

**Paper No. 10**

**Peace Journalism Case Study:  
US Media Coverage of the War in Iraq**

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This paper presents an in-depth analysis of Peace Journalism, using US media coverage of the War in Iraq as a case study. First it lays out some of the basic tenets of peace studies—more specifically Johan Galtung’s discourses—as well as George Lakoff’s cognitive linguistic frames. It then applies these theories to an in-depth analysis of how the War in Iraq was portrayed by the US media.

## Discourses and Frames

Discourses and frames are mental mechanisms by which we organize our thoughts, ideas and world views. Any new information is integrated into pre-existing frames or discourses which help us make sense of the world. Our use of these mechanisms is generally unconscious, yet they critically color the reality we see in the world. For the media, especially journalism, which attempts to say something about reality, it is vitally important to bring our discourses and frames to the light of consciousness.

Johan Galtung, founder of the field of peace studies, identifies a peace discourse and security discourse according to which he believes people around the world organize their understanding of conflict and violence. George Lakoff, a cognitive linguist, believes that there are two competing frames governing American politics: the nurturant parent frame and the strict father frame. Lakoff's work is also significant because he demonstrates how frames impact politics, and he offers some suggestions for the promotion of the nurturant parent frame. It should be noted that such dichotomy and dualism is misleadingly simplified, but such theoretical approaches help us better understand the world. The peace discourse and nurturant parent frame share many similar characteristics just as the security discourse and strict father frame do. Combining Galtung's and Lakoff's approaches can give us a fuller understanding of how and why we interpret the world in a certain way and how we can promote a more peaceful vision.

### 1. Johan Galtung's Peace and Security Discourses

Galtung believes there are two competing discourses which inform our understanding of conflict and violence: the peace discourse and security discourse. His theory is based on years of observation of conflict situations around the world. The difference between the peace discourse and the security discourse is summarized in the following table:

<i>Peace Discourse (Horizontal)</i>	<i>Security Discourse (Vertical)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict which has not been resolved or transformed.</li> <li>• A danger of violence as one way to "settle the conflict."</li> <li>• Conflict Transformation which is empathetic, creative and non-violent, in turn producing:</li> <li>• Peace, which is the best approach to "security." The approach works through acceptable or sustainable outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evil Party with strong capabilities and evil intentions.</li> <li>• A clear and present danger of violence, real or potential.</li> <li>• Strength to defeat or deter the evil party, in turn producing:</li> <li>• Security, which is also the best approach to "peace." The approach works when evil/strong parties are weakened through defeat or deterrence, and/or converted into good parties.</li> </ul>

(Galtung, 2004)

The peace discourse addresses issues more comprehensively and addresses the root causes of conflicts. It focuses on contradicting goals rather than on violence. Conflict can be defined as a situation where two or more individuals or groups try to pursue goals or ambitions which they believe they cannot share. (Howard, 2004) Conflict is not necessarily negative, nor does it need to lead to violence. It is necessary for progress and evolution. Any change in the world can be understood as a conflict with the status quo; and change can have positive effects.

The peace discourse makes use of tested conflict analysis techniques. A number of theories and explanations have emerged, but generally their focus is larger than those employed in security discourse. Conflict analysis broadens the scope of actors and stake holders, takes into account root causes and basic needs and assumes that solutions must be based on legitimate goals.

On the other hand, the security discourse places its emphasis on violence which it confuses with conflict. Violence can be understood as the use of force to achieve a goal. An alternative definition is the physical or psychological degradation of someone or something. As Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick write in *Peace Journalism*, “Violence is only one possible *response* to conflict—a collective expression, or political tool to achieve ends. It can easily be self-defeating, in the long term nullifying any gains or even killing those who would have benefited from the achievement.” (2005) The security approach tends to gloss over the distinction between violence and conflict and neglects root causes of conflict.

Galtung identifies three interlocking types of violence: direct, cultural and structural. Direct violence is what we usually think of in terms of aggression, military force, etc. Cultural violence can be understood as the way a group has been thinking about another group for many years. It can include talk, images or beliefs which glorify physical violence. Structural violence is harm which is built into the laws and traditional behavior of a group or society. Harm is permitted or ignored. Each of these forms of violence can be equally destructive and detrimental.

The above definitions of violence and conflict can help us understand the peace discourse and introduce important concepts in conflict analysis and transformation. This conception is quite different from the prevailing understanding of violence and conflict which is perpetuated by the security discourse around the world.

## **2. George Lakoff’s Nurturant Parent and Strict Father Frames**

Lakoff’s cognitive linguistic approach to American politics sees the political scene dominated by two competing frames: the nurturant parent frame and the strict father frame. He connects the nurturant parent frame to a progressive view of American society and the strict father frame to a conservative view. In his collection of essays *Don’t Think of an Elephant* (2004), he offers suggestions on how to promote the progressive frame.

“Frames come with inferences, so each frame implies something different,” writes Lakoff to demonstrate the importance of understanding frames. (2004) He also believes that the frames that dominate American politics are based on competing views of the family. The main points of each frame are summarized in the following table:

<i>Nurturant parent</i>	<i>Strict father</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The world is basically good and can be made better. It is our responsibility to work towards that.</li> <li>• Both parents share responsibility for raising children.</li> <li>• Parents must nurture their children and raise them to be nurturers.</li> <li>• Nurturing equals empathy (feeling and caring how others feel) plus responsibility (for taking care of oneself and others for whom we are responsible).</li> <li>• Political values based on empathy: protection from harm, fulfillment in life, fairness, freedom, open communication.</li> <li>• Political values based on responsibility: competence, trust, commitment, community building.</li> <li>• Policies: government protection as social safety net and government regulation, military and police, universal education, civil liberties, equal treatment, accountability, public service, open government, economy that benefits all and promotes these values.</li> <li>• Role of government: provide infrastructure and services to enact these values.</li> <li>• Foreign policy: Promote cooperation and extend these values to the world.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The world is dangerous and difficult and children are born bad and must be made good.</li> <li>• Father is the moral authority, has to support and defend family, tell his wife what to do and teach children right from wrong.</li> <li>• This is achieved through painful punishment: physical discipline leading to internal [self] discipline and resulting in morality and survival. Must pursue your self-interest to become self-reliant.</li> <li>• Social programs “spoil” people, giving them what they have not earned and keeping them dependent.</li> <li>• Social programs are evil and should be eliminated.</li> <li>• Role of government: protect nation, maintain order, administer justice (punishment), provide for orderly conduct and promotion of business.</li> <li>• Business is how disciplined people become self-reliant and wealth is a measure of discipline.</li> <li>• Taxes take away from good, disciplined people what they have rightfully earned and spend on those who do not deserve it.</li> <li>• Foreign policy: maintain sovereignty and impose moral authority while seeking self-interest.</li> <li>• Trigger: fear.</li> </ul>

(Lakoff, 2004)

While there is a dichotomy of frames, Lakoff argues that all Americans carry both models, either actively or passively, and that they can be activated at different times. In order to understand what frames actually are and how they operate in our minds, here are some key points about framing:

Carry out the following directive: "Don't think of an elephant!"

It is, of course, a directive that cannot be carried out — and that is the point. In order to purposefully not think of an elephant, you have to think of an elephant. There are four morals.

**Moral 1. Every word evokes a frame.**

A frame is a conceptual structure used in thinking. The word *elephant* evokes a frame with an image of an elephant and certain knowledge: an elephant is a large animal (a mammal) with large floppy ears, a trunk that functions like both a nose and a hand, large stump-like legs, and so on.

**Moral 2: Words defined within a frame evoke the frame.**

The word *trunk*, as in the sentence "Sam picked up the peanut with his trunk," evokes the Elephant frame and suggests that "Sam" is the name of an elephant.

**Moral 3: Negating a frame evokes the frame.**

**Moral 4: Evoking a frame reinforces that frame.**

Every frame is realized in the brain by neural circuitry. Every time a neural circuit is activated, it is strengthened. (Lakoff, 2005)

The way that frames get transmitted and reinforced is through culture, and in the United States, one of the greatest purveyors of culture is the media. Lakoff argues that the conservative frame currently dominates the American political scene and is continuously reinforced in public debates and by the media because the progressives lack organization. This lack of organization has two implications: first, the progressives do not realize that they have a single cohesive frame towards which they can all work. Rather, progressives tend to be issue-focused and compete with each other and the opposition to gain support for their position. Second, because this common frame is not even acknowledged, they lack the vocabulary and concepts to support it. Instead, progressives use conservative phrases and concepts, even when contesting them, which, according to Lakoff, serve to reinforce the conservative frame.

Lakoff's proposal is to have the progressives unite and view all their issues and movements as part of the overarching nurturant parent frame. Concomitantly, progressives must build their own vocabulary and gain common currency for their concepts. This is what cognitive linguists call reframing. "Reframing is changing the way the public sees the world. It is changing what counts as common sense. Because language activates frames, new language is required for new frames. Thinking differently requires speaking differently." (Lakoff, 2004)

### 3. Galtung's and Lakoff's Theories and Institutional Pillars

Galtung's and Lakoff's theories are analogous and complementary. Both see two basic worldviews which govern our relationships with others. The peace discourse shares many values and implications with the nurturant parent frame, while the security discourse runs parallel to the strict father frame.

The peace discourse and nurturant parent frame share similar values. Notably, they both believe that positive change is within our power; that there are alternatives to violence; that empathy is a key component of human relations; and that all are equal. These maxims imply that people should be engaged in the world and that cooperation and dialogue can be fruitful. What holds true for individuals also applies to groups, nations, and states because the latter are simply agglomerations of individuals.

In contrast, the security discourse and strict father frame are based on the supposition that evil lurks in the world; that violence is inevitable; that those who are strong are those who win; and that fear is necessary and effective. The implications are that each has to look out for his or her own well-being and that demonstrations of strength and victory prove moral superiority. Again, this vision applies from the micro to the meta levels.

Despite the fact that Galtung applies his theory to understanding conflict and Lakoff's pertains to his vision of American politics, they are still complementary. Galtung's paradigm is societal while Lakoff's theory is based on the American family, although it does extend itself to national society. Galtung's theory can be applied around the world, while Lakoff demonstrates his theory according to the specific American case study. While Lakoff favors the nurturant parent frame and Galtung the peace discourse, they both acknowledge that at times there is need for the alternative worldview.

It can be of interest to combine Lakoff's cognitive linguistics with peace studies in terms of diagnosis, prognosis and therapy (DPT) (Galtung, 2004). Lakoff posits the following:

Diagnosis – conservatives have the upper hand in politics because they have consolidated their efforts, plugging into an over-arching framework, and know how to promote their frame.

Prognosis – if nothing is done, conservatives will continue to gain power, completely crippling the progressive movement.

Therapy – progressives can promote their view by understanding that they have an over-arching frame into which they can plug in all their views and issues; reclaiming vocabulary and concepts is necessary to put forth a new progressive agenda.

The above DPT can easily be applied to the promotion of peace discourse. Ideally, peace activists and workers should team up with progressives to strengthen their position. Lakoff would probably argue that peace workers and activists are one of the groups that

make up the progressive movement, while Galtung would say that Lakoff's progressive values are part of a wider vision of peace. According to this DPT, the peace discourse needs to avoid a reactionary stance to the security discourse and instead needs to put forth its own concepts and values. The question is, "How can this be done?"

Part of the answer can be found in examining an important vector of the security discourse and strict father frame. The most obvious vector in the United States is the Department of Defense (DoD, which until 1949 was more aptly named the Department of War) and its extension, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The DoD and DHS act as institutional, government pillars for the promotion of the security discourse and the strict father frame. Their premise is that through the use of force and violence, the United States will maintain its strength and impose its moral authority. The goal is victory and annihilation of the evil enemy. The enemy, however, is not just a foreign military, but can take a number of less tangible forms, and may even be hiding among us. (Rothschild, 2005)

In his farewell address, President Dwight Eisenhower warned of the dangers that a powerful military could have on American society. His presidency lasted from 1953 to 1961 and largely oversaw the expansion of the military-industrial complex<sup>1</sup> in the United States. While he believed the military-industrial complex was necessary for American security, he realized that, if not kept in check, it could endanger American freedoms. Eisenhower proclaimed,

This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government. [...] Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society.

In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.

We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together. (Eisenhower, 1961)

In other words, Eisenhower warned against the militarization of the United States, or in his words the total economic, political and spiritual influence of the military-industrial

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<sup>1</sup> The term "military-industrial complex" refers to the combination of the U.S. armed forces, arms industry and associated political and commercial interests.

complex. He cautioned against “unwarranted influence” and upheld the necessity of “a knowledgeable citizenry.” Unfortunately, the military-industrial complex in the United States acquired and continues to acquire “unwarranted influence” and the citizenry is no longer knowledgeable.

The very presence of the DoD and DHS militarizes American society. Michael Geyer defines militarization as “the contradictory and tense social process in which civil society organizes itself for the production of violence.” (Orr, 2004) The DoD and DHS legitimize the use of violence and adherence to an authoritarian order. In 2007, their actual \$498 billion budget (Office of Management and Budget, 2008) puts at its disposal a vast amount of resources—physical, human and intellectual. This does not even take into account the infrastructure that has been built up around the DoD which includes a variety of institutions, think tanks, university departments devoted to military and security studies, etc. Furthermore, because the DoD has an effective public relations strategy<sup>2</sup>, it can easily promote these views to the media for mass transmission to American society.

The missing pillar for the promotion of the peace discourse and nurturant parent frame is a Department of Peace<sup>3</sup>. By having a DOP, this alternative view will be given institutional and government backing. The DOP will legitimize a position that stands for non-violence, empathy and cooperation. It will act as a powerful counterweight to the policies and worldviews that are promoted through the DoD and DHS. The infrastructure that will build up around the DOP and an effective communications strategy will help gain common currency for its position.

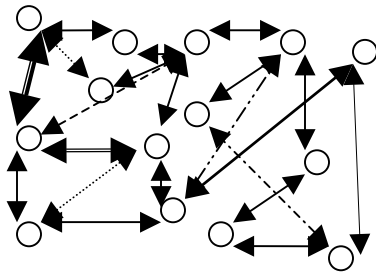
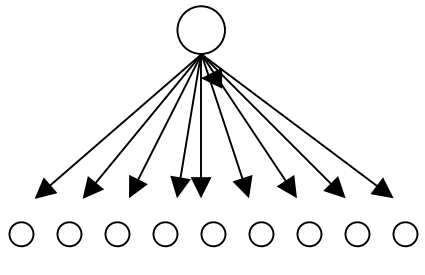
Not only do the DoD and DHS inform the security discourse and strict father frame, but they also impact media by promoting what can be termed “war media” and “war journalism,” centralized ownership of media and an information distribution dynamic of one authoritative voice to many uninformed ears. The DOP will counter this phenomenon by anchoring the peace discourse, nurturant parent frame, peace media, peace journalism and a many-to-many information distribution dynamic.

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<sup>2</sup> Not only does the DoD have a strategy for disseminating information to the public, but it has an effective feedback loop in which a “Lessons Learned” paper is circulated after each operation. This allows the DoD to critically examine its portrayal and performance in the media and make appropriate changes to better promote their position in the future.

<sup>3</sup> For further elaboration on this point, see “Moving Mainstream Media towards a Culture of Peace” from which this paper is an excerpt. [http://www.transcend.org/t\\_database/pdfarticles/629.pdf](http://www.transcend.org/t_database/pdfarticles/629.pdf)



<b>Department of Peace</b>	Peace discourse (Galtung)	Security discourse (Galtung)	<b>Department of Defense and Dept of Homeland Security</b>
	Nurturant parent frame (Lakoff)	Strict father frame (Lakoff)	
	Peace media	War media	
	Peace Journalism	War Journalism	
	Democratic structure	Centralized structure (corporate or government)	
	Dynamic: Many-to-many 	Dynamic: One-to-many 	

#### 4. Frames, Discourses and the Media

Some of the most effective ways to advance discourses and frames is through education, social groups and the media. This section will examine the latter. In a society as mediatized as in the United States, messages are conveyed and repeated to the public using television, radio, print (newspapers, magazines, mailings, leaflets, billboards) and the internet. Constantly, we are reminded that evil lurks through fictional and non-fictional stories; that violence is inevitable through its portrayal in movies, TV shows and the news; that we need to use strength to combat everything from laundry stains to terrorism; and that fear is what keeps us alert and poised for action, through security and weather forecasts and warnings. These are just a few examples of how the security discourse and strict father frame are presented and reinforced, but the list is endless.

Lakoff reminds us of the importance of vocabulary and concepts in perpetuating frames. He argues that conservatives effectively monopolize the language of American politics and that is how they are able to control policies and the electorate. But he does offer some suggestions:

The media does not have to accept the right wing's frames. [...] Reframing is everybody's job. Especially reporters'. [...] It is a duty of reporters *not* to accept this situation and simply use those right-wing frames that have come to seem natural. And it is the *special duty* of reporters to study framing and to learn to see through politically motivated frames, even if they have come to be accepted as everyday and commonplace. (Lakoff, 2004)

We should not limit reframing to journalism, but expand it to all forms of media. Frames are not just present in the news, but also in movies, TV programs, books,

advertisements etc. In peace studies, efforts to implement a culture of peace also incorporate the arts (high and popular), public education and awareness.

While the relationship between frames and discourses and media content is relatively easy to grasp, the structures that govern media outlets should not be neglected. The economic application of the strict father / security model is centralized ownership either through corporations or the government. Since the 1996 Telecommunications Act, the U.S. government increasingly supports and strengthens corporations. Currently, a small number of corporations that include Time Warner, Disney, Murdoch's News Corporation, Bertelsmann of Germany, Viacom (formerly CBS) and General Electric's NBC control most of the market (MRIC, 2004). A nurturant parent / peace model of media ownership would have greater diversity of owners, including a mixture of public and private, corporate-owned and locally-owned, profit-seekers and public interest groups.

## **Peace Journalism**

This section examines the growing field of peace journalism. It begins by applying Lakoff's and Galtung's theories to journalism. While Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick have developed an in-depth framework for journalists based on the peace discourse model, it is of interest to supplement it with cognitive linguistic theory.

### **1. Applying Lakoff and Galtung to Journalism**

In previous chapters, we examined Galtung's peace and security discourse model and Lakoff's nurturant parent and strict father frame paradigm, as well as their complementarity to each other and their relevance to media. Now, these models will be applied specifically to journalism. A presentation of Lynch and McGoldrick's vision of peace journalism based on Galtung's work will be supplemented by Lakoff's work on framing. We will see how these models give journalists and the audience a fuller understanding of conflict and alternatives to violence.

Lakoff believes that it is possible to shift from the strict father frame to the nurturing parent frame through reframing. "Reframing is everybody's job. Especially reporters'," he writes (2004). He suggests asking questions that open up the issue and do not repeat the established frame. Lakoff also warns against the malicious use of framing:

Spin is the manipulative use of a frame. Spin is used when something embarrassing has happened or has been said, and it's an attempt to put an innocent frame on it—that is, to make the embarrassing occurrence sound normal or good.

Propaganda is another manipulative use of framing. Propaganda is an attempt to get the public to adopt a frame that is not true and is known not to be true, for the purpose of gaining or maintaining political control.

The reframing I am suggesting is neither spin nor propaganda. Progressives need to learn to communicate using frames that they really believe, frames that express what their moral views really are. I strongly recommend against any deceptive framing. I think it is not just morally reprehensible, but also impractical, because deceptive framing usually backfires sooner or later. (2004)

Galtung offers some concrete points for reframing in his vision of peace journalism and war journalism. They are outlined in the following table (Lynch, 2005):

<b>PEACE/CONFLICT JOURNALISM</b>	<b>WAR/VIOLENCE JOURNALISM</b>
<b>I. PEACE/CONFLICT-ORIENTATED</b> - Explore conflict formation, x parties, y goals, z issues - General “win, win” orientation - Open space, open time; causes and outcomes anywhere, also in history/culture - Making conflicts transparent - Giving voice to all parties; empathy, understanding - See conflict/war as problem, focus on conflict creativity - Humanisation of all sides; more so the worse the weapon - Proactive: prevention before any violence/war occurs - Focus on invisible effects of violence (trauma and glory, damage to structure/culture)	<b>I. WAR/VIOLENCE ORIENTATED</b> - Focus on conflict arena, 2 parties, 1 goal (win) war - General zero-sum orientation - Closed space, closed time; causes and exits in arena, who threw the first stone - Making wars opaque/secret - “Us-them” journalism, propaganda, voice for “us” - See “them” as the problem, focus on who prevails in war - Dehumanisation of “them”; more so the worse the weapon - Reactive: waiting for violence before reporting - Focus only on visible effect of violence (killed, wounded and material damage)
<b>II. TRUTH-ORIENTATED</b> - Expose untruths on all sides / uncover all cover-ups	<b>II. PROPAGANDA-ORIENTATED</b> - Expose “their” untruths / help “our” cover-ups/lies
<b>III. PEOPLE-ORIENTATED</b> - Focus on suffering all over; on women, aged, children, giving voice to voiceless - Give name to all evil-doers - Focus on people peace-makers	<b>III. ELITE ORIENTATED</b> - Focus on “our” suffering; on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece - Give name to their evil-doers - Focus on elite peace-makers
<b>IV. SOLUTION ORIENTATED</b> - Peace = non-violence + creativity - Highlight peace initiatives, also to prevent more war - Focus on structure, culture, the peaceful society - Aftermath: resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation	<b>IV. VICTORY ORIENTATED</b> - Peace = victory + ceasefire - Conceal peace initiative, before victory is at hand - Focus on treaty, institution, the controlled society - Leaving for another war, return if the old flares up again

Essentially, Galtung is calling for journalists that cover conflict to use conflict analysis skills. Just as the health journalist has some specialized knowledge of medicine and medical issues in order to better write stories, journalists covering war, violence and conflict should know how to analyze a conflict properly.

### **Case Study: Coverage of the War in Iraq**

This section will examine Galtung, Lynch and McGoldrick's vision of peace journalism in close detail, using American coverage of the war in Iraq to demonstrate the failings of war journalism and the purpose of conflict analysis in peace journalism. In order to better understand what conflict analysis is, let us examine the most recent American invasion of Iraq. We will look at how war journalism reported it and how it could have been understood differently—and more accurately—through the lens of peace journalism using the tools of conflict analysis. We will do this by systematically analyzing each of the items in Galtung's table describing the two types of journalism. Examples come from various American media including the New York Times, National Public Radio (NPR), *Newsweek*, and other print media available on the internet. Because television broadcasts are not easily accessible or searchable for logistical reasons, they were not consulted for this study.

#### **1. War & Violence Orientated – Peace & Conflict Orientated**

*War Journalism (WJ): Focus on conflict arena, 2 parties, 1 goal (win) war.* The conflict was portrayed as the United States versus Iraq, more precisely, George W. Bush versus Saddam Hussein. This is epitomized by *Newsweek's* cover on September 30, 2002 with portraits of Hussein and Bush and between the two the headline “Who Will Win?” It presumes that the only two actors are Bush and Hussein and they both have the same incompatible goal: to win the war.<sup>4</sup> (Lynch, 2005)

*Peace Journalism (PJ): Explore conflict formation, x parties, y goals, z issues.* This view assumes a wider perspective on the conflict, looking not only at Bush and Hussein, but also the various persons and groups within their governments and states, political and military allies, the military-industrial complex, the Kurdish minority in Iraq, United Nations weapons inspectors, French and German heads of state, protestors opposed to the invasion... PJ also examines each of the parties' goals and issues. For Bush, an analysis would question if Bush's goal was really to deflect the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction, or if it had something to do with securing oil for “the American way of life,” landing big contracts for corporations or building up a long-term American military

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<sup>4</sup> Note: This cover was printed before the U.S. invasion of Iraq, but it implies that war is inevitable and that anyone who avoids the war or offers alternatives is a loser, or even a coward.

presence in the Middle East. Issues Bush was facing included decreased popularity, a lagging economy and arguably a psychosis of fear induced by September 11, 2001. Hussein's goals include retaining control over Iraq and its oil reserves, saving face and maintaining his honor. His issues included a belief that he was dealing with rational U.S. actors and his disbelief that the U.S. was actually targeting Iraq. PJ would then go on to examine other parties, their goals and issues, and do so in a way that lends credibility and legitimacy to each. Although the French and German positions against the American invasion of Iraq were ridiculed and/or downplayed in most mainstream coverage, PJ would have legitimated these concerns. It is a fundamental tenet that conflict transformation assumes that each party has at least one legitimate goal.

*WJ: General zero-sum orientation.* This is the belief that only one party can win and that both parties aim to win. This view is based on classical international relations game theory. The outcomes are limited to: 1. Bush wins, Saddam loses; 2. Saddam wins, Bush loses. The zero-sum orientation is corroborated by the *Newsweek* cover and headline cited above.

*PJ: General "win, win" orientation.* This orientation considers that if the parties work together they can enhance both their positions. Regarding oil, one possibility would be for Iraq to give the U.S. full access to its reserves, ensuring the American supply and allowing Iraq to maintain control over it, even making a profit from the sales. In this way, the U.S. would be assured of its oil supply and Saddam Hussein would retain control of his oil fields. This proposal was actually suggested by Hussein prior to the invasion, but was paid no heed. (Risen, 2003)

*WJ: Closed space, closed time; causes and exits in arena, who threw the first stone.* This type of coverage was especially evident when the U.S. administration started beating on the war drums. On September 12, 2002, George W. Bush addressed the United Nations General Assembly in an effort to convince fellow heads of state that Iraq posed a threat to world security. (Miller and Gordon, 2002) Little mention was made of previous U.S.-Iraq entanglements. Coverage only delved into the past to demonstrate the links between Iraq and Al Qaeda. The invasion was portrayed as the only possible course which could be taken as a result of Iraq's supposed weapons program.

*PJ: Open space, open time; causes and outcomes anywhere, also in history/culture.* Journalists could have considered alternatives to the invasion, examined proposals put forth by Iraq, France, Germany and the United Nations, considered what the likely outcomes would be of an invasion, etc. Conflict-sensitive journalists would have also looked at the U.S. policy in Iraq since the 1991 Gulf War and considered the impact that bombing sustained for over a decade (mostly under Clinton) had on the Iraqi people.

*WJ: Making wars opaque/secret.* This point is probably the most closely related to how journalists act as an extension of the Department of Defense by parroting official statements and adhering to the news agenda set by the DoD's Public Affairs Office. The real reasons for the U.S. invasion of Iraq were kept secret, and most reporters bought the official weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and regime change arguments. (Boot,

2003) The extent to which there were cover-ups and secrecy has become clearer in recent months with evidence that relevant intelligence information had been kept from Congress and the American people, that there was a deliberate misinformation campaign, that the Iraq-Al Qaeda link was fabricated, that Iraq did not actually acquire nor attempt to acquire uranium from Niger and that the current administration dismisses all uncomfortable questions by stating that “information cannot be disclosed for national security reasons.” In October 2001, the White House announced that its official policy is to keep all war-related information secret. (Bumiller, 2001)

*PJ: Making conflicts transparent.* While the DoD must certainly have some legitimate reasons for keeping *some* information top secret, it is also the public’s right to know how their tax dollars are being spent. It is the job of journalists to insist the government address citizens’ concerns. This policy may seem counter-intuitive to the classic international relations approach in which conflicts are viewed as a high-level poker game, with each player hiding his cards and anteing, raising the stakes and bluffing based on assumptions about the other’s strategy and psychology. In contrast, the school of conflict transformation tries to foster as much communication and dialogue as possible amongst the parties. Galtung, however, is particularly careful to not bring the parties together too soon. Rather, he begins by working with each party individually so that she can fully understand what her needs and position are in the conflict. This can be understood as each party making the conflict transparent for herself. Journalists in the U.S. should engage in some introspection on behalf of the public and the government to foster a discussion about what really are the U.S.’s needs and what is the best way to meet them.

*WJ: “Us-them” journalism, propaganda, voice for “us”.* This is perhaps most easily seen in journalists covering the military beat. It comes out clearly when we see that the number of U.S. soldiers is meticulously counted and reported, whereas the number of Iraqi dead is very much based on guesswork. Furthermore there is some sloppiness in distinguishing between Iraqi civilians, soldiers and freedom fighters. It is as if it did not really matter who was killed since they are just Iraqis. “Road-side Blasts Kill U.S. GI, 11 Iraqis” (AP, 2006) offers typical coverage: “bombings [...] killed a U.S. soldier and at least 11 Iraqis.” The story goes on to offer a few details about the soldier, but makes no attempt to discuss the Iraqi victims. When discussing the total number of dead, the Associated Press (AP) writes “the number of U.S. personnel killed in Iraq [is] at least 2,273,” whereas “Scores of Iraqis have been killed and wounded.” The AP can offer an estimate to the unit for American deaths, but cannot offer an estimate even to the tens of thousandths for Iraqi deaths. For reference, on the day the article appeared (February 18, 2006), IraqBodyCount.org estimated the number of Iraqi civilians killed by the military intervention between 28,427 and 32,041<sup>5</sup>.

*PJ: Giving voice to all parties; empathy, understanding.* This precept of peace journalism already exists to an extent in so-called “human-interest pieces,” for example

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<sup>5</sup> More information at [www.iraqbodycount.org](http://www.iraqbodycount.org)

looking at the effects of war on the life of a particular Baghdadi family or delving into the role of the Kurdish minority. While most attempts are earnest, there is a danger of these pieces having an Orientalist tone with the reporter deliberately picking the most exotic stories because they are the most provocative and then treating the interviewees as subjects, or even objects, to be studied and observed. Genuine empathy and curiosity open up many more windows through which these voices can be heard. Journalists who write this kind of story would greatly benefit from Marshall Rosenberg's techniques in non-violent communication.<sup>6</sup>

*WJ: See "them" as the problem, focus on who prevails in war.* This was especially evident around the time that Secretary of State Collin Powell made his presentation at the United Nations on Iraq's WMD program and argued for a U.S. invasion. Blame was squarely placed by the administration—and supported by the American press—on the Iraqi government. Patriotic journalism was crammed with estimates on how long it would take for American troops to prevail and bring order and justice to the world. Stories on the U.S.'s military tactics for toppling Saddam Hussein appeared as early as April 2002, nearly a year before the American invasion actually took place. (Shanker and Sanger, 2002) By offering such coverage, especially so early prior to the actual military intervention, in effect acts as publicity for the military point of view. Such coverage legitimizes it and reinforces it, making war seem logical and inevitable.

*PJ: See conflict/war as problem, focus on conflict creativity.* In the lead up to the Iraq invasion there was a distinct lack of coverage in the mainstream media of the anti-war protests that took place world-wide. The February 15, 2003 anti-war protests were the largest ones ever on record with estimates varying from eight to thirty million protestors world-wide. Such a huge event received relatively little coverage, particularly in the U.S. Furthermore, there was little coverage of the protesters' point of view and their arguments against this specific war and war in general. A search in *The New York Times* archive for the terms "protest" and "Iraq" for the month of February 2003 yielded six stories covering the national protests on February 15, 2003 and six covering the protests abroad and one story giving both the domestic and international perspective. All these stories appeared on February 16, 2003. There were no other stories for the rest of the month that focused on the protests aside from some passing comments about how they did not impact Bush's decision to invade Iraq. As soon as the memory of the protests faded, the peace view was rarely solicited. While there was some coverage of the protests, unfortunately, journalists did not solicit any concrete solutions for how to deal with the conflict.

*WJ: Dehumanization of "them"; more so the worse the weapon.* Consistently, Iraqis are given the epithet "insurgent" or "terrorist." Ross Howard believes these terms are emotional and such "words take sides, make the other side seem impossible to negotiate with. Call people what they call themselves." (2004) While most journalists would not

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<sup>6</sup> For more information, visit the Center for Non-Violent Communication: [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org)

question the use of the term “terrorist,” some consideration of the term and its connotations sheds light on how demonizing and dehumanizing the term is.

*PJ: Humanization of all sides; more so the worse the weapon.* This was done to a certain extent when the U.S. military’s use of white phosphorus in Fallujah was made public. Stories, however, tended to center more on the use of white phosphorus and the controversy within the military rather than on the Iraqi suffering<sup>7</sup>. Similar coverage existed with the Abu Ghraib torture incidents. More could be done to humanize and empathize with the victims. Another vacuum exists in coverage of U.S. veterans, with their situation largely ignored by the mainstream media. When they are mentioned, it is usually in the form of statistics counting the number of amputated limbs, post-traumatic stress disorder cases or other detrimental effects of active duty. But coverage of returning soldiers as people rather than numbers has been limited, although my subjective impression is that it has increased in recent months.

*WJ: Reactive: waiting for violence before reporting.* Recent interest in Iraq only began when the war and violence were imminent. Coverage is still dominated by nearly daily updates of the number of people killed or bombs detonated. Occasionally there is a report on Iraqi elections or the growth of democracy, but that frame is not reinforced as much as the war frame.

*PJ: Proactive: prevention before any violence/war occurs.* Peace proposals and anti-war protestors could have received more serious coverage. Iraq, the United Nations, France and Germany all made proposals to prevent war and violence, but these were not given much credit by the American press. Had they considered these alternatives more seriously, perhaps the administration would have been more deliberate in its decision to invade Iraq.

*WJ: Focus only on visible effect of violence (killed, wounded and material damage).* Reports on the war in Iraq count the dead, the wounded, the bombs detonated and the buildings and tanks damaged. In Galtung’s terms, the focus is on direct violence.

*PJ: Focus on invisible effects of violence (trauma and glory, damage to structure/culture).* There is almost no coverage of structural or cultural violence. The extent of this type of reporting is on post-traumatic stress disorder of returning soldiers. Mainstream media has almost no stories on the damage done to family structures, to cultural institutions, the implications of a disrupted school education etc.

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<sup>7</sup> An open-date search in *The New York Times* archive for the terms “Fallujah” and “white phosphorus” yielded four news stories, two editorials and two opinion pieces. Only one story discussed the impact of white phosphorus on Iraqis, and this was done behind the shield of an Italian documentary which compared the use of white phosphorus in Iraq to napalm in Viet Nam.



## 2. Propaganda Orientated – Truth Orientated

*WJ: Expose “their” untruths/ help “our” cover-ups/ lies.* Perhaps the greatest cover-up of the American invasion of Iraq was the alleged connection between Iraq and Al-Qaeda and the WMD dossier. Allusions that Iraq supported Al-Qaeda began appearing in August 2002 (Erlanger, 2002 and Janofsky, 2002). This assertion is now considered bunk. (Jehl, 2005) *The New York Times* reported on September 25, 2002 that Britain had confirmed intelligence that Iraq had chemical and biological weapons. (Hoge, 2002) It turns out that this claim was based on “flawed intelligence assessments.” (“The Reach of War,” 2004) Iraqi denials of a WMD program were deemed untrue. (Sanger, 2002)

*PJ: Expose untruths on all sides/ uncover all cover-ups.* The extent to which the administration distorted the truth becomes clearer and clearer with each passing day. Unfortunately, the information comes at a time when it is too late to avert war. Furthermore, the efforts to expose all the untruths and cover-ups are diverted by the Department of Justice’s whistle-blower investigations, which attempt to place blame on insiders who leaked information about the cover-ups, rather than on the administration’s cover-ups. (On the Media, 2006)

## 3. Elite Orientated – People Orientated

*WJ: Focus on “our” suffering; on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece.* Embedded reporters served primarily this function—to report on the war from the point of view of the young, virile soldiers. The new tactic of the DoD to allow American reporters to experience the war with the troops on the ground made it easy for journalists to see first hand the suffering of American soldiers. While certainly they witnessed what happened to the Iraqis, because the reporters were protected and mobilized with the troops, their ties were much stronger there.

*PJ: Focus on suffering all over; on women, aged, children, giving voices to the voiceless.* Again this is achieved to an extent with human interest pieces. Another interesting development is the attention Cindy Sheehan brings to the grief of parents who have lost their children in Iraq. While Sheehan’s empathy extends to grieving Iraqi parents, little has been done by the American media to cover their stories, or the countless other voiceless sufferers. A search in *The New York Times* archive generated no stories of Iraqi parents who lost their children in the war, but did turn up one human interest piece on Baghdadi teenage girls’ difficulties in pursuing their education and going out alone. (Sengupta, 2004) Most of the 82 other stories that turned up in the search focused on American suffering and the loss of American parents.

*WJ: Give name to their evil-doers.* From the beginning, Saddam Hussein was characterized as the primary evil-doer. The U.S. military even went so far to print a deck

of cards with the 52 most wanted Iraqis<sup>8</sup>. (Van Natta, Jr. and Jehl, 2003) Some journalists even referred to captured Iraqi leaders according to their position in the deck. (Worth, 2003)

*PJ: Give name to all evil-doers.* Any reference to the Bush administration's violation of international laws and treaties is considered either unpatriotic or fanatically liberal. The media could do much more to examine this and previous administrations' record of unwarranted violence around the world. By failing to do so, violence is legitimized. In a typical story, "The Roots of Abu Ghraib: A President Beyond the Law," Anthony Lewis (2004) presents the administration's case for defying domestic and international law in about 710 words and only devotes about 115 words to criticism of the policy. Furthermore, criticism comes in the guise of a reference to Justice Lewis Brandeis and his 75 year-old plea to lead by example. The media should be more assertive and direct in its denunciation of egregious and illegal conduct.

*WJ: Focus on elite peace-makers.* Aside from Cindy Sheehan, the voice that has received the most coverage for withdrawing troops from Iraq has been Congressional Representative John Murtha's. Only when a respected legislator emphatically requested withdrawal of troops was the proposition seriously entertained in the mainstream media.

*PJ: Focus on people peace-makers.* There is limited coverage of peace groups working in the U.S. to end the war. Members of the Christian Peacemakers Team only appeared in the media when their members were kidnapped. The mainstream media mentioned nothing about other grassroots peace teams that have gone to Iraq or Iraqi organizations and individuals working for peace, such as the Muslim Peacemakers Team, Women for a Free Iraq and Iraqi Organization for the Defense of Journalists<sup>9</sup>. Even the alternative media is disappointingly silent in its coverage of Iraqi peace groups.

#### **4. Victory Orientated – Solution Orientated**

*WJ: Peace = victory + ceasefire.* This understanding of peace stems from a classic international relations view and from the lack of journalistic training in conflict analysis. It disregards the efforts necessary before and after a ceasefire agreement is signed. Indeed, it attempts to make peace an event and give it a date. This view does not take into account basic needs on either side and therefore fails to see that the ceasefire is likely to be breached with rising frustrations. On May 2, 2003, the day following Bush's announcement that "major combat" was over, *The New York Times*' Michael Gordon wrote, "American forces are operating in a netherworld between war and peace." Nearly

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<sup>8</sup> Images of the complete deck are available at: <http://html.wnbc.com/sh/idi/news/iraq/cards/00.html>

<sup>9</sup> More organizations are listed on the website of the Middle East NGO Gateway (MENGOs): [www.mengos.net](http://www.mengos.net).

three years later, it seems that American forces will remain in limbo for quite some time. Gordon's understanding of peace was quite misguided.

*PJ: Peace = non-violence + creativity.* Galtung's equation for peace means that peace is not simply the absence of violence, it is actively engaging in non-violence, and doing so requires creativity. In his vision, journalists create the space for and propose non-violent solutions for conflicts. But, in order to do so, journalists need to be properly trained in conflict analysis and transformation. It begins by understanding that peace is something that needs to be worked at constantly, not just in order to negate war, but to actively engage in peace. Peace is a daily matter, governing our relations with others, the choices we make and our understanding of the world. Opportunities for non-violent action abound, from consciously choosing to buy clothes which were not produced in sweat shops to withholding taxes which fund unnecessary military action. Journalists should put in as much effort to seek out and report on these alternatives as they do on violence and war.

*WJ: Conceal peace initiative, before victory is at hand.* This relates to the WJ understanding of peace, that it only comes when there is a victory and ceasefire. Coverage of the war in Iraq is completely devoid of any mention of peace initiatives, most likely because journalists do not see any. While there have been public calls for troop withdrawal, there has been no mention of American-Iraqi reconciliation.

*PJ: Highlight peace initiative, also to prevent more war.* PJ looks into ongoing proposals for reconciliation, transformation and reconstruction. While military correspondents plot troop movements and achievements, peace correspondents should be abreast of peace initiatives and create a space for public dialogue. By doing so, the idea is that it will prevent escalation of war and future conflicts resorting to violence.

*WJ: Focus on treaty, institution, the controlled society.* Galtung clarifies, "The classical war-based approach end[s] typically with a ceasefire agreement, possibly with a capitulation, based on the winner-loser idea. The point, then, is to control the loser's society so there is no mischief." (2006) This type of coverage can be seen in pieces after Hussein's capitulation in which the American military presence in Iraq is necessary in order to bring order and democracy to Iraq. The slogan of instilling democracy has so far just been a pretext for maintaining U.S. control of Iraq for personal or economic reasons. Indeed, true democracy cannot be implemented with bullets, especially foreign ones, over ballots.

*PJ: Focus on structure, culture, the peaceful society.* The task of PJ is to help bring a culture of peace. Instead of justifying control of a society, it should report on initiatives that rebuild the structures and cultures of society in a peaceful way. As John Paul Lederach states in all societies there are always individuals or groups with visions of peace. Grassroots organizations, women's associations and religious groups are but a few examples of those working on shifting from cultures and structures of violence to those of peace. Often their stories are remarkable and their work inspiring.

*WJ: Leaving for another war, return if the old flares up again.* In the U.S., the war drums are already beating for an attack on Iran. It seems that the novelty of Iraq has worn off and now it is time to turn to another escalating conflict. The question is: will journalists learn from their mistakes in covering Iraq or will they fall into the same propaganda traps and blinded understanding of the conflict? Of course, Iraq will not be completely forgotten, because when something goes awry in the “democracy building” process, the media will shift its glare back to Iraq.

*PJ: Aftermath: resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation.* This begins with reporting on the active work of peace building. With a better understanding of conflict, journalists would understand the importance of transformation, reconstruction and reconciliation. Peace does not come when a head of state declares the end of a war or signs a treaty. Rather it is an extensive and exciting process which should engage all levels of society in implementing a vision for their state. Reconstruction and reconciliation in themselves are rife with conflict which when properly addressed can be generative and constructive. There are many stories to be uncovered at this stage of a conflict.

## **Conclusion**

This paper combined peace studies with cognitive linguistics and compared and contrasted war journalism with peace journalism by presenting mainstream coverage of the war in Iraq and alternatives to that reporting. This alternative is both comprehensive and viable and can be used for coverage of a variety of issues varying from different conflicts around the world to business reporting, national news, sports coverage etc. The application of peace journalism is as endless as the list of subjects journalists wish to cover. The basic tenets of Galtung’s peace discourse and Lakoff’s nurturant parent frame can even be applied more generally to peace media.

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