ability of field units to rapidly access and share information allowed Manning to manipulate systems to retrieve military and intelligence secrets contained on the JWICS (Joint World-wide Intelligence Communication System) and SIPRNet (Secret Internet Protocol Router Network) networks that his duties required him to surf (Gaviria & Smith, 2011). Among the treasure trove of possible leaks were military and diplomatic intelligence, video from every helicopter, drone, or helmet cam, and field reports from unit commanders. Using compact discs and a clever tactic of lip-syncing Lady Gaga songs, Manning was able to download files from the networks onto the discs, thanks to the SCIF's utter lack of any

security measure preventing or detecting activity (Gaviria & Smith, 2011). Investigators

have stated that they believe Manning took this data, including the *Collateral Murder*

(Assange, 2010) raw camera feed, the field reports from Iraq and Afghanistan, and

possibly more, back to hackers at Cambridge while on leave (Gaviria & Smith, 2011;

Brånstad, 2011). *Frontline: WikiSecrets* displays a picture of Manning in a hackers'

community space at Cambridge, before he returned to Iraq in February of 2010 (Gaviria

& Smith, 2011).

In a further ironic twist, when Manning returned to FOB Hammer from his leave in

February 2010, according to investigators, he installed data mining software on

computers and downloaded an even more audacious leak (Gaviria & Smith, 2011):

diplomatic cables (251,287 to be exact) of which, 15,072 records have been published

so far in the ongoing *Cablegate* leak (WikiLeaks, 2010c). One scholar, writing a piece

in *Foreign Policy*, even credited one of the cables with "fueling" the downfall of the

Tunisian autocracy in early-2011, writing:

> The release of a cable revealing lavish lifestyle of the Tunisian strongarm
> [*sic*] leader's son-in-law, complete with a pet tiger that reminded the
> ambassador [from the United States] of "Uday Hussein's lion cage in
> Baghdad" helped fuel anti-government rioting in Tunisia that eventually
> forced the president into exile. (Jasanoff, 2011, p. 101)

On April 5, 2010, at a press conference in Washington, D.C., Julian Assange and

Daniel Schmidt [Domscheit-Berg] unveiled a video titled *Collateral Murder* (Assange,

2010)*,* which shocked the world as it went viral. Assange originally wanted to sell it for

$1M (USD) to encourage media groups to make use of the footage (Gaviria & Smith,

2011, n.p.). Made from a Blackhawk attack helicopter's gun-turret camera, the video

depicts the slaughter of two Reuters journalists, a dozen other men, and the driver of a

minivan who stopped to help the injured while taking his children to school (Assange, 2010). Assange, though he posted both versions, first released the edited video with 'tags' to add context and captions on the audio. The result was criticism for his overt subjectivity, resulting in the subsequent release of the raw video and audio. WikiLeaks has also added video from United States Army veteran Ethan McCord, who attests to the veracity of events depicted in the video and tells his account (Assange, 2010).

In July 2010, WikiLeaks released the *Afghan War Diary*, a collection of field reports giving detailed accounts of day-to-day military operations from soldiers on the ground (WikiLeaks, 2010a). Three months later, in October of 2010, WikiLeaks released the *Iraq War Logs*, a similar set of reports (though much larger in quantity) from Iraq (WikiLeaks, 2010b). As told by Greg Mitchell of *The Nation* magazine, Manning's story resembled, in all but sexual preference, a combination of Herman Melville's "Bartleby" and Chuck Palahniuk's narrator from *Fight Club*. By leaking these documents, Manning destroyed his life, his career, and a massive (if secret) institutional history.

After he broke up with his boyfriend and was demoted for striking an officer, Manning was reportedly depressed. In response, he sought attention from another hacker named Adrian Lamo; the Army Private believed he had sensed a "kindred spirit" (Poulsen & Zetter, 2010a). In their online chats, Manning told Lamo:

> Hillary Clinton and several thousand diplomats around the world are going to have a heart attack when they wake up one morning, and find an entire repository of classified foreign policy is available, in searchable format, to the public. (Poulsen & Zetter, 2010a, para. 5)

The young specialists talked, and Manning confessed to leaking various files. He said he had given up on quietly doing as instructed after investigating a case wherein clerics

had been arrested and charged with producing anti-Iraqi propaganda. For writing a

political critique on the corruption within the Maliki regime, they were jailed even after

the intelligence analyst alerted his commanding officer (Poulsen & Zetter, 2010b).

Manning also dropped Assange's name into the conversation quite early. He told

Lamo:

> . . . lets [*sic*] just say *someone* I [*sic*] know intimately well, has been penetrating US classified networks, mining data like the ones described… and been transferring that data from the classified networks over the "air gap" onto a commercial network computer… sorting the data, compressing it, encrypting it, and uploading it to a crazy white haired aussie who can't seem to stay in one country very long . . . crazy white haired dude = Julian Assange (Mitchell, 2011a) [2]

Journalists haven't always reported on the entire contents of these

conversations. For example, although Poulsen and Zetter (2010a; 2010b) have made

major breaks in the story, they or their organization, *Wired*, an online technology

magazine, heavily redacted the chat logs after they were received from Adrian Lamo,

prompting sharp criticism from other journalists, such as Glenn Greenwald (Greenwald,

2010). However, Poulsen and Zetter (2010b) could not resist posting the most sensitive

data, the technical details regarding how Manning overcame the protections at a secure

facility:

> [Manning:] funny thing is… we transferred [*sic*] so much data on unmarked CDs… everyone did… videos… movies… music [.] all out in the open [.] bringing CDs too and from the networks was/is a common phenomenon [*sic*] i would come in with music on a CD-RW […] labeled [*sic*] with something like "Lady Gaga"… erase the music… then write a compressed split file [.] no-one suspected a thing […] i didn't [*sic*] even have to hide anything [.]
> [Lamo:] from a professional perspective, i'm [*sic*] curious how the server they were on was insecure [?]
> [Manning:] you had people working 14 hours a day… every single day…

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[2] Greg Mitchell has made this material (excerpts from the Lamo-Manning chat logs) available in advance through his blog at theNation.com, (Mitchell, 2011b)

no weekends… no recreation… people stopped caring after 3 weeks [.] [Lamo:] I [*sic*] mean, technically speaking [?] or was it physical [?] [Manning:] >nod< [indicates a positive answer] there was no physical security […] 5 digit cipher lock… but you could knock [on] the door […] everyone just sat at their workstations… watching music videos / car chases / buildings exploding… and writing more stuff to CD/DVD… the culture fed opportunities [.] (Poulsen & Zetter, 2010b)

Manning was arrested after Lamo, with the help of Poulsen and Mark Rasch, turned the chat logs over to the FBI, the Army, and *Wired*.[3] He has been charged with the leak of the *Collateral Murder* video footage (Assange, 2010), the *Afghan War Diary* (WikiLeaks, 2010a)*, Iraq War Logs* (WikiLeaks, 2010b), and the *Cablegate* (WikiLeaks, 2010c) documents to WikiLeaks. He is currently being held at Ft. Leavenworth Military Prison in solitary confinement (Greenwald, 2011).

WikiLeaks has since released over a half-million documents, presumably leaked by Manning. Some had been withheld for the sake of protecting those named; other documents were released unabridged. Assange shocked the world just after the release of the documents, when he told London's Frontline Club, via skype:

Of course we have an institutional--a cultural--respect for sources. Does that come across to sources of spy organizations or sources of military [organizations] and to some degree we have to fight against our own instincts to protect various types of sources? . . . While we understand the benefit of information going out that in fact we are not obligated to protect other people's sources, military organization and spy organization sources, except from unjust retribution. There are numerous cases where people with no information . . . sell the information or frame others, or engaged in genuinely traitorous behavior and actually that is something for the public to know about. (Frontline Club, 2010, n.p.)

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[3] Mark Rasch, former chief of the Department of Justice, Computer Crimes Unit, now in private practice, put Lamo in touch with FBI and Army officials so he could become their informant (Greenwald, 2010). This informer-triangle of Lamo, Rasch, and Poulsen is made even more interesting by their relationships before Manning contacted Lamo. Rasch had been a favorite source in Poulsen's previous reporting on Lamo's criminal antics, in addition to investigating and pursuing criminal charges against Poulsen, himself, prior to that (Greenwald, 2010).

The diplomatic and political community responded with a vengeance. Vice President Joe Biden called Assange, "a high tech terrorist;" U.S. Representative Pete King attempted to formally designate WikiLeaks as a foreign terrorist organization; and Sarah Palin commented that the US government should treat Assange like Al-Qaeda or Taliban leadership, or as one commentator put it, "in other words, he should be assassinated" (Benkler, 2011, p. 32). This rhetoric was a crushing blow to WikiLeaks' ability to use the services and infrastructure that kept the site running: Apple, Amazon, Mastercard, Visa, Pay-Pal, and EveryDNS all responded to the controversy by withdrawing services from WikiLeaks (Benkler, 2011, p. 32). In response, the Internet-based, direct-action cooperative, 'Anonymous,' performed operations to avenge what they saw as the mistreatment of WikiLeaks, slowing or shutting down the Internet-based financial systems of Mastercard, Visa, and Pay-Pal (Bryan-Low & Gorman, 2011). After WikiLeaks threatened to release a file allegedly containing evidence of endemic corruption within Bank of America, the bank hired 'cyber detectives' from HB Gary Federeral to minimize damage. Assange has recently claimed that he and his organization are being blackmailed to keep these Bank of America documents secret (Assange & Žižek, 2011).

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

While scholarly literature directly on the subject of WikiLeaks is unfortunately rare and often tangential to questions of news framing, the construction of reality, or media effects, the publications of more popular materials such as magazine articles, blogs, and films have boomed. That said, a review of current research that centers on WikiLeaks, the Afghan War Diary, Julian Assange, Bradley Manning, and the balance of power in today's political communication systems is presented.

3.1   WikiLeaks, the Afghan War Diary, Assange, and Manning

A search of scholarship revealed 28 peer-reviewed articles on the subject of WikiLeaks, a large swath of which might be considered as less than academic. None of the articles report on research that relates to journalistic framing of WikiLeaks or related topics. Though WikiLeaks has become a polarizing source of debate and an easy to use anecdote for various academic arguments, this review of literature demonstrates that scholars of communications (and, more broadly, the social sciences) have yet to give WikiLeaks an appropriate 'big picture' treatment.

Authors of several law review articles have dealt lengthily with the legal aspects of WikiLeaks. Jonathan Peters, author of a *Federal Communications Law Journal* article on WikiLeaks and journalist's privilege*,* wrote that those who leak documents through the site "would not qualify to claim federal reporter's privilege in any form." The article rests its overall conclusion on the contention that anyone who uses WikiLeaks to release secret information would not be covered by the First Amendment or any federal shield law that might be published sometime in the future. In addition, he discussed his

view that WikiLeaks did not do enough to "minimize harm," something that any

reputable investigative journalist would strive for (Peters, 2011).

A second law review article that discusses WikiLeaks was published in *North Carolina Journal of Law & Technology* (Hester, 2011). Hester examines the effects of media artifacts in defining the role of a journalist, thus admitting the dynamic nature of the journalistic classification insofar as federal law is concerned. In addition, the article suggests that the distinction between leaking and publishing could "break down when applied to the facts of a potential U.S. suit against WikiLeaks and Julian Assange" if federal prosecutors were to pursue charges (Hester, 2011, p. 191). Hester also points out that if a federal shield act were passed, it might criminalize publication of classified information that benefits a "transnational threat" (Hester, 2011, p. 195). Hester maintains that a redefinition of espionage is necessitated by new technologies:

> The advent of computer technology, and perhaps even more importantly, the Internet, has created newer and faster modes of intelligence acquisition, transfer, theft, communication, and publication. Courts have consistently perceived a line beteen the person who leaks . . . and the person or institution that publishes . . . but when modern technologies blur the line between leaking and publishing classified data the balance can no longer be maintained . . . The multiple technological innovations that enabled the massive transfer and publication of the secret documents make the Assange situation an interesting case study for the future of the Espionage Act in a highly interconnected and networked world. (Hester, 2011, p. 196)

Columbia Journalism Review, which is aimed largely at journalists and members of the public with an interest in journalism, has published two articles on WikiLeaks, "Will WikiLeaks work" (Goldberg, 2007), and more recently, "Unnecessary secrets" (Ungar, 2011). Goldberg's article is written with a sense of cynicism about the project,

complaining of secrecy amongst the project organizers and demanding more

transparency from the activist group:

> There may be legitimate reasons for all the mystery; maybe the Wikileaks
> [*sic*] founders believe they need to remain decentralized and in the
> shadows to protect themselves from retribution, legal or otherwise. If
> that's the case, then the Wikileaks [*sic*] folks should simply say so, maybe
> through a principled leak of their own. (Goldberg, 2007, p. 11)[4]

The second article (Ungar, 2011) tangentially touches on WikiLeaks, poking fun

at the White House's strategy of "task forces" to review documents and espionage

prosecutions against non-US citizens, such as Assange. The main focus of the article

is not on the necessity or moral certitude of WikiLeaks, but the severe hindrance of the

U.S. secrecy system to journalists and everyday citizens.

Numerous academic and professionally oriented journals and magazines have

published short pieces and editorials on WikiLeaks, but none of them report on

academic research. A 2009 edition of *Information Management Journal*, for example,

includes an article claiming WikiLeaks published the entirety of the Congressional

Research Service's database going back almost two decades (Information Management

Journal, 2009). The reports, "estimated in value by WikiLeaks at approximately one

billion dollars (USD), had been sought by groups such as the Center for Democracy and

Technology… for years" (Information Management Journal, 2009).

Teacher Librarian labels a critique of WikiLeaks by Goldsborough as peer

reviewed. Goldsborough (2010) presents a wonderful rehashing of mainstream media

coverage of WikiLeaks and occasionally uses blogs and online media to deride

Assange and his organization. Although he does little to corroborate the bloggers and

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[4] WikiLeaks did exactly this by leaking the Army Counterintelligence Center report that proposed ways to
destroy the organization and website (United States Army Counterintelligence Center, 2008).

"conspiracy theorists" he quotes, Goldsborough is intent on criticizing web sources for "the paucity of what the Old Media of newspapers and magazines [do] best: Investigate" (Goldsborough, 2010, p. 57). Goldsborough uses Internet sources to add to the available "hypothetical harms" that WikiLeaks presumably subjects society to. This includes a scenario where "WikiLeaks' actions . . . could potentially lead to a nuclear Armageddon," and the "speculation" of a possibility that WikiLeaks would next release sensitive information about "millions of Americans' personal and business bank accounts" (Goldsborough, 2010, p. 57).

Risk Management published a similar article in their "Forefront section," entitled "Data security in the age of WikiLeaks" (Ruppin, 2011). This article at least makes a sound case for media effects theory as a means of analysis: Ruppin blames "mobile workers," "cloud services on the rise," and globalization for the insufficiency of mere compliance with privacy and information security legislation to protect data (Ruppin, 2011, p. 8). Yet again, this article does little in the way of actually investigating WikiLeaks or even the news event itself.

A few peer-reviewed articles stand out from these brief pieces because of their more relevant and comprehensive treatment of WikiLeaks. *Social Education*'s contribution to the academic milieu around WikiLeaks focuses on the legal and political liabilities of Assange—even his alienation from the media, a tactic hinted at by national security law expert, Kathleen Clark (Freivogel, 2011). The author noted that when Jeffrey Sterling was arrested in January 2011 for detailing a botched CIA operation aimed at the Iranian nuclear program to a *New York Times* author, he was immediately put in prison and kept from the press. The government's reasoning was that a

government employee who leaks information to the public is more dangerous than one

who sells secrets solely to an enemy of the United States, because the information

would then help all *potential enemies* (Freivogel, 2011). The worry of Kathleen Clark,

employed at Washington University in St. Louis, is that the attempt to vilify Sterling (and

Assange) is a tactic to alienate them from their obvious allies in the media (Freivogel,

2011). Freivogel seeks out the input of a handful of journalism experts for a

bidirectional perspective regarding Assange's status as a publisher, journalist, spy, *et

cetera* (2011). He concludes that while Assange may not be the most ethical journalist,

he is still a publisher whose *Cablegate* publication, for instance, "helped reveal

wrongdoing in the Mideast even more quickly than the Pentagon Papers affected the

Vietnam War" (Freivogel, 2011, p. 141).

The articles published by *AMASS* are admittedly warm towards Assange,

Manning, and WikiLeaks. An obvious sense of subjectivity is apparent in the work of

two authors: Wright (2010) and Wolf (2010). The two authors' defenses of both public

figures focus on the typical, pro-WikiLeaks narrative. Wright, a retired US Army Colonel

and former diplomat, opined, "Bradley Manning is a patriot of our democracy who

stayed loyal to what is right, risking his own security. His loyalty to the Constitution and

the American people transcends partisan politics" (Wright, 2010, p. 38). Referring to

Assange's rape charge, Wolf wrote:

> Anyone who works in supporting women who have been raped knows
> from this grossly disproportionate response that Britain and Sweden,
> surely under pressure from the US, are cynically using the serious issue of
> rape as a fig leaf to cover the shameful issue of Mafioso-like global
> collusion in silencing dissent. That is not the State embracing feminism.
> That is the State pimping feminism. (Wolf, 2010, p. 30).

Tapscott and Williams, writing in the journal *Financial Executive* (2011), note that

the most powerful organization in the world, the U.S. government, cannot keep a

"monopoly on information" and Assange is also targeting financial service companies on

his "hit list." But instead of proposing expensive or inefficient new security measures,

the authors propose corporate leadership "embrace transparency, not fear it" (Tapscott

& Williams, 2011).

In what is the most statistically and quantitatively rigorous work to come from the

broader WikiLeaks phenomenon, four political geographers produced a rigorous study

of the *Afghan War Logs* published in *Eurasian Geography and Economics* (O'Loughlin,

et al, 2010)*.* These political geographers make short work of the statistical trends found

in the *contents* of the leak itself, making this a valuable source for understanding the

war in Afghanistan, but not so much the media treatment of WikiLeaks.

Salient facts can be mined from this work. For instance, one can understand the

handling of the war and what story the *Afghan War Diary* tells if one is patient and

skillful enough to truly listen amidst the clamor of commentary and opinion. Focusing

"attention on the geographic and temporal elements of the files that are marked by the

geographic and time stamps in the individual records," four political geographers used

the leak to construct the backbone of a historical narrative (O'Loughlin, et al, 2010, p.

493).

The researchers also used the classified documents to compare previous

conclusions (determined from media) declassified, and non-governmental organization

accounts, against the uniform data of the "unexpurgated war logs" (O'Loughlin, et al,

2010, p. 472). They saw this as a test of reliability for sources available to academics

and civilian policy analysts; a solution to the ever-present dilemma in their field:

> Policy suggestions and academic analysis are always subject to the
> criticism that the data from which conclusions are drawn have been
> falsified or are biased, uneven in coverage, amnesiac about certain
> events, or exculpatory of government decisions.

They conclude that the leaked documents did add significant, new information, at least

to their scholarly endeavors.

The most diverse range of perspectives on WikiLeaks comes from *New*

Perspectives Quarterly, which devoted the first quarter of their winter 2011 issue to the

topic of WikiLeaks in the larger social and international systems. Gardels (2011) opens

the issue with echoes of Tappscott and Williams' suggestion that transparency can be

beneficial, but does so from a foreign policy perspective. The other side of this equation

is that while closed societies open, open societies will have to close themselves off

because of "extreme glasnostics like Assange or cyberspies [*sic*] trying to climb

firewalls" (Gardels, 2011, p. 5).

Gardels, the editor of *New Perspectives*, compares Russian philosopher

Aleksander Solzhenitsyn's critique of Mikhail Gorbachev's revolutionary transparency

policy, glastnost ("ruined everything"), with the WikiLeaks saga, opining that "we might

well ponder whether we are as prepared to responsibly handle the consequences of

total freedom of information as we were to fight totalitarian oppression" (Gardels, 2011,

p. 6). The editor then pointedly interviews various experts to develop a multi-

disciplinary perspective on WikiLeaks and Julian Assange. Stanford visiting scholar,

Evgeny Morozov (2011) writes:

Assange has a vision for changing the world and he believes that, if implemented, this vision might dwarf all these current harms to diplomacy. Only if we, or he himself, knew his theoretical template of a totally free information society could we then draw limits on what is acceptable or not. (2011, pp. 7-8).

Though Morozov seems to write from an objective point of view, his comments lead his readers to believe that Assange has not made any literary, or even oral contributions, to the public sphere that would outline his vision. This is hardly the case. Assange's radical vision was most recently discussed with Slavov Zizek at another, two-hour event hosted by Amy Goodman and produced by London's *Frontline Club* (Assange & Žižek, 2011). His is not a vision of a brand new world that requires outlining; it is a vision of a world in which the old cartoon *G.I. Joe* adage, "knowing is half the battle," is a reality and individuals have a chance to make decisions (as citizens, consumers, and members of society) that are in their best interests[5]. Morozov hints at this goal when he writes, "Wikileaks and Assange in particular will emerge as leaders of a new political 'geek' movement that would be built on the principles of absolute 'Internet Freedom,' transparency, very permissive copyright law, and so on" (Morozov, 2011, p. 8). He is quick to add that treating Assange and WikiLeaks as terrorists will only "nudge the movement toward violent forms of resistance," whereas playing nice might keep the organization like a "digital equivalent to the green movement in Europe" (Morozov, 2011, p. 9). This is interesting, given that the Green movement in the United States has been vilified and labeled violent for direct actions designed to be non-violent

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[5] The author strongly urges readers to invest the two hours necessary to watch this event. It is likely to be the most in depth analysis by Assange as to what he has learned over the last five years and what he hopes to accomplish with his project, which he concludes is to create a "sacrosanct" historical record that can never again be rewritten by those currently in power (Assange & Žižek, 2011). This goal is herculean if not impossible, in the sense that he wishes to firmly peg history to reality, operating under the principle that *"who controls the past . . . controls the future,"* and ending the reign of those who control the present over the past.

and only destroy property while the only violence that Morozov cites is the Anonymous attacks on Visa and MasterCard (2011). Morozov cannot decide which is worse, governments censoring the Internet, or "geek" activists hitting the globalized undo button on that censorship.

There is reason to believe it dangerous to support WikiLeaks in the public sphere. When HB Gary's system was hacked and confidential proposals from Hunton and Williams (designed for their clients, Bank of America and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce) were leaked to WikiLeaks by hackers from Anonymous, it came to light that the digital detectives had proposed faking leaks to damage the website and even proposed threatening the careers of journalists seen as less than critical of WikiLeaks, including Glenn Greenwald of *Salon.com* (Greenwald, Dylan Ratigan Show, 2011). This may be one reason English-language publications are so lacking in literature that critically examines WikiLeaks or Assange. On the other hand, it may simply be that objectivity is completely impossible in the coverage of such a profound global phenomenon. This could be interpreted as an indication that humanistic criticism may be one of the best ways to understand how the media cover such a self-involved event.

3.2   The Press in an Age of Transition

It is impossible to interpret the framing of the *Afghan War Diary* without first understanding the context(s) in which journalists operate. As the "fourth estate," traditional media live within a social and political structure that affects their organizational cultures and relationships with government, especially in regards to the secrecy system. Highlighting that relationship, this section examines trends in journalism from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Grossman and Rourke (1976) avoid understating the symbiotic relationship of the press and the executive establishment by eschewing an adversarial relationship. They then analyze Presidential exchange with the press, given the power of traditional print and broadcast news sources. "If it is credible to speak of an imperial presidency," wrote Grossman and Rourke, alluding to the title of Schlesinger's history of the evolution of executive power, "it may be no less plausible to think of the emerging citadels of power in the American press as an imperial media" (Grossman & Rourke, 1976, p. 470). Their analysis ultimately concluded that the loss of presidential credibility, increasing professionalization of journalists, and increasing dominance of large national print and broadcast syndicates, were leading journalists to a point where they were "much less susceptible to presidential domination" (Grossman & Rourke, 1976, p. 469). Ultimately, the authors could not rule out the possibility that the President might keep the upper hand in the exchange (Grossman & Rourke, 1976).

In contrast to this line of thinking, other researchers have less faith in the power of journalists within political and occupational/professional social structures. In their analysis of the journalistic turf wars of the early 1990s, a period that saw the birth of new political news forums, Dooley and Grosswiler found that many mainstream journalists were nearly oblivious to the threats posed by those who called themselves journalists (Dooley & Grosswiler, 1997, pp. 37-38). More importantly, these authors write, with my emphasis in italics, "*New political media are precipitating an awareness*, at least among some mainstream political journalists, that their jurisdiction over political news reporting is in jeopardy" (Dooley & Grosswiler, 1997, pp. 43-44).

Thus, whereas American journalists of the 19th century claimed "occupational independence" (Dooley, 1999, pp. 351-352), the members of today's Washington press corps have seemingly given it up. Patronage and press passes buy journalists access to the beltway's more inner circles; this access buys journalists scoops, which in turn produce return on investment for employers. When Helen Thomas' incendiary remarks about Israeli Jews cost her the cherished front row seat she had occupied for decades in the White House press room, Fox News and Bloomberg supposedly began competing for the open seat. It took John Stewart, the "fake newsman," of *The Daily Show*, to ask, "are you journalists, or are you rushing a sorority?" (Linkins, 2010, para. 3). According to Linkins, a *Huffington Post* reporter, the overwhelming sense gathered from the White House Press Corps losing a member was their misplaced values, "lame perks, proximity to power, dickish oneupsmanship [*sic*]" (Linkins, 2010, para. 2). Indeed, it would seem that the press, when given the upper hand, has allowed itself to be sucked back onto an unlevel playing field.

This is exactly the argument of Daniel Hallin, who contends that due to the collapse of American political consensus stemming from the New Deal and the Cold War, the "high modernist" period of American journalism has ended. Hallin argues that these two major political factors allowed for the journalistic presumption of objectivity and disinterest while operating within the establishment (Hallin, 1992). The once-upon-a-time "voluntary agreements in which journalists gained extraordinary access to the inner workings of politics" was possible because the role of the journalist was "above politics" (Hallin, 1992, p. 152). As journalists became bolder in challenging authority, their objectivity had to give way to a more mediated form of reporting, according to

Hallin, who notes the *Pentagon Papers* as a perfect example. However, he reminds his

readers, "The relation between the news media and political power is still tight and

symbiotic; and it seems to me that the news media are still very much the junior

partner." He concludes that journalists remain "too much insiders, to close to the

powerful institutions whose actions need to be discussed," and, similarly, that "they are

too constrained by the need to avoid offense to any major political faction or, most

powerfully, to the majority sentiment of the moment" (Hallin, 1992, p. 156).

On the other hand, the same cannot be said for Internet hackers, bloggers, and

contributors to wikis, who aren't a part of the establishment and have no ethical (or even

sometimes legal) worries about publishing the truth, raw and unmediated. Some "white-

hat" (generally, politically motivated and non-malicious) hackers actually see this as

their role. Julian Assange was a legend in this community long before he founded

WikiLeaks. In 1989, the same year the WANK (Worms Against Nuclear Killers) virus

infected computers at NASA and the Department of Energy, widely considered the first

politically motivated hacking, McLuhan and Powers predicted:

> In an electrically configured society all the critical information . . . would be
> available to everyone at the same time. Espionage becomes an art form.
> Culture becomes organized like an electric circuit . . . The computer, the
> satellite, the data base, and the nascent multi-carrier telecommunications
> corporation will break apart what remains of the old print oriented ethos by
> diminishing the number of people in the workplace, destroying what is left
> of personal privacy, and politically destabilizing entire nations through the
> wholesale transfer of uncensored information across national borders via
> countless microwave units and interactive satellites. (McLuhan & Powers,
> 1989, pp. 92-93)

Indeed, in the electronic world of the information age, there is no need for a

photocopier, a journalist, or a traditional publisher--just a kid with a modem, a computer,

and a website like WikiLeaks--to send shivers down the spines of those in power. This

potentiality should particularly worry journalists:

> Like other occupational groups, journalists have long sought to build and
> sustain the public's acceptance as its primary providers of news and
> editorial commentary . . . One of the most important environments within
> which journalists have fought to establish and maintain work turf has been
> the political communications work sphere . . . Not only did the journalistic
> occupational group structurally differentiate from politicians, but its societal
> roles were transformed . . . Part of this process involved journalists'
> wresting from politicians the role of providing political content in the
> Newspapers. (Dooley & Grosswiler, 1997, pp. 33-34)

In this sense, journalists can be seen as playing the role of epistemological

referee, insofar as the political game goes. Unfortunately, recent data suggests that this

may no longer be the case. Eighty-two percent of Americans now report that they use

the Internet, at a startling average of 19 hours per week (USC Annenberg School for

Communication and Journalism, 2010, p. 2). Yet in the same 2010 Digital Future

Report, published by the USC-Annenberg School's Center for the Digital Future, only

27% of Internet users reported "that by using the Internet public officials will care more

about what people think" and only 29% reporting "that the Internet can give people more

of a say in what government does" (USC Annenberg School for Communications and

Journalism, 2010, p. 2). This is not to say the Internet user is not changing the material

world:

> The study found that as sources of information—their primary function—
> newspapers rank below the Internet or television. Only 56 percent of
> Internet users ranked newspapers as "important or very important sources
> of information for them" while 78 percent rated the Internet as their primary
> sources of information (USC Annenberg School for Communication and
> Journalism, 2010, p. 3).

Nevertheless, "Only 46 percent of users said they have some trust or a lot of trust in the

Internet in general," while "nine percent of users have no trust in the Internet" (USC

Annenberg School for Communications and Journalism, 2010, p. 3). This would imply

that while newspapers move their content onto the Internet and governments, state and

local, now send out tweets, the public distrusts all the conflicting information more.

It would be regrettable to forget McLuhan's analysis of the defense and

Intelligence communities reliance on the jet airplane, the typewriter, and the oral report:

"Such is the speed of this process of the meeting [of the media], that those going forth

to the ends of the earth often arrive unable to spell the name of the spot to which they

have been sent as experts" (McLuhan, 1964, p. 76). Yet, just pages later, McLuhan's

typical prescience shines through when he writes,

> Electromagnetic technology requires utter human docility and quiescence
> of meditation such as benefits an organism that now wears its brain
> outside its skull and its nerves outside its hide . . . But there is this
> difference, that previous technologies were partial and fragmentary, and
> the electric is now total and inclusive. An external consensus or
> conscience is now as necessary as private consciousness. (McLuhan,
> 1964, p. 86)

On the one hand, McLuhan points out that our electronic western culture is

poised on the brink of a new collective global consciousness (something definitely

resembling his harping on satellites and computers). On the other, he forgets to note

that the fragmented consciousness of individual ethics and the ethics of the collective

actor do not seem to allow for such a coherent, unified consensus. The Internet

medium positions users within its nebulous center, even if they maintain the economic

and political status of the global periphery in physical reality.

The pattern of Internet whistle-blowing in this context would seem like the way

out, the transcendence of this particular confusion. It could yet be the fact that the old

structures of the state and print media organizations, among others, have somewhat

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suddenly invaded the digital medium that has decreased the general level of trust in the Internet. To add one further twist, 78 percent of users claim to trust most of the information available on the sites *they* visit (USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, 2010, p. 3). This could be seen as a clear extension of the fragmented biases of Western readers and the various interests that serve their need-gratification-based consumerism operating under the informational mantra of *my news source is holier than yours*. The McLuhan quote, "external consensus or conscience is now as necessary as private consciousness" (McLuhan, Understanding Media, 1964, p. 86) could never be more true than in a world where those who consider themselves factually informed pick and choose sources and facts to their liking. Media barons, like Rupert Murdoch, have responded accordingly.

Does WikiLeaks provide the fact-emporium that individual information consumers could use to develop such an "external consensus or conscience"? As a corollary, if the only way to hold on to big audiences is for journalists to hold on to their press pass and the access that make their stories of national interest, then the only means left to buttressing their legitimacy is found in unquestioning repetition of the official line so as to not lose that access. Caught between the rock of power and the hard-place of public perception, journalists generally failed to cover the most recent documents released by *WikiLeaks*, the *Iraq War Logs*; as a matter of fact, the Pentagon actually requested it (Flaherty, 2010). Though the coverage of the leak petered out within months here in the states, only to be reignited in favor of reporting on rape allegations and the likelihood of what Assange has called "ham-fisted investigations" (Assange & Žižek, 2011), the leaked content has generated substantial *news* headlines in Europe (On The Media,

2010). It has also remained salient to domestic Internet news websites, such as DemocracyNow.org and the HutchinsonPost.com.

As this chapter makes clear, control of information (and therefore the world) in the twenty-first century is up for grabs. The professionals who control traditional media infrastructures have acted as the gatekeepers to that information, but increasingly find themselves undercut by and reacting to stories from the Internet. It seems likely that those who embrace digital and Internet innovations will pose serious challenges to the power of those who fail to do so. Institutions and individuals capable of quickly adapting, co-opting, and annexing threats to control of information will likely maintain a foothold in future political communication systems.

Chapter 4 covers theoretical perspectives of paramount importance to the thesis, as well as a description of the method used to address its research question.

CHAPTER 4

THEORY AND METHOD

While most news framing analysis is firmly rooted in the quantitative social sciences, humanities-oriented scholars have for the past couple of decades been striving to bring rhetorical framing analysis into wider acceptance (Kuypers, 2010). Following their lead, this thesis is based on D'Angelo's (2002) Lakatosian metatheoretical framework, Scheufele's (1999) process model, Gamson and Modigliani's (1989) constructionist theories, Lawrence's (2010) political context scholarship, and McLuhan and Powers' media ecology paradigm (McLuhan, 1964; McLuhan and Powers, 1989). The amalgamation of such modes of understanding and theorizing provides a solid base for the investigation of the news stories studied in the research. Before describing the thesis's methodology, a review of the most salient of these scholars' ideas is required.

4.1   Theory

4.1.1 A Lakatosian Multiparadigmatic Approach

In 1993, Entman challenged framing scholars to develop a unified news-framing paradigm. In response, there have been attempts to bridge key differences in theory and research on the phenomenon of news frames. The work of one of those who responded to Entman's challenge – Paul D'Angelo – has been influential in the development of this thesis. D'Angelo's (2002) approach, which is referred to here as a multiparadigmatic framing research program, presumes a "hard core" of shared conjectures and empirical goals drawn from the metatheoretical work of Lakatos (1974) to illustrate how "theoretical and paradigmatic diversity has led to a comprehensive view

of the framing process, not fragmented findings in isolated research agendas"

(D'Angelo, 2002, p. 871).

A number of D'Angelo's empirical goals and core conjectures are of importance.

Two of his goals that resonate with this study include the following "To identify thematic

units called frames," and "to investigate the antecedent conditions that produce [such]

frames"(D'Angelo, 2002, p. 873). In addition, four of D'Angelo's (2002) central tenets

provide useful direction. First, he argues, "News frames are themes within news stories

that are carried by various kinds of framing devices"(D'Angelo, 2002, p. 873). This

would imply that to bridge beyond the mere description of thematic units called 'frames,'

qualitative analysis is required to identify and *interpret* the devices that carry them

(Kuypers, 2010, p. 308). As D'Angelo explains, "the content of a frame amalgamates

textual items . . . with the contextual treatment that they receive from framing devices"

(D'Angelo, 2002, p. 873).

Second, "news frames… shape various levels of reality"(D'Angelo, 2002, p. 873).

As news frames are ontologically distinct from the news topics they relate to (Pan &

Kosicki, 1993), they can be seen as "discursive cues." To put it another way,

irrespective of the particular issues that are covered in news stories, news frames

impact intrapersonal (Rhee, 1997), interpersonal (Gamson, 1992), mass media (Gitlin,

1980), and political communication (Entman, 1991).

A third conjecture, that "framing shapes [public] dialogues about public issues"

(D'Angelo, 2002, p. 874) provides some heuristic value to this study. And on a more

primary level, framing is about rhetoric, which is naturally strategic:

> Rhetoric may be viewed as strategic since it is intentional; that is, it is
> employed only when words can make a difference. Persons who are

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interested in influencing how their messages are received will plan ahead; they think ahead to the potential impact of their words. (Kuypers, 2010, p. 288)

Indeed, it's difficult to imagine that the individual journalists who wrote stories related to the Afghan War Diary would not realize on some level that the way they prepared their stories would have an impact on public dialogue.

Finally, D'Angelo holds that a news frame's discursive cues "interact with the cognitive and social behaviors that they have shaped in the first place." As D'Angelo notes, this is rooted in Kinder and Sanders's (1990) description of frames' double lives as "internal structures of the mind," and "devices embedded in political discourse" (as quoted in: D'Angelo, 2002, p. 873). This double-life theory of frames is replicated in research by Entman (1991; 1993) and Popkin (1993), and provides the basis for an important distinction within the framing research program, between news frames and individual frames. My analysis and criticism is aimed at the "devices embedded in political discourse" rather than the individual frames that could be alternately studied, a critical distinction for any academic work on framing (D'Angelo, 2002).

4.1.2 Defining News Frames within a Process Model

In what is arguably the most important piece of literature to the contemporary framing research program, Dietram Scheufele provides both vernacular and process models that are valuable for this research (1999). Foremost among these distinctions is the dichotomy between the kinds of frames that are examined, i.e., *media (or news) frames* vs. *audience (or individual) frames*, and the way frames are operationalized, i.e., as *independent variables* or *dependent variables*. This study is engaged in a rather broad survey of news frames, rather than audience frames, and conceives of them as

dependent rather than independent variables. Consequently, I not only seek out the thematic units in that coverage, but document the process by which competing frames were built and set. This allows for analysis of the structural factors that may have influenced the frame(s) and the presentation of a master narrative, replete with a cast of competing interests attempting to shape reality in their own favor.

Pan and Kosicki (1993) argue that each frame is essentially a "package" made up of a series of "devices," such as syntactic, narrative, thematic, and rhetorical elements. As such, "thematic units," when defined as *frame packages*, can be composed of multiple, second-level thematic devices that contextualize other information. In addition, the absence of certain framing devices that seem conspicuously ignored can contribute to the construction of frame packages. Thus, the phenomenon scholars refer to as "frames" are not simply idealized constructions of common devices put together by rational actors or a simplistic 'reading between the lines.' Instead, news frames are the outcome of larger, interdynamic processes inherent to the production of news media and the larger society that surrounds media.

Scheufele's (1999) process model (Figure 4.1, opposite page) gives researchers investigating identifiable media frames a place to start. In this study, it is used retroactively, as structural factors, or inputs, provide the fodder for certain frames in the "frame building" process. To find out how frames become dominant in the media, it is simply a matter of tracing frames back to different systemic inputs suggested by early work on news frames (Gans, 1979; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Donsbach, 1981). Scheufele identifies three types of inputs into the frame building process from a synthesis of these early studies: (1) "Journalist-centered influences" or the ideology,

attitudes, and professional norms of the individual journalists, (2) the "type or political orientation of the medium," most notable in terms of the different organizational routines
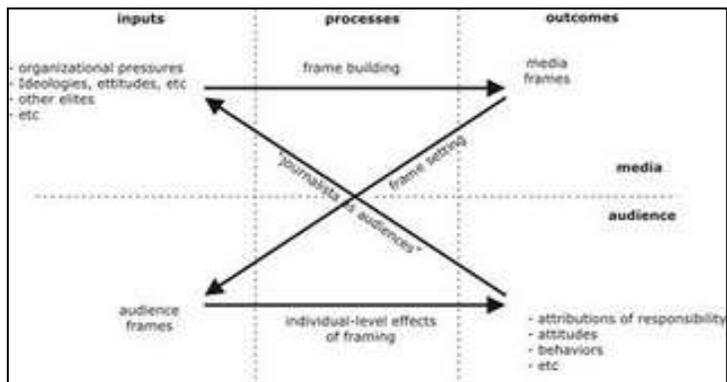
Figure 4.1:Scheufele'sProcess Model of Framing

developed to suit different needs, and (3) "external sources of influence . . . political actors, authorities, interest groups, and other elites" (Scheufele, 1999, pp. 115-116) Results from this analysis may not produce empirical answers as to why certain journalistic decisions were made. Such conclusions will more likely come from historical analysis. On the contrary, this thesis will add to the aforementioned Lakatosian framing research program spearheaded by D'Angelo (2002) and attempt a modest interpretation of journalistic and editorial pressures and influences, in light of observation and analysis regarding the interplay of themes on journalists as audiences.

4.1.3 The Constructivist Framing Paradigm

Secondary analysis of frames (understanding *how* the frames produce meaning) requires the selection of a paradigm. D'Angelo(2002), in his multiparadigmatic response to Entman (1993), compares three different paradigms and corresponding "distinct images" (see Ritzer, 1975) regarding frames and their effects: cognitivist, constructionist, and critical. The cognitivist paradigm, symbolized by the image of *negotiation*, deals mostly with intrapersonal frame effects (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987; Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Rhee, 1997). The critical paradigm is similarly less than

useful for this work, as scholars who work under this paradigm generally hold that

"frames are the outcome of newsgathering routines by which journalists convey

information about issues and events from the perspective of values held by political and

economic elites" (D'Angelo, 2002, p.876; See also, Becker, 1984; Hackett, 1984; Reese

& Buckalew, 1997). This latter paradigm (the critical) can be characterized with the

image of domination (D'Angelo, 2002), but cannot account for news events such as the

Afghan War Diary, where newsgathering routines were disrupted for the sake of

undercutting political and economic elites, nor the structural input of the Internet

medium that drove the event.

The constructionist paradigm is not quite between or opposed to these two

paradigms, but rather seeks out the intersection of the audience's cognition versus the

influence of power on the rhetor(s). Characterized by an image of co-option, this

paradigm for the study of framing "holds that journalists are information processors who

create interpretive packages of the position of politically invested 'sponsors' in order to

both reflect and add to the issue culture of the topic" (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, as

summarized by D'Angelo, 2002, p. 877). This paradigm [embodied in the work of

Gamson(1992; 1996), Gamson and Modigliani (1987; 1989), and Swidler(1986)] holds

that themes are like tools in a journalist's or individual audience member's toolkit. Even

if a frame dominates news coverage, this is only because it has been more "developed,

spotlighted, and made readily accessible" (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, p. 10). The

choices that members of the public sphere make in negotiating such frames are heavily

influenced by these same processes. This paradigm maintains that overall coverage of

the phenomenon still encompasses a range of perspectives for use in the public sphere,

even while excluding some viewpoints (see Andsager, 2000; Andsager & Powers, 1999). Through this process, the boundaries of the phenomenon referred to as "the sphere of legitimate controversy" are socially constructed and enforced (see Hallin, 1986).

Though subjectivity is inherent (Kuypers, 2010), the study of rhetoric as "a mode of altering reality . . . through the mediation of thought and action" (Blitzer, 1968, p. 4) seems distinctly suited to the task of constructivist framing scholarship. Kuypers argues that "no one effort to describe or evaluate [rhetoric] will yield all the knowledge that there is to know about that artifact . . . criticism usually takes its structure from a particular perspective," to guide the "apprehension of and interaction with the rhetorical act being analyzed" (Kuypers, 2010, p. 296). Foss, as quoted by Kuypers(2010, p. 294), goes as far as to argue that theory can be used to judge the results of criticism:

> When we approach our data, we bring to them our particular [perspective], a form that allows us to apprehend content of those data. Our knowledge of the content has the potential to cause us to revise the theory or form in light of our experience with the content. (Foss, 1983, p. 287)

With this in mind, we turn to even more focused theories to assist criticism in the task of evaluating rhetorical choices.

4.1.4 Lawrence's Political Context Theory

The political context theory investigated by Regina Lawrence (2010) has been influential in my interpretation of the texts studied in the research. Lawrence's theory provides a constructivist-oriented mode of investigating frame building that asks how structural and organizational inputs affect the choices made by journalists. Lawrence discerns that "the media's independence in crafting news frames varies across political contexts" (Lawrence, 2010, p. 266). She concurrently provides three contexts across

which that variance occurs: (1) foreign policy and national security, (2) domestic policy, especially social issues, and (3) election coverage (Lawrence, 2010).

The foreign policy and national security context is clearly at the heart of the news event that was the coordinated publication of *The Afghan War Diary* and its print coverage. Lawrence, referencing Hallin (1986), notes that elite news organizations are most likely to perceive leaving the "sphere of legitimate controversy" as unprofessional, instead relying most heavily on officials to do the framing for them. She states that *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* issued "public mea culpas after the [Iraq] war began," specifically referring to those organizations' reluctance to challenge the Bush Administration claims that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and involvement in the execution of the 9/11 incident (Lawrence, 2010, pp. 267-268).

It will be interesting to examine Lawrence's theoretical explanation for the framing of the Iraq war and test its generalizability in light of the heavy self-interest of journalists and the insistence of some major publications to cover the WikiLeaks *Afghan War Diary* content. The early interactions of *The New York Times*, as well as *The Guardian* and German-language *Der Spiegel*, in the vetting and highlighting of the *Afghan War Diary,* was anything but reluctant to deviate from the position of government officials. All three publications provided front-page stories contextualizing the information they had gained in early closed-door sessions with *WikiLeaks* employees and volunteers on the same day the *War Diaries* were posted to the *WikiLeaks* website. Indeed, this observation runs contrary to the "one thing on which scholars of political news framing agree"(Lawrence, 2010, p. 269), that high level government officals are generally the most prominent voices in the news (Aday, 2005;

Bennet, 2007; Entman, 2004). This is what makes the Afghan War Diary a topic worthy

of study, especially for framing scholars.

Durham(1998) is correct in pointing out that there are far too many authors in the

contemporary framing tradition whose theoretical outlooks presume a static nature to

the process and its results. Such authors do serve to broach some of the more

oppositionally derived foundations of this work (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987; Gans,

1979; Pan & Kosicki, 1993; Entman, 1993). Entman (2004) claims to show particularly

close correspondence to foreign policy news coverage and an ontologically distinct,

hypothesized subprocess of framing he labels as "indexing."

In later works, Entman adds to this concept a theory of "cascading activation"

(Entman, 2004). Indexing refers to the process by which journalists use their prior

experience with an issue and their contacts within structural elites to gauge how they

should frame a given story. Cascading activation refers to the process by which frames

are transmitted from powerful political players to elite journalistic organizations, then

recycled by less powerful news organizations (Entman 2004). Entman even goes so far

as to argue that reporters can sometimes be the exclusive variable that challenge the

dominant frame (Entman, 2006), though his example is pulled from another major leak

of the early 21st Century, the Abu Ghraib scandal. This new information disproved the

cascading activation hypothesis. Entman attempts to salvage his theory with the

postulation of news frames that "cascade upwards'" (Entman, 2006). Lawrence notes

that it is still an open question as to how news frames can "cascade upwards"

(Lawrence, 2010, p. 277), functionally reversing his cascading activation theory to fit his

latest data set. Given that the allegations against PfC. Manning (that he was both the

leaker and conspiring with Assange) originated from an online-magazine (Poulsen &

Zetter, 2010b), this criticism will provide an interesting anecdote to understanding the

how and *why* of news frames which 'cascade upwards,' if any are present.

Lawrence notes the indexing hypothesis is "probabilistic: news frames are *likely*

to be driven and bounded by the preferred frames of powerful political players," but

admits the best way out of this dynamic is "through some combination of insider leaks to

the press and hard-nosed investigative journalism" (2010). She also admits the

hypothesis needs further testing, a goal that this work will explicitly serve.

Empirical work (summarized in Bennet, Lawrence, & Livingston, 2007) lists three

means by which the indexing dynamic can be unbalanced: "event driven news," leaks

and investigative journalism, and skillful activists who set out to influence the news.

Lawrence's research on event driven news (which presumably is the superceding

category in the case of *The Afghan War Diary*) holds that the indexing dynamic can

"accomodate and incorporate challenges" to the dominant news frames, provided the

dynamic returns to normal, a condition of which is that officials do not mishandle the

public relations crisis in the short-term (Lawrence, 2000; Livingston & Bennet, 2003; as

summarized in Lawrence, 2010, p. 275).

The institutional and cultural contexts of foreign policy may reinforce the indexing

trend (Lawrence, 2010). The case of over 90,000 classified military documents from

Afghanistan tests the ability of journalists to index a balance of power and stay within

the bounds of a rather nebulous sphere of legitimate controversy enveloping foreign

policy and journalism. Though framing, and specifically the indexing hypothesis, has

received criticism for being simplistic while more nuanced theories, such as cascading

activation, have been ignored for their lack of parsimony (Lawrence, 2010, p. 277), coverage of *The Afghan War Diary* release provides an opportunity to map some of the complexities of these concepts. While the legality of even holding the documents may be in question, the coverage of the release of such documents will answer various questions regarding the competing interests that provide the impetus for frame construction. That coverage may also show how technology is changing the empirical landscape of news framing within, or interdepentdently linked to, the greater political context.

4.1.5 Media Ecology

Questions regarding the role of technology within the larger framing phenomenon are most prominently asked in the work of Livingston and Bennet (2003), but better heuristically informed by Marshall McLuhan's theories of media effects (see: McLuhan, 1964; McLuhan & Powers, 1989; a helpful preface to these works can also be found in McLuhan, 1962). In the earlier discussion of framing metatheory, Scheufele's work was used to point out that the "type or political orientation of the medium" influences frame construction (1999, p. 115). Having already treated political orientation, above, a discussion of the *type* of medium is left. At the point scholars begin to question whether technology is altering a sociocultural dynamic or invoke the cliche, "the medium is the message," McLuhan's tetradic model becomes an apt tool to understand the effects of a medium on the subject under study. McLuhan's theory holds that all media artifacts, from the cave painting to the Internet, extend some ability of the human physiology or mind, obsolesce other artifacts, retreive the ground of previous cultural archetypes, and

finally, when used to their fullest extent reverse into a new cultural archetype (McLuhan & Powers, 1989).

Use of McLuhan's tetrad gives credence to the idea that the Internet extends the nervous system of those in military command, obsolescing previous perimeter-based defenses and the typographic specialization of tactics and strategies (Schoch, 2011). In terms of systemic inputs from the "type or political orientation of the medium" (Scheufele, 1999, p. 115), this puts the Internet, or Internet-driven news coverage, in a league of its own. Traveling at the speed of light (literally, where fiber optic infrastructure allows) and capable of supercharging the public sphere around an issue or event, activists skillful in its manipulation could have a particularly disharmonizing effect on the political indexing dynamic. This makes the Internet, as a medium, the perfect storm for destabilizing news frames[6].

Those who understand the language of the machines well enough to manipulate the virtual world are both linear-typographic artists and HiFi-acoustic spies, technological priests and social warriors. As such, the work of hackers, for both good and bad, encapsulate the words of McLuhan, who opined, "espionage becomes an art form" (McLuhan & Powers, 1989, p. 92). As an afterthought, the Internet may also challenge the monopoly of journalists to be the gatekeepers of truth. If *WikiLeaks* is a publisher, then their ability to do what *The New York Times* did for the *Pentagon Papers* should give the organization an *a priori* First Amendment protection.

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[6] To pull an example from contemporary events, one need look no further than the Arab Spring. As of this writing, the movement is still embroiling Yemen, Palestine, Bahrain, Libya, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia in political tumult. Though the material events of these populist revolutions are not all direct consequences of virtual foment, Al Jazeera English's web-centered, news program, *The Stream*, highlighted the effect of the cable-gate documents and the activities of web-group, Anonymous, at the root of many of the so-called, "rolling revolutions" (Al-Jazeera English, 2011).

As communication technologies prove their geo-strategic value to realists, as shown by the development of a Cyber Command directly under Defense Department Central Command, they retreive the archetype of the "Cult of the Offensive," which would encourage defense elites to promote the most hard-line it can take against *WikiLeaks* and other digital dead-letter drop bloggers, who solicit classified information. "In the end," wrote Gabriel Schoenfeld, of *The Weekly Standard*, "stanching the most pernicious of these leaks, and thereby vindicating the rule of law, is the right course in both principle and practice in these perilous times" (Schoenfeld, 2006, para. 23). Schoenfeld does not truly ask if there is a difference today between a publication and a (web) post. My criticism can therefore benefit from an understanding of how and why new digital media could alter the occupational norms of print journalists such as Schoenfeld, and cause them to take such a hard-line in the treatment of whistle-blowers and competing media.

4.2   Method

Any research that involves framing analysis should begin with a discussion of how the researcher defines frames. In this thesis, frames are packages comprised of framing devices that are constructed via use of language, rhetorical strategies, and other structural elements. Van Gorp posits that frames structure latent meaning through their use of "metaphors, historical examples . . . catchphrases, depictions . . . themes, subthemes, types of actors, actions and settings, lines of reasoning and causal connections, contrasts, lexical choices, sources, quantifications and statistics" to elucidate the structural elements of a text and the relations between its parts (2010). These connections form what can be loosely envisioned as a network of contextual

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information. While they may overlap, when viewed holistically, framing devices work together to produce frames. These definitions are based primarily on the conclusions of Reese, who quotes Hertog and McLeod's (2001) definition of frames as "structures of meaning made up of a number of concepts and the relations among those concepts" (Reese, 2010, p. 24). The competition and interaction of the narratives each frame tells, creates what Reese describes as the "master narrative." (Reese, 2010, p. 24).

To address the thesis's primary research question concerning newspaper framing of the *Afghan War Diary,* Bradley Manning, Julian Assange, and WikiLeaks, three newspapers published from July 25 to Oct. 25 were searched for news articles on these topics. July 25 corresponds to the release of the diary, and Oct. 25 with WikiLeaks next major leak, the *Iraq War Logs*. The three newspapers were the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Post*.

These newspapers were selected for several reasons. All three are considered elite media with national readerships (Lawrence, 2010). In addition, the *New York Times* was chosen for research because of its collaboration with WikiLeaks in vetting the *Afghan War Diary;* the *Wall Street Journal* was selected as a cultural counterweight to the *Times*; and, finally, the *Washington Post* was picked due to its proximity to U.S. policy makers inside the beltway. Functionally identical Boolean searches were employed on Lexus-Nexus and Proquest[7] to gather news stories. The following search

	New York Times	*Washington Post*	*Wall Street Journal*
Initial	24	19	18
Final	21	16	15

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.**.2: Sa**

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terms were concurrently employed to generate the search results: "Afghan War Diaries" OR "Afghan War Diary" OR "Julian Assange" OR "Bradley Manning" AND "WikiLeaks."

Figure 4.2 (previous page) identifies the number of news stories that were identified for analysis. A few initially identified in the research were excluded because they were irrelevant to the framing of the *Afghan War Diary*. Others were not included in the body of articles analyzed in the research because of their redundancy (*i.e.,* they were copies of or a quote from an article already in the sample). All, save one article, referred to the *Afghan War Diary* by disambiguation (*i.e.,* "Afghanistan war logs," "the leak," "the Afghanistan diaries," *etc.*). In other words, only one article uses the correct name for the 75,000-plus documents crucial to the story. One article mentioned WikiLeaks so tangentially that it could not be used for analysis.

The next chapter presents the results of my reading of these 52 news articles. As I worked through the data, I broke the results into two parts: Stage 1 identifies and discusses the framing devices embedded in the stories and Stage 2, which explains the frames that are made up of these framing devices. The concluding discussion chapter presents the master narrative that emerges from the frames in Stage 2, along with pertinent conclusions.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the rhetorical frame analysis of the 52 articles concerning Julian Assange, Bradley Manning, WikiLeaks, and the Afghan War Diary, published in *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Post*, from July 25 to October 25, 2010. The chapter is divided into three sections: Section one identifies and describes the framing devices embedded within the news stories; section two reports on my assessment of how such framing devices coalesce into news frames.

5.1 Stage 1: Inductive Identification of Framing Devices

Stage one of my analysis of the 52 articles was conducted in order to identify framing devices (e.g., themes, structural elements, rhetorical devices) that contribute to the frames identified in the chapter's next section. Several of the devices are associated most closely with Assange and Manning, some with the Afghan War Diary and others with the newspapers that released the diary after they were leaked.

5.1.1 Characterizations of Assange, Manning, and WikiLeaks

A prominent type of framing device in the 52 news stories was their authors' various characterizations of Assange and the other Afghan War Diary actors. I have broken them into five groups: labels, motives and ideology, roles, responsibilities, and criminality.

5.1.1.1 Labels

One set of themes describes the labels the writers use in their stories. Among other things, news articles characterize Assange as a non-American, an unorthodox journalist or publisher, a whistle-blower, or a hunted or on-the-run criminal. Examples include

articles denoting WikiLeaks as an "online whistle-blowing organization" (Shanker, 2010, para. 2), "criminal enterprise" (Thiessen, 2010, para. 1), or seeking a "secure base in Sweden" (Burns, 2010b, para. 1). In addition, Burns et al refer to Assange as "a hunted man," who leaves interviews "at twilight, heading into the shadows" (Burns, Somaiya, Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010, para. 1 & 40).

To create an even more dramatic, le Carré-esque narrative and character, Assange is described as a "non-U.S. citizen operating outside the territory of the United States " (Thiessen, 2010, para. 5) and "Australian activist who has operated in various European cities" (Schmitt, Savage, & Lehren, 2010, para. 14). According to Hester, author of a *North Carolina Journal of Law & Technology* article, Assange's characterization by newspaper writers as a foreigner has implications for his legal status, since the federal government has wider jurisdiction to use the Espionage Act against non-citizens (2011).

Some authors differentiated the unorthodox Assange and WikiLeaks from the more responsible news organization that published the diary. A *New York Times* author, for example, made a key distinction between Assange's WikiLeaks and the newspapers that profited the most from the publication of the leaks in his story:

> While WikiLeaks dumped its cache online in an unfiltered manner, the *New York Times*, the *Guardian* newspaper of Britain and *Der Spiegel* magazine of Germany used the material as basis for news articles and analysis. The *Times* was even praised for seeking guidance from administration officials to ensure that its disclosures did not jeopardize lives in the field. (Farhi, 2010, para. 12)

This device acts as an enthymematic metaphor referencing *Times* reporters as a team of hostage negotiators acting in service of U.S. military and intelligence interests and trying to do the right thing, while WikiLeaks holds the data hostage. All the while, the

New York Times claims that reporters had access to the documents, but didn't publish

any identifying information. *New York Times* reporters did attempt transparency about

their collusion with WikiLeaks activists and the huge scoops they garnered from it.

Journalists Farhi and Nakashima (2010) used the words "published," "posted,"

"dumped," "released," and "revealed" in their story about the release of the diary. Such

words imply that Assange/WikiLeaks were more like spies than journalists. After all,

spies deposit or post data in secret drop-boxes for unknown recipients, while journalists

publish big scoops online. Entous and Perez (Entous & Perez, 2010) could not keep

the two concepts straight, suggesting disambiguation: "WikiLeaks in late July posted . . .

It has promised to publish an additional 15,000 documents" (para. 4) and "The

increasingly confrontational tone could be part of Pentagon efforts to dissuade

WikiLeaks from posting online the yet-to-be-published documents in its possession"

(para. 7). Similar juxtapositions could be found elsewhere in the newspaper articles

(Burns, Schmitt, Savage, Somaiya, & Robbins, 2010). Other authors were more rigid,

such as Farhi and Nakashima, *Washington Post* staff writers, who described WikiLeaks

as "the whistleblower Web site that posted the documents and orchestrated their

simultaneous publication" in various papers (Farhi & Nakashima, 2010, para. 4). When

WikiLeaks is described as a publisher of previously secret documents, it plays into the

WikiLeak's mission statement and ideal narrative. By default, when described as

publishers, WikiLeaks and Assange *should* be conferred legal protection under the laws

of various countries. When WikiLeaks or Assange are attributed to "posting,"

"releasing," or "dumping" the documents, their collective action remains unchanged.

Yet, the connotation of the act becomes quite the opposite.

Similarly, when journalists repeat the words "rape" or "molestation," their repetition becomes a substitute for the truth of the allegation. It is ironic that the Stockholm Office of Public Prosecution could, itself, not consistently identify the nature of the allegations or charges against Assange. None the less, the *New York Times* (Burns, Rankin, Schmitt, & Somaiya, 2010) and *Wall Street Journal* (Edmondson & Whalen, 2010) both ran articles covering the unorthodox series of events surrounding rape and molestation allegations; both used the words "rape" or "molestation" nine times in less than ten column inches. Surprisingly, *The Washington Post* did not cover the issue until September 10 (Cody, 2010), using the word "rape" eight times, and "sexual harassment," "harassment," "sex crimes," or "sexual misconduct" (alternate translations for the secondary molestation charge leveled at Assange) eight times.

Alternately, by comparing the Afghan War Diary actors to the infamous Daniel Ellsberg rather than a spy, both Assange and Manning are presented in a more positive light by some journalists. A *New York Times* article, for example, quoted Assange in an October 2010 article as having said, "They called me the James Bond of Journalism . . . It got me a lot of fans, and some of them ended up causing me a bit of trouble" (Burns, Somaiya, Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010, para. 17). The James Bond theme would hold Assange, his leakers, and his organization to be shadowy, but good guys, nonetheless. The Ellsberg comparison also supports the concept that Assange, Manning, and WikiLeaks, even if conspiratorial or foreign, uphold historically cherished American values through their action.

5.1.1.2   Motives and Ideology

A group of four thematic categories concerning actors' motives and ideological stances are notable. The first of these themes, labeled "anti-American," attributes Assange and WikiLeaks with motives and ideologies antithetical to United States interests. For example, Burns et al wrote, "Mr. Assange's detractors also accuse him of pursuing a vendetta against the United States" (Burns, Somaiya, Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010, para. 28), while Bumiller et al reported that WikiLeaks had offered to help pay for Bradley Manning's legal defense (Bumiller, Hulse, Calmes, & Arango, 2010, para. 21). This theme at times resonates with earlier, preceding references to confrontation with U.S. agencies or the larger Obama administration. Statements that serve as examples include the following: "Elicited a furious reaction from national security officials" (Savage C. , 2010, para. 3), "embroiled in a feud with the Pentagon" (Edmondson & Whalen, 2010, para. 2), or "locked in a dispute with the Pentagon" (Burns, Rankin, Schmitt, & Somaiya, 2010, para. 2).

A second thematic category that touches on the actors' motives and ideological stances is titled "anti-war themes." For example, an anonymous author stated, "Nor does [the *Afghan War Diary*] provide evidence for war crimes prosecutions—though, in making that assertion, WikiLeaks' founder revealed his organization's antiwar agenda" (*Washington Post*, 2010, para. 1). Another example calls Assange and WikiLeaks outspoken opponents of American and NATO involvement in Afghanistan (Schmitt & Sanger, 2010, para. 1). One article even contextualizes the leak as an event that happened at the worst time: during a legislative vote on funding the war, and "some of those voting against it said they were influenced by the leaked documents" (Bumiller,

Hulse, Calmes, & Arango, 2010, para. 8). In another article, Assange is quoted as stating that WikiLeaks does not "have a view about whether the war should continue or stop . . . We do have a view that it should be prosecuted as humanely as possible" (Nakashima & Warrick, In latest release, a new approach; Growing sophistication evident in Wikileaks' handling of papers, 2010, para. 9).

A third thematic category related to motives and ideologies, called "whistle-blower," denotes an ideology that supported leaking based on moralistic or axiological grounds. Some of the examples from news stories included explicit reference to WikiLeaks as a "whistle-blower's website" (Burns, Somaiya, Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010, para. 4), or "an online whistleblower" (The Washington Post, 2010, para. 6). Another reference to whistle-blowing stated, "Assange . . . and Daniel Ellsberg . . . lashed out together on Saturday at the Obama administration's aggressive pursuit of whistle-blowers" (Burns & Somaiya, 2010, para. 1). By combining Assange and Ellsberg, there is a sense they are both fellow whistle-blowing veterans.

Pro-transparency themes on the other hand, denote an ideology stemming from a generalized philosophy that society would be improved by a greater scope and magnitude of information sharing. Nakashima and Warrick quote Assange as stating, "We believe that the way to justice is transparency, and we are clear that the end goal is to expose injustices in the world and try to rectify them" (2010, para. 5).

This pro-transparency theme was often found to be in competition with whistle-blower themes. For instance, Schmitt writes that Steven Aftergood is the "head of the project on government secrecy at the Federation of American Scientists . . . who accused WikiLeaks of 'information vandalism' with no regard for privacy or social

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usefulness . . . [that] does not respect the rule of law nor does it honor the rights of individuals" (Schmitt, 2010, para. 1).

The names assigned to these categorical ideological themes are derived from the explicit devices embedded within the articles. The overall theme of an article could often be tricky to spot. Schmitt, for example, accused WikiLeaks of being motivated by a pro-transparency ideology with whistleblower rhetoric: "WikiLeaks.org, the online organization . . . says its goal in disclosing secret documents is to reveal 'unethical behavior' by governments and corporations" (Schmitt, 2010, para. 1). The key was the later inclusion of Aftergood's quote to emphasize that WikiLeaks only *says* they are motivated by a whistle-blower ideology, and instead argue they wish to go much further and attack *individual* privacy.

5.1.1.3   Roles

Similarly, the roles news story authors ascribe to WikiLeaks and Assange, as characters in an unfolding drama, act as framing devices. Descriptions of Assange's role fall into four categories, with some overlap. "Hacker," or technological engineering specialist, is Assange's only true claim to fame before the launch of WikiLeaks[8], and he could often be found referenced as "a 39-year-old former computer hacker from Australia" (Burns, Schmitt, Savage, Somaiya, & Robbins, 2010, para. 2).

"Activist" implies Assange had experience being in the public eye and leading an organization, a more recent development. The description at least reads poetically when he is called an "Australian activist" (Schmitt, 2010, para. 11; Schmitt & Sanger, 2010, para. 1).

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[8] Assange may not have a vendetta against the Pentagon, but he did penetrate their cyber-defenses and create a 'backdoor' for repeated, secret access as a teenager (Brånstad, 2011).

"Hacktivist," a specialized term from Internet culture for a white-hat hacker with an ideological motivation, was never explicitly used[9] despite the obvious pragmatism of the term. Some authors did reference this role, such as Burns, et al, who wrote that Assange "used years of computer hacking and what friends call a near genius I.Q. to establish WikiLeaks, redefining whistle-blowing" (Burns, Somaiya, Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010, para. 6). There is an obvious blending of Assange's hacking and political philosophy when Burns et al. identify "Private Manning as a 'political prisoner'" for his presumed service to WikiLeaks (Burns, Somaiya, Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010, para. 38).

Finally, Assange became frequently introduced as "founder" of WikiLeaks (Nakashima & Warrick, 2010, para. 2), emphasizing his organizational leadership role, prominently when he faced sexual misconduct allegations in Sweden (Burns, Rankin, Schmitt, & Somaiya, 2010, para. 1; Whalen & Crawford, 2010a, para. 2; Edmondson & Whalen, 2010, para. 1; Burns, 2010a, para. 1; Anderberg & Whalen, 2010, para. 1). Most authors associated Assange with more than one role, thus more realistically portraying the multiple hats he wears (Vascellaro, 2010, para. 2; Nakashima, 2010a, para. 6).

These themes and rhetorical devices were often used explicitly to contextualize Assange's statements, actions, and pending charges. WikiLeaks also had a sort of existential ambiguity to it, allowing journalists to choose between calling *it* a "website" (Anonymous, 2010, para. 1) or *them* an "organization" (Schmitt, Savage, & Lehren, 2010, para. 1). Andrew Exum actually attacks Assange, and "his brand of activism," for "muddying the waters between journalism and activism" (Exum, 2010, para. 16).

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[9] Assange has penned various works on political philosophy (Assange, State and Terrorist Conspiracies, 2006) and the ideological roots of hactivism (Assange, Julian Assange: The Curious Origins of Political Hacktivism, 2006) that would easily warrant the "hactivist" moniker, had journalists read them.

5.1.1.4 Responsibilities

The authors of the 52 news stories assign responsibility to Assange and Manning through use of the words of the sources they quote. The phrase "blood on their hands" is an important example. The initial publication and subsequent repetition of these words create the salient theme that Assange, Manning, WikiLeaks, and all involved in release of the *Afghan War Diary* should be held accountable for future Afghanistan-related violence and loss of lives. The phrase is part of a statement made by Admiral Mike Mullen at a U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff press conference called by then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates after the release of the *Afghan War Diary*, on July 25, 2010. Mullen said, "Mr. Assange can say whatever he likes about the greater good he thinks he and his sources are doing, but the truth is they might already have on their hands the blood of some young soldier or that of an Afghan family" (2010, para. 11).

While some writers did not use these exact words, their implication was clear that Assange and WikiLeaks were endangering lives. For example, Thompson et al, wrote, "The Pentagon has denounced the leaks, saying they put American soldiers and their Afghan allies in grave danger" (Thompson, Fenwick, Somaiya, & Lyles, 2010, para. 7). And when Assange acknowledged to a New York journalist that his strategy may lead to reprisals against the "genuinely traitorous" who would sell out innocent individuals for gain, the texts echoed this as a lead: "('collateral damage' he called them) and that WikiLeaks might get 'blood on our hands'" (Thiessen, 2010, para. 1). As the author of a *Washington Post* article put it, "Julian Assange acknowledged that his practice… could one day lead the Web site to have 'blood on our hands'" (Charging WikiLeaks, 2010, para. 1).

An article written by Cohen included Assange's response from the Friday

following the Mullen and Gates press conference. According to Cohen, Assange said,

"The grounds of Iraq and Afghanistan are covered with real blood . . . Secretary Gates

has overseen the killings of thousands of children and adults in these two countries"

(Cohen, 2010, para. 23). Although this quote is positioned at the end of the story, its

inclusion says much about Cohen's attributions of salience: Clearly, Assange's claim

doesn't count for much (despite its categorical truth).

Adding to the drama, the journalists whose stories were studied in the research

unflinchingly repeated the claims of an unverified Taliban spokesman who "told Britain's

Channel Four they are using WikiLeaks data to hunt down Afghans who helped NATO.

Taliban 'justice'" includes hanging, beheading and strapping people to explosives and

detonating them in public" (Crovitz, 2010, para. 5). By October 2010, the *New York*

Times had decided "Zabiullah Mujahid" (a pseudonym which loosely translates in Arabic

to "wilted warrior") was credible and newsworthy enough for a telephone interview.

Reporting on the interview, the story stated, "The Taliban had formed a nine-member

'commission' after the Afghan documents were posted 'to find about people who are

spying'" (Burns, Somaiya, Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010, para. 32). Another sample of the

text holds telling rhetoric:

> Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates said Sunday that an
> announcement by the Taliban that they were going through classified
> military dispatches from Afghanistan posted by the Web site WikiLeaks
> "basically proves the point" that the disclosures put at risk the lives of
> Afghans who had aided American forces. (Schmitt & Sanger, Gates cites
> peril in leak of Afghan war logs, 2010, para. 1)

Any evidence, regardless of how tenuous or mundane, seemed enough for journalists to

claim that WikiLeaks is responsible for violence. Bloody shirts are obsolesced in favor

of the symbolic, "blood on their hands" quote and resonant theme. The larger

enthymeme may simply be a pragmatic response from the Pentagon to the *Collateral*

Murder video (Assange, 2010). The use of this device not only attributes brutal,

Taliban-style violence as the indirect outcome of WikiLeaks, but also charges the

organization with leaving a wake of collateral damage. This could be interpreted as

parallel to Assange's previous charge against the U.S. military within his

contextualization of the Apache gunship's camera video (Assange, 2010).

In addition to the "blood on their hands" quote, newspaper writers amplified

through repetition a second phrase, one not directed at Assange but at authorities. The

words "dirty tricks" were harvested by journalists from an August 21, 2010 Assange

Twitter feed, which reads, "I don't know who's behind this but we have been warned, for

example, that the Pentagon plans to use dirty tricks against us" (Edmondson & Whalen,

2010, para. 9). Assange was referencing the rape and molestation allegations against

him leaked to the press, and explained the accusation of dirty tricks in a later tweet.

Assange tweeted, on August 22, "Reminder: U.S. intelligence planned to destroy

WikiLeaks as far back as 2008" and linked to the ACIC report. None of the authors of

the 52 articles studied in the research mentioned it. This is a perfect example of a

practice I call *sniping little blue birds*. This practice is characterized by journalists

selectively harvesting messages from a subject's social media streams. Typically, this

practice was used to bring readers to particular conclusions regarding Assange.

5.1.1.5   Criminality

Attributions of criminality coalesce into another set of themes that act as framing

devices. For instance, journalists referred to Manning and Assange in ways that

establish a criminal agenda in the minds of readers. For examples, in discussions of the

possibility of criminal charges against the men, journalists made choices about various

degrees of suspicion. For example, Burns et al used the word "alleged" in a story. They

wrote, "The Swedish prosecutor's office . . . defended its handling of allegations . . .

against Julian Assange" (Burns, Rankin, Schmitt, & Somaiya, 2010, para. 1).

"Suspected," on the other hand, would imply the individual is wanted for

questioning or otherwise a person of interest to authorities, typically because evidence

of an inconclusive nature suggests an individual committed a crime, as was initially the

case with Bradley Manning (Thompson, Fenwick, Somaiya, & Lyles, 2010, para. 6).

Assange is even quoted as critiquing journalists who trumpeted "headlines all over the

world that say I am suspected of rape," when the investigation itself was first dismissed.

There were no charges, but the rape investigation had concluded in Assange's favor.

Manning was still only officially a "suspect" in leaking information to WikiLeaks by late

October (Burns, Somaiya, Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010, para. 13).

"Charged," which denotes the filing of criminal charges by a prosecutor, is

typically based on evidence sufficient to conclude an individual had committed a crime

and could be convicted. Though Manning was eventually charged with a cornucopia of

federal crimes, Assange has never been given the luxury of knowing what he has even

been formally accused of. The last article in the sample, dated October 24, notes that

an "arrest warrant"[10] was dropped and accurately described the Stockholm police and

prosecutors as, "continuing to investigate" after over a month of looking into allegations

(Burns, Somaiya, Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010, para. 18).

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[10] In proper Swedish translation, this "warrant" is actually a formal notice that the police wished to
custodially interrogate Mr. Assange in person, as he had been in contact with Stockholm investigators only
over the Internet.

In addition to the authors' frequent use of terms like "accused" and "charged" that at the very least suggest criminality, many of the stories make repeated references to the rape allegations surrounding Assange. While rape allegations are serious concerns, one might argue that they are to some extent tangential to the leak of the Afghan War Diary. That said, it was Assange himself who invited journalists to conflate the story through his "dirty tricks" tweet. Nevertheless, it's fair to say that journalists' fascination with this part of Assange's life to some extent diverts readers' attention from the political issue.

Typically, when two separate sexual encounters with a man result in "rape" or "molestation" accusations, the pattern is presumed proof of the allegations, and not a coincidence. When both encounters began as consensual, as was the case with Assange, their veracity is once again presumed from the pattern. But when the accused has assisted Australian police to catch predators and the first ever allegations against him occur in the weeks after he challenges a monolithic political establishment, the *coincidence* begs investigation as much as the allegation; it has unique, dramatic characteristics.

While the latter facts regarding Assange were not mentioned by any of the articles, almost every article that mentioned the sexual allegations against Assange also made specific mention of the "two Stockholm women," "two different locations" or "separate allegations"(Burns, Rankin, Schmitt, & Somaiya, 2010; Edmondson & Whalen, 2010; Burns, 2010a; Anderberg & Whalen, 2010; Whalen & Crawford, 2010b; Burns, 2010b; Jolly, Burns, & Rankin, 2010; Whalen, 2010b; Cody, 2010; Somaiya, 2010).

Anderberg and Whalen, writers for the *Wall Street Journal*, were unusually

specific about the nature of the complaints: "The encounters took place within a few

days of each other at two different locations, within the past week or so" (Anderberg &

Whalen, 2010, para. 8). This begs the obvious question: How exactly did these

journalists get such information from a freshly opened investigation? One anonymous

staff writer for *The Washington Post* went further, omitting reference to the

investigations into the Stockholm Prosecutor's office in favor of quoting Director of

Public Prosecution Marianne Ny (The Washington Post, 2010b). Ny told reporters, "'It's

not entirely uncommon' that such reversals take place in Sweden" (The Washington

Post, 2010b, para. 8). It apparently was uncommon enough to warrant widespread calls

in Sweden to investigate the Stockholm prosecutor's office, catalogued on Assange's

Twitter feed. John Burns, staff writer for *The New York Times*, called it a "tortured

sequence of events" (2010a, para. 2), also highlighting the strange operations of the

office.

When the press repeats accusations before charges are filed, the court of public

opinion is in full session. Anna Ardin, one of Assange's accusers named in the Swedish

publication, *Aftonbladet*, is given substantial leeway in responding to the charge that her

allegations were politically motivated. According to Burns, "[Ardin's] complaints were

'not orchestrated by the Pentagon' but prompted by 'a man who has a twisted attitude

toward women and a problem taking no for an answer'" (2010b, para. 7). Again, this

seems a unique and dramatic reaction for any victim of a sexual assault. It is rather

surprising, since Ardin admits to having consensual sex with Assange and actually had

to ask the Stockholm prosecutor's office to re-file the charges after the prosecutors

found no evidence of a crime. What is stranger, as reported in *CounterPunch* online:

> She has ties to the US-financed anti-Castro and anti-communist groups. She published her anti-Castro diatribes . . . in the Swedish-language publication *Revista de Asignaturas Cubanas* put out by *Misceláneas de Cuba.* From Oslo, Professor Michael Seltzer points out that this periodical is the product of a well-financed anti-Castro organization in Sweden. He further notes that the group is connected with Union Liberal Cubana led by Carlos Alberto Montaner whose CIA ties were exposed [in *CounterPunch*]. Note that Ardin was deported from Cuba for subversive activities. In Cuba she interacted with the feminist anti-Castro group Las Damas de Blanco (the Ladies in White). This group receives US government funds and the convicted anti-communist terrorist Luis Posada Carriles is a friend and supporter. (Shamir & Bennett, 2010, para. 10)

This is not guilt by association; rather, suspicion by publication. How is it that Assange

is an "activist operating in various European cities" while Ardin's links to the CIA,

activism, and deportation are neither mentioned nor investigated? Worse, only one

article identified Ardin along with her quote about Assange's "twisted attitude towards

women" (Burns, 2010b).

This information may seem unnecessary or even unprofessional to publish, with

the exceptions that, first, she is addressing the press and, second, her name was

already publicized in Sweden, just not the United States. More importantly, in what

could be the most salient information to not appear in the press coverage of sexual

misconduct allegations, if Ardin's name was searched through Google, almost comical

anecdotes of her prior adventures appear:

> A Swedish forum reports that she is an expert on sexual harassment and the male "master suppression techniques". Once, as she was lecturing, a male student in the audience looked at his notes instead of staring at her. Anna Ardin reported him for sexual harassment because he discriminated against her for being a woman and because she claimed he made use of the male "master suppression technique" in trying to make her feel invisible. As soon as the student learned about her complaint, he

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contacted her to apologize and explain himself. Anna Ardin's response was to once again report him for sexual harassment, again because he was using the "master suppression technique", this time to belittle her feelings. (Shamir & Bennett, 2010, para. 11)

These omitted facts make Assange's accusations of "dirty tricks" from the Pentagon seem more credible, especially when corroborated by the ACIC Report. Nonetheless, various defense and intelligence personnel are repeatedly quoted as calling Assange's allegations "absurd" (Burns, Rankin, Schmitt, & Somaiya, 2010, para. 13; Edmondson & Whalen, 2010, para. 10). Burns went a step further, writing "one of Mr. Assange's close friends in Sweden, who had said he had discussed the case in detail with Mr. Assange and one of the women, said . . . 'this wasn't anything to do with the Pentagon . . . It was just a personal matter between three people that got out of hand" (Burns, 2010a, para. 16-18). Again, Burns quotes a source with no name, claiming to be a close friend of Assange, who has been in Sweden less than a month.

Burns et al claimed that the charges against Assange were "bizarre" (Burns, Rankin, Schmitt, & Somaiya, 2010, para. 1), while Jolly et al referred to the process employed by Stockholm criminal prosecutors as "convoluted" (Jolly, Burns, & Rankin, 2010, para. 2). Yet, even these description seemed to operate counter-intuitively, normalizing the strange military, prosecutorial, and judicial behavior in the months after the release of the *Afghan War Diary*. Karin Rosander, a spokeswoman for the Stockholm prosecutor's office, was quoted in one article as having stated, "it wasn't normal for prosecutors to name a suspect" after a Swedish tabloid published its own leak regarding news of the investigation into Assange's personal life (Edmondson & Whalen, 2010, para. 12).

In addition to the newspapers' fascination with Assange's sexual history, they were likewise interested in Pfc. Bradley Manning's sexuality and love affair with a transgendered man (Thompson, Fenwick, Somaiya, & Lyles, 2010, para. 1-3). Such references are *non sequitur* in the face of the larger phenomena. But these facts could explain how a young soldier was pulled into a conspiracy with Assange, a claim openly made by Poulsen and Zetter's work for *Wired* (2010b).

5.1.2 Newspapers as Innocent Conduits of Information

Another thematic framing device that appeared in a number of the 52 articles is the assertion or insinuation that the three newspapers that published the Afghan War Diary are merely passive conduits of information whose employees do not share in the blame for its release. Characterizations of this nature are prominent in the early coverage of the *Wall Street Journal* and *Washington Post*. The following examples have been italicized to place emphasis on the eulogistic rhetoric placing blame exclusively on Assange: "*Mr. Assange launched* a new plan . . . *He offered* a U.K. newspaper, the Guardian, advance access to documents the site planned to release about the war in Afghanistan, according to the Guardian's account" (Vascellaro, 2010, para. 5). The second quote provides more evidence of eulogistic rhetoric: "WikiLeaks, the *whistleblower Web site that posted the documents* and orchestrated their simultaneous *publication by the* New York Times*, the* Guardian . . . *and* Der Spiegel" (Farhi & Nakashima, 2010, para. 4)*.* These are key questions in the determination of whether Assange is a mastermind of a vast criminal conspiracy, as claimed by Marc Thiessen (2010, para. 1), or just a quasi-journalist collaborating with entrenched, traditional media, as presumed by Applebaum (2010) and Cohen (2010).

5.1.3 Killing the Messenger

Journalists' lack of attention to the revelatory contents of the Afghan War Diary suggests they would much rather kill their deliverers, Assange, Manning, and WikiLeaks, than focus on the import of what they brought to light. Apparently, few saw much value in diverting readers' attention from government and military officials' outrage over the illegality and dangerous potential of the leaks. For example, overt references to the two most geo-politically salient pieces of information found in the documents were given little attention in the newspaper stories analyzed in the research. A hunter-killer (*i.e.*: assassination) squad under the employ of the US defense department, named Task Force 373, responsible for atrocious loss of civilian life in pursuit of Taliban and al Qaeda leadership (Exum, 2010; Barnes & Gorman, 2010) is ignored in most of the sample. The frequent and cooperative interactions of the Pakistani intelligence service (ISI) and militant extremists in the mountainous border between Pakistan and Afghanistan (Barnes & Gorman, 2010; Exum, 2010; Schmitt, Cooper, Ellick, Masood, & Oppel, 2010; Rich, 2010), is absent in most coverage of the *Afghan War Diary*, present in about one-tenth of the text. Both deserve special focus in this criticism.

Andrew Exum mocks Assange for calling Task Force 373 an "assassination squad." To do so, he convolutes the term with the force he had led, "a small special operations unit," obviously using self-deprecating humor to sandbag the impact of his only rebuttal to Assange. Exum wrote: "I can confirm that the situation in Afghanistan is complex" (2010, para. 11). Despite the fidelity of the facts before their leaked publication, they had never been publicly confirmed by government officials. Some journalists played down the revelations, writing the charges against the Pakistani

intelligence services had, "often been made privately by U.S. officials" (Barnes &

Gorman, 2010, para. 11). Alternately, other authors claimed "we already knew that U.S.

and other coalition forces were inflicting civilian casualties . . . We knew that U.S. and

allied Special Forces units were authorized to assassinate senior Taliban or al-Qaeda

[*sic*] figures" (Robinson, 2010, para. 4). These facts could be used to leverage a certain

foreign policy angle, much in line with the action of the Obama administration's counter-

terrorism strategy to date.

A year before Osama Bin Laden's assassination by Seal Team Six, the threat of

an extraterritorial and extralegal assassination in the backyard of a U.S. ally was

unthinkable to most Americans, even if justifiable to some. After publication of the

Afghan War Diary, the rumors of U.S.-operated hit squads and Pakistani sponsorship of

their own brand of terrorism become undisputed fact. Jon Stewart summed up the

rather overt brand of duplicity being practiced by Pakistan diplomatically and the

corresponding shock value for U.S. audiences in an interview with former Prime Minister

of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf:

> Last time you were here, I asked you where Osama bin Laden was…
> [audience laughter] now at the time, I believe you held a relatively high
> level position in Pakistan [audience laughter], you mentioned that you
> didn't know. [Pauses] Uh, funny story… [audience laughter] as it turns out,
> he was there, in a town called Abbottabad . . . So, that was weird.
> [Audience laughter and cheering](Stewart J. , 2011)

The irony was not lost on Afghani leadership, either. Waheed Omar, spokesman

for Hamid Karzai, told reporters the Afghan President "was not upset by the documents

and did not believe the picture they painted was unfair" (Schmitt, Cooper, Ellick,

Masood, & Oppel, 2010, para. 25-26). In addition, a story included the statement that a

"senior ISI [Pakistani intelligence] official, speaking anonymously under standard

practice, sharply condemned the reports as 'part of the malicious campaign to malign

the spy organization'" (Schmitt, Cooper, Ellick, Masood, & Oppel, 2010, para. 23).

Karzai changed his mind in the following days, calling the leaks "extremely irresponsible

and shocking" (Jaffe & Partlow, 2010, para. 8). A July 27 article announced, "Several

administration officials privately expressed hope that they might be able to use the leaks

. . . to pressure the government of Pakistan to cooperate more fully with the [U.S.] on

counterterrorism" (Schmitt, Cooper, Ellick, Masood, & Oppel, 2010, para. 11).

Applebaum plays down the two major revelations. She taunted readers with an implied

attack on the patriotism of those who would admit such facts were revelatory. She

accomplished this by implying that if a reader was unaware "The ISI helped create the

Taliban . . . civilian casualties are generally a problem for NATO, or that special forces

units are hunting for al-Qaeda fighters . . . all that means is that you don't read the

mainstream media. Which means you really don't want to know" (Applebaum, 2010,

para. 10).

　　　Some facts appear only rarely or simply do not appear in the news article. For

example, the name of the documents, the *Afghan War Diary*, as it was published by

WikiLeaks, was used only once in the 52 articles by an editorialist in the days following

its release (Robinson, 2010, para. 10). The obviously anti-war bias of the editorialist

stands out, but the Robinson article also stands alone in being the only article that gives

readers an opportunity to quickly Google the documents and read them independently.

It is most disturbing that while journalists fail to report on the most important facts from

the documents and introduce the sexuality of actors as the red-herring sub-plot to the

master narrative, only an editorialist can report the proper name of the documents to

allow readers their own opportunity to peruse them and come to a conclusion about

what they mean. Anne Applebaum proclaimed that Assange's release of the

documents "made an ironclad case for the mainstream media," proving "the notion that

the Internet can replace traditional newsgathering has been revealed as a myth" (2010,

para. 1).

While some journalists did discuss the *Afghan War Diary*'s reliability and/or

value, at times they referred to the content in inexplicable terms. Though the *Afghan*

War Diary was likely the most detailed history of a war before the release of the *Iraq*

War Logs, reporters and commentators had no qualms about making sweeping

generalizations before any organization, even WikiLeaks, had been able to read through

all of the data:

> Last week the left and right reached a rare consensus. The war logs are
> no Pentagon Papers. They are historic documents describing events
> largely predating the current administration. They contain no news. They
> will not change the course of the war. (Rich, 2010, para. 4)

 Another author, noting that the documents simply confirm criticism of the war, wrote,

"the most shocking thing about the 'War Diary' may be that it fails to shock" (Robinson,

2010, para. 10). One unnamed U.S. official went so far as to speculate, since he would

have had one day to analyze the 75,000-plus documents, "many of the low-level reports

are the kind that some intelligence experts consider the equivalent of second-hand

rumors, said one U.S. official" (Barnes & Gorman, 2010, para. 6).

5.1.4 Axiological Claims

Editorialists at times assailed Manning, Assange, and WikiLeaks by foretelling

the effects of the documents as "damaging," "beneficial," and "divined sanctimonious

attributions of axiology (wrong or justified) based on pre-existing desires and ideals"

(Jaffe & Partlow, 2010; Savage C. , 2010; Barnes, Bustillo & Rhoads, 2010; Robinson, 2010). Such claims were justified through use of statistics, e.g., the number of informants reporters could find in a search (Jaffe & Partlow, 2010, para. 3; Crovitz, 2010, para. 3)' expert testimony, such as that from Defense Secretary Robert Gates (Savage C. , 2010, para. 1; Barnes, Bustillo & Rhoads, 2010, para. 9) or Admiral Mike Mullen and Hamid Karzai (Jaffe & Partlow, 2010, para. 2 & 8); and examples, mostly salacious accounts pulled from the content itself (Robinson, 2010, para. 4). The predictions of "blood on their hands," or of violent acts that had not yet occurred, were not considered evidence because, as Dean Baquet, Assistant Managing Editor of *The New York Times,* pointed out in the *PBS: Frontline* documentary, *WikiSecrets*, "[Assange] Balance[d] the disclosures and the impact . . . against everybody's fear of what was [going to] happen. Seems to me it ended up OK" (Gaviria & Smith, 2011).

Though it may seem like argument *ad ignoramus*, it seems hard to believe that no bloody shirt has been produced as evidence for McMullen's claim. With the amount of time and energy spent by the government in searching the documents and, presumably, protecting informants, the utter lack of reports regarding insurgents or Taliban using the *Afghan War Diary* would be a coup for the Pentagon's domestic public relations team.

Pentagon Press Secretary, Geoff Morrell, told *New York Times*' Schmitt and Savage the executive plan for harm minimization:

> Mr. Morrell said the Pentagon had formed a team of 80 analysts from the military and the F.B.I. who are working around the clock to vet the documents for damaging information. So far the team, which is expected to increase to about 125 people in the coming days, has conducted about 400 "key word" searches through the 77,000 disclosed documents . . . After this initial review is completed, the Pentagon will conduct a separate

"page by page, word by word" review of each and every document. (Schmitt & Savage, 2010, para. 6-7)

Given that this report comes eleven days after WikiLeaks' publication of the *Afghan War Diary*, assuming an eight-hour workday for government employees, this would mean that it takes, on average, 17.6 hours per keyword search. Never mind that a "page by page, word by word" search is exactly what a keyword search is, except assisted by a computer that knows what it is looking for doing the search, the government may not be able to provide the harm mitigation necessary, even if such redundant processes yield results. Nevertheless, structural elites were throwing resources at the problem and advertising that fact to journalists who were obliged to print such information.

5.2 Stage 2: Bridging the Gap, Naming the Frames

The previous section identifies, describes, and interprets the framing devices embedded in the 52 news articles analyzed in the research. These devices coalesce into a series of frames, which produce the six competing narratives examined in the following discussion chapter. Many of the devices occur across various frames, especially in the first week of coverage. Typically a device or set of devices act as a catalyst on previously inert devices, crystallizing context and facts into a narrative. The following subsections discuss the observed use of framing devices the creation of such narratives.

5.2.1 Assange, the Defiler

A framing device present in all three newspapers' stories was the salacious rape case. Articles focused on the sexual allegations against Assange, along with descriptions of Assange and Manning's characters, catalyzed frame I call 'Assange the defiler.' The articles interpreted to set this frame make up a large segment (33%) of the

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total sample and provide an obvious pattern in authorship (Bumiller, Hulse, Calmes, &
Arango, 2010; Thompson, Fenwick, Somaiya, & Lyles, 2010; Burns, Rankin, Schmitt, &
Somaiya, 2010; Whalen & Crawford, 2010a; Edmondson & Whalen, 2010; Burns,
2010a; Anderberg & Whalen, 2010; Whalen & Crawford, 2010b; Burns, 2010b; Jolly,
Burns, & Rankin, 2010; The Washington Post, 2010d; Whalen, 2010b; Cody, 2010;
Somaiya, 2010; Nakashima, 2010b; The Washington Post, 2010c; Burns, Somaiya,
Schmitt, & Filkins, 2010).

Of course, the more obvious thematic device, 'Assange the defiler of women,'
could be seen in many of the articles across the sample—if the charges or allegations
against him were meant to perform what could loosely be termed a 'reverse-wag the
dog' or defame WikiLeaks to take the heat off of the U.S. government, the strategy
might have worked by sheer saturation. But in a broader sense, according to the defiler
frame, Assange begins as a hacker (defiler of networks), then recruits Manning (defiling
a young soldier), posts military secrets on the web hindering war funding (defiles the
war effort), then consensually molests two women (defiling them), and accuses the
Stockholm prosecutor's office of conspiring with U.S. diplomats to trump up the 'dirty
tricks' (defiling the courts and diplomatic system).

The larger implication of this frame is that Assange cannot be trusted. Even
Assange's brainchild is up for defilement: WikiLeaks' funding network is criticized for
being too complex to regulate. When his subordinates attempted, within months after
the release of the *Afghan War* Diary, a coup d'état to wrest control of the WikiLeaks
organization and infrastructure from the increasingly paranoid Assange, coverage
became exceedingly exaggerated. What could have been an organizational

restructuring was painted as an Assange-orchestrated scandal, using the Assange the

defiler frame (Nakashima, 2010). Yet again, instead of Assange getting a chance to tell

his side of the story, the elite print media again took to quoting his critics (even

anonymous one, *i.e.*: leakers) in full while 'sniping little blue birds' from his twitter feed[11].

Again, the larger implication is that Assange is a hypocrite and, by default,

untrustworthy.

5.2.2 Journalistic Turf

References to Assange's degradation of journalism were considered so

important to the authors of the articles studied in the research (14 articles,

approximately 27% of the 52 articles in the sample) that I have grouped them under the

title journalistic turf frame.   This frame is distinct from the defiler frame, despite

similarities, because of the volume of its use and the specialized rhetoric used as

framing devices, such as distinguishing between publishing and posting. This term

comes from the scholarship of Dooley and Grosswiler, who posit that journalism's

occupational/professional boundaries are established and maintained through rhetorical

battles over journalistic work roles, often displayed in their work (Dooley & Grosswiler,

1997).

These 14 articles contain a more active critique of WikiLeaks' activities as

compared to 'real' journalism, the *Afghan War Diary*'s as compared to the *Pentagon

Papers*, and Ellsberg's comparison of Assange and Manning to himself (*Washington

Post,* 2010a; Farhi & Nakashima, 2010; Schmitt, Savage, & Lehren, 2010; Anonymous,

2010; Applebaum, 2010; Schmitt & Sanger, 2010; Cohen, 2010; Crovitz, 2010;

Thiessen, 2010; The Washington Post, 2010b; Shanker, 2010; Farhi, 2010; Entous &

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[11] A feed is a stream of messages presented in chronological order.

Perez, 2010; Burns, Schmitt, Savage, Somaiya, & Robbins, 2010). These articles are

written with some of the most consistently focused rhetoric out of the entire sample,

incessantly discrediting WikiLeaks and explaining to readers even how WikiLeaks

proves we still need traditional media (see: Applebaum, 2010). This frame's rhetoric, to

use Burke's words, contains both the 'deliberate design' of persuasive efforts, while

engaging in a sort of 'new rhetoric' by factoring in identification, or in this case, its

antithesis, to include partially unconscious factors.

The executive leadership of two professional journalistic associations is even

called upon in one article to dispute the borders of journalistic turf in the 21st century

(Farhi, 2010), just as these professional organizations were critical to the original claim

for that turf (Dooley & Grosswiler, 1997). Worse yet, these articles even appear in the

New York Times alongside the overt statements that employees of the paper had

delivered a message for WikiLeaks to return the documents after publishing various

scoops from them.

5.2.3 Blood on their Hands

A frame that becomes even more important to this same sub-process is that of

the 'blood on hands' frame, found in sixteen percent (or eight articles) of the sample.

This frame is catalyzed by explicit references to the moral culpability of WikiLeaks in the

deaths of Afghan informants, U.S. intelligence personnel, and even U.S. troops (Schmitt

& Savage, 2010; Barnes, 2010; Whalen, 2010a; Barnes & Whalen, 2010; Stewart P. ,

2010; Savage C. , 2010; Barnes, Bustillo, & Rhoads, 2010; Jaffe & Partlow, 2010).

Never mind that no such proof has been offered up for such claims. The highest

ranking military officer in the United States, Admiral Mike Mullen, was publicized in all of

these works making the claim that WikiLeaks "may already have the blood of some young soldier on their hands." Because of the expectation in the United States that military leaders have secrets you don't need to know, there may once have been a hollow hope that they will quietly (at least from the perspective of civilians) take care of it. Ironically, the claims that the Pentagon would or could alleviate the damage caused by WikiLeaks are hampered by the little evidence their spokesmen did use. Even giving the benefit of the doubt to the "team" assembled to vet the documents, their efficiency is highly in question. But in this frame, journalists report—they do not *assess*—the data that is given to them. Quotations in this frame often are dominated, both qualitatively and quantitatively by high-level federal employees, spokespersons, and, yet again, anonymous individuals close to the action (*i.e.*: leakers). Characterizations of Wikileaks and Assange focus on WikiLeaks as a website, Assange as the anti-war or anti-American founder, or a former hacker. This suggests a narrative where Assange is a villain and his volunteers are being offered rhetorical clemency.

5.2.4 Criminals

Even more critical of WikiLeaks, from a material standpoint, are the four articles that directly allege criminality, or focus on the investigations into WikiLeaks (Vascellaro, 2010; Barnes & Hodge, 2010; Nakashima, 2010a; Bumiller, 2010). The use of legalistic rhetoric catalyzes the criminal frame into existence. Within its narrative, WikiLeaks is an organization and Assange is an anti-American founder of that organization, an interpretation that could loosely be interpreted as an attempt to classify WikiLeaks as a foreign information-terrorist organization. Little is conclusively known as of this writing about plans to prosecute Assange or WikiLeaks. Manning's trial has been indefinitely

delayed. These facts have not stopped journalists from turning to the beltway rumor mill to speculate about the cases without analyzing the reliability of claims made by official or anonymous (*i.e.*: leakers) spokespeople. This pattern is disturbing given the fact that publishing many of the statements from anonymous sources (often contextualized as 'close to prosecutors') regarding an espionage prosecution or federal action against a 'spy' or 'terrorist' such as Assange, would be akin to tipping off said 'spy' or 'terrorist.'

5.2.5 Anti-War Heroes

Of course, some of the articles (about ten percent), especially in the first weeks of the sample, are positively supportive towards WikiLeaks endeavors (Burns & Somaiya, 2010; Nakashima & Warrick, 2010; Robinson, 2010; Schmitt, 2010; Savage M. W., 2010). Instead of the formulaic dominance of government and other interests in the analyzed text, the typical criticisms of WikiLeaks are catalyzed by critical responses from journalists. This frame also displays a significantly higher quantity and quality of quotations from WikiLeaks-affiliated individuals, as compared to the other frames. Daniel Ellsberg, Birgitta Jónsdóttir, and various other individuals rally support for Assange or Manning. The hero theme, or explicit comparisons of Assange and/or Manning to Ellsberg, and the publications of WikiLeaks akin to the *Pentagon Papers*, are rampant within this frame, and one article even calls Manning an "antiwar hero"(Savage M. W., 2010). They also mesh more coherently with the rest of the content in articles covered in this frame, as these claims may be rebutted but not as substantially as would be found in other frames. It is here that Assange is more eloquently described as the pro-whistleblower, founder of WikiLeaks. He is only mentioned as an activist in one article and is ignored in two others, in favor of reporting

on Manning. Though later reports on Manning began to mention his mistreatment in a secret military prison in Kuwait and at Quantico, Virginia[12], even the most supportive authors in the 'positive frame' seem ignorant to the phenomenon in the three months included in the sample.

5.2.6 Proofer

After having identified the various functioning parts of the article, it occurred to me that various devices were used by omission. Only four articles out of 52 (about eight percent) articles referenced the most important content in the *Afghan War Diary*, regarding Pakistan's collusion with the Afghani insurgency and the United States' use of 'hunter-killer' teams (Barnes & Gorman, 2010; Schmitt, Cooper, Ellick, Masood, & Oppel, 2010; Exum, 2010; Rich, 2010). These four articles I clumped together into one frame, called 'proofer.' A reference to the derogatory name given to September 11th transparency activists and conspiracy theorists (truthers), proofer refers to the frame whereby journalists use the reference to Task Force 373 or Pakistani support for the Taliban as a tool to rethink old policies. These articles could be either warm or cold towards WikiLeaks, Assange, Manning, or whistle-blowing in general. The key to recognizing the 'proofer' frame was that many of the authors also work at policy institutes and think-tanks and are pushing particular prescriptive solutions to the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan using information contained in *Afghan War Diary*.

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[12] Assange cites various sources to back claims that the United States military went so far as to put Manning in solitary confinement, allowing him only an hour a day outside of his cell, and even being forced to stand at attention every morning without any clothing. Assange continues to claim Manning anonymously submitted the files to WikiLeaks, but believes the brutality Manning underwent was designed to motivate the young Army specialist to give up his contacts within the WikiLeaks organization; most specifically Assange, himself (Assange & Žižek, 2011).

Within this narrative, the necessary was now possible—and how impossible is it that U.S. intelligence agencies knew the location of bin Laden in Pakistan, but were prevented from acting by hurdles of legality and public opinion? These facts, whether disputed as a rumor, or not, provide a strong jingoistic enthymeme. Taken as facts, these revelations could be a plausible narrative impetus for Barak Obama to go where no President had openly gone before: an extralegal assassination mission in the sovereign territory of an allied nation-state.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

The third step of this critical process involves the interpretation of different narratives which compete against each other. For each narrative produced by a frame, there is a competing interest group, or cast, of different publications, authors, and sources. As such, the narratives compete against each other in what becomes the Master Narrative. In this spirit, I have assembled a chart to map the ascent and decline of the six frames, as well as the relationships of the frames, both quantitatively and chronologically (Figure 2). Taken apart, respective frames and narratives are just the product of self-interested gain. When analyzed as *competing* in a master narrative, news frames act on journalists, as they go home from work and become their own reflexive audience. This is not only seen in a chronological overlay of the frames, but
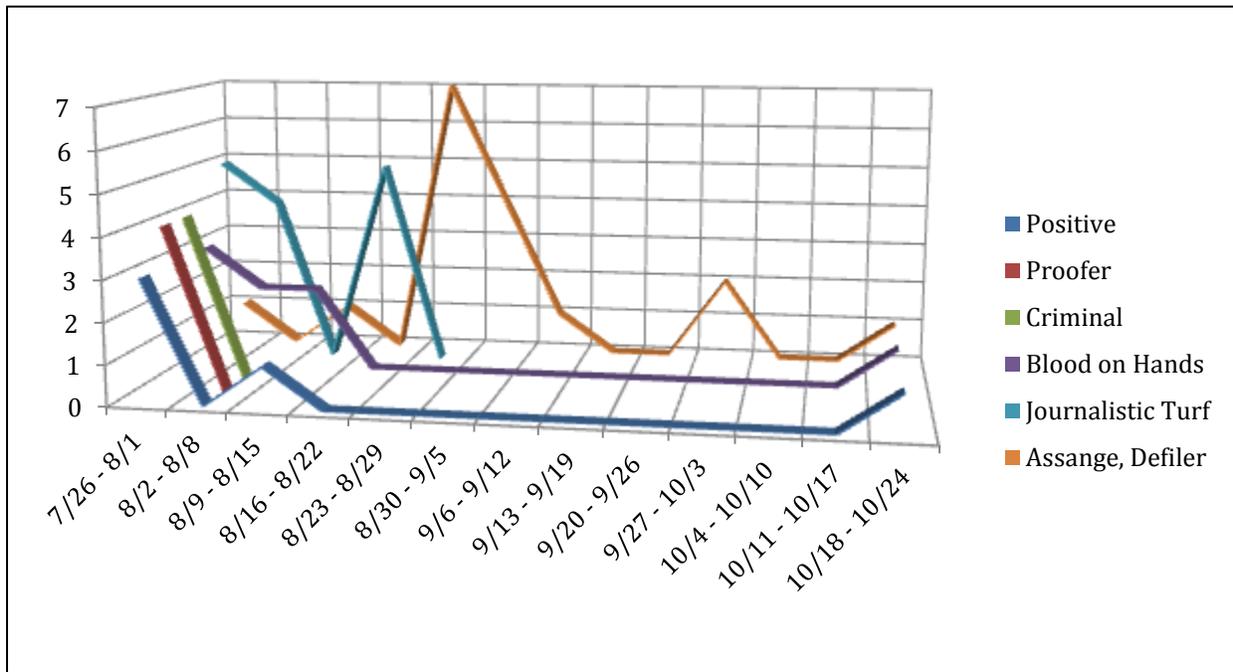

Figure 6.1 Longitudinal Display of Sample by Frame

also in the fact that various authors from the sample appear in multiple frames, indicating their change of rhetoric.

A visual analysis of the 3D display in the chart (Figure 6.1) gives the impression that six frames entering the public sphere *en-masse.* Four frames (the 'positive,' 'journalistic turf,' 'blood on hands,' and 'Assange the defiler') remained after the first week of coverage.

6.1 Frames Challenged by Subject

I interpret the loss of the 'criminal' and 'proofer' frames from the elite media as a direct result of the subject matter presented. In each case, journalists surely found resistance from the inclusion of the necessary subject matter to build the frame. This may have something to do with the fact that both of these frames appeared and disappeared within a period of one week.

6.1.1 Criminals

The diagnosis that Assange is a terrorist or criminal and the prescribed remedies of extra-legal (if not the arguably illegal) use of power, seem to present insurmountable challenges to the rhetors, in this case, the journalists and editorialists who authored the articles in the 'criminal' frames. To begin, the American cultural history of protecting and valuing ethically motivated whistle-blowers (Schlesinger, 1973; MacMillan, 2011) holds a deep taboo for the retaliation of the powerful against those brave enough to expose the hidden misgivings of public servants. As Assange notes, only when a conspiracy is made public can the public find redress against those who conspired against them (Assange, State and Terrorist Conspiracies, 2006, p. 4).

Admittedly, some American audiences may buy the terrorist label. On the other hand, It may be hard for some American audiences *not* to interpret Assange and Manning as two bullied underdogs, parallel to the heroes of their favorite spy movies, or filling in for the warrior-priests that litter human mythology. One friend of Bradley Manning went on film with PBS's Frontline, telling audiences that Manning gave up on following orders his superiors ignored his analysis in the case of Iraqi political prisoners. This non-action resulted in the detention of a group of clerics, whose only crime was penning an Islam-oriented exposé and critique of the widespread corruption in the Maliki regime (Gaviria & Smith, 2011).

Assange has noted that his impoverished upbringing in Australia had given him much of the impetus for his life decisions (Brånstad, 2011). Simply prescribing that the government should employ force (as in the case of a criminal) to bring Assange to justice presents challenges of cost and control. How much money, time, and effort *should* the United States government expend to extra-legally bring a foreign citizen living abroad to justice, which *may or may not* lead to an actionable prosecution? How many diplomatic chips will have to be called in to win extradition of an Australian living off the grid in the European Union? It is hard to for even the *most adept* rhetors to fight off both of these challenges at once, whilst delivering *any* message.

6.1.2 Proofer

The 'proofer' frame's exposition of the secrets we "already knew" of course presents a sort of overkill. Americans had read and heard plenty of anonymous and unofficial sources tell plausible tales about ISI-Taliban interaction and hunter-killer teams. American audiences had not heard any official reports on such matters. The

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net result is a poorly defined sphere of legitimate controversy. It is likely that journalists

and editors were under intense pressure not to publish any information that could

present legal problems for members of the executive or a diplomatic rift with Pakistan,

as this information should. I interpret the choice to allow these frames into the

discussion as a mistake by journalists in indexing the political context of the news they

were reporting at the beginning of the sample. When the frame reappears in one more

article, shortly before the release of the *Iraq War Logs*, I interpret this to again, be driven

by that event.

Lawrence's political context theory of framing, specifically the conflict and event-

driven context, may hold some help in understanding rhetorical challenges to the

proofer frame. The flip side to the physical inability of Western governments to provide

security to their populaces in the war on terrorism is the success they have had in their

public relations campaigns linking Islam and terror. But this manufactured causality

seems to keep the focus off of terrorists of European ancestry. No assumptions as to

the Islamist roots of a terror plot are to be apologized for or fully retracted, even when

proven false. A good example of this lies in the media coverage of the extremist-

Christian terrorist, Anders Behring Breivik, who detonated explosives and gunned down

children at a progressive summer camp in Norway last July (Listening Post, 2011).

Despite his pale skin, blonde hair and blue eyes, *Washington Post* reporter, Jennifer

Rubin, blogged and *Wall Street Journal* editorialized, that the attacks were committed

by jihadists, or violent Islamic fundamentalists (Gharib & Waldron, 2011). The thematic

otherization of Moslems justifies *claims* that the intelligence service of majority-Moslem

Pakistan was collaborating with Afghan Taliban, before any *evidence* arrives. Further,

in this narrative, a larger enthymeme is established that perceiving these new facts as revelatory only establishes that an individual doesn't read enough (Applebaum, 2010). If an individual needs *evidence* to back up these *claims*, then his or her patriotism is in question.

The same could be said for the United States' employment of hunter-killer teams (*i.e.*: assassination squads) to hunt down senior al-Qaeda and Taliban leadership, and if requested kill those individuals. In what is commonly referred to by neo-conservatives as the "post-September 11th world," how strange is it to believe American Special Forces would be put to such work? It could be rationalized as more cost-effective than rescuing American hostages and much more humane than water-boarding. Besides, is it any less disturbing to presume that senior insurgency leadership will end up in extralegal black-site prisons, rather than killed on sight? So how shocked should any informed American really be to the norm? Again, Applebaum's (2010) theme resonates here: Whose side are you on if you need evidence for this claim?

Though such phenomena were meant to be extraordinary measures, rendition and torture have been in use so long it may be too late to undo the cultural desensitization to such cruelty and, concurrently, the lowering of the bar for the expected behavior of government operatives. Where Žižek has expressed publically his own desire that toture remain "extraordinary" (Assange & Žižek, 2011), the reality expressed by the proofer frame speaks to the institutionalization of extralegal and extraterritorial measures in the service of counterterrorism. Also, the complexity of the enthymeme that the United States should use such a squad to search for Osama Bin

Laden in al-Qaeda-complicit Pakistan may be lost on most readers unfamiliar with the nebulous and secretive world of foreign policy.

The proofer frame had no longevity because of subject. Though authors of articles interpreted to use this frame may have made a case for their own readers, the revelatory information was mostly absent in the master narrative where frames competed. Many of the authors would not directly attribute the status of "news" or "revelatory" information to the *Afghan War Diary*'s content, exposition and contextualization of the content was eschewed for a discussion of the methods by which the content was exposed. Even emotional reaction to the conclusive evidence of what was already suspected was muted, because as such it might make one uninformed, ignorant, or lacking in their civic duty. The ability of these two frames to be constructed at all may actually be an effect of poor public relations at the White House following the release of the *Afghan War Diary*, what was then the largest leak of its kind. A certain rhetorical complexity was created for journalists trying to stay within the confines of the war-time political context, itself stemming from the confusion that the Obama administration (much like the Nixon administration) endured in those first few days after publication. When the official line is "We don't know how to react" (Schmitt, Cooper, Ellick, Masood, & Oppel, 2010, para. 6) and elite journalistic organizations are already outside of their comfort zone, increased risks and context-defying behaviors may seem acceptable to newspaper managers and editors. Nonetheless, the 'criminal' and 'proofer' frames were doomed to extinction within the first week of coverage. This is not to say that they didn't effect other journalists within that week.

Both of the unstable contexts for the *Afghan War Diaries* publication (the 'criminal' and 'proofer' frames) may seem tenable on the surface, but ultimately are anachronistic. Gibson writes about the inherent violence of a technological society, positing two orders of violence produced by technology that interconnect society by invading the mental and emotional "internals" of the users. The first being the loss of identity by the extension of interconnection and the second order violence is the cultural invention of technologies "specifically designed to produce violence" in ways that "both mirror and reverse . . . the manner in which our technologies do violence to us"(Gibson, 2005, p. 197). Gibson points out that the rhetorical devices used to justify and mitigate physical violence assault our identities and cognitive understandings of reality, using the "peacekeeper" nuclear missile and death by "lethal injection" as examples (Gibson, 2005, p. 198). I will return to this theme in the conclusion section.

6.2   Challenges from Inertia: Journalistic Turf

The 'journalistic turf' frame occurred in two distinct waves, and that second wave incorporated a great deal of the structural devices (such as calling WikiLeaks a "criminal enterprise" or hinting at Pakistani-Taliban connections and hunter-killer teams) left over from the 'criminal' and 'proofer' frames. The main idea of this frame remained, at its core, about journalistic occupational boundaries in a new, interconnected world full of technologies that threaten to obsolesce (or worse, reverse) the role of the journalist in the developed, democratic world. The constant critique of Assange remains that he is not a journalist because he is not objective, too pragmatic, ideologically focused, and not professional enough. The irony may be that print journalists make this critique so forcefully, they frequently fall prey to it, themselves. But ideologically, this frame may

resonate with American audiences simply because Assange has not specialized himself properly. He is a digital, computer programmer--not a typographic, *printing press programmer*. Assange's artistic and radical nature similarly distinguishes him from the professional and cool occupational culture of the contemporary print journalist. Could it be the case that hactivism and journalism are mutually exclusive roles in society but overlapping occupational roles?

This frame may be the most epic example of Scheufele's most crucial sub-process in his process model of framing (1999), as described in the theoretical review from Chapter 4. Scheufele's process model of framing (as pictured in Figure 4.1, p. 41) holds that the resonant interplay of the sub-process labeled "journalists as audiences" creates new inputs for "frame building" thus contributing to the feedback loop found in the model. Journalists watching the news who are dedicated to muckraking and high modernist journalism may have felt slighted they were being scooped by Internet upstarts. The result is a nebulous redefinition of journalistic turf where whistle-blowers and Internet publications are sidelined, exploited, and left without the protections that American journalists have privileged access to. In this frame, journalists, unable to ignore the challenge from alternative media, are rewarded with legitimacy for the selective plagiarization of relatively powerless sources from the World Wide Web from their elite positions in the print media.

If the empirical conclusions of cognitivist framing scholars are in any way informative, they could be interpreted as proof that journalists are just typographic hackers of the human brain. Further constructivist theoretical insights similarly present a connection between hactivism and journalism: the social activism of print journalists is

constricted by the organizational cultures of their papers and organizational routines of their 'beats,' so as to be self-selected activists when reporting economics, 1st Amendment cases, the run-up to a war, or various other topics that make up the focus of print journalism. Technology is breaking down the walls between editorial and news. Search engine algorithms do not care about this distinction and publishers are often following Google's lead. The less objective but more poetic rants of reporters can now be published in their blogs and (depending on the content) need only be *publicized* in their employer's newspaper pages. The insertion of a blog's homepage into the byline of an article invites readers to go beyond the professional bounds of journalism. Similarly, journalistic turf spills out through this doorway and is thusly expanded outside of the realm of occupation and into the realm of art, vis-à-vis technology.

Theall (2005) notes an interesting connection between art and technology in the "emerging post-literate, digital telecosm" in the work of programmers (Theall, 2005, p. 53). Stuart Brand saw computer programming as uniting art, technology, and science, while Andy Hertzfeld has called computer programming as "the only job where I get to be both an engineer and an artist" (Theall, 2005, p. 53). These are certainly not the analogies for the traditional work of journalists. Certainly though, in light of this analysis, the role of journalist could be added to such a list of hats that Assange wears: hacker, activist, organizational founder, and concurrently, the *James Bond of Journalism*. Journalists may be tempted to cordon off their occupational territory from digital age intruders with large contributions of print articles decrying Assange, Manning, or the 'blogosphere.' This reactionary tendency only reinforces the value of such outsiders to journalism, if not as object, then at least as the subject. Post-literate artists of code

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(computer programmers, information technology specialists, *et cetera*) are already judged by a different social standard than the typographic professional in all the fields they invade.

If analyzed in a vacuum, the 'journalistic turf' frame qualities seem to support the critical paradigm if only because the elite organizations in control of the print medium's most circulated publications seem to have some inherent self-interest in such control. The political context of a critical legislative session is also an input to the frame. One author interpreted as using the 'journalistic turf' frame explicitly mentioned the upcoming vote on the SHIELD Act and the perceived threat of WikiLeaks to that legislation. Other authors from the frame tried turning to the leaders of journalistic professional organizations. This is, again, not the standard by which Assange can be judged, as Assange's already well-publicized background in hactivism make him an altogether *novel type* of journalist, if he is to be counted amongst their ranks whatsoever.

It is here that journalist authors in the sample face their own rhetorical challenge of inertia. Assange took on print media organizations as an underdog and now *obliges* their requests for information. This presents a similar challenge of prior ethos for print journalists who wish to criticize Assange as being a non- or quasi-journalist. All of the journalistic professional organizations in the world cannot change the fact that Assange supplies information where the existing media and government establishments leave an open demand. The public may already see the traditional print and broadcast media as obsolesced in favor of other, faster, digital media. The mass publication of leaked official documents as a means of increasing transparency mirrors the rise of other Internet technologies (or applications). Social networking's rise in popularity should

indicate that, among other conclusions, the average digital media consumer is willing to

filter through large amounts of innocuous information to find the unfiltered information

they desire. There may also be the misinterpretation among the audience that

newspapers are already doomed, a wholly separate challenge of inertia and prior ethos

for print journalists.

Another significant issue with the 'journalistic turf' frame was the inability of

journalists to objectively or skillfully deal with the challenges that WikiLeaks creates for

traditional print media—akin to a carriage-maker criticizing automobiles for their lack of

horses. Applebaum's reasoning as to why we still "need news organizations, editors, or

reporters with more than 10 minutes' experience," (2010, para. 1) was based on her

own trouble in using the *Afghan War Diary* website. The *Afghan War Diary* website

uses Web2.0-style, XML encoding to make every defense department acronym or piece

of military jargon into a link to a reference guide which pops up in a separate window to

guide reading. Applebaum evidenced her claim using typographic reproductions of the

Afghan War Diary, stripped of any benefit the Internet holds:

> To see what I mean, try reading this: "At 1850Z, TF 2-2 using PREDATOR
> (UAV) PID insurgents emplacing IEDs at 41R PR 9243 0202, 2.7km NW
> of FOB Hutal, Kandahar. TF 2-2 using PREDATOR engaged with 1x
> Hellfire missile resulting in 1x INS KIA and 1x INS WIA. ISAF tracking
> #12-374."
> Did you get that? I didn't, at least not at first. I understand it somewhat
> better now, however, because the New York Times [*sic*] helpfully explains
> on its Web site that this excerpt . . . describes a predator drone firing a
> missile . . .
> Reading through the documents, you do begin to pick up the code . . . Yet
> after a while, even the summaries don't make that much sense. Was that
> Predator operation crucial? Was that Afghan police battle ordinary friendly
> fire, or did it reflect a larger conflict? Here the Times and the Guardian
> can help a little. (Applebaum, 2010, para. 1-2 & 4)

Of course, it is possible that Applebaum didn't know how to use the XML-dictionary for all the jargon—media literacy is a commodity in short supply. It is also possible she never visited the actual site and instead relied on the accounts of journalists and a skeleton of the information available online to make her case that much more "ironclad." Her reasoning is also rather degrading to readers, since she argues because it is hard for her, a trained journalist, to understand the way that the information is being encoded and transmitted over the Internet, therefore a non-journalist could not do the same without her or her ilk. What is more revealing about Applebaum's criticism, is that entries in the *War Diary* are not only placed chronologically on a timeline above where they appear on the Web, not only placed geographically on a map of Afghanistan on a sidebar on each page, but are even tagged and color-coded to provide, quite literally, the context as a frame for the content (WikiLeaks, 2010a). While Applebaum attempts to show an "ironclad case" for elite typographic organizations, she instead points out her own typographic *bias* and, alternately, her lack of objectivity or her lack of media literacy. Sadly, reactionary criticism of technology is characteristic of the articles in the journalistic turf frame.

All three of the frames that died out in the three-month span of the sample text (the 'criminal,' 'proofer,' and 'journalistic turf') place the media in some sort of high demand. Respectively, they describe in a dramatistic nature who the villains are, tell readers what to look for in the documents, and defend occupational boundaries. Take for instance the words of one journalist-cum-media effects scholar regarding journalists as audiences during the first Gulf War:

> In 1991, during the Gulf War, I found myself in Saudi Arabia as a
> journalist, living in Dhahrann near the Kuwaiti border. Every day, U.S.

officials conducted two live televised press conferences—one from allied military headquarters in Riyadh . . . and one from the Pentagon . . . With other journalists I crowded around a television set twice a day to get the official news of the war's progress, as relayed by CNN. And we knew that Saddam Hussein in his bunker in Baghdad was doing exactly the same thing . . .(Hickey, 2005, p. 65)

Another challenge for media attempting to cover United States military interventions: the most patriotic and trusting of the audience might reject such broadcasts as insincere or incomplete, as the content equates the audience with the enemy, incapable of being trusted with the truth. Such audiences will inevitably gravitate towards hawkish, infotainment sources in either traditional or digital media. Such content requires "insider analysis" from retired military officers, typically supplied by the Pentagon's or private contractors' media relations machines. In this media environment, the functional difference between news and editorial is erased. Also pushed out to seek other sources would be those who do not trust such an official line and desire more facts for their own analysis. Journalists, obsolesced and drowned out by the media relations machines they are forced to echo or confront, then fall into this class, as Hickey concludes, with my own emphasis:

> We knew also that what the generals in Riyadh and Washington were conveying in those press conferences was aimed at Saddam Hussein as much as it was to the public and ourselves. *So the information needed to be decoded, if possible. How much of it was tactical propaganda and misinformation, and how much of it could be believed?* CNN had become a player, a participant in the conflict as much as an observer. *For the first time in the history of warfare, there existed a live, simultaneous information loop that was an aspect of the war.*(Hickey, 2005, p. 65)

Without an informant or whistleblower, the tightlipped system forces reporters on the military and intelligence beats to become reliant on the Pentagon's distributed media relations machine. In this sense, the war journalist is only necessary if they provide

actual insight into the facts on the ground. What better way to prevent such insight, than to embed such journalists with a military unit? This would ensure that their lives are at risk if they give away tactical information. And what special training might a journalist have to make such insights off the battlefield, while watching and analyzing the same press-conferences and broadcasts as civilians? The "live, simultaneous information loop" may exist; but humans can be taken 'out of the loop,' as is the description of fully automated systems, if organizational routines and pressures prevent journalists from reacting to new stimuli in their environment. The *Afghan War Diary*'s content is straight from the soldier, the format (making it categorized, cross-searchable, graphically displayed, and the target of a hyperlink) is the product of WikiLeak's creativity. I do not wish to give short shrift to journalists who attempt to provide this sort of objective, insightful coverage. At the same time, journalists in this frame who only complain that WikiLeaks does not provide enough context or analysis fail to live up to journalistic standards, put lives at risk, and are missing the point and value of the *Afghan War Diary*. 'Elite journalists' are expected to at least peruse the documents until they find the data that allows them to provide the kind of forward-looking analysis once expected of journalists in Hallin's period of High Modernity. That analysis could save the lives of countless Afghans and NATO troops, simply by performing what *was* the occupational and social role of journalists. What if the *New York Times* staff who worked with Daniel Ellsberg had told him: *These Pentagon Papers sure are lengthy. History of a secret war and presidential deception or not, we can't afford to pull coverage off of celebrity news and political sex scandals… Besides, didn't you photocopy this?* The value of the *Afghan War Diary* should not be lessened by the

methods which prompted its publication. If professional journalists cannot make this leap, then citizen journalists now will take on the social role of journalists without the occupational benefits.

As noted, Dooley and Grossweiler used the term *Turf Wars* (1997) as an accurate description of the battle journalists had in staking out the fourth estate. The rise of citizen journalists who challenge the journalistic establishment is the analogous guerilla-style, asymmetric battle for that turf's control. Just like a guerilla insurgency, individuals' allegiances are tough to discern. Journalists increasingly are becoming citizen journalists as they get fed up with their editors' decisions and citizen journalists are increasingly being hired by the journalistic establishment to prop it up. The journalistic turf frame is a key weapon in that war.

6.3   Violating the Taboo of Political Context: Anti-War Heroes

Strangely, the frame that provided the most contextual information (in the second-smallest number of documents) was the frame that seemed the most biased— the more positive anti-war hero frame. Pointing out that the web-based whistle-blower organization was "maturing" by seeking out the help of traditional media and that WikiLeaks' "methods have often overshadowed the significance of the documents they wished to publish" (Nakashima & Warrick, 2010, para. 13) seems a viable ovservation about the medium and the message, especially in light of the 'journalistic turf' frame's focus. Other authors provided important information on the kind of information WikiLeaks has published in the past, information about the hacker that turned Manning in, and/or information about how WikiLeaks protected Manning from prosecution and offered to pay his legal bills.

One editorial in the sample mentioned not only the actual, Google-ready moniker, *Afghan War Diary*, but even published the operational designation of one American assassination squad, "Task Force 373" (Robinson, 2010). This begs the question of why a clearly anti-war editorialist is the only author in the whole of the sample able to give the correct name of this new creation that so threatens the journalistic establishment and the Pentagon's ability to frame the war. The only headline calling a leaker a "hero" also falls under this frame, and adds the interesting context that "a Facebook page to support Manning . . . In less than a week . . . had more than 6,000 members" (Savage M. W., 2010, para. 8).

A legal defense fund has also been set up for the Army Private, named "Courage to Resist," and had already raised $33,000 (USD) towards their $50,000 goal in less than a month after Manning's arrest (Savage M.W., 2010, para. 14). This frame assumes the kind of investigative coverage Lawrence (2005) writes would best upset an entrenched political context. The context is the site of frame construction, per Lawrence's (2005) reasoning. Use of this frame then becomes an act of protest. So to return to an earlier analogy (between ecology and framing) the ecosystem in which the frames studied here are evolving is in a state of flux due to the introduction of the new factors. The introduction of an alien species, such as kudzu or silver carp, can cause "cascading effects" and destroy the previous homeostasis of an ecosystem. Similarly, the introduction of a whistleblower (Manning) and an individual determined to provide the opportunity for analysis and research stemming from the leak (Assange) alters the dynamics of the political context for reporting on the U.S.-led Afghanistan mission. As the new actors in the system make it harder for frames that originally dominated war

coverage to compete, previously marginalized frames (or opinions and attitudes) are able to bubble up to the surface, if only momentarily. What is interesting and novel: individuals, without an official position of power, are having this effect on the social construction of American foreign policy. Judging from the inconsistent and loose rhetoric, authors using the anti-war heroes frame may have lost sight of the competition to win hearts and minds in their acts of protest.

Some authors who originally contributed to articles that fell under this frame wrote or collaborated in the writing of more critical stories later in the sample—possibly a change of heart, possibly a result of organizational routines and pressures. The 'positive' frame was not well established in the sample, but continued to crop up even before the release of the supposedly 'more explosive' documents from the Iraq War, the *Iraq War Logs*. Burns and Somaiya, two Washington Post journalists, seemed to do an about face from their previous reporting on WikiLeaks. In place of their typically stern use of the 'blood on hands' and 'Assange the defiler' frames were quotes from Assange and Ellsberg, updates on the conditions under which Manning was being held, along with a recap of the Obama administration's pursuit of whistle-blowers. Burns and Somaiya even rebut the Pentagon's only quote regarding WikiLeak's "gift to terrorist organizations" with realistic analysis regarding the reliability of the Pentagon to lay out such claims before reviewing the data and Ellsberg's description of the Iraq War as failed and misguided (Burns & Somaiya, 2010, para. 9-12). What Burns and Somaiya could not do for the Afghan documents, they clearly pushed to do for next major publication of WikiLeaks, the *Iraq War Logs*.

6.4   Dominant Frames

The final two remaining frames dominate both the front and tail end of the

sample. The 'blood on hands' and 'Assange the defiler' frames take up more space but

provide non-sequitur and non-salient information in place of actual analysis, creating an

echo-chamber for the Whitehouse, Pentagon, or the Stockholm prosecutor's office

spokespersons to present their case. These two frames each contained triple the

number of stories as I could interpret to fall under the anti-war heroes frame and provide

a stark contrast in framing devices used.

6.4.1 Blood on Hands

The 'blood on hands' frame may in fact be a much more clever enthymematic

argument than at first suspected. If Assange is a terrorist by association, the full weight

of the 'criminal' frame and the prescribed remedies of the 'proofer' frames fall on him

without their explicit use. This would of course mean the executive should do what it

must and, by default, without the oversight. A post-9/11 America cannot fully divorce

itself from the otherization of the criminal or terrorist, so long as the label sticks. The

argument is hard to make, but the label is hard to shake. Again, Assange's methods

take center-stage, but are mostly confused with the general effects of globalization.

Some authors of media effects even interpret terrorism as an inevitable result of global

inequality in the omniscient presence of a digitally interconnected world populace:

> The globalization process is inherently divisive and destabilizing . . .
> People are no longer as locked into their own separate cubbyholes of life
> as they once were before modern communications put them in daily
> contact with the rest of the world.(Hickey, 2005, p. 70).

This dynamic, according to Attali, "threatens true world war of a new type . . . of

terrorism that can suddenly rip the vulnerable fabric of complex systems" (Attali, 1991,

pp. 76-77). Assange is either the solution or the problem. The easiest way of painting

Assange as the problem is the cooption of his rhetorical ground. The blood on hands

narrative holds Assange responsible for or adds to this destabilizing dynamic within this

narrative. Hickey actually proscribes such a "preventative" strategy:

> The politics of reaction and crisis management need to give way to a new
> early warning system based on social detection and prevention:
> preventative politics, preventative diplomacy and even preventative
> journalism. A systematic effort to patrol ahead for early signs of stress in
> the deepest recesses of society, to search out root causes in hopes of
> taking timely action to prevent cataclysmic results. (Hickey, 2005, p. 71)

Whereas the rhetoric of the 'criminal' and 'proofer' frames is reactionary, and

therefore like "political and social institutions formed in the Industrial Age," such rhetoric

also faces a challenge of inertia, "running far behind the curve of change" within the

society that they operate within (Hickey, 2005, p.68). The 'blood on hands' frame co-

opts the destabilizing causes of globalization (originally used by Assange to threaten

structural elites) and exploits them to blame Assange for the effects of global inequality

and interconnectedness within virtual reality. Assange has blood on his hands at the

point he makes audiences aware of what was already the case in unmediated reality.

Though the disharmony afforded by WikiLeaks-style publishing may at first seem

directly beneficial to Americans, by castigating Assange and those who work with them

as having blood on their hands of some young soldier or Afghan informant, that

disharmony can no longer be tolerated. Take for instance the case of the "Ground Zero

Mosque." Religious freedom, like ethically empowered whistle-blowing, is supposedly

valued in America, but upon the first hint that terrorists (in this example, the hints were

rather direct on certain 24-hour news stations) may have been funding the project,

national outcry against the project halted plans for construction. A community center

(even with a mosque) may have been exactly what Ground Zero needed for the families

of Moslem 9-11 victims and necessary intercultural healing to take place. Unfortunately,

to paraphrase Nixon, the semblance of impropriety is worse than the real thing when it

comes to defining terrorists. To simply react to Assange's challenge to United States

hegemony by calling him a terrorist or a criminal would not advance the narrative, as

other frames show. To preempt investigations into, or the outcome of, Assange's

actions by saying the functional effect of his actions is the same as terrorism or

organized crime proactively mitigates the rhetorical challenges faced by those trying to

prevent Assange from cashing in his coup d'état for folk-hero status.

6.4.2 Assange, the Defiler

A similarly preventive strategy bent on the irrational defamation of Assange's

character, which truly dominated the coverage quantitatively and in terms of distribution,

was the Assange the defiler frame. This frame attempts to persuade the audience that

Assange is metaphorically the antithesis to the mythological King Midas: Assange

devalues and pollutes all that is before him. Etymological investigation of the verb,

defile, yields interesting results:

> 1. To make filthy or dirty; pollute.
> 2. To debase the pureness or excellence of; corrupt.
> 3. To profane or sully (a reputation, for example).
> 4. To make unclean or unfit for ceremonial use; desecrate.
> 5. To violate the chastity of.
> (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2009)

This frame accuses Assange of "muddying the waters between journalism and

activism," consensually violating the chastity of two women, desecrating the sacred

temple of the U.S. military by accusing it of "dirty tricks," and even sullying the good

name of the Stockholm Office of Public Prosecution. Hacking secure networks is akin

to desecrating their very purpose of controlling information for the purpose of this frame. Assange was making the War in Afghanistan unfit for its most important ceremonial use; that is, his release threatened congressional votes on *war funding*. Another article about the troubled childhood and career of Manning was included here because of the thematic device that the young army private, weak from years of ostracism based on his sexuality, was corrupted by his hacker friends (or possibly Assange) to collude with WikiLeaks.

The Middle English root for defile was *defilen*, "to trample on, abuse, pollute" (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2009). It is ironic that this is exactly the rhetorical purpose for the Assange the defiler frame. This mode of reporting the *Afhan War Diary* mitigates the rhetorical challenges of Assange's folk-hero status and Manning's status as a digital warrior-priest (*i.e.*: inertia). Hypothetically, if this frame set with 100% of the world audience and cascaded down to all levels of the media, Assange would be given no quarter, no trust, and no loyalty, as he is accused of debasing the pureness of his organization by acting in an imperious or paranoid manner.

This frame not only contains the largest volume of articles, but is also distributed the widest across the sample when viewed in week-long segments, as Figure 6.1 (p. 82) illustrates. The rape and molestation allegations made in late-August played directly into this virulent mode of contextualizing the WikiLeaks story and powered this frame to dominance with the most salacious of fuels: *sex crimes*. What journalist's trustworthiness could survive such a stain? Worst of all, the accusations reverse Assange's cultural appeal as the "James Bond of Journalism" into a criticism of the

fictional spy's favorite vice: his proclivities toward lecherous and promiscuous sexual conduct.

This frame creates a valid narrative from the media effects perspective by doubling down on the archetype retrieved by Assange, the James Bond of Journalism. From the political context perspective, nothing could quite be said to 'wag the dog' with the effect of a sex scandal—other than a new war. If the narrative was no longer about the content of the *Afghan War Diary*, no longer about the ethical or criminal liability of Assange as a terrorist or journalist, but instead, about the hard-to-shake accusations of sexual impropriety made by two different women, Assange now faces the serious rhetorical challenges. Assange's challenges from prior ethos then outweigh the challenges the Pentagon, White House, and elite journalists faced in responding to the leaks. His prior ethos and ethos derived from any rhetorical act designed to point out wrongdoing (accusations of "dirty tricks," for instance) destroy Assange's credibility. Who would trust an accused rapist (at least without being informed of the information the press deprives audiences of in this sample)? The Pentagon and press establishment rebut what could have been a reasonable narrative, simply calling Assange's accusations "absurd." The Pentagon has successfully co-opted the basic epistemological conclusions of those who find the rape allegations too much a coincidence to be fidelitous.

If Assange's problems in Sweden were a "honey trap" as some have called it, this would be one of the most ingenious and risky international public relations strategies in history. Most journalists follow such a racy plot twist with vigor, afraid of being scooped, as is standard occupational routine. Other journalists may try to stick to

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a 'big picture' view of the story. The palpable sense of ease with which journalists pile on the coverage of the tenuous rape and molestation allegations alongside ridiculous claims (more like unfulfilled prophecies) of blood on WikiLeaks' or Assange's hands are warnings. The sheer volume of articles employing this frame displays the hallmarks of journalists taking the path of least editorial resistance and eschewing the high road of high modernist journalism.

These are clear signs that Hallin's argument about the passing of a High Modernist period in American journalism is all too true. Publicizing the general details of a freshly open rape case, an open treason case, and possible espionage cases is business as usual—provided the sources are anonymous insiders and the publishers are elite print organizations. But the media will not investigate Anna Ardin, named in one article, or her ties to Central Intelligence Agency-funded groups in Sweden. The media effects of the 'Assange the defiler' and 'blood on hands' frames make sense: this story is like a spy drama more and more, selling papers, generating clicks, meant to blow the cool, rational impulses of the print reader off the page. Most importantly, the two frames stealthily defame the reputations of key actors and organizations, without an argument to give away their eventual purpose, the cooption of Assange, Manning, and WikiLeak's very ground.

The final section of this chapter provides concluding analysis about the three newspapers' framing of WikiLeaks, a comparison to the treatment of Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers, implications for the framing researchers, media effects theorists, and other liberal arts scholars, as well as a discussion of the thesis's limitations, and ideas for future research.

6.5   Conclusion

Taken holistically, the results of this analysis provide a collection of prescient conclusions for news framing and media effects. Overt domination of column inches is no longer a viable strategy for structural elites. Being the loudest or most constant voice in the print media arena only tells readers (most of which have access to the Internet) to ignore that voice just as they learned to tune out birds tweeting or the hiss of their air conditioner. The effects of the WikiLeaks in particular show that a large amount of content is not the problem. It is the print media's presentation of that content that is demeaning and disengaging to the target audience.

It should be noted that my results are the product of rhetorical criticism, and as such, are only one interpretation, even if guided by a wealth of prior scholarship. This research does not empirically prove causal connections between structural inputs and journalistic framing decisions. This thesis cannot presume to have fully established that link between structures of power and frame construction. Yet, rhetorical criticism from my particular constructivist paradigm (seeking to understand the cooption of alternative frames by hegemonic interests) may provide ample hypotheses for cognitivist or critical scholars to test in their own research, using qualitative or quantitative analysis. Any of these efforts would contribute to a Lakatosian framing research program's competitive and collaborative nature, as this interpretation surely does. Though "the bulk of framing research is derived from a social scientific orientation" and "is grounded in quantitative assumptions" (Kuypers, 2010, pp. 286-287), Kuypers concludes that, "looked at from a broad perspective, framing analysis can provide a safe place for the interaction of rhetorical and social scientific work" (Kuypers, 2010, p. 308).

The three months presented here provide but a small window into the phenomenon of globalization (represented here by WikiLeaks) and its implications for the disruption of a dominant, *en bello* political context for reporting. Instead, strategies of cooption and defamation allow elite print journalists to present stories in ways that bring harmony back to the political context of *how* they report stories.

There are two structural inputs that most likely add to this trend (of cooption and defamation). First, by returning to the familiar political context of war-time reporting, reporters and journalistic organizations add stability to their own organizational routines and cultures. Through the process of cooption, authors and organizations that were originally warm to WikiLeaks can make an editorial about-face without eating crow. Secondly, as much as the content of the *Afghan War Diary* is salient to the public discussion of American involvement in Afghanistan, it is not salient to the discussion that political leaders want to have. The institutional and government elites that the news media is so seemingly co-dependent upon are defamed in many cases by the content of WikiLeaks' publications. In fact, this is often the point. As much as WikiLeaks is an effort to make government transparent, it is also a global village analogue to an old-fashioned public disgracing in the town square, attempting to place corrupt politicians, generals, and business leaders in the stocks of a whistle-blower-induced media firestorm. The only difference is the tomatoes thrown in the global village are tweets and posts, which fester into protests, ultimately rotting the legitimacy of the state. This has been the case in the "Occupy" movement, as Internet activists post all available information on police, judges, or politicians perceived to be mistreating protesters (this practice is known as "DOXing").

Indeed, the effect of the WikiLeaks anonymous data submission and publication system as a global cultural artifact may be the maximum extension of the user's eyes, seeing that which was previously hidden, without pesky trespassing or breaking and entering charges. This inherently obsolesces the print journalistic establishment as intermediaries between structural elites and the public, as this has traditionally been the job of journalists. As print journalists are no longer the sole and proprietary source of state secrets, the WikiLeaks artifact retrieves the cultural artifact of a small town's bartender or priest; WikiLeaks tells you what you really need to hear, selectively keeping identities secret based on ethical attributions of actors, but never pulling any punches in the process. Indeed, this trend could inevitably result in WikiLeaks reversing itself into an entrenched institution, as some previous hackers and volunteers already claim.

Thankfully, the nature of the Internet as a meta-medium is that when WikiLeaks goes the way of the *Washington Post,* there will always be another hacker waiting to pick up the pro-transparency flag. As the WikiLeaks organization currently scales back operations because of financial problems, on face they seem to be as much affected by power as elite journalistic organizations. Again, this work can only interpret the answer from what was observed in research; this may be another question better answered by historians. That interpretation has to incorporate a fundamental understanding that the mediums in which power is exercised, the press-room seat or the electronic payment infrastructure, are vastly different between the Pentagon Papers and the *Afghan War Diary.* The social turf the executive, the Pentagon, journalists, and WikiLeaks have staked out and the lines drawn in the sand will remain as long as the Internet coexists

with traditional media under the current socio-cultural dynamic. But what do the larger power plays in the master narrative mean for the unconstructed nature of reality? What do they say about how technology and news frames are using us? What is the moral of the master narrative to those who wish to remain entrenched in systems of power?

The failure of the criminal, proofer, and bloody hands frames may be rooted in that the print news audience was simply not ready to call Assange a terrorist. They were not ready to make the jump to rhetorical violence against a pale and futuristic individual. He hardly fits the stereotypical mode for a criminal or terrorist (he is likely the palest international terrorist on the planet). In fact, he seems more like a professor or executive. Similarly, "hunter-killer" squads and United States military allies such as Pakistan helping our enemies in Afghanistan may simply be too obvious a conclusion to get 'worked up' about.

But it may also be the case that the print medium is not hot enough, not sufficiently emotionally charged, to set such bold frames. Or it may simply be the case that the amount of anonymous and quasi-official sources talking to the press about sensitive diplomatic, operational, and prosecutorial information was both initiated and quashed by the ambiguous "other elites" whose "ideologies, attitudes, *etc.*" (Scheufele, 1999) motivate them to respond even if it is counterproductive. Such elites may be inherently opposed to journalists tipping Assange off concerning an impending espionage prosecution, yet may also wish to present enough legal pressure to mitigate his work. Such "other elites" may also be opposed to journalists tipping off Pakistan of an imminent U.S. invasion of their sovereign territory by such a hunter-killer team searching for public enemy, number one, Osama bin-Laden.

Advertising a looming federal prosecution against Assange similarly fits this purpose. It could yet be the case that the leak was manufactured for the sole purpose of intimidating an individual already beyond the reach of *legal* reprise. Much in the same way that Poulsen and Zetter gave away valuable secrets about SCIF in forward-operating bases from the Lamo-Manning chat logs, secrets from the beltway are filtering into articles aimed at punishing leakers. Unless this is a pragmatic choice made by defense or intelligence communications strategists to release such information, it is hard to see the difference between these secondary or tertiary leaks, and the conduct of WikiLeaks, insofar as potential risk. If this information is being purposefully leaked, it may be better for the Pentagon to do it officially, rather than anonymously.

I take the latter stance in my interpretation, for the print medium is as emotionally charged and salacious as ever (note the defiler frame's popularity).   The aggregation of print with the addition of links, blogs, comments, and social media forces a discussion to happen. A larger and ever more totalistic network is growing in America and neither decision-makers nor the press can ignore it. The mere cascading effects of a social system in constant flux from the exponentially accelerating interconnections may even prevent any one organization or individual from ever controlling such a network. To actually have any power in a press that coexists with the Internet, domination must be replaced with cooption.

I qualify my critique of the sample using Gibson with one caveat to his theorization. Gibson presumes the total interconnection of every human being, or the panopticon, where all is seen by all, as a state in which humanity already exists. He writes:

> Our privacy threatened and our identities on the line we have had to invent modes of violence that we can stomach. The panopticon is here and now. Because, as McLuhan points out, "electronic surveillance of every human being, every human action, is now a reality" . . . the violence we inflict must be clean. We don't want even the mediated and far away, but bloody, violence of Vietnam. We want Gulf War I, with its clean, managed, and manageable violence.(Gibson, 2005, p. 199)

But Gibson is wrong to interpret McLuhan in this way—McLuhan simply was describing that the *technology* is a reality. Gibson's mediated violence is no longer clean enough, in a world where social networks rule. The new violence, when applied to the inherent 'other' of homeland security, the subaltern Muslim, Said's Oriental other turned violent is a typology that does not count Assange amongst its members. Cooption is not as simple as lumping Assange in this group. It is not yet the case that every human action is actually under electronic surveillance, even in closed-circuit camera infested London. It is not yet the case in Los Angeles, teeming with unstoppable paparazzi. Nor is it the case in Beijing, where smart phones and social networking may interconnect more people at a higher density and with a stronger identity-depriving content regulation regime, than anywhere else on the planet. The panopticon is still tomorrow and the closer groups like WikiLeaks move us to that tomorrow, the faster society will see such violence in its deployment.

Another example of how the 'criminal' and 'proofer' frames challenge both Gibson's conclusions on second order media violence and the critical paradigm of news framing, whereby researchers may presume the domination of news frames by government and economic elites, builds on a point made by Gibson:

> The government controlled the press during the first Gulf War far more strictly than it ever had during any previous armed conflicts. During the second go-round it preempted information gathering by "embedding" reporters with units and at least attempting to force all others off to the

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side of the road . . . Information makes events routine, it indicates that the official body carrying out the act has formulated a way of framing the event. (Gibson, 2005, p. 202).

Indeed, military and political elites may not want a Vietnam-style, bloody conflict—but it is present if one is connected well enough and literate in Internet technologies, to read about it in the *Afghan War Diary*. Further, after reading such a document as the *AWD*, it becomes clear that the war in Afghanistan had become routine, not through the official narrative that was being framed, but rather through the selective telling of truths and the occasional lie. At the point elite journalistic news organizations begin violating the war-time political context for reporting (Lawrence, 2010), government control is no longer extended through information (and thus, identity is no longer deprived of the individual who reads about the actual carnage on the ground). The jump to new rhetorical devices for inflicting violence on Assange or Manning (individuals) is counteracted by the new space for individual analysis of the United States-led war in Afghanistan, reversing and flipping the cultural archetypes packaged in the old medium of the newspapers. The effect of the digital medium of the Internet on the typographic medium of journalism is inherently degrading the status of reporters from valued providers of information to the pointless middlemen, more concerned with withholding information than distributing it. Compared to the open source platform of the Internet, which is slowly assimilating print media, the contemporary, elite press seem to be failing to live up to journalistic standards, or even cannibalizing those occupational values for the sake of defending an ever shrinking turf.

For some journalists, especially those of a prior generation, the treatment of Assange compared to Ellsberg and the actions of newspapers must cause intense

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cognitive dissonance as they attempt to interpret the political context. The journalistic turf frame harmonizes occupational culture with political context, based on technology. It makes sense to allude to the contemporary art world, where pieces are sometimes designed to shock audiences into reflexive behavior, these shocking methods employed by the artist often gets more media attention than the body of work they exhibit. Some artists starve dogs to death in glass enclosures to make a statement about occupation and war. Other, more technologically adept artists enclose the audience in a fiber-optic cage of 1's and 0's, light and sound, documents, audio, and video, all dedicated to starving the audience of their apathy. Assange and Manning wrote scripts (*i.e.*: computer programs) that did exactly this task, and in chat logs, Manning is alleged to have noted what an uproar he was about to cause (Poulsen & Zetter, 2010b). So whether one refers to Assange and Manning as any variety of names, the figures audiences see, that is, soldiers' and operatives' reports, the facts making up the largest military data leak at the time of its release, were only accessible through the technological and social constructions of Assange, Manning, and all the other programmers who contributed work to the project. But visionaries of any given artistic tradition face immediate condemnation from the centers of power they most directly challenge in their work.

> Structures of power are also inherently challenged to use cooption to greater effect in desired framing. The attribution of responsibility for violence to Assange is a perfect example of symbol outweighing referent in the service of cooption; shocking readers into a new worldview. If any blood was conclusively on Assange's hands, one would expect a bloody shirt to be held up sooner, rather than later. This is especially true given the massive public relations defense mounted by the White House and Defense Department. No such evidence occurs in the newspapers studied in the thesis research, or in any other sources accumulated over two years.

Hickey might disagree with my analysis in the earlier discussion of the bloody

hands frame, regarding the necessity of preventative cooption strategies. But

politicians, diplomats, and journalists are no longer *reacting*; they are engaging in this

proactive strategy, at least as far as the 'blood on hands' coverage of the *Afghan War

Diary* shows. The political context of the *Afghan War Diary* coverage was

cataclysmically altered from the start—overt arguments pose too many rhetorical

challenges to use, from inertia to cultural complexity, prior ethos to ethos derived from

the act. Cooption is the only option for damage mitigation when backed into such a

corner. By co-opting (*i.e.*: to take or assume for one's own use) the pop-anxieties of

globalization, the national security argument (that Assange *is legally* a terrorist) does

not need to be made explicit. This is the key to the constructionist paradigm—the

acquisition of the concepts and attitudes foundational to a critical stance are redeployed

as a defense to those who challenge the official framing of the Afghan War. America is

at war with terrorists in Afghanistan and if Assange helps them, even indirectly, then he

is simply *with* the terrorists, and *against* America. The storyline presented by the 'blood

on hands' frame socially constructs the evidence for the Bush-esque paradox of being

"with us or against us." It elicits emotional reaction against Assange, by covertly

presenting the case for Assange's criminal liability. Hickey's writing predates the three-

months of coverage analyzed in this sample by almost 5 years. Nonetheless, using

McLuhan's media effects theory, Hickey presents a similarly prescient conclusion to

those given by McLuhan decades earlier, with my own emphasis added:

> Mass emotions, immediately expressed in polls, protests, migratory
> movements, or violence, increasingly drive decisions from the bottom up
> instead of from the top down. And the bottom is where new early warning

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techniques are needed and *where prevention has to begin* . . . William H. McNeill (1979) observes [that] "the whole process may be conceived as a kind of race between the rational, disciplined, cooperative potentialities of mankind, and the urge to destroy, which also lurks in every human psyche" (p. 537). (Hickey, 2005, p. 72-73).

Despite Hickey's focus on socioeconomic trends, the mass-hysteria surrounding terrorism, the protests against war and prosecution of whistle-blowers upholding American values, the migratory movements and rhetorical violence of Assange all fit into this conclusion. The site of prevention *is* the "urge to destroy." The target of that destruction is that which threatens the power to control and contextualize information. Though it may be too challenging to defend this power in the hands of the press establishment, the full weight of the power of the state and military establishment in a globalized world can still be brought to bear. To give such a treatment to Assange would mean that he was already considered the *a priori* avatar of those rational, disciplined, and cooperative potentialities that could be tapped for the process of cooption. Tipping the emotional scales towards reviling Assange requires the cooption of mass emotions, using rhetorical violence against Assange in much the same way Marcuse describes the external and internal capitalist response to the rise of socialism:

> Wholesale massacres in Indochina, Indonesia, the Congo, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Sudan are unleashed against everything which is called "communist" or which is in revolt against governments subservient to the imperialist countries . . . The counterrevolution is largely preventive and, in the Western World, altogether preventive.(Marcuse, 1972, pp. 1-2)

The narrative of character assassination is the more effective than unmediated assassination in an interconnected world. Control of territory is not as important as the cooption of the media for the purpose of advancing the narrative that an organization or

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faction should control that territory. Recent media repression in Thailand, Russia, Italy,

and Kyrgyzstan all point to this global truth.

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