**Mar/Apr 22: Structural Violence AC**

**I affirm.**

**Observation: The resolution doesn’t indicate a policy or governmental actor meaning the 1AC only needs to defend objectivity as a desirable principle rather than a status quo function**

#### **Defintion: Objectivity is fact-aligned which is distinct from neutrality – the truth doesn’t always lie in the center.**

## **Gutman 12:**

## (David Gutman is a Staff Reporter with The Seattle Times. Formerly, he wrote for the West Virginia Gazette and the Capital News Service in Maryland. 10-25-2012 "Objectivity Does Not Mean Neutrality: The Danger of False Equivalency in the Media" <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2012/10/25/objectivity-does-not-mean-neutrality-danger-false-equivalency-media>)

## And yet, too often, they do not. The media, too often, reports what officials say and how they say it, and doesn’t delve into the substance and accuracy of the statements. The **truth is objective**, a **presentation of both sides** of an argument **is not necessarily objective.** When a topic is noisily debated, journalists go to pains to present, with equal space and import, both sides of the topic. Usually this is a good thing. The public should know the arguments from all sides of a contentious issue. But **sometimes**, and this may sound overly simplistic, but it remains true, **there is** **only one credible side** to a debate. The earth is getting warmer, and man-made carbon emissions are causing it. Humans evolved from apes. You cannot cut taxes by 20 percent and close enough loopholes to be revenue neutral without raising taxes on the middle class. Study afterreputable study has shown these statements to be true. (Admittedly there have been fewer studies of the last claim because it is so much newer, but every reputable study has found the above statement accurate). Yet we still see news stories in which “experts” from both sides of the argument are called upon and given equal standing to make their case. Paul Krugman, the Nobel-winning economist and unabashedly liberal New York Times op-ed columnist, wrote about this phenomenon in 2000. “If a presidential candidate were to declare that the earth is flat, you would be sure to see a news analysis under the headline ‘Shape of the Planet: Both Sides Have a Point.’ After all, the earth isn't perfectly spherical. That analysis is equally applicable today. The mainstream media (with the exception of nakedly partisan outfits like Fox News and MSNBC) are so desperate to appear unbiased that they go out of their way to point out inconsistencies on both sides of the political spectrum even when it may not be appropriate. This **false equivalency**, the effort of the news media to remain at the political center of an argument, no matter the merits or truthfulness of either side of the argument, is sometimes **labeled as** a **bias towards objectivity**. **This is** a false and **misleading** turn of phrase**.** Journalists should always exhibit a bias towards objectivity. Being objective -- dealing with facts or conditions as perceived without distortion by personal feelings -- is always the goal. The **trouble** comes **when objectivity is confused with neutrality**. It is **fine to be partial**, indeed it is imperative **if, after** acareful **examination** of the facts, **one concludes that** the **truth lies on one side** of the argument**.** This is being objective. Examining the facts on their merits and presenting the truth is a journalist’s job. Granted, on many issues there is legitimate debate and disagreement, but this is not always the case, and the media should not treat every issue as if both sides have equally valid points. The **truth does not always lie in the center**. In fact, it rarely does. A journalist’s job is to report the truth, not to neutrally report what both sides say and stake out a safe position in the middle.

**The value is human dignity**

**Dignity offers value to the lives of individuals. Without it, life becomes meaningless. Therefore, dignity should be valued over life itself.**

**Wood 07:**

(Human Dignity, Right and the Realm of Ends by Allen Wood. Stanford University. (2007) web.stanford.edu/~allenw/.../keynote2007.doc.)

The Kantian conception of human dignity, however, goes even farther. Kant uses the word ‘dignity’ in a very precise sense. As a basic conception of value, he contrasts ‘dignity’ with ‘price’ (G 4:434). What has price has a kind of value that may be rationally sacrificed or traded away for something else having an equal or greater value. The market price of a commodity, for example, is the ratio at which it may be ex changed for other commodities whose value is deemed equal for the purposes of exchange. **Dignity,** however, **is** a value that is incomparable and **absolute.** It cannot be measured against other values in this way, because **it can never [be] rationally** be **sacrificed** or traded away for anything at all, not even for something else having dignity. Though human beings come and go, the value of a human being is absolute and irreplaceable. It cannot be substituted for, even by the value of another human being. […] In a recent article, Laurie Ackermann argues that equality is an ‘attributive’ rather than a ‘predicative’ term. That is, he holds that to call people equal depends for its meaning on the implicit idea that they are equal in some particular respect – for instance, equal in human dignity. The human equality based on human dignity is not merely a formal equality, like that involved in “treating like cases alike.” Treating like cases alike under the same rules is a canon of fairness or rationality in any system. But it could apply even if people were assumed not to be equals. In a social order based on unequal social status, it would require that we treat two dukes in the same way, and two slaves in the same way, but that we not treat a duke as we would a count, a noble as we would a commoner, or a slave as we would a free person. Human dignity, however, requires that all people be treated as alike in dignity, however they might differ in other properties. Equality based on human dignity is also not like the equality of two bills or coins you might find in your pocket. For these are equal only in what Kant would call ‘price’**.** Human dignity is equal only in the sense that as a value that is absolute, it is a value that cannot be compared or exchanged, hence a value that cannot be unequal. The fundamental egalitarianism built into the idea of human dignity can be understood as the most direct basis of many modern political and legal conceptions and principles. These include that governmental authority ought properly to exist and be exercised only with the consent of the governed, that political power should be based on the rule of law, not the arbitrary power of individuals or groups, and that everyone falling under such as system should have the right to participate in the decisions that determine what these laws are and who should be granted the authority to enforce them. These were principles fundamentally denied under apartheid, but even in what we call ‘democratic’ constitutions no honest person can fail to see much in our existing social arrangements that fails to live up to them. […] Perhaps the easiest way go wrong here is to confuse the dignity of a human being with the value of a certain kind of state of affairs or result, namely, the human being’s existing or continuing to exist. This confusion leads some people to think that the chief, perhaps the only, meaning of human dignity is what they like to call “the sanctity of human life.” We are all the more susceptible to this confusion because that if humanity has dignity, then it is true that the existence and continuation of a human life does have great value, and is even the basis of important human rights. But this is only an inference from the fact that humanity has dignity. And it is not even the most immediate inference, or the one having the highest priority. I think a more immediateconclusion from the fact that humanity is an end in itself is that **human beings should never be treated in a manner that degrades** or humiliates **them,** should not be **treated as inferior** in status **to others,** or **made subject to the arbitrary will of others,** or be **deprived of control over their own lives, or excluded from** participation in the collective life of the human **society** to which they belong. As regards the value of human life, **there can be terrible circumstances** in which **people** must **sacrifice their lives in order to retain their human dignity. So human dignity is a value prior to** that of **human life**. Kant held notoriously strict views about the prohibition of suicide, and if we confuse humanity as an end in itself with the value of the preservation of human existence, we might suppose that they follow directly from the idea that humanity is an end in itself. But the most defensible Kantian position on this issue seems to me one which says that in some circumstances the choice to end one’s life is the only way to protect one’s dignity from a state of helpless and hopeless suffering and incapacitation that is degrading to humanity. Kant was aware of this position, and took it seriously, even if in the end he was too rigidly traditional to accept it (MS 6:422-424, VE 27:342-344, 369-375).

**The value criterion is minimizing structural violence**

**First, evaluating structural violence comes first--- prevents moral exclusion and is key to just action.**

**Winter and Leighton 99:**

(Deborah DuNann Winter and Dana C. Leighton. Winter|[Psychologist that specializes in Social Psych, Counseling Psych, Historical and Contemporary Issues, Peac3e Psychology. Leighton: PhD graduate student in the Psychology Department at the University of Arkansas. Knowledgable in the fields of social psychology, peace psychology, and ustice and intergroup responses to transgressions of justice] “Peace, conflict, and violence: Peace psychology in the 21st century.” Pg 4-5)

Finally, to recognize the operation of structural violence forces us to ask questions about how and why we tolerate it, questions which often have painful answers for the privileged elite who unconsciously support it. A final question of this section is how and why we allow ourselves to be so oblivious to structural violence. Susan Opotow offers an intriguing set of answers, in her article Social Injustice. She argues that **our normal perceptual cognitive processes divide people into in-groups and out-groups. Those outside our group lie outside our scope of justice. Injustice** that would be instantaneously confronted if it occurred to someone we love or know **is barely noticed** if it occurs to strangers or those who are invisible or irrelevant. We do not seem to be able to open our minds and our hearts to everyone, so **we draw conceptual lines between those who are in and out of our moral circle. Those who fall outside are morally excluded, and become either invisible, or demeaned in some way so that we do not have to acknowledge the injustice they suffer.** Moral exclusion is a human failing, but Opotow argues convincingly that it is an outcome of everyday social cognition. To reduce its nefarious effects, we must be vigilant in noticing and listening to oppressed, invisible, outsiders. Inclusionary thinking can be fostered by relationships, communication, and appreciation of diversity. Like Opotow, all the authors in this section point out that **structural violence is not inevitable if we become aware of its operation, and build systematic ways to mitigate its effects.** Learning about structural violence may be discouraging, overwhelming, or maddening, but these papers encourage us to step beyond guilt and anger, and begin to think about how to reduce structural violence. All the authors in this section note that the same structures (such as global communication and normal social cognition) which feed structural violence, can also be used to empower citizens to reduce it. In the long run, reducing structural violence by reclaiming neighborhoods, demanding social jus- tice and living wages, providing prenatal care, alleviating sexism, and celebrating local cultures, will be our most surefooted path to building lasting peace.

**Second, racism is a violation to all morals. It makes all forms of violence inevitable and must be rejected in every instance as possible.**

##### **Memmi 2000:**

(Albert Memmi is a Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University Of Paris Albert. RACISM, translated by Steve Martinot, pp.163-165. 2000)

The struggle against racism will be long, difficult, without intermission, without remission, probably never achieved. Yet, for this very reason, it is a struggle to be undertaken without surcease and without concessions. **One cannot be indulgent toward racism**; one must not even let the monster in the house, especially not in a mask. To give it merely a foothold means to augment the bestial part in us and in other people, which is to diminish what is human. **To accept the racist universe to the slightest degree is to endorse fear, injustice, and violence.** It is to accept the persistence of the dark history in which we still largely live. it is to agree that the outsider will always be a possible victim (and which man is not himself an outsider relative to someone else?. Racism illustrates, in sum, the inevitable negativity of the condition of the dominated that is, it illuminates in a certain sense the entire human condition. The anti-racist struggle, difficult though it is, and always in question, is nevertheless one of the prologues to the ultimate passage from animosity to humanity. In that sense, we cannot fail to rise to the racist challenge. However, it remains true that one’s moral conduit only emerges from a choice: one has to want it. It is a choice among other choices, and always debatable in its foundations and its consequences. Let us say, broadly speaking, that **the choice to conduct oneself morally is the condition for the establishment of a human order, for which racism is the very negation.** This is almost a redundancy. **One cannot found a moral order,** let alone a legislative order, **on racism, because racism signifies the exclusion of the other,** and his or her subjection to violence and domination. From an ethical point of view, if one can deploy a little religious language, racism is ‘the truly capital sin. It is not an accident that almost all of humanity’s spiritual traditions counsels respect for the weak, for orphans, widows, or strangers. It is not just a question of theoretical morality and disinterested commandments. Such unanimity in the safeguarding of the other suggests the real utility of such sentiments. All things considered, **we have an interest in banishing injustice, because injustice engenders violence and death**. Of course, this is debatable. There are those who think that if one is strong enough, the assault on and oppression of others is permissible. Bur no one is ever sure of remaining the strongest. One day, perhaps, the roles will be reversed. All unjust society contains within itself the seeds of its own death. It is probably smarter to treat others with respect so that they treat you with respect. “Recall.” says the Bible, “that you were once a stranger in Egypt,” which means both that you ought to respect the stranger because you were a stranger yourself and that you risk becoming one again someday. It is an ethical and a practical appeal—indeed, it is a contract, however implicit it might be. In short, **the refusal of racism is the condition for all** theoretical and practical **morality** because, in the end, the ethical choice commands the political choice, a just society must be a society accepted by all. If this contractual principle is not accepted, then only conflict, violence, and destruction will be our lot. If it is accepted, we can hope someday to live in peace. True, it is a wager, but the stakes are irresistible.

**Third, you should prioritize frameworks rejecting racism in an educational space.**

##### **Alston and Timmons 14:**

(Jonathan Alston, Head Debate Coach at Newark’s Science Park High School, and Aaron Timmons, Head Coach at the Greenhill School. “Nobody Knows the Trouble I See (And In National Circuit Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Does Anyone Really Care?” April 2014, VBriefly.)

The writers of the article seem deeply offended and or confused by an argument that many students around the country have recently found it necessary to make. Students pushing back against the idea that they have to prove that rape or genocide is bad have taken to routinely using the works of Dr. Shanara Reid Brinkley, Tim Wise, Henry Giroux, Tommy Curry, Chris Vincent, (former CEDA and NDT Champion), Elijah Smith and others to warrant the benefit to making arguments that challenge structural oppression. Though **debate is** a game, it is a game **about issues that have real consequences. We teach future generations how to deal with issues of** freedom and **oppression.** Often the evidence shows that **debaters go on to** become leaders and **impact** policy in **the** real **world.** This means that **it is appropriate for the judge’s role to be an educator** responsible for training future generations. **Justifications of moral frameworks that don’t preclude** ~~rape,~~ **slavery and genocide are dangerous because rights are only important so long as a critical mass of society believes that they should exist**.

#### **Contention 1: Alt-Right Media**

#### **The fairness doctrine’s elimination decked journalistic objectivity, forging the Alt-Right and invigorating conspiracy theories and white nationalism**

**Cagliuso 21:**

(Dominique Cagliuso is working on a Master in International Affairs with a concentration in Human Rights and a Specialization in UN Studies at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs, 2021, “Age of the Alt-Right: New-Age Media and White Nationalism in Trump’s America,” International Social Science Review, https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1529&context=issr)

15 In the twentieth century, news organizations tried to present information in anunbiased and objective way. Bias was meant to be avoided at all costs, and facts were supposed to be highly proven with evidence. In 1949, **the** Federal Communications Commission **(FCC) enacted** the **Fairness Doctrine** with the purpose of **enforcing strict rules on broadcast media.** The doctrine **required any entity functioning under a broadcasting license** needed to present unbiased news and cover all sides of an issue. Under these rules, the media was rewarded by presenting truthful, unbiased, and fair reports. Everything changed, though, **when the Fairness Doctrine was repealed** in 1987.16 The **new media era began with** the founding of **FOX News** in October1996.17 The network purpose was to showcase solely Republican and Conservative ideas and news. This **creation of biased news networks** quickly **led to** the "**narrowcasting**" seen today: **where producers** of news seek to gain readers for profit rather than share credible and unbiased news. They **seek to reinforce** **the readers’** already **existing viewpoints rather than inform** them of all sides. The new media also rewards the speed of news rather than accuracy. It is seen as more important to be the first to report on a topic whether or not the content is yet proven as true or false. 18 The rise of the internet created a new medium for political discourse and gave birth to the Alt-Rightmovement. As it became more challenging for those with a racial bias to openly voice their opinions without persecution, the internet opened an entirely new platform for supremacists to express their ideology without social reproach. The Alt-Right success can be attributed to the internet’s lack of “opportunity costs—the energy, money, and psychological energy it takes to meet people, establish connections, and mobilize actions among groups of people.”19 By anonymously joining a movement for free by merely owning an internet-accessible device, the Alt-Right became the new haven for white nationalists. An **expansive network of right-wing platforms has been created during this** new digital **era.** A few of the most successful **far-right websites** that the Alt-Right frequent are Breitbart, Infowars, 4chan, American Renaissance, and Occidental Dissent. Social media sites such as Twitter, Reddit, and Facebook have also played vital roles in the movement’s growth—although there have been increased monitoring of hate groups on these sites in the past few years. Andrew Anglin created The Daily Stormer in 2013, one of the most well-known Alt-Right sites. It focuses on the sense of victimhood and marginalization that the Alt-Right strongly believes they are the subject of.20 Another significant Alt-Right player, Alex Jones's Infowars, is known as the conspiracymongering site at **the center of many Alt-Right ideologies and conspiracy theories**.21 Infowars is **used to “fuel right-wing paranoia and propaganda.**”22 Infowars truly emphasizes the concept of the “false flag,” used as a claim that anything potentially damaging to conservative values must simply be false. It is the concept that anything that has gone wrong, whether it be a scandal, a mass shooting, or an economic crisis, must be the fault of liberal policies or a plot by liberal players to undermine the conservatives.23 Without a doubt, the most prominent way that the AltRight represents themselves in our society today is through the internet. The Ideology of the Alt-Right

#### **The American political sphere proves a post-truth media creates facism and marginalization--- objectivity is the only check**

**Palley 21:**

(Thomas Palley is a US economist with a master's degree in international relations and a PhD in economics from Yale University, and former chief economist for the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2021, “Proto-Fascism Unleashed: How the Republican Party Sold its Soul and now Threatens Democracy,” Political Economy Research Institute. <https://peri.umass.edu/publication/item/1460-fascism-unleashed-how-the-republican-party-sold-its-soul-and-now-threatens-democracy>)

Her offenses were twofold. First, denying Donald Trump’s dishonest claim to have won the November 2020 election. Second, voting for Trump’s impeachment for his role in promoting the insurrection of January 6, 2021. Cheney’s dismissal marks another step for the U.S. down the road to fascism, and **the echoes with** the Germany’s **Nazi experience** grow louder every day. With her dismissal, the Republican Party has officially accepted Trump as their “Fuhrer” and shown itself to be entirely beholden to him. **The party** has also **accepted Trump’s** “Big **Lie**” and all **that** it **implies** for democratic politics. The lie claims **the election was stolen**, which implies President **Biden** lacks legitimacy and **should be overthrown**. In effect, Republicans have tacitly **invited** further **insurrection**. Worse yet, acceptance of the “Big Lie” implicitly signifies the Republican Party’s rejection of rule of law and a turn to the politics of will power. Trump’s lie has been disproven by numerous election audits and multiple courtcases, all of which have dismissed his claim regarding the election being stolen. By rejecting those audit findings and court decisions, the Republican Party has effectively rejected the rule of law as the basis for settling political disputes. In its place, it has tacitly embraced fascist politics, which views democracy as being for the weak and advocates seizing power by force of will, using whatever means necessary. 3. Triumph of the will Fascist political thinking emphasizes will power, and that turn to the politics of will power is now evident in the **Republican** Party**’s** nationwide **effort to systematically rig elections** via a combination of extreme gerrymandering and voter suppression. The goal is **to stack the** electoral **deck by making it harder for African Americans, minorities, and the poor to vote.** Measures include making it more difficult or costly to vote by reducing the number of polling stations, eliminating postal vote drop boxes, reducing polling hours, and lengthening polling station wait times by reducing the number of voting machines. Additionally, Republicans are requiring ID that poorer people are either less likely to have (e.g. a driving license) or is relatively more costly and difficult for poor people to get. The **justification for** this **suppression** of voter turnout **is unproven claims of voter fraud**. Republicans prefer to exclude millions of legitimate voters in the name of possibly preventing a few illegal votes. In effect, legal voters are being de facto deprived of the right to vote by placing hoops they cannot jump. All of this is being done knowing that those groups disproportionately vote Democratic. Moreover, it is all being done within the law as it is done in states where Republicans control the legislature and Governorship. That prevention of voting by use of law is exactly how “Jim Crow” worked in the Southern United States to disenfranchise African Americans, which is why the current Republican effort has been labelled Jim Crow 2.0. Though little known, **takeover from within the law is** also **how** Adolf **Hitler gained permanent power** in Nazi Germany. Although the largest party in the Reichstag, the Nazis did not have a majority. At Hitler’s request, on March 23, 1933, the German Parliament passed the Enabling Act that gave Hitler dictatorial powers. It was supposed to expire in four years, but by then conditions of democracy had been destroyed in Germany. The debate over the act took place under conditions of intimidation. The Nazis had already arrested all Communist and many Social Democratic members of parliament. The Catholic Church (to its lasting shame) endorsed the act in exchange for a promise its liberties and property would be protected. Its political ally, the Center Party, provided the votes needed to pass the act. That tragic history resonates with the current moment when the Republican Party is stepping up legal means to rig elections by electoral exclusion. The big lesson from the Nazi era is it shows how the worst of dictatorships can emerge from within the law. That is an often forgotten lesson of European history where fascism, for the most part, was voted into office. The balance of this essay argues that, for forty years, the Republican old guard has fostered political practices and beliefs conducive to fascism. The structure of the argument is illustrated in Figure 1. At the center is fascism which emerges from within the law, is carried across the winner’s line by the Big Lie, and rests on a politics that celebrates triumph of the will. The political conditions for this are the death of aspiration to truth-telling, belief that a greater purpose justifies actions which are above the law, and belief that politics should be practiced as total war. Those political conditions are mutually reinforcing, as illustrated by the bi-directional arrows. That reinforcing character adds to momentum. Most dangerous of all is that once these practices and beliefs have taken hold they are extremely difficult to reverse. Of course, there is also much more to the rise of fascism. In particular, there is an essential economic dimension, with the rise of fascism always being associated with economic distress or disappointment. That aspect is beyond the scope of the current essay which is focused on political practices and beliefs, particularly how the Republican Party has fostered practices and beliefs conducive to fascism. 4. The germination of the fascist seed in the U.S. It is comforting and tempting to attribute the current danger to just Donald Trump. If that were true it would alleviate any wider responsibility, and particularly any responsibility on the part of U.S. political culture and the U.S. political system. However, the reality is the fascist seed germinated in U.S. politics long ago, but only now has it become so visible that it is possible to speak of it. A cruel aspect of history is that the unspeakable only becomes speakable once it has happened. Before then it is dismissed as impossible. For instance, twenty years ago the U.S. responded to the 2001 Twin Towers attack with passage of the Patriot Act (2001), the Homeland Security Act (2002), and an illegal murderous invasion of Iraq (2003). The World War II memorial was inaugurated by President George W. Bush on May 29, 2004. It looks as if it was designed by Albert Speer who designed the Nazi Party rally grounds in Nuremberg. Back then saying the U.S. was walking the road to Weimar was dismissed as ridiculous. That is despite the open use of the term “Homeland” in the Homeland Security Act, which resonates with the fascist language of “Fatherland” and is so alien to U.S. political linguistic culture. At that time, such things could only be said in fiction – and they were said by Philip Roth (2004) in his prescient novel The Plot Against America. The driving force behind the U.S. drift to fascism has been a Faustian bargain made by the old guard Republican elite which is now being dismembered by Trump. That dismemberment is the payback which the old guard thought it would never have to make. The bargain had Republicans pandering to prejudice by pushing “red meat” politics that advocated nationalism, xenophobia, racism, abolition of abortion, and white conservative cultural values. In return, they got votes that enabled them to push their agenda of tax cuts plus a deregulated economy favorable to business and profits. For almost forty years, beginning with the folksy charm of Ronald Reagan, the old guard persistently fed its political base that diet. And for forty years the formula worked, with Republicans setting the U.S. political agenda as evidenced in bi-partisan support for both the neoliberal economic policy regime and the neocon foreign policy regime. As with Faust, the bargain eventually came due. Tremors first appeared in the Republican presidential primaries of 2016 which saw Donald Trump crush the old guard’s favored son, Florida Governor Jeb Bush, the son of former President George H. Bush and brother of former President George W. Bush. However, once Trump had won the nomination, the old guard went all in on his election. Likewise, they stayed all in on his presidency, embracing the passage of the 2017 tax cuts and defending Trump in his first impeachment trial for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. Most also stayed with Trump, albeit reluctantly, immediately after the November 2020 election despite his lies about the election being stolen. The old guard only broke more substantively with Trump after the January 6, 2021 insurrection. However, by then it was too late as the old guard no longer controlled the Republican Party, whose base had been transformed by the forty year “red meat” diet. Instead, the base now swore allegiance to Trump, in whom they see an alter-ego with which they can wholly identify: a rich vulgar billionaire, a transgressor (e.g. pussy grabber and conman) who gets away with it, and a demagogic amoralist who is willing to deliver the punitive intolerant social and cultural agenda they want. 5. Death of the aspiration to truth telling The emergence of the fascist threat in the U.S. has been a long slow process. That process is marked by three key developments, the first of which is the death of the aspiration to truth telling. The death of that aspiration has destroyed the basis for agreement on what constitutes fact. Over the last several years there has been much chatter about fake news. The phenomenon of fake news is associated with the internet and new communication and social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. It rose to prominence after the 2016 election when Hillary Clinton and the Democrats tried to deflect blame for their defeat on to Russian internet trolls who had posted fake news stories that had supposedly swung the election. The phenomenon was even larger in the 2020 election, but now the fake news stories were associated with home-grown right-wing extremist groups. The problem of internet fake news is real. The internet provides a platform for rapid far-reaching dissemination of highly tendentious or outright fake material, which can be plausibly presented in ways that make it difficult to detect. As such, the internet and social media have become the whipping boy for fake news. However, that storyline is a form of fake news in itself. First, it misses the story of Fox News which is broadcast by the enormously influential “old technology” Fox TV network. Second, it miss- es the story of why so many Americans have rejected traditional news sources, why they have such an appetite for fake news, and why they are so vulnerable to fake news. Those questions compel recognition that **fake news** did not emerge from a vacuum. Instead, it **emerged from** an environment in which many viewers had been primed to receive **partisan** **one-sided** **news** presentations, and **where they** had **lost** both **the capacity to check and** the **desire** for **checked news**. Fox News is a critical part of that story in two ways. First, it contributed to the prepping and transformation of the Republican base into what it has become. Second, it points to the original sin which birthed the conditions enabling a player like Fox News to become dominant. Metaphorically speaking, Fox News is the bridge that connects where we are now with where we came from, and it also illuminates how we got here. As regards the prepping and transformation of the Republican base, **Fox News** has skillfully and entertainingly **fostered** **extremism** in the base for over twenty-five years. The founding CEO was Roger Aisles, a former Republican media consultant and CNBC executive. Aisles set the tone and direction of the network which has been built on favorable reporting of conservative causes and the Republican party, combined with persistent denigration of the Democratic Party and liberal causes. **It has supported the incremental takeover** of the Republican Party **by** its **more extreme elements**, while simultaneously encouraging its viewership to become more extreme and hostile to the Democratic Party. Leading Fox News personalities include Lou Dobbs, Sean Hannity, and Tucker Carlson, all of whom are widely recognized to be aligned with what used to be the extreme wing of the Republican Party. Fox has been enormously successful, ranking as the top-rated cable news network in 2019 and received by 87 million U.S. households (90 percent of television subscribers). Its viewer demographic leans significantly older, and a 2013 Gallup poll reported 94 percent of Fox News viewers either identified with or leaned toward the Republican Party. Academic studies uniformly agree that it has an extreme pro-Republican bias, and exposure to Fox News increases the Republican vote share. Some go so far as to characterize it as an extension of the Republican Party, delivering news that borders on agitprop (agitation propaganda).1 The bottom line is that Fox News has played a critical role transforming the news and political reporting culture, and **prepping Americans to be receptive and welcoming of extremist fake news**. In effect, it prepared the ground in which internet based fake news could seed so easily. But just as fake news did not develop in a vacuum, so too Fox News did not develop in a vacuum. That leads to the other side of the bridge and the original sin that birthed today’s conditions. The decisive measure was the Federal Communication Commission’s (FCC) elimination of **the** “**Fairness Doctrine**” in 1987. The doctrine had been introduced in 1949. It required holders of broadcasting licenses to present controversial issues of public importance and to do so in a manner that was, honest, equitable, and balanced. In short, it **was a restraint** **on** exactly the **corrosive** type of **news** and political reporting that **Fox** News **introduced**, and which opened the ugly Pandora’s box of fake news. The attack on the Fairness Doctrine was led by conservative libertarian and business interests. Business viewed it as an expense and a restraint on lucrative commercial possibilities offered by the infotainment market, in which news is twisted into entertaining partisan half-truths and opinions are presented as fact. Both business and libertarians sold their attack on First Amendment grounds (i.e. unconstitutional restriction of speech), and on grounds that market developments meant consumers had a multitude of news possibilities against which they could check for truth. The doctrine’s elimination unleashed a demon that has only gotten worse over time. Fox News was the beginning of the journey: fake news was the destination. And the same arguments that justified repeal of the Fairness Doctrine now service the cause of fake news. “Truth” is impossible. That is because we are always dogged by our own subjectivity, and there are also deep epistemological limits to knowing. However, if truth is impossible, we can still aspire to it via a culture and institutions that promote “truth telling”. The Fairness Doctrine sought to do that in its own imperfect way. It sought to combine freedom with the obligation to restrain subjectivity via equitable balanced reporting.

**Unchecked conservative media fuels opressive discourse that contributes to real-world white supremacist violence.**

**Color of Change 21:**

(Color of Change is a progressive nonprofit civil rights advocacy organization in the United States. It was formed in 2005 in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in order to use online resources to strengthen the political voice of African Americans. Color of Change. 2021. https://act.colorofchange.org/sign/Cancel\_CarlsonandIngraham/)

**Fox News is giving white supremacist rhetoric** two nightly **platform**s to spread hate speech. From coding white supremacy, mythologizing the brutality and impact of slavery, and launching a nakedly bigoted attack on Congresswomen Ilhan Omar, Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham **serve as an on ramp to dangerous anti-Black, anti-women, anti-migrant, and white supremacist ideologies** that corporate advertisers have no business sponsoring.For being a Black, immigrant, and Muslim woman calling for the country to live up to its ideals, Tucker Carlson called Rep. Omar “a living fire alarm” in a racist rant to justify blocking migrants like Omar from coming to this country. Smears like this are ripped directly from white nationalist talking points to otherize and paint us as threats. Advertisers must take responsibility for their financing of this hate and immediately pull their ads. In addition to Carlson’s recent hateful rhetoric, **Fox’**s Laura Ingraham has **recently defended [a] white supremacist** Paul Nehlen **and dismissed** the ongoing debate surrounding **reparations for descendants of slaves** with inflammatory **using coded white supremacist remarks copied straight from Richard Spencer.** Laura Ingraham and Tucker Carlson’s use their Fox News platform to issue hot tongued attacks anchored in white nationalist exclusion. Together, these two are, a nightly white nationalist one-two punch, **creating echo chambers** of warped ideals **and activating hate** amongst their viewers **that is undoubtedly contributing to** the rise in **real world white supremacist violence.** Allowing Laura Ingraham and Tucker Carlson to continue to broadcast hate speech on a national platform is endorsing a dangerous ideology. Those that fund these shows with their ad dollars, must be held accountable. Stand with us and demand advertisers turn their backs on Laura Ingraham and Tucker Carlson, once and for all.

**Contention 2: War Propoganda**

#### **Objective journalism thwarts government propaganda-- a biased media enabled the invasion of Iraq without proper oversight and embraces racist fear-mongering to jusitify western colonial expansion under the guise of “war”**

**Switzer and Ryan 09**:

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More than 2400 terrorist actions against American citizens and interests were recorded from 1983 to 1998. In almost every case, the preferred counterterrorism response was law enforcement. The government used military force in response to only three incidents – the bombings by bin Laden’s followers of two US embassies in East Africa in 1998; the attempt by Iraq to assassinate former President George H. W. Bush in Kuwait in 1993; and the bombing by Libya of a West German discotheque in 1986 (Malvesti 2001). **The** US news **media played** a **critical role in selling** the **invasion of Iraq to** the **American public** as an appropriate response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. We argue that (1) traditional **principles of objectivity are incompatible with** the dissemination of **propaganda** from any source; that (2) the media failed to employ principles of objectivity in covering the build-up to war; and that (3) the **media endorsed** the **Bush administration’s exploitation** of propaganda **techniques to rally** public **support** for war. The media generally have not acknowledged this failure in professional ethics – even as some isolated, though influential, media now do acknowledge lapses in judgement in covering news about Iraq. We offer a few suggestions about what journalists could have done differently. The framers of the US Constitution singled out the press for special protection under the First Amendment because they believed unfettered information and commentary were integral to a healthy democracy. The American people should reasonably expect nothing less than the press’s best efforts to provide accurate and complete news and commentary in the service of a burgeoning democratic state. Clearly, this means the press must challenge and not legitimise state propaganda. For its part, the press has a moral covenant with the people to do its very best to keep them informed, from stories about Little League baseball games to stories about war and peace. As international communication scholar Majid Tehranian puts it, ‘Without free and vigorous debate among competing views, no nation can achieve the level of integrated unity and determination necessary for democratic societies to act on public issues’ (Tehranian 2002, p. 79). It may seem naïve to suggest that the media have a **moral covenant** with the people– given the media’s poor coverage of the Bush administration, the war in Iraq and other issues – but we argue that the American people must expect more of the press and we propose a reasonable ethical standard by which the media can be judged. Journalists must decide which of an infinite number of events and issues are important for an audience to know about, and they must describe (or reconstruct) each event or issue as accurately, clearly and completely as possible. Ethical journalists can accomplish these goals when they use a strategy embodied in the principles of objective journalism. Examples of stories by journalists who use an objective approach may be found – in the past and even in contemporary news coverage of the war on terrorism in Iraq – in newspapers like The Christian Science Monitor and The New York Times, and in network television newscasts by people like Tim Russert and Tom Brokaw, but they are rare. Warren Strobel, Jonathan Landay and John Walcott, for instance, wrote a story refuting the Bush administration’s claim that Saddam Hussein had purchased special aluminium tubes for centrifuges to enrich uranium, possibly for nuclear weapons (Strobel et al. 2002). The Knight Ridder trio challenged the administration sources, and much of the media’s coverage, by reporting new evidence from different sources showing the administration’s story was false. Objectivity in news and commentary Many critical scholars believe that objective journalism has been misused and/or abused by journalists to such an extent that it is no longer relevant when discussing how the media might better portray the world to their audiences. We do not agree. An objective approach must be rehabilitated in an ongoing effort to re-establish and re-impose ethical standards for today’s journalists. We recognise that many journalists assume they merely mirror or reflect the news and do not play a major role in representing these realities to their readers, listeners or viewers. We also recognise that objectivity – which often is framed inadequately as merely giving equal time or space to (only) two sides of an issue – is the traditional strategy journalists claim they employ in this quest for truth. We argue for an alternative perspective. First, as journalists we can never be benign or neutral observers, because there is no fixed meaning in the world we are writing about to re-present. Second, as journalists we have essentially abandoned the largely unwritten standards that comprised the foundation of an objective approach to news reporting and writing. A news event or issue cannot be separated from its mediated image. While the media may reflect our world, the act of mediation itself is constitutive of the world that the media reflect. The journalist’s voice is always present in any given news report, and in this way the journalist represents the world of news to the news audience. Even a journalist covering a Little League baseball game may have strong feelings because he or she was a star or a dud or never played. These feelings may colour that journalist’s stories about Little League, just as a religious background may colour a journalist’s stories about the use of foetal stem cells in medical research. We do not argue that individuals can always control these feelings, for they cannot. But we do argue that an objective approach helps journalists and others produce more accurate, complete and impartial representations of reality. The movement toward objectivity began in the Enlightenment and gained momentum as scientists began to unravel the mysteries of the natural world. Galileo and Copernicus, for example, showed that the Earth circled the Sun and was not the centre of the Universe. Georges-Louis Buffon and James Hutton demonstrated that the Earth was considerably older than the few thousand years implied by The Bible, and Charles Darwin, of course, popularised the notion of evolution by natural selection. Journalism – which was jingoistic, mean, partisan and politicised in early America – began to change in the late 1830s as the penny press made news available to the masses, and editors and writers sought new ways to conceive and package news in their quests for new readers and advertisers. As the scientific method became the dominant narrative in communicating knowledge, more and more journalists began to incorporate the scientific perspective, and to emphasise factual information, in their own work (Mindich 1998).Many journalists began seeking increased power and prestige by defining journalism as a profession and by aligning journalism with a less partisan and more objective approach. This approach was seen as a way to increase profits, and an objective strategy helped drive journalistic practices with the emergence of a mass, popular press beginning in the 1880s and the 1890s (Streckfuss 1990, p. 973). Objectivity was not viewed as a way to guarantee neutrality, but as a way to compensate for the human inability to be objective (Ryan 2006). As early as 1867, Haney & Co., Publishers, produced for literary and newspaper writers a book describing principles that were later seen as fundamental to an objective approach. Newspapers that strive to be profitable must not reflect political or other interests; they must report news, not opinions (Haney’s Guide to Authorship 1867, p. 85). Further, when a newspaper writer quotes an authority, he (sources and writers typically were men) must ‘do so fairly, and copiously enough to do him justice’ (p. 44). When reporting public records, a writer ‘should chronicle the facts, but not give opinions’, and when covering meetings, a writer should report ‘fairly and honestly as a matter of news, giving his personal views in another portion of his paper’ (p. 92). A more formal definition of an objective approach to journalism in America was proposed by journalism professor Charles G. Ross: News writing is objective to the last degree. . . . The viewpoint of the news writer must be that of the unprejudiced, but alert, observer. He must approach his story with a mind open to the facts and he must record the facts unvarnished by his own preferences and opinions. (Ross 1911, pp. 17–18, 20) The meaning of objectivity was refined as journalism practice matured and journalism training evolved during much of the 20th century. Journalism ‘played a significant role in the secularisation of American public life’, as sociologist Richard Flory notes, ‘by spreading ideas adopted from other institutional spheres of knowledge-production to the general public [and by offering] a modern, scientific perspective, appropriate to the age’ (Flory 2003, p. 397). This perspective, media ethicist Stephen Ward observes, ‘can be the practices of common sense or the technical methods of scientific research’ (Ward 2004, p. 17). The overarching goal of one who uses an objective approach is to describe those realities deemed to be newsworthy as accurately as possible. The philosophical underpinnings for objectivity are clarity, accuracy and completeness in identifying, gathering and reporting information; willingness to find and consider new evidence and alternative explanations; scepticism toward authority, the powerful and the self-righteous; initiative in finding answers and solutions and ways to expose lies and deception; impartiality, fairness and disinterest in reporting; refusal to serve any political, social, religious, cultural or scientific agenda; imagination, creativity and logical consistency; honesty about personal preferences and idiosyncrasies; communality in sharing findings; and verification of findings in subsequent reports. None of this excludes analysis and interpretation in information collection and writing, as some critics charge. Early admonitions to ‘keep your own opinion out of your stories’ referred to personal opinion unsupported by evidence. They did not refer to evidencebased analysis and interpretation that could be used to guide story selection, information collection, reporting, writing and editing. The standards of an objective approach apply to commentary as well as to news. This does not mean commentary must not contain opinion. It does mean those opinions must be clearly labelled and well supported by evidence gathered using the techniques of an objective approach. The opinions expressed certainly should not be based on faulty or incomplete information that could ultimately lead to poor decision-making (Ryan 2001, 2006). Ethical journalists honour the principles of objectivity – whether they call it pragmatic objectivity, epistemological objectivity, good journalism or something else – because their output will be transparent, rational, coherent, logical and factual. The approach requires a journalist, or anyone else, to follow the evidence to reasonable conclusions. ‘Objectivity is part of our culture’s attempt to say what knowledge is and how to pursue truth in the many domains of inquiry’, Stephen Ward (2004) argues. ‘Objectivity, properly understood, is a bulwark against authoritarianism in belief and practice. It is a defense against an obscurantism that allows the clever to manipulate the naïve or vulnerable’ (p. 318). The focus of media ethics typically has been on the individual journalist, but that focus is too narrow when the individual must function within an organisation buffeted by all kinds of pressures from government, advertisers, peers and the community. In many cases, the interests and concerns of the media corporation itself may place undue burdens on journalists who work in this environment. Nevertheless, these pressures do not abrogate ‘the ethical imperative of journalism to maintain its standards’, as Ward (2004) notes. ‘Awash in media, the public needs a core of objective news reporting. It needs quality news organizations that serve as islands of credible, verified reporting in a sea of bias and opinion’ (p. 325). Propaganda strategies and the run-up to war The use of propaganda techniques is not consistent with a journalism that is defined by an objective approach to news. Journalists who use an objective approach seek to construct reality as accurately as they can, while those who use propaganda – as defined by communication ethicist Elspeth Tilley (Tilley 2005) – typically seek to bend reality to their own purposes. Tilley, who refined a propaganda index through analysis of the Australian government’s terror information package, defines propaganda as: communication that uses a specific set of rhetorical devices and cognitive heuristics to make claims or assertions, and to generalize (often unstated) broader assumptions from those claims, without providing evidence. [Labelling], particularly once it has become widely accepted as having a certain meaning and connotation, means evidence is not presented and examined on each occasion, but taken as ‘read’. (p. 70) Ethical communicators, especially in times of crisis, use ‘pluralist, evidence-based communication styles that offer data, research, history, context, and point readers to verifiable sources of information’ (Tilley 2005, p. 70). Propagandists typically serve someone’s narrow agenda, make claims that are not evidence-based, spread lies and deception, supply incomplete or misleading information, serve authority figures, and deny or hide their own interests and prejudices. Journalists who are committed to an objective approach do none of these things. We argue that America’s news media endorsed propaganda devices used by the Bush administration to generate public approval for invading Iraq. The focus is on propaganda devices that constitute Tilley’s propaganda index. The categories are described as bandwagon, glittering generality, transfer positive (positive qualities of something transfer to something else), transfer negative (negative qualities of something transfer to something else), name-calling, manifest destiny and plain folks. We report the results of several studies of media coverage of the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, but our primary focus is on our own study of editorials published in the ten largest US daily newspapers, which we searched for these propaganda devices:1 The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, The New York Times, Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post, Daily News (New York), Chicago Tribune, Newsday, Houston Chronicle and The Dallas Morning News. 2 The focus is on the 27 days preceding the invasion – 22 February–20 March 2003. Ninety-one editorials related to the invasion. Results were broken down into two time periods, 22 February–6 March and 7 March–20 March. The dividing point is 7 March, when Hans Blix, the chief UN weapons inspector, reported that Iraq, though increasingly cooperative, was not in full compliance with UN mandates. The question was whether this news was reflected in the editorials and whether more or fewer propaganda devices were used as war approached (Ryan and Switzer 2008). These newspapers and other media used six of Tilley’s seven propaganda devices, according to our research and other studies. Only the plain-folks technique seems to be missing from the propaganda armoury. Propaganda strategy 1: getting on the bandwagon The news **media clearly supported** the Bush administration’s **effort to** create a bandwagon effect (Table 1) – defined as an attempt to show that ‘everyone, most people, many people or any large collectivized group of people such as our school, our company, or our neighborhood thinks a particular, singular, and uniform way’ – to **make it appear** that **all patriotic Americans supported** the proposed **invasion** (Tilley 2005, p. 72). Part of this effort was the attempt to **create** the **perception** that there were **only two options** regarding Iraq, ‘use **military force’ or ‘do nothing’** (defined as anything short of an invasion). Since few journalists or commentators seemed prepared to argue that the United States should do nothing, the bandwagon favouring a military option rolled freely from the beginning. Editorials in the ten largest US newspapers helped move the war wagon along. Seventy-nine **editorials** (and all ten newspapers) **simply assumed Iraq would be invaded**, as shown in Table 1, with more making that assumption in Period 2 (following the Blix report) than in Period 1. Forty-eight editorials (in seven newspapers) supported military intervention. Seven newspapers backed the war editorially: The Wall Street Journal, Newsday, The Dallas Morning News, USA Today, Daily News (New York), Chicago Tribune and The Washington Post. Three did not call for war, but they did not oppose it either: The New York Times, Los Angeles Times and Houston Chronicle. Not a single editorial attempted to slow the bandwagon by opposing military intervention; only five editorials counselled sacrifice by the public and only seven suggested caution. Ten of these twelve editorials were published only after it was clear the United States would invade Iraq. The bandwagon effect was supported by editorial writers who said urgent action was required – even after 7 March 2003. The newspapers frequently posed the question, repeated incessantly by Bush and other war advocates: How much time does this evil man need? Their frustration was captured in the president’s statement, ‘[H]ow much time do we need to see clearly that he’s not disarming? As I said, this looks like a rerun of a bad movie and I’m not interested in watching it’ (International Information Programs 2003). Most agreed with USA Today: Pretending that more time would prompt Hussein’s cooperation or conjure up a strong-willed international community ignores 12 years of history. It also perpetuates the kind of wishful thinking that got the world where it now stands.3 (USA Today 2003, p. 14a) **Few** in the media **seemed to notice** that **Hussein was complying with UN directives** or that Bush kept raising the bar for peace – first that Hussein must allow weapons inspectors, then that he must allow them in his palaces, then that he must list his weapons and ‘becooperative’ and finally that Hussein and his sons must leave Iraq. A few editorial writers suggested that the embargo against Iraq, weapons inspections and diplomatic efforts were working, but most ultimately agreed with the president that ‘doing nothing’ was not an option.In this binary world, war was the only option. The bandwagon effect also was supported in other publications. Photographs of troops and military hardware published in news magazines before the invasion created an image of a determined, powerful nation ready for war: The analysis suggests that newsmagazine photographs primarily serve established narrative themes within official discourse: that published photographs most often offer prompts for prevailing government versions of events and rarely contribute independent, new or unique visual information. (Griffin 2004, p. 381) Photographs of human suffering, property damage and American casualties were accessible to viewers of news media like Al Jazeera, the Arab television and Internet network. Al Jazeera did show images of innocent civilian casualties, who were called martyrs, and of American and coalition war prisoners and casualties, who often were called invaders. **American media outlets** might have used such images – had they not **self-censored** themselves **by stereotyping** Al Jazeera and the **Arab media** in general **as a** propaganda **tool of the terrorists** – and framed them as part of a more comprehensive and accurate depiction of war. Military strikes were assumed from the start to be part of the US response. ‘The New York Times,’ for example, ‘constructed and celebrated heroes and bolstered leaders as they responded to the crisis. It mobilized for war andwarned of a foreboding future, of suffering and sacrifice to come’ (Lule 2002, p. 286). The words ‘war’ and ‘terrorism’ were linked, and they constituted a mantra in network television’s pre-invasion coverage: ABC News broadcast eighty-six stories that contained the terms ‘war’ and ‘terrorism,’ CBS News aired ninety-six such segments, NBC News broadcast 133, CNN televised 316, and National Public Radio aired 166. The US print press available in the Lexis-Nexis archive published a total of 5,814 articles that mentioned the two terms. (Nacos 2002, p. 146) The New York Times, The Washington Post, and other individuals and media outlets – in unprecedented fashion – eventually acknowledged their coverage was flawed. Editors at The New York Times, for instance, ‘found a number of instances of coverage that was not as rigorous as it should have been. . . . Looking back, we wish we had been more aggressive in re-examining the claims as new evidence emerged – or failed to emerge’ (From the Editors 2004, p. 10a). The New York Times and The Washington Post acknowledged that reporters relied too heavily on sources who had vested interests in war or who had no knowledge of what was happening in Iraq. ‘Complicating matters for journalists,’ according to The New York Times, ‘the accounts of these exiles were often eagerly confirmed by United States officials convinced of the need to intervene in Iraq.’ **Assertions** by war advocates **were unchallenged** – or **contradictory info**rmation **was buried**. Official claims got prominent play, ‘while follow-up articles that called the original ones into question were sometimes buried. In some cases, **there was no follow-up** at all’ (From the Editors 2004). Patrick E. Tyler’s story of 6 February 2003, according to Daniel Okrent, The New York Times’ public editor, ‘all but declared a direct link between Al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein’. The link would never be confirmed because there was no link. ‘Other **stories pushed Pentagon assertions** so **aggressively** you could almost sense epaulets sprouting on the shoulders of editors’ (Okrent 2004, Week in Review, 2). The bandwagon rolled on. The Washington Post also gave favoured treatment to pro-war news, according to staff writer Howard Kurtz: ‘Some reporters who were lobbying for greater prominence for stories that questioned the administration’s evidence complained to senior editors who, in the view of those reporters, were unenthusiastic about such pieces.’ Pentagon correspondent Thomas Ricks noted: ‘There was an attitude among editors: Look, we’re going to war, why do we even worry about all this contrary stuff ?’ (Kurtz 2004, p. 20a). Jessica Yellin, former White House correspondent for MSNBC, said in May 2008: ‘The press corps was under enormous pressure from corporate executives, frankly, to make sure that this was a war that was presented in a way that was consistent with the patriotic fever in the nation and the president’s high approval ratings.’ As Bush’s approval ratings went up, so did pressure from news executives to produce positive stories about Bush. Yellin said: ‘They would edit my pieces, they would push me in different directions, they would turn down stories that were more critical and try to put on pieces that were more positive.’4 There were isolated instances in which journalists reported evidence and made arguments that might have slowed the bandwagon. One example was The New York Times’ response to the 7 March report of Blix: ‘[T]he report of the inspectors on Friday was generally devastating to the American position. They not only argued that progress was being made, they also discounted the idea that Iraq was actively attempting to manufacture nuclear weapons’ (The New York Times 2003, p. 12). Most responses were like that of the Daily News (New York), however, which said the report contained ‘even more excuses’ (Daily News (New York) 2003a, p. 24). Propaganda strategy 2: the glittering generality Glittering generalities are words and phrases that support a position without evidence (Table 1). These include: positive-sounding euphemisms (e.g., collateral damage and friendly fire for civilian or owntroop deaths . . .); broadly affirmative unverifiable adjectives (e.g., state-of-the-art, hightech); . . . vagaries (e.g., significantly increasing or highly trained, where the level of increase or training is not defined); subjective adjectives or adverbs (beautiful, stunning) which give positive effect without evidence. (Tilley 2005, p. 72) All were used by the media in the run-up to the war in Iraq. Sixty-three **editorials** published by the ten largest US newspapers we studied, for example, **cited destroying Hussein’s** unconventional **weapons as** a **main reason for war**, as shown in Table 1. **But there was no credible evidence** that **he had** such **weapons or** that he **could deliver them against the U**nited **S**tates or its allies. No editorial in any newspaper questioned whether Hussein had weapons of mass destruction – all assumed he did. Other reasons cited in support of the invasion included: to change the regime, 21; Saddam is ‘bad,’ twelve; to bring freedom to the Iraqis, eleven; to make the world safer, ten; to defend the country, eight; and to combat terrorism, six. The two reasons that resonated particularly well with many Americans, especially conservative Christians, were that Saddam is evil and must go and that America must fight to bring freedom to Iraq (Ryan and Switzer 2008). All of these are empty euphemismsthat had little empirical support before the invasion, but they ultimately began to appear to be – and to be portrayed in the media as – hard evidence supporting an invasion. In fact, the Bush administration manufactured and cherry-picked evidence supporting the invasion. A glaring example was former Secretary of State Colin Powell’s speech to the United Nations when he sought approval for a resolution authorising military action against Iraq. Powell promised to show in his UN speech on 5 February 2003 that Hussein was secretly trying to produce weapons of mass destruction: We know that Saddam’s son, Qusay, ordered the removal of all prohibited weapons from Saddam’s numerous palace complexes. We know that Iraqi government officials, members of the ruling Baath Party and scientists have hidden prohibited items in their homes. Other key files from military and scientific establishments have been placed in cars that are being driven around the countryside by Iraqi intelligence agents to avoid detection. (US Secretary of State Colin Powell addresses the UN Security Council 2003) Powell presented photographs purporting to show that components of weapons of mass destruction were being moved; he maintained Iraq had failed to account for all weapons of mass destruction amassed in the 1990s; he said Iraq had mobile facilities for making biological weapons; he cited the purchase by Iraq of aluminium tubes to construct centrifuges used to enrich uranium; and he claimed Iraq had helped Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda acquire gases and poisons. These were all positive statements supporting an invasion, but they were mostly false or misleading. A compliant media deemed the speech a success. Powell, USA Today asserted in its news columns, ‘forcefully laid out newly declassified evidence of Iraq’s efforts to develop and conceal chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, as well as new signs that an al-Qaeda terrorist cell was set up in Baghdad last year’ (Nichols 2003, p. 1a). The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette claimed in an editorial that Powell’s speech ‘was far more powerful than anyone had predicted’ and that ‘Powell did produce the proverbial “smoking gun”’ (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette 2003, p. 1b). Propaganda strategy 3: transferring positive qualities The media clearly used the transfer positive technique (Table 2) – the ‘process of association whereby the “good” of one thing rubs off onto something else’ (Tilley 2005, p. 72). They praised and made heroes of Western leaders, victims, survivors and rescue workers. ‘This shift of focus [in the days immediately following 11 September 2001] from victims to heroes helped to effect a transition from death to life, and it coincided with the rhetorical shift from shock to sorrow to patriotism’ (Kitch 2003, p. 219). Political and military leaders were portrayed as heroes – to their benefit. ‘The construction of political leaders as heroes . . . can legitimize the actions of those leaders and buttress their authority at critical times. The [New York] Times’ portrayal of President Bush as “a leader whom the nation could follow” offered implicit (and politically important) support for the administration’s response to September 11’ (Lule 2002, p. 284). President Bush elevated his own status by: attacking the ‘evil’ of the terrorists, using the word five times in his first statement on the September 11 terror assaults, and repeatedly portraying the conflict as a war between good and evil in which the United States was going to ‘eradicate evil from the world’ and ‘smoke out and pursue . . . evil doers, those barbaric people’. (Kellner 2002, p. 144) The media also used the transfer positive device by relying on spokespersons like former Secretary of State Colin Powell and former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, as shown in Table 2. In addition, they relied on a host of military analysts who often agreed with the administration’s militaristic worldview and who would benefit financially from a war in Iraq. The paid analysts ‘often got more airtime than network reporters, and they were not merely explaining the capabilities of Apache helicopters. They were framing how viewers ought to interpret events’ (Barstow 2008, p. 1a). Two of the analysts were Barry R. McCaffrey and Wayne A. Downing, who worked for NBC. They were members of an advisory board for the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq, ‘an advocacy group created with White House encouragement in 2002 to help make the case for ousting Saddam Hussein. Both men also had their own consulting firms and sat on the boards of major military contractors’ (Barstow 2008, p. 1a). Two problems, however, did arise during the run-up to war. First, Bush’s heroic image had tarnished somewhat by the time it became obvious the United States would invade Iraq (roughly a month before the invasion) and, second, several major religious denominations expressed opposition to the proposed war. These difficulties had to be dealt with if the selling of the invasion were to succeed. Editorials in the ten largest newspapers employed two strategies. First, they seized on former British Prime Minister Tony Blair as the hero in hopes that his ‘positive outlook’ would rub off onto the war effort. Blair, like other members of the coalition of the willing, was lauded for standing his ground in the face of considerable political opposition at home. Second, editorials began to distinguish between Bush’s efforts to get international support for the war, which they said fell short, from the idea of war. Negative descriptors of Bush were far more common after 6 March 2003, when Bush was trying, and largely failing, to rally international support and to secure a new UN resolution, particularly in newspapers that did not call for an invasion: The New York Times, Los Angeles Times and Houston Chronicle. Bush was described in the editorials as confused, unfocused, cavalier, high-handed, disingenuous, reckless, wrongheaded, inflexible and too hasty. The main substantive concerns were that Bush’s diplomatic efforts were clumsy and ineffective, 14; that he did not explain clearly the costs and risks of war, 13; that he did not make the reasons for war clear, nine; that he dismissed critics’ concerns about the war, eight; and that he alienated allies, six. This excerpt from the Los Angeles Times is typical: But Bush and his advisors also bear much responsibility for the impasse that threatens to wreck the system of collective security that emerged out of World War II. Bush’s disregard for international treaties and his heavy-handed diplomacy have infuriated America’s allies, turning friends into foes. (Los Angeles Times 2003a, p. 14b). Most newspaper editorials, because of larger concerns, tended to ignore or to explain away Bush’s mistakes and inconsistencies. Newsday, which supported the war, wrote: ‘Whatever diplomatic mistakes and political missteps he made in getting there, Bush has taken a stand on Iraq from which he cannot back off without damaging his office and the credibility of the nation itself’ (Newsday 2003, pp. 25a, 26a). The opposition to the invasion expressed by many Christian denominations and individuals was more problematic. Many moderate and progressive Christians, as well as many conservative evangelicals, were uncomfortable with a war of choice, or what Bush and the news media called a ‘preemptive’ war – one in which the United States, acting in self-defence, would respond militarily to a proven threat (weapons of mass destruction). Many Americans, Christians and non-Christians, recognised that Bush was really proposing a ‘preventive’ war in which the United States, acting as an aggressor, would launch military strikes against a sovereign nation that might pose an unspecified threat at some unspecified time in the future (Dean 2004, pp. 132–136). But a preventive war would not satisfy the criteria set by Christians like Saint Augustine as early as the 5th century – it was not a just war.5 Many religious leaders refused to endorse a preventive war in Iraq, even though many members of their congregations did. Bob Edgar, head of the National Council of Churches, noted: ‘While we may have been silent then [before the war in Afghanistan], we certainly don’t think the way to get rid of terrorism is to bomb every government. Even bad governments’ (Gibson 2002, p. 6 opinion). The US Conference of Catholic Bishops sent to Bush on 13 September 2002 a letter stating: We respectfully urge you to step back from the brink of war and help lead the world to act together to fashion an effective global response to Iraq’s threats that conforms with traditional moral limits on the use of military force. (Letter to President Bush from Catholic Bishops 2002) The media dealt with the problem of Christian opposition by embracing Christians like Charles Colson (the Nixon administration’s chief counsel and one of the infamous Watergate Seven), who said: ‘Out of love of neighbor . . . Christians can and should support a preemptive strike, if ordered by the appropriate magistrate to prevent an imminent attack’ (Colson 2002, p. 72).6 Like the Bush administration, they also used another powerful propaganda technique: They essentially ignored the criticism. They gave enough coverage to show they made a good faith effort, but not enough to have an impact on the march to war. None of the editorials in the ten largest newspapers mentioned the calls by the major religious denominations or by Pope John Paul II for a peaceful solution and they ignored, downplayed or denigrated the marches and petitions of ordinary Americans against the impending invasion. Propaganda strategy 4: transferring negative qualities Transfer negative (Table 2) is defined as a process of casting individuals or groups in a bad light by associating them directly or by implication ‘with negative incidents, places, people, or symbols’. The negative qualities ‘rub off’ on ‘the issue being discussed or discredit by implication an opposing viewpoint’ (Tilley 2005, p. 72). France, attacked in 45 editorials, was the prime target, followed by Russia, 19; Germany, 13; and the United Nations, eight. ‘Weapons inspectors’ were criticised in eight editorials, as shown in Table 2. The editorials also attacked individuals like French President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. Writers typically associated those who did not support the war wholeheartedly with ‘bad’ people. The Daily News (New York) managed to associate just about everyone with ‘appeasers’ when it wrote of Blix’s 7 March report: France and the other eager appeasers should stop their excuse making and do what comes naturally to them: retreat. Unfortunately, they are being handed even more excuses, courtesy of Hans Blix. The chief UN arms inspector . . . is wrapping everything in such carefully parsed language, he’s playing right into the hands of the cave-in crowd. (Daily News (New York) 2003a) The Wall Street Journal, in a particularly harsh editorial, managed to associate former Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle with the despised French. The last line was, ‘The next time Mr. Daschle says he wants to “work with the President”, at least we’ll know which country’s President he’s referring to’ (The Wall Street Journal 2003, p. 14a). Many of the ten largest newspapers used the transfer negative device in attacking domestic critics of the war. They typically noted that critics had the right to protest, but they clearly wanted to intimidate and silence the protesters, often by casting them as ‘friends’ or ‘dupes’ of the evil terrorists. The Daily News (New York) said that opponents of the war were ‘determinedly blind to the facts’ or were ‘sadly ignorant of them’ and it stereotyped them as ‘peaceniks’ and ‘peacemongers’ (Daily News (New York) 2003b, p. 34). Mackubin Owens denounced in The Providence Journal (RI) ‘the lunatic ravings of those who hide behind the Constitution while trying to destroy it, and whose perspective is not that different from the pathological hatred and fanaticism that motivates Osama bin Laden’ (Owens 2001, p. 7b). Some of the guilt-by-association charges were levelled in clever, backhanded ways. The Dallas Morning News, for instance, chastised Mexican President Vicente Fox for failing to support war against Iraq publicly. The Dallas Morning News noted that Mexico, a member of the UN Security Council, can ‘decide for itself whether to authorize war’. However: Having enlisted to help maintain the world’s security, Mexico should demonstrate it takes that responsibility seriously by supporting the United States. Having thrust itself onto the world stage, it should act with all the courage, wisdom and foresight that its role requires. (The Dallas Morning News 2003, p. 22a) Mexico would not be acting with ‘courage, wisdom and foresight’, presumably, were it to associate itself with ‘them’ by voting against war. The media dutifully reported Bush’s assertion that Iraq had obtained uranium from Africa during his State of the Union speech on 28 January 2003: ‘The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.’ The uranium, yellowcake plutonium from Niger, could be enriched to make a nuclear weapon: Imagine those 19 hijackers with other weapons and other plans – this time armed by Saddam Hussein. It would take one vial, one canister, one crate slipped into this country to bring a day of horror like none we have ever known. (President delivers ‘State of the Union’, 2003) The media had to report Bush’s use of this propagandistic statement, but they failed to report that the charge had been discredited months before the president’s address and there was no evidence that Hussein was linked to al-Qaeda or the 9/11 attacks. The FBI later determined that two employees in the Niger Embassy had forged the documents and passed them to an Italian national for sale to contacts in the international intelligence community (Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 89–90). A few journalists did use an objective approach in providing credible coverage of antiwar perspectives. Knight-Ridder’s Strobel, Landay and Walcott (Strobel et al. 2002), who have already been mentioned, refuted the story about Iraq’s alleged purchase of aluminium tubes to enrich uranium. Some newspapers also published stories like Kim Campbell’s (2003) in The Christian Science Monitor, Laurie Goodstein’s (2003) in The New York Times and David Gibson’s (2002) in the Sunday Star-Ledger of Newark about religious opposition or indifference to the potential war. And some publications transcended some of the propaganda by showing they were at least aware of the potential impact a preventive attack by the good people (Americans) would have on the demon people (Muslims). The Los Angeles Times wrote, for example, that: Throughout the Middle East, a postwar occupation of Iraq would become part of the myth of an American empire come to wreak havoc on the Muslims. This refueled resentment would not make the world safer. It would not make the streets at home safer. (Los Angeles Times 2003b, p. 14b) Propaganda strategy 5: name calling Name calling (Table 2) seems in this study closely related to transfer negative, but it is treated as a separate category. Name calling is defined as ‘negative or “bad” labels or stereotypes (e.g., terrorists, extremists, fanatics, ferals, “rent-a-crowd”) that encourage a summary negative response without examining history, complexity, or evidence related to an issue’ (Tilley 2005, p. 72). The ultimate insult was to label someone a terrorist, whether the accuser had any evidence or not, and it was the most frequently mentioned pejorative name in the editorials of the ten largest newspapers. The terrorist was defined and described by the Bush administration, the media and war advocates as signifying an individual or group as evil, irrational and without goals – and as someone who, without evidence, could be detained indefinitely by the US government. This use of ‘terrorist’, under the definition that prevailed in the United States after 9/11, essentially stops conversation and makes it difficult to find the causes of terrorist behaviour, which is an important step in developing a responsible response to an attack. Saddam Hussein – whose name was mentioned 84 times, often without rancour, in the editorials we studied – was not often demonised as a terrorist, although his name was associated with terrorism. The writers of editorials published in the ten largest newspapers frequently settled for names that carried less emotional baggage than terrorist, the primary one (used 25 times) being dictator. Names that seemed to carry more emotion than dictator, but less than terrorist, were also used, the most favoured being tyrant, murderer and madman, as shown in Table 2. He was also called a monster, bully, thug, megalomaniacal, torturer, aggressive, psychotic, liar, cruel, terror-monger, beastly, deceptive, dirty and dastardly. Propaganda strategy 6: manifest destiny Manifest destiny – especially as used by American politicians since the beginning of the 19th Century – is the ‘deterministic invocation of God (of any kind or faith), destiny, fate, natural processes, or universal design, to lend support to an argument; removal of accountability for an idea or issue from individuals and attribution of responsibility to deterministic “greater forces”’ (Tilley 2005, p. 72). George Bush and Tony Blair tried in 2002 to rally support for the invasion of Iraq by asserting that it was the West’s destiny to protect future generations. They cited a report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that predicted in a ‘new’ intelligence study that Hussein could have a nuclear weapon within six months. ‘I don’t know what more evidence we need,’ Bush proclaimed. ‘We owe it to future generations to deal with this problem.’ In fact, the ‘new’ report was published in the 1990s, not in 2002, and the IAEA did not say Iraq could have a nuclear capability within six months of September 2002. It said Iraq could have had a nuclear capability within six months to two years at the time of the Persian Gulf War in 1991. Journalists could have discovered from the IAEA that Iraq’s nuclear weapons program was destroyed between 1991 and 1998 (Cirincione et al. 2004, pp. 22–23). The media also alluded to manifest destiny when they portrayed the 9/11 attacks as an assault only against the United States: This portrayal ‘precluded other sorts of framing such as“an attack on the West” which might have appeared had we seen the spontaneous street demonstrations of shocked and saddened people in Berlin, Copenhagen, Paris, London, and other parts of the world’. More than 1000 victims of the World Trade Center attack were not US citizens and many of the businesses were international. ‘But ours was an American story’ (Uricchio 2001). Print and electronic media across the United States used slogans such as ‘War on America’ and ‘America’s New War’, suggesting this was a US problem and that it was America’s destiny to solve it (Kellner 2002, p. 147; Nacos 2002, ch. 5). The **media** dutifully **reported** Bush’s incessant **invocations of God** as he attempted **to generate support for war**. They reported **comments like**, ‘the terrorists hate the fact that . . . we can worship Almighty God the way we see fit’, and **the U**nited **S**tates **will ‘eradicate evil from the world’** (Kellner 2002, p. 144). The media typically did not greet such expressions with the scepticism they deserved and they rarely noted that many religious leaders viewed the circumstances much differently. God was invoked directly one time and indirectly five times in editorials published in the ten largest newspapers. None suggested that Bush used the word ‘God’ for propaganda purposes. Bush and the media also **invoked manifest destiny in** their use of **words like ‘freedom’ and ‘liberty’.** In their analysis of the Bush administration’s use of freedom and liberty, communication scholars David Domke, Kevin Coe and Robert Tynes found that editorial writers for 20 US newspapers echoed Bush’s rhetoric: ‘“Freedom” and “liberty” language and emphasis on **these values as universal norms significantly increased** . . . **after September 11**; these shifts over time paralleled the patterns of the president’s communications’ (Domke et al. 2004, p. 23). About 30% of the editorials they studied referred to freedom and liberty after 9/11, and half of those emphasised freedom and liberty as universal norms. What journalists should have done Journalists would have served the public better in the run-up to the invasion if they had adhered to principles of objectivity that were once a tradition in journalism. Had writers, editors and commentators followed these tenets, they would have challenged the dichotomous choices posed by the war advocates. They would have questioned whether there were only two options regarding Iraq, ‘do nothing’ or ‘use military force’, and whether such options as tightening the embargo or giving weapons inspectors more time were viable. They would have challenged the assertion that those who were not ‘with us’ were ‘with the terrorists’. They would have noted that one could oppose a US policy of violence and not be ‘with’ the terrorists. They would have questioned the use of ‘terrorist’, a term that has no intrinsic meaning, and challenged its use as a substitute for thinking. Terrorists were not defined as the powerless attacking the powerful who may have wronged them, as individuals who committed violent acts because they believed they had no other alternatives, as individuals who were foreigners to the Arab–Muslim communities in which they were embedded or as individuals who had legitimate grievances (Ryan and Switzer 2008, p. 304). The media, the Bush administration and war advocates made sure questions were seldom raised about the individuals who participated in the 9/11 attacks or about those who were called terrorists and held without trial following the attacks. The use of ‘terrorist’ and phrases like ‘death cults’ to describe groups and individuals: conveniently allows us to dismiss their obvious and usually explicit political goals as simply a mask for their irrationality. It encourages us to believe that those who oppose us for our actions are ‘in love with death’ rather than being governed by beliefs as important to them as ours are to us. By doing so it indulges us in waging ‘war’ on the manifestations of terrorism rather than dealing with its causes. (Steel 2004, p. 13) Journalists were shamefully careless about relying on partisan sources. Officials in the Bush administration selected facts that supported war, particularly those suggesting Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, and ignored evidence suggesting war was problematic. Journalists were dealing with an administration whose public dishonesty was perhaps unprecedented – a reality that was clear in a report produced in 2004 by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which documented a long list of the lies the Bush administration told about the war in Iraq (Cirincione et al. 2004). The report showed the **administration lied about Iraq’s w**eapons of **m**ass **d**estruction, about its **missile program**, about its c**ontact with terrorists** and about UN inspectors’ findings. **Journalists committed to an objective approach could have exposed** most of these **lies**. They certainly would not have disseminated them without caveats attached and without noting the pattern established by war advocates of emphasising facts that supported an invasion and discarding facts that did not.

#### **The news media directly controls public opinion for war legitimacy---coverup in Vietnam proves**

**Eilders 5:**

(Christiane Eilders, is a senior researcher in political communication at the Hans Bredow Institute for Media Research, 12-2005, “Media under fire: Fact and fiction in conditions of war,” International Review of the Red Cross, https://www.corteidh.or.cr/tablas/a21917.pdf)

Strategies of information control Although the media might lack autonomy and tend to follow parliamentary consensus, warring parties **cannot** rely on an automatically supportive media attitude. It goes without saying that they constantly develop new information control strategies to ensure that the media do not counteract their views. For warring parties the **public perception** of the objectives of war and the actual warfare, i.e. public opinion on the war itself, **is an existential resource of** modern **war**fare. Nowadays wars cannot be waged without public support. The less the United States relied on the compliance of its allies during the Iraq intervention, the more it endeavoured to convince its own public of the need for that war.14 In doing so, media coverage plays a decisive role. Not only is **public opinion** expressed in the media, it **is** also **produced** and regulated **through** the **media**. By **keeping media coverage under control**, it is **possible to sway** **the** general **public towards** **affirmation or rejection of** the **war**. The US **withdrawal from Vietnam had been attributed to** far too lax **media** coverage by military circles. The **images of** civilian **victims**, of the **inhumanity of warfare** **and** of US **casualties** had been blamed for the fact that the American public **deprived** the government of their **backing for** the **war**. This reasoning cannot be verified scientifically,15 but it led to a very creative handling of new forms of censorship by the military.16

**Thus I affirm**