

**“Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists”**

A content analysis of the news coverage of George W. Bush’s speeches on  
the War on Terror in the context of American nationalism



By Annabel van Gestel

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

24-07-2018

366765 – 366765ag@eur.nl

Dr. M. Lak

Prof.dr. D. Douwes

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Timeline War on Terror</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3. Public perception of the War on Terror</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>4. Literature Review</b>	<b>16</b>
4.1 <i>Nationalism</i>	16
4.2 <i>American Nationalism</i>	20
4.3 <i>The Bush Doctrine</i>	26
<b>5. Framing the News</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>6. Methodology</b>	<b>34</b>
6.1 <i>Data collection</i>	34
6.2 <i>Operationalization</i>	36
<b>7. Results</b>	<b>42</b>
7.1 <i>Exceptionalism</i>	42
7.2 <i>Vindicationism</i>	44
7.3 <i>Othering</i>	45
7.4 <i>Nationalism</i>	47
7.5 <i>Criticism</i>	49
7.6 <i>Difference Afghanistan and Iraq</i>	51
<b>8. Conclusion</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>9. Suggestions for future research</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>10. Bibliography</b>	<b>64</b>

## 1. Introduction

“Every nation in every region now has a decision to make: either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.” This phrase was part of a speech that US President George W. Bush delivered 9 days after the September 11th, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.<sup>1</sup> Bush addressed the American Congress and the American people in what some have called the most important speech of his presidency.<sup>2</sup> In this address, he appealed to the Americans’ grief about the attacks, set an ultimatum to the Taliban, but also made this blunt statement to nations across the world. It was an ultimatum posed to all nations, implying: ‘be on our side or suffer the consequences’. This clear us-versus-them dichotomy known as ‘othering’ was a pervasive element in Bush’s rhetoric in the aftermath of 9/11 and perceived as an element of nationalism by a multitude of scholars.<sup>3</sup> American nationalism was at the heart of this research. Apart from othering, other aspects of nationalism were researched in the context of the War on Terror. Specifically, a close examination was conducted of the way the mainstream news media covered Bush’s appeal to nationalism in his speeches during the Afghanistan and Iraq War.

In the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the level of nationalism in the United States rose tremendously.<sup>4</sup> As a study by the University of Chicago revealed, the number of Americans surveyed who agreed with the statement “Generally speaking, America is a better country than most other countries” grew from 80 to 85 percent after the terrorist attacks.<sup>5</sup> According to the same study, almost half of the respondents felt that “the world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like Americans”, an increase of 11 percent since before the attacks. In the United States itself, the increase of the display of the American flag by both the government and the American people at large, was a concrete indication of this spike in American nationalism after 9/11.<sup>6</sup> Besides, the acts of terrorism sparked widespread sympathy from abroad. “We are all Americans”, was a phrase used in the French newspaper *Le Monde*.<sup>7</sup> An increase of patriotism and nationalism – the distinction between these concepts is explained in chapter three - in a time when your nation is under threat is not a phenomenon that is exclusively American. As psychology scholars Qiong Li

---

<sup>1</sup> George W. Bush, “Address to a joint session of Congress,” (speech, Washington DC, September 20, 2001), American Rhetoric,

<sup>2</sup> John M. Murphy, “Our Mission and Our Moment: George W. Bush and September 11<sup>th</sup>,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 6, no. 4 (2003): 613.

<sup>3</sup> Anatol Lieven, *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 25.

<sup>4</sup> Gerald R. Webster, “American Nationalism, the Flag, and the Invasion of Iraq,” *The Geographical Review* 101, no. 1 (2011): 2.

<sup>5</sup> Tom W. Smith, Kenneth A. Rasinski & Marianna Toce, “America Rebounds: A National Study of Public Response to the September 11<sup>th</sup> Terrorist Attacks,” *National Organization for Research*, (2001): 1.

<sup>6</sup> George C. Herring, *From colony to superpower: US foreign relations since 1776*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 942.

<sup>7</sup> Webster, “American Nationalism,” 2.

and Marilyn Brewer state, people are likely to show a heightened sense of unity and belonging when facing a common problem or threat to their community.<sup>8</sup> The fact that more than 80 percent of Americans supported the choice to send troops to Afghanistan to fight Al Qaeda, the organization that claimed responsibility for the terrorist attacks, is therefore hardly surprising.<sup>9</sup> This collective perception of an imminent threat arguably even provides an explanation for the wide consensus on the necessity of the consequent war in Iraq, which was proclaimed 'inevitable' by the Bush administration.<sup>10</sup> Even though a majority of the American people initially opposed the idea of taking military action against Iraq unilaterally, once Bush declared war, 72 percent of Americans supported this decision.<sup>11</sup> Bush and his aides went to great lengths to convince both the public as well as the media that the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, had links to Al Qaeda and was in possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). However, even after it became clear that there was very little evidence for these claims and that the evidence presented by the administration officials was more often than not fabricated, a vast majority of Americans still supported the war.<sup>12</sup>

A sheer number of scholars have dedicated their work to the American support for the War on Terror. Although approval for a possible future attack on Iraq declined as the trauma of 9/11 gradually receded, the Bush administration succeeded at keeping a majority of the American public behind its plans for Iraq once they were worked out and put to action.<sup>13</sup> Professor of international relations Jon Western provides a number of factors that contributed to the administration's success at maintaining support for the war.<sup>14</sup> One of those factors, according to him, was the way the Bush administration framed the war. Bush and his aides were quite successful at appealing to the fear of the American public and convince them of the presence of a credible threat, posed by the regime of Saddam Hussein. Framing of the Iraq War by the American government as well as by the mainstream news media has received considerable attention by scholars of political science and communication.<sup>15</sup> While many of these scholars have attributed the widespread support for the Iraq War to the great persuasiveness of government officials, there is also great academic consensus that the media

---

<sup>8</sup> Qiong Li & Marilyn B. Brewer, "What does it mean to be an American? Patriotism, Nationalism, and American Identity after 9/11," *International Society of Political Psychology* 25, no. 5 (2004): 729.

<sup>9</sup> David W. Moore, "Eight of 10 Americans Support Ground War in Afghanistan," *Gallup* (November 1, 2001), <https://news.gallup.com/poll/5029/eight-americans-support-ground-war-afghanistan.aspx>. Date accessed: 25-04-2018.

<sup>10</sup> Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 945.

<sup>11</sup> "Public Attitudes Toward the War in Iraq 2003 - 2008," Pew Research Center, last modified March 19, 2008, <http://www.pewresearch.org/2008/03/19/public-attitudes-toward-the-war-in-iraq-20032008/>. Date accessed: 17-07-2018.

<sup>12</sup> Steven Kull, Clay Ramsay, and Evan Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War," *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 4 (2003-4): 569-70.

<sup>13</sup> Jon Western, *Selling Intervention and War: The Presidency, the Media, and the American Public* (Baltimore, MA: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 178.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* 179

<sup>15</sup> Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, "Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration's Rhetoric," *Perspective on Politics* 3, no. 3 (2005): 525.

played an extensive role in this. In the past one and a half decade, academics have criticized the news media for their tendency to cover the war in a way that was in line with the administration's intentions.<sup>16</sup> Instead of functioning as the watchdog of the government and taking the time to check the legitimacy of the information presented to them by administration officials, the news media were competing for scoops and as such they were inclined to rush any information they received into their outlets. It is true that, especially in times of war, the press is highly dependent on government sources.<sup>17</sup> However, as communication scholars Kathleen Jamieson and Paul Waldman argue, journalists often face difficulties in their attempts to verify stories presented as facts by government officials.<sup>18</sup> This happens because they may be denied access to the source of the information or struggle with finding credible intelligence that might rebuke the source. Still, even if sources that contradicted the information as presented by the political elite were available, these rectifications of earlier statements rarely received similar coverage as the information that was published initially.<sup>19</sup>

That lessons are learned constantly even in the most renowned news organizations, was proven by *The New York Times*, when the editors of the newspaper issued an apology to their readers in May 2004.<sup>20</sup> They acknowledged that they, on multiple occasions, failed to check and recheck sources. Besides, indeed, when it did become clear that claims made previously by government officials on the presence of WMDs in Iraq or links to Al Qaeda were false, rectifications were not prominently published in the newspaper. Issuing this apology was quite an exceptional thing to do for a news organization of the prestige like that of *The New York Times*. Millions of Americans relied on newspapers like *The New York Times* for their understanding of the war and the reasons for going to war in the first place.<sup>21</sup>

News framing refers to the notion that the news media are not only able to set the agenda – determining *what* the public thinks about – they are also able to determine *how* people think about the issues they cover. The way the news media do this is elaborated on in chapter 5 of this research. The different frames that the media used in covering the War on Terror were immensely relevant in the formation of public opinion.<sup>22</sup> Considering that in 2001 Mark Zuckerberg was still in high school and the concept of Web 2.0 (i.e. the development of online

---

<sup>16</sup> W. Lance Bennett, Regina Lawrence and Steven Livingston, *When the Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media from Iraq to Katrina* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 3.

<sup>17</sup> Kathleen H. Jamieson and Paul Waldman, *The Press Effect: Politicians, Journalists, and the Stories that Shape the Political World*, (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 14.

<sup>18</sup> Kull, Ramsay & Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media and the Iraq War," 570.

<sup>19</sup> Bennett, Lawrence and Livingston, *When the Press Fails*, x.

<sup>20</sup> From the editors, "From the Editors; The Times and Iraq," *The New York Times*, May 26, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/26/world/from-the-editors-the-times-and-iraq.html>. Date accessed: 03-01-2018.

<sup>21</sup> Serena Carpenter, "U.S. Elite and Non-elite Newspapers' Portrayal of the Iraq War: A Comparison of Frames and Source Use," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 84, no. 4 (2007): 762.

<sup>22</sup> Ray Eldon Hiebert, "Public Relations and Propaganda in Framing the Iraq War: A preliminary review," *Public Relations Review* 29, (2003): 244 – 45.

user-generated content) was still in its infancy, the press was still the institution that the public relied on for information about major current events, especially events such as the War on Terror, which had such profound implications on American daily life.<sup>23</sup> Because different news organizations frame their stories differently, the perception of important, global events highly depends on the choice of news outlet people make.<sup>24</sup> In this research, various outlets were analyzed to identify those differences and determine if indeed, the audience of one news outlet was more susceptible to particular frames than another.

Even though Bush only explicitly mentioned Iraq in his State of the Union Address in January 2002, planning for military action against Saddam Hussein began days after 9/11.<sup>25</sup> Once the Taliban regime in Afghanistan was defeated, the Bush administration started its elaborate campaign to garner support for an intervention in Iraq by repeatedly claiming Hussein had helped the terrorists of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and that he was in the possession of WMDs. Much of the literature on the news framing of the Iraq War has focused on the frame of fear and the 'fight against terrorism' frame.<sup>26</sup> However, few studies have examined the role that nationalism played in the framing of the War on Terror. Seeing as nationalism among Americans showed a significant increase after 9/11, it can be expected that journalists were affected by this as well, and were therefore more inclined to go along with Bush's nationalist rhetoric. Because the nationalism approach has received much fewer attention in studies on news framing of the War on Terror, this research is a valuable addition to existing literature. It provides relevant observations on the role of the press in times of war as well as how different news outlets covered the war differently. The research question of this study is: to what extent did the mainstream news media differ in their adoption of nationalist sentiments from George W. Bush's speeches on the War on Terror?

To answer this research question, three American newspapers were quantitatively analyzed. These newspapers were *The New York Times*, the *New York Post*, and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. These newspapers were chosen because of their diverse political color - *The New York Times* is considered a liberal newspaper, while the *New York Post* is generally perceived as conservative - and apart from two newspapers with a large national readership, a more regional, Midwestern newspaper was selected: the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. Because the readership of the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* primarily consists of people from the region of the city of Saint Louis, Missouri - a liberal city - it is expected that the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* has a

---

<sup>23</sup> Hiebert, "Public Relations and Propaganda in Framing the Iraq War," 570.

<sup>24</sup> Carpenter, "U.S. Elite and Non-elite Newspapers' Portrayal of the Iraq War," 763.

<sup>25</sup> Western, *Selling Intervention and War*, 175-76.

<sup>26</sup> David L. Altheide, "Terrorism and the Politics of Fear," *Cultural Studies Critical Methodologies* 10 (2006): 2.

slightly liberal media bias.<sup>27</sup> Still, because the city is located in the predominantly conservative state of Missouri, it was expected that the *Post-Dispatch* were a little more likely to adopt nationalist statements from Bush's speeches on the War on Terror than *The New York Times*.<sup>28</sup>

It was analyzed to what extent these three newspapers adopted phrases from Bush's speeches that were deemed nationalist. To determine whether a phrase from the speech was nationalist, three elements of nationalism were identified on the basis of existing literature. These elements were 'exceptionalism', 'vindicationism' and 'othering'. Exceptionalism refers to the notion that the United States is the representation of humanity and a stimulator of universal progress.<sup>29</sup> Exceptionalists assert that the United States ought to serve as an example for the rest of the world and that, because of the United States' uniqueness, other nations ought to perceive the US as their roll model.<sup>30</sup> As historian Antony Hopkins states, this uniqueness is rooted in the American notion that the United States has an extraordinary mission to spread its principles across the globe.<sup>31</sup> This sense mission points to the concept of vindicationism, another element of nationalism. This concept takes the idea that the United States should serve as an example to other nations a step further. Vindicationists maintain that the United States should actively disseminate its ideology to the rest of the world and ensure that other nations adopt the sacred American principles.<sup>32</sup> It involves the belief that the United States is burdened with the task of saving the world. Thirdly, the nationalist element of othering refers to the notion that the American principles are superior to those of other nations.<sup>33</sup> There is an explicit identification of an 'ingroup' and an 'outgroup', with a sense of pride for the 'ingroup' and disdain for the 'outgroup'.<sup>34</sup>

From the three newspapers, articles were selected in which the content of Bush's speeches about the War on Terror was elaborately discussed. The time frame chosen for this research was September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 until May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003. While the starting date does not require explanation, the end date was chosen because this was when President Bush delivered his infamous 'Mission Accomplished' speech on the deck of the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, announcing the end of major combat operations in Iraq. The number of times the three elements of nationalism were directly adopted by the newspapers was counted. Besides, it was determined if the article

---

<sup>27</sup> "The Most Conservative and Liberal Cities in the United States," The Bay Area Centre for Voting Research, 2004, accessed July 18, 2018, <https://alt.coxnewsweb.com/statesman/metro/081205libs.pdf>. Date accessed: 14-07-2018.

<sup>28</sup> "Political ideology among adults in Missouri," Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/state/missouri/political-ideology/>. Date accessed: 18-07-2018.

<sup>29</sup> Minxin Pei, "The Paradoxes of American Nationalism," *Foreign Policy* 136 (2003): 33.

<sup>30</sup> Paul T. McCartney, "American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War," *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 3 (2004): 402.

<sup>31</sup> A.G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 15-16.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* 403.

<sup>33</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 25.

<sup>34</sup> Cindy Kam and Donald Kinder, "Terror and Ethnocentrism: Foundations of American Support for the War on Terrorism," *The Journal of Politics* 69, no. 2 (2007): 325.

took either a critical or a positive stance towards the speech. This variable was included because, even though the analysis of the pervasiveness of nationalist frames in the articles sketch a valuable overview of the extent to which the newspaper embraced Bush's rhetoric, the way this rhetoric was evaluated by the newspapers strengthens this analysis. It takes into account whether or not the newspapers merely adopted Bush's statements or if they did provide critical insights.

Lastly, the difference in the number of nationalist phrases adopted by the newspapers between the coverage during the Afghan War and during the prelude to the Iraq War was analyzed. Because the level of nationalism in the United States knew a peak after the 9/11 attacks, it might be expected that the level of nationalism in Bush's speeches and in the newspapers would be higher in the final months of 2001. However, because the Bush administration had work much harder to convince the American public of the necessity for the Iraq War, the assumption that nationalism was more important in the Iraq period is plausible as well.<sup>35</sup> Because of these two considerations, it was expected that there was no significant difference between the level of nationalist sentiments between the Afghanistan War period (September 2001 until December 2001) and the Iraq War period (January 2002 until May 2003). The following hypotheses were formulated for this research:

- H1: The three elements of nationalism were significantly more present in the *New York Post* than in *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*.
- H2: The three elements of nationalism were more present in the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* than in *The New York Times*, but the difference was not significant.
- H3: The *New York Post* evaluated Bush's speeches rather positively, while *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* were more critical.
- H4: There was no significant difference in the level of nationalist frames in the three newspapers between the war in Afghanistan and the Iraq War.

In the following section, a timeline of the War on Terror is provided to give context to the events this research refers to. Besides, a more in-depth examination of the background of American support for the War on Terror is given. Then, in the literature review of chapter 4, the concept of nationalism is explored, as well as the way it plays out in the United States and the Bush Doctrine is explained. Chapter 5 deals with the concept of news framing. In the final chapters, the methodology, results and conclusion of this research are presented.

---

<sup>35</sup> Jon Western, *Selling Intervention and War*, 175-76.

## 2. Timeline War on Terror

On September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, President George W. Bush was visiting an elementary school in Sarasota, Florida, as part of a campaign to promote education.<sup>36</sup> He was reading *The Pet Goat* when his chief of staff Andrew Card interrupted the president to whisper in his ear that a second aircraft had hit the second tower of the World Trade Center. That evening, Bush addressed the nation, saying: “Today, our way of life, our very freedom came under a attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts.”<sup>37</sup> Nine days later, Bush declared the War on Terror in an address that many remember as the most important speech of his presidency.<sup>38</sup> This speech marked the beginning of a war against Al Qaeda and the Taliban regime, which had provided a home to the terrorist organization in Afghanistan.<sup>39</sup> On October 7, *Operation Enduring Freedom* was launched. Rather than employing ground forces and marine units, the operation was conducted by American Special Operation Forces, CIA personnel and massive airpower.<sup>40</sup> The operation included heavy bombings of presumed Al Qaeda targets and strategic military sites of the Taliban.<sup>41</sup>

Within five weeks, the Taliban regime was toppled and had fled Kabul, but 16 of 22 top Al Qaeda officers, including their leader Osama Bin Laden, managed to find shelter in the mountains of the Afghan/Pakistani border.<sup>42</sup> The operation was still considered a success because of the limited number of American casualties and the speed with which the fall of Kabul was reached.<sup>43</sup> The swift victory over Afghanistan - or at least, as it was then still perceived a victory - inaugurated the long awaited shift of focus of the War on Terror for the Bush administration. Talks about also targeting Iraq in response to 9/11 began only days after the terrorist attacks.<sup>44</sup> Bush and his aides discussed whether or not to direct their mission towards Iraq as well, but in the end decided to focus on Afghanistan first. In these discussions, Secretary of State Colin Powell said: “Don’t go with the Iraq option right away, or we’ll lose the coalition we’ve been signing up.”<sup>45</sup> He added that there was no evidence yet that Saddam Hussein was responsible for 9/11.

---

<sup>36</sup> David Holloway, *9/11 and the War on Terror*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 12.

<sup>37</sup> George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address” (speech, Washington DC, January 29, 2002), American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/stateoftheunion2002.htm>. Date accessed: 19-02-2018.

<sup>38</sup> Murphy, “Our Mission and Our Moment,” 613.

<sup>39</sup> Ole R. Holsti, *American Public Opinion on the Iraq War*, (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 26.

<sup>40</sup> Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 314.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* 213 – 20.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* 316.

<sup>43</sup> Holsti, *American Public Opinion on the Iraq War*, 27.

<sup>44</sup> Bob Woodward, *Bush at War*, 60.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* 87.

Once the combat mission in Afghanistan was completed by the end of 2002, the Bush administration agreed that the time had come to focus on the Iraq issue. Although the president had mentioned 'other hostile regimes' apart from the Taliban in his speeches before, it was not until his State of the Union in January 2002 that he explicitly mentioned Iraq as part of an 'axis of evil'. This axis constituted the countries of Iraq, North Korea and Iran, which Bush said threatened 'the peace of the world'.<sup>46</sup> As political scientist Ole Holsti points out in his book *American Public Opinion on the Iraq War*, this State of the Union address was the first of a series of speeches in which it became evident that the issue of Iraq had now become the priority for the Bush administration's foreign policy. It marked the beginning of an extensive campaign to garner support domestically as well as internationally for military action to remove Saddam Hussein from power. Central to this campaign was the allegation that the Iraqi regime provided assistance to the terrorists of Al Qaeda and that Hussein was in the possession of WMDs.<sup>47</sup> These claims were repeatedly stipulated by administration officials, as well as in Bush's speeches during the prelude to the Iraq War. However, they failed to present solid evidence for these claims.<sup>48</sup>

In Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy, traditional beliefs on defense were dismissed as a result of the 'imminent threat' that the United States was now subject to. The two foundations of Cold War defense policy – deterrence and containment – were replaced with a new strategy that was characterized by preemptive warfare against hostile nations and terrorist organizations whenever evidence pointed towards a credible threat.<sup>49</sup> This strategy was exemplified by President Bush's October 7, 2002 address to the nation on the threat of Iraq, in which he said: "Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof – the smoking gun – that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud."<sup>50</sup> The United States added to this premise that other nations did not have the same right to preemptive warfare. The argument was that the interests of the United States aligned with those of the rest of the world. Therefore, the US was empowered to draw up the rules to which other countries ought to adhere.

Furthermore, the National Security Strategy stipulated that the United States should take an active role towards the promotion of democracy in undemocratic societies, especially in the Middle East, to combat the threat of terrorism. If necessary, the United States would be willing to

---

<sup>46</sup> Narasimhan Ravi, "Looking beyond Flawed Journalism: How National Interests, Patriotism, and Cultural Values Shaped the coverage of the Iraq War," *Press/Politics* 10, no. 1 (2005): 47.

<sup>47</sup> Bennett, Lawrence and Livingston, *When the Press Fails*, 22.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* 22.

<sup>49</sup> Holsti, *American Public Opinion on the Iraq War*, 29.

<sup>50</sup> George W. Bush, "Address to the Nation on the Threat of Iraq," (speech, Cincinnati, Ohio, October 7, 2002), *American Rhetoric*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbushwariniraqcincinnati.htm>. Date accessed: 10-04-2018.

do so unilaterally.<sup>51</sup> Especially the latter was a delicate issue in the process of garnering support for the American cause. In a speech a year after the terrorist attacks, Bush made an appeal to the United Nations General Assembly in which he asked the question: “Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding or will it be irrelevant?”<sup>52</sup> The United States never succeeded in getting approval of the United Nations for military action, primarily because France used its veto to stop any use of force. Bush and his aides decided to defy this decision and launched *Operation Iraqi Freedom* in March 2003.<sup>53</sup> In April, images were seen around the world of the toppling of the Saddam Hussein statue in Bagdad, one of which is used for the cover of this research as an evident illustration of America’s mission to make Iraq sure Iraq would become more like the United States. On May 1<sup>st</sup>, on the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, Bush declared the end of major combat operations in Iraq with a banner saying ‘mission accomplished’ above his head.<sup>54</sup> This image would later become a symbol of the United States’ failures in the Iraq War.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, 2002), 4, <https://library.bowdoin.edu/research/chicago-gov.pdf>. Date accessed: 26-06-2018.

<sup>52</sup> George W. Bush, “Speech to the United Nations General Assembly,” (speech, New York City, September 12, 2002), American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbushunitednations2002.htm>. Date accessed: 26-06-2018.

<sup>53</sup> Brian C. Schmidt and Michael C. Williams, “The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Conservatives Versus Realists,” *Security Studies* 17, no. 2 (2008): 198.

<sup>54</sup> Daniela V. Dimitrova and Jesper Strömbäck, “Mission Accomplished? Framing of the Iraq War in the Elite Newspapers in Sweden and the United States,” *International Communication Gazette* 67, no. 5 (2005): 408.

<sup>55</sup> Nora Bensahel, “Mission not accomplished: What went wrong with Iraqi reconstruction,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no.3 (2006): 454.

### 3. Public perception of the War on Terror

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, a majority of the American population was supportive of both the Afghan and the Iraq War.<sup>56</sup> More than 80 percent of the public was behind Bush when he announced the United States would launch military air strikes against Afghanistan.<sup>57</sup> Although Bush agreed that Al Qaeda and the Taliban should be dealt with first, the search for evidence that the Saddam Hussein regime had in some way aided Al Qaeda began immediately after 9/11. *Operation Enduring Freedom* was considered a success because of the swift outcome with the collapse of the Taliban regime and because the number of American casualties remained very limited.<sup>58</sup> In his book *American Public Opinion on the Iraq War*, political scientist Ole Holsti included results from several polls, conducted by numerous independent polling organizations as well as news outlets. In the eighteen months between the terrorist attacks in September 2001 and the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, these polls revealed that a constant majority of Americans was supportive of removing Saddam Hussein from power.<sup>59</sup> Even though many Americans did prefer to wait until the United Nations Security Council would give green light to the operation, once President Bush declared war, a majority was still behind him. This was the case despite the lack of evidence for the administration's justification of the war.<sup>60</sup>

A multitude of scholars have examined the role that the media played in the high level of support for the Iraq War.<sup>61</sup> Many of their studies have focused on the different news frames, the public (mis)perceptions of the war, and on the credibility of the news. These misperceptions refer to the degree to which the public bought into the things that they were told by the Bush administration - of which much appeared to be false in hindsight - and to the role of the news media in the pervasiveness of these misperceptions.<sup>62</sup> In a time when the term fake-news was not yet commonplace and the public still relied on the mainstream news media for its knowledge on international issues, it is indeed interesting to examine the way the news media covered the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>63</sup> The news framing of the War on Terror is an aspect

---

<sup>56</sup> Western, *Selling Intervention & War*, 177 - 78.

<sup>57</sup> Jill A. Edy and Patrick C. Meirick, "Wanted, Dead or Alive: Media Frames, Frame Adoption, and Support for the War in Afghanistan," *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007): 119 - 20.

<sup>58</sup> Holsti, *American Public Opinion on the Iraq War*, 27.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* 30.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* 37.

<sup>61</sup> Danny Hayes and Matt Guardino, "Whose Views Made the News? Media Coverage and the March to War in Iraq," *Political Communication* 27 (2010): 60.

<sup>62</sup> Kull, Ramsay, and Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War," 571.

<sup>63</sup> Jamieson and Waldman, *The Press Effect*, xii.

of the role of the media that has received ample consideration by communication scholars.<sup>64</sup> Framing the war in a particular way starts at the government level, but whether these frames are successfully embedded into the public's understanding of the issue, depends on the way journalists adopt these frames in their news coverage (news framing is more elaborately discussed in chapter 5).<sup>65</sup>

In academics, there is overall consensus that the press did not sufficiently challenge the frames that surrounded the Iraq War.<sup>66</sup> The most prominent of these frames were the assertion that the Saddam Hussein regime had links with Al Qaeda and that it possessed – or was at least striving to develop – WMDs.<sup>67</sup> The observation that the news media covered these justifications for military action in a way that highly conformed to the messages the government communicated, has become widely accepted among scholars.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, a great number of these scholars have asserted that the news media were partly to blame for the fact that a majority of the American public had intrinsically wrong ideas about the justifications for the Iraq War.<sup>69</sup> In his speeches concerning the wars, first the one in Afghanistan and later in the prelude to Iraq, Bush made sure to make it very clear why these wars were necessary. Of course, his speeches were carefully composed of rhetoric that would appeal to the American public and potentially increase support for his decisions. Journalists subsequently transmit his messages to the public, choosing the elements that they deem important and then provide critical examination. At least, this is what they are supposed to do. However, the misperceptions that many people had about the War on Terror, especially on the Iraq War, are indications of the press' failure to perform this critical role.<sup>70</sup>

In his speeches between that infamous day in September and the day he proclaimed the end of combat operations in Iraq in May 2003, Bush attempted to convince the American people of the necessity for war with Iraq. He warned the public of the dangers of not taking action, stating that the United States was not going to sit back and wait until Saddam Hussein was going to strike.<sup>71</sup> Even though there was neither conclusive evidence of Hussein's possession of or intention to create WMDs, nor was there proof of links between the Iraqi government and Al Qaida, Bush's repeated claims of the reality of both turned out to be very effective.<sup>72</sup> The Pew Research Center found that in April 2002, 69 percent of Americans were in favor of military

---

<sup>64</sup> Dimitrova and Strömbäck, "Mission Accomplished?" 400.

<sup>65</sup> Ravi, "Looking beyond Flawed Journalism," 46.

<sup>66</sup> Bennett, Lawrence & Livingstone, *When the Press Fails*, x.

<sup>67</sup> Kull, Ramsay, and Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War," 569.

<sup>68</sup> Dimitrova and Strömbäck, "Mission Accomplished?" 407.

<sup>69</sup> Gershkoff & Kushner, "Shaping Public Opinion," 533 .

<sup>70</sup> Kull, Ramsay, and Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War," 570.

<sup>71</sup> David Dudge, *The War in Iraq and why the Media Failed us* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2006), 12.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* 13.

action in Iraq.<sup>73</sup> It is, of course, not a strange phenomenon for people to range on the side of their leader(s) in times of crisis.<sup>74</sup> The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were perceived as an assault on not only buildings and people, but on America's fundamental beliefs and principles such as capitalism, freedom, and security.<sup>75</sup> An increase in the level of faith put in political leaders is a natural response to a nationally shared sense of stress and fear. It is a form of coping with the sudden crisis.<sup>76</sup> This notion is reflected by the fact that Bush's approval ratings jumped from 51 percent before 9/11 to 86 percent afterwards.<sup>77</sup> However, the fact that a year and a half after the crisis, this faith had not receded is quite striking.<sup>78</sup> When it became clear that Bush's accusations of the Saddam Hussein regime were not substantiated by evidence and that he and his aides had even fabricated evidence to justify their plans, the majority of Americans still had faith in its political leaders.<sup>79</sup> A Harris poll conducted in February 2004 found that 74 percent of Americans still believed that a link between the Saddam Hussein regime and Al Qaeda was certain or likely.<sup>80</sup> This is indeed an interesting observation, which can be attributed to the successful framing by the Bush administration and the negligence of the press to critically examine the evidence presented by the political elite and go to greater lengths to gather counter-evidence.

In 2005, political scientists Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner conducted a content analysis of Bush's speeches. They concluded that the fact that a majority of the American people supported the Iraq War, despite its weak motivational evidence, could largely be attributed to the successful framing of the news coverage by the Bush administration.<sup>81</sup> They particularly looked at the effectiveness of the administration's framing of the Iraq War as part of the "War on Terror". As the researchers assert, the Bush administration successfully managed to convince the American public of a link between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaida and the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Although Americans were often able to watch and hear these speeches firsthand on television, the news media played an important role in communicating the president's message to the public. The way people thought about the Bush administration's messages was therefore highly influenced by the way the news media

---

<sup>73</sup> Pew Research Center, "Americans and Europeans Differ Widely on Foreign Policy Issues", (April 2002), <http://www.pewglobal.org/2002/04/17/americans-and-europeans-differ-widely-on-foreign-policy-issues/>. Date accessed: 4-03-2018,

<sup>74</sup> Kam and Kinder, "Terror and Ethnocentrism," 325.

<sup>75</sup> Michelle C. Bligh, Jeffrey C. Kohles and James R. Meindl, "Charisma under crisis: Presidential leadership, rhetoric, and media responses before and after the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks," *The Leadership Quarterly* 15 (2004): 212.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* 212.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* 213.

<sup>78</sup> Western, *Selling Intervention & War*, 178.

<sup>79</sup> Kull, Ramsay & Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media and the Iraq War," 570.

<sup>80</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 32.

<sup>81</sup> Gershkoff & Kushner, "Shaping Public Opinion," 533.

commented on the speeches.<sup>82</sup> Although Gershkoff and Kushner focused on the ‘War on Terror frame’, they also took American patriotism into consideration in their analysis of the strong support for the Iraq War. Although they acknowledged the relevance of patriotism in the large-scale support of the Iraq War, they did maintain that patriotism alone did not provide a sufficient explanation for the national approval of the Iraq War. Even though patriotism – or nationalism (the difference between these concepts is clarified in the next chapter) – may not be the only reason for the support for the War on Terror, this research contends that it definitely contributed to the way the war was perceived by the public and played a big role in the news framing of the issue.

---

<sup>82</sup> Bligh, Kohles and Meindl, “Charisma under crisis,” 221.

## 4. Literature Review

### 4.1 Nationalism

Thus far, the term 'nationalism' has been mentioned many times. Since it is at the core of this research, the concept requires some further explanation and clarification. In academia, there is general agreement among political scientists, psychologists and historians that the emergence of nationalism dates back to the nineteenth century.<sup>83</sup> As is stipulated in the *Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, according to a multitude of scholars, a sense of national consciousness did not gain momentum until the French and Industrial Revolutions.<sup>84</sup> Since before the 1800s, the political elites and the peasantry belonged to vastly different communities and often even spoke different languages, there was no notion of a cohesive nation. With the development of new means of communication, expanding infrastructures as well as social and cultural changes, the premise of a nation in which people spoke a common language arose.<sup>85</sup>

Philosopher and social anthropologist Ernest Gellner, one of the most prominent authors on nationalism theory, underlined this approach of the origins of nationalism in his 1983 book *Nations and Nationalism*.<sup>86</sup> He maintained that indeed, industrialization obscured the boundaries between classes within nations and made the differences between nations more distinct. The centralized state became increasingly visible and relevant to the micro-level of society like regions and villages.<sup>87</sup> According to Gellner, the emergence of industrial societies required the social and political life to be in harmony with one another. In order for a modern and industrial society to exist, nations needed to be formed through nationalism.<sup>88</sup>

Historian Eric Hobsbawm, another leading scholar of nationalism theory, agreed with Gellner that the political and national unit should be congruent.<sup>89</sup> Besides, both of them strongly believed that nationalism is a socially constructed phenomenon. Gellner and Hobsbawm discussed the ideas, feelings and assumptions constructed in people's minds that constitute a sense of nationalism. As Gellner pointed out, nationalism only comes into being when there is a perceived commonality in the 'ingroup'. Nations are therefore merely artificially created entities,

---

<sup>83</sup> Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar, "Introduction," in *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, ed. Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar (London: Sage, 2006), 1.

<sup>84</sup> Peter Burke, "Nationalism and Vernaculars, 1500 – 1800," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. John Breuilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 21 – 22.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* 22.

<sup>86</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 5-153

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* 12.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.* 20

<sup>89</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 5 – 209.

rather than pre-existing structures. According to Gellner, one way in which a nation's sense of nationalism can be violated, is when people of the 'outgroup' are allowed to enter within the territory of the ingroup.<sup>90</sup> The attacks of 9/11 can therefore be seen as an occurrence of a severe violation of the Americans' sense of nationalism. Members of an outgroup violently forced themselves into the ingroup and attacked not only its people, but also the ideology and principles on which the ingroup's nationalism was built.<sup>91</sup>

Similarly to Gellner, Hobsbawm adopted a constructivist approach in his explanation for the rise of nationalism. He wrote that as soon as a large group of people perceive of themselves as members of a nation, they will be seen as a nation.<sup>92</sup> This is constructivist in the sense that it shows that a nation will only be regarded as one, when its members have constructed the idea of a unity in their minds.<sup>93</sup> In other words, in order for nationalism to succeed, nations need to be 'imagined'. This means that pre-existing characteristics do not create nations; they are no absolute, God-given entities. Nations do not create nationalism, Hobsbawm asserts, but rather the other way around. Nationalism invents, recreates or even eliminates a culture to create a nation.<sup>94</sup> The inclination of states to develop a sense of union and loyalty among its citizens is, according to Hobsbawm, one of the most important aspects of the emergence of nationalism.

Hobsbawm agreed with Gellner that nationalism was only able to emerge with technological and economic developments, spurred by the industrialization. Development in these fields gave an impulse to mass printing and literacy, which significantly aided the establishment of common languages in industrialized nations. A common language, according to Hobsbawm, is imperative to the creation of a nation.<sup>95</sup> Subsequently, Hobsbawm asserted that nationalism depends on political, technological, and economic factors constructed from above, but needs to be studied from below, where the hopes, needs and interests of ordinary people originate. Hobsbawm criticized Gellner for neglecting the implications of nationalism from the grass-root level.<sup>96</sup> Hobsbawm's emphasis on the economic factors of nationalism and how it evolves at the working-class level is rooted in his Marxist affiliations, which he developed before and during the Cold War.

Hobsbawm's notion that nations are imagined was inspired by Benedict Anderson, another renowned political scientist who worked extensively on nationalism theory. Anderson is best known for his work *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of*

---

<sup>90</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2.

<sup>91</sup> Bligh, Kohles and Meindl, "Charisma under crisis," 221.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. 8

<sup>93</sup> Ian Hurd, "Constructivism," in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008): 301.

<sup>94</sup> Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 10.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. 10.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. 10 -11.

*Nationalism*, published in 1983.<sup>97</sup> He acknowledged that defining the terms 'nation', 'nationality' and 'nationalism' has proven to be very difficult. He suggested the definition of the nation as an 'imagined political community', rooted in the constructivist wave that also influenced Gellner and Hobsbawm in the same period. Nations are imagined, because even though members of each nation will never know all of its fellow-members, in all of their minds, they are a community. Despite the inequality that inevitably exists within a nation's population, it will still be seen as a community because at the core lies a perceived commonality.<sup>98</sup> Published in the same year as Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism*, Anderson responded to Gellner's ideas of nations as fabricated constructions. Anderson, however, rejected Gellner's assertion that nations are created under false pretenses, because this would imply that 'true, unimagined communities' exist opposite these nations as well. Anderson believed that all communities of a size bigger than face-to-face personal relations are imagined. He adds that communities ought to be analyzed by the manner in which they are imagined, not by their falsehood or realness. Anderson was concerned with the question why, over the past two centuries, so many people have been willing to kill and even die for this imagined community. Part of the answer, Anderson explains, lies in the perceived brotherhood among members of a community that is strengthened by the imagined culture of a nation.<sup>99</sup> Social Psychologist Lauren Langman adds to this phenomenon of the willingness to die for ones nation that 'the power of nationalism comes from its ability to create an identity based on emotion and the irrational, meaning that generally, members of a community possess a passionate sense of loyalty to its unknown fellow members.'<sup>100</sup>

This sense of loyalty is an aspect of civic nationalism. In the field of nationalism theory, there is a distinction between civic, cultural and ethnic nationalism. Civic nationalism refers to the notion that a state is made up of a 'community of sovereign citizens', which is grounded in loyalties to fellow members of the state.<sup>101</sup> One of the earliest writers on the civic national idea was Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who in his publication the *Social Contract* presented this theory on how best to establish a social community.<sup>102</sup> Rousseau believed that the people who constitute the nation are not guided by ethnicity, religion, or wealth, but are united by their common agreement to obey the political authority they have created. Ethnic nationalism, on the other hand, refers to the perception of unity when there is a sense of blood ties and common descent

---

<sup>97</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), 39.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* 6.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.* 9.

<sup>100</sup> Lauren Langman, "The Social Psychology of Nationalism: To Die for the Sake of Strangers," in *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, ed. Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar (London: Sage, 2006), 66.

<sup>101</sup> David Brown, "Contending Nationalisms in South-East Asia," in *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, ed. Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar (London: Sage, 2006), 466.

<sup>102</sup> Erica Benner, "Nationalism: Intellectual Origins," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. John Breuilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 37.

among the community's members.<sup>103</sup> The notion of civic nationalism was accepted much earlier in history than ethnic nationalism. The idea of a community based on ethnicity was considered absurd before the nineteenth century. However, contemporary theories on nationalism have accepted the premise of ethnic nationalism to give meaning to communities. Cultural nationalism refers to the perception of the nation as a historical community.<sup>104</sup> Many cultural nationalists are concerned with the alignment of traditional beliefs with national progress. Nationalism theorists have tended to combine ethnic and cultural nationalism, forming the concept of ethnocultural nationalism.<sup>105</sup> This form of nationalism refers to the belief in myths of common ancestry and the idea that these myths are legitimized by commonalities in, for example, language and religion. As political scientist and international relations theorist David Brown states, ethnocultural nationalism is rooted in these myths of common ancestry and the pride people take in linguistic, cultural, or physical evidence of common kinship. These aspects "provide the basis for claims to authenticity, and thus for claims to the right of collective national self-determination."<sup>106</sup>

This historical context on the roots and theories of nationalism do not yet take into account how it is different from patriotism. While the three renowned theorists of nationalism, Gellner, Hobsbawm and Anderson, do not discuss the distinction between the two concepts, the distinction is a common topic of debate for more contemporary scholars. Many of them differentiate the two concepts in arguing that patriotism merely means love for one's country, while nationalism really positions one's nation above others in either one or all three of the forms of nationalism mentioned above.<sup>107</sup> Patriotism, therefore, is generally viewed in a much more positive perspective than nationalism. The latter, as psychologists Qiong Li and Marilyn Brewer clarify, is generally associated with arrogance and a desire for dominance.<sup>108</sup> They maintain that the main difference between the two concepts is their relation to outgroups. While patriotism acknowledges the presence and legitimacy of other cultures and principles and advocates cooperation with other nations, nationalism views internationalism much more negatively and is often associated with intolerance.

Sociologists Markus Kemmelmeier and David Winter indeed assert that patriotism refers to love of one's country and perceives other nations as neutral, while nationalism views one's

---

<sup>103</sup> Krishnan Kumar, "Nationalism and the Historians," in *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, ed. Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar (London: Sage, 2006), 16.

<sup>104</sup> John Hutchinson, "Cultural Nationalism," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. John Breuilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 76.

<sup>105</sup> David Brown, *Contemporary Nationalism: Civic, ethnocultural and multicultural politics* (London: Routledge, 2000), 50.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.* 50.

<sup>107</sup> Tom W. Smith and Lars Jarkko, "National Pride: A Cross-national Analysis," *GSS Cross-national Report 19* (1998): 1.

<sup>108</sup> Li and Brewer, "What does it mean to be an American?" 728.

own country as superior.<sup>109</sup> Political scientists Leonie Huddy and Nadia Khatib agree that there is a broad consensus among researchers that nationalism implies a sense of superiority and dominance, while patriotism is defined as ‘a deeply felt affective attachment to the nation’.<sup>110</sup> Gerald Webster, an American professor of geography, specifies that some scholars argue that the main difference between nationalism and patriotism lies in its focus on nations or states. Patriotism, he points out, implies an identification with the territorial nature of the polity, or the state. Nationalism, on the other hand is primarily focused on ideological, cultural and ethnic identification.<sup>111</sup> However, Webster does maintain that in patriotism too it is quite hard not to identify a sense of uniqueness and superiority towards other groups. He therefore concludes that it is in fact quite difficult to see patriotism and nationalism as two entirely separate entities.<sup>112</sup> Political scientist Minxin Pei indeed asserts that there is no essential difference between patriotism and nationalism.<sup>113</sup> He claims that in practice, patriotism and nationalism are expressed in similar ways. British writer and journalist Anatol Lieven adds to the discussion that, although Americans indeed display strong expressions of patriotism (i.e. loyalty to American institutions and love for the country in general), a sense of superiority towards other nations is definitely embedded in American society.<sup>114</sup> Taking into account the concept of exceptionalism, vindicationism and othering that are discussed in the next section, this research is approached from the principle of nationalism rather than patriotism.

#### 4.2 American Nationalism

An analysis of American nationalism provides a more specific account on how it plays out in the United States. Ever since theorists of nationalism have researched its employment, they have examined it in the context of many different nations. Of these nations, the United States has received much attention. Polls have repeatedly concluded that Americans experience an extraordinary sense of nationalist sentiments towards their nation and everything it embodies.<sup>115</sup> Especially in comparison to other western democracies, the level of nationalism in the United States exceeds that of any other.<sup>116</sup> This assertion is exemplified by the Americans’ extraordinary devotion and loyalty to their national flag. Few, if any other states express similar

---

<sup>109</sup> Markus Kemmelmeier and David G. Winter, “Sowing Patriotism, but Reaping Nationalism? Consequences of Exposure to the American Flag,” *Political Psychology* 29, no. 6 (2008): 863.

<sup>110</sup> Leonie Huddy and Nadia Khatib, “American Patriotism, National Identity, and Political Involvement,” *American Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 1 (2007): 63.

<sup>111</sup> Webster, “American Nationalism, the Flag, and the Invasion of Iraq,” 3.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* 4.

<sup>113</sup> Pei, “The Paradoxes of American Nationalism,” 32.

<sup>114</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 19.

<sup>115</sup> Pei, “The Paradoxes of American Nationalism,” 32.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* 32.

deep felt emotions to the flag, which is often perceived as synonymous with the 'nation' and 'blood sacrifice'.<sup>117</sup> The fact that there has been widespread outrage in the past years in the United States because of athletes, who kneeled during the national anthem to raise awareness for police brutality against people of color, is a clear manifestation of these sentiments.<sup>118</sup>

In US nationalist mythology, the origins of the foundation of the new nation are often ascribed to the departure of New England Puritans, escaping religious persecution in Britain, to the new continent from 1620 onwards.<sup>119</sup> However, there is little evidence that in the next century and a half, the colonists desired independence from Britain. In fact, the settlers were quite content with the protection that they enjoyed for being part of the British Empire. When violence did erupt in 1775, it was predominantly an escalation of a tax protest, rather than an outburst of nationalist sentiments among colonists with the aim of separation from the British.<sup>120</sup> In the years leading up to the Revolutionary War, the organized protests against the British Empire took patriotic forms. It was a sign of American pride to refuse to import and consume English products, of which the tea boycott became the most symbolic. Wearing American-made clothes and drinking coffee or local herbal teas became patriotic statements of resistance. Historians Don Doyle and Eric van Young assert that the revolutionaries in North America might be the best example of Benedict Anderson's imagined national communities, in the sense that it was an imagined unity because of the shared opposition against imperial rulers.<sup>121</sup> All in all, during the decades of protests and the subsequent war, a shared sense of resentment towards the British and the manifestation of a common cause helped create a national American identity. Therefore, as Doyle and van Young eloquently phrase it, nationalism in the United States of America was 'more the child than the parent of the independence movement.'<sup>122</sup> Professor of American history Susan-Mary Grant adds that from the outset, because of the absence of a sense of historical birthright and no claim to common ancestry or even political traditions, American nationalism was more than anything else 'an ideological nationalism, the embodiment of an idea.'<sup>123</sup>

Rooted in this idea is the notion that Americans are unlike any other people. Stemming from revolutionary origins, this perception of American exceptionalism is constituted by the

---

<sup>117</sup> Webster, "American Nationalism, the Flag, and the Invasion of Iraq," 2.

<sup>118</sup> Clark Mindock, "Taking a knee: Why are NFL players protesting and when did they start to kneel?" *Independent*, May 24, 2018, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/taking-a-knee-national-anthem-nfl-trump-why-meaning-origins-racism-us-colin-kaepernick-a7966961.html>. Date accessed: 13-07-2018.

<sup>119</sup> Don H. Doyle and Eric van Young, "Independence and Nationalism in the Americas," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. John Breuilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 99.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.* 100.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.* 103.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.* 107.

<sup>123</sup> Susan-Mary Grant, "A Nation before Nationalism: The Civic and Ethnic Construction of America," in *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, ed. Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar (London: Sage, 2006), 527.

widespread belief that America is qualitatively different from other nations. One of the most prominent revolutionary advocates, Thomas Paine, had a vision of the new nation as a society freed from the corruption of the Old World. He presented America's future as an inspiring model that people around the world would want to pursue. 'We have it in our power to begin the world over again,' he wrote in his exceptionally popular pamphlet *Common Sense*.<sup>124</sup>

As political scientist Paul McCartney (not to be confused with the Beatle) asserts, the United States has always had a vision of itself as the representation of humanity at large and as the number one stimulator of universal progress.<sup>125</sup> McCartney asserts that inherent in American national identity is the presumption that American ideals and principles are shared globally.<sup>126</sup> The third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, referred to the US as 'A chosen country' in his first inaugural address in 1801.<sup>127</sup> The notion that American exceptionalism is a deeply rooted sentiment in American daily life is exemplified by the backlash that President Obama received as a result of the following statement: "I believe in American exceptionalism, just as I suspect that the Brits believe in British exceptionalism and the Greeks believe in Greek exceptionalism."<sup>128</sup> This comment, which he made in 2009, was exploited by Republicans to argue that Obama did not believe in America's unique greatness. This goes to show that American exceptionalism is not something Americans tend to deny, or are afraid to admit they believe in. On the contrary, many Americans strongly believe in the premise of America's unique greatness and discredit people who do not.

An important element of American exceptionalism is the notion that the United States ought to serve as the example to the rest of the world.<sup>129</sup> This assertion reflects the 'city upon a hill' metaphor, which first appeared in John Winthrop's *A Model of Christian Charity* and is often seen as one of the earliest writings of American exceptionalism.<sup>130</sup> Winthrop was one of the New England Puritans and claimed that the settlement of the first English colonists in the United States would serve as an example for the rest of the world.<sup>131</sup> Exemplarism maintains that, because of the United States' uniqueness, other nations ought to perceive the US as their roll model and strive to look and act more like it.<sup>132</sup> However, proponents of American exemplarism do maintain that the United States should refrain from taking action to make sure that other

---

<sup>124</sup> Doyle and van Young, "Independence and Nationalism in the Americas," 106-7.

<sup>125</sup> Pei, "The Paradoxes of American Nationalism," 401.

<sup>126</sup> McCartney, "American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 402.

<sup>127</sup> Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 101.

<sup>128</sup> Barack Obama, "News Conference in Strasbourg," (press conference, Strasbourg, April 4, 2009), retrieved from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=85959>. Date accessed: 28-06-2018.

<sup>129</sup> Deborah L. Madsen, *American Exceptionalism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 2.

<sup>130</sup> Thomas B. Byers, "A City Upon a Hill: American Literature and the Ideology of Exceptionalism," *American Studies in Scandinavia* 29 (1997): 92.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* 92-93

<sup>132</sup> McCartney, "American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 402.

nations do so. As historian Henry Brands describes, 'exemplarists' argue that Americans should continuously improve and perfect American practices, but should not be tempted to get involved in the policies of other nations.<sup>133</sup> An example of an exceptionalist statement in one of the newspapers of this study – the *New York Post*, in this case – based on one of Bush's speeches is the following: "But just as important as the president's statements directly concerning Iraq was his reminder that America's foreign policy is underpinned by America's values, and that the global role it plays is more than ever essential - indeed, noble."<sup>134</sup> This is an example of a phrase in one of the newspaper articles that points to exceptionalism in Bush's 2003 State of the Union Address. It demonstrates the nobility and significance America's role on the world stage.

The element of nationalism that most resembles Bush's approach is vindicationism.<sup>135</sup> Vindicationism takes exemplarism a step further and implies the idea that the United States should in fact take action to ensure that other nations adopt American principles. While both exemplarism and vindicationism indicate a sense of superiority, it is vindicationism specifically that involves a mission: a feeling of responsibility to make nations across the world look more like the United States.<sup>136</sup> This idea stems from the well-known American concept of Manifest Destiny, which originated in the nineteenth century as a justification for territorial expansion.<sup>137</sup> More specifically, it served as a legitimization for taking on imperial activities.<sup>138</sup> Indeed, the perception of the United States as a nation that is unique and inherently superior to other nations has resulted in imperial behavior, especially since the Second World War.<sup>139</sup> Even though Americans traditionally have not been keen on using the word 'empire' for their expansionist mission, many scholars over the past decades agree that the US has acted in an imperial way, albeit with a more indirect approach than traditional empires in world history.<sup>140</sup> Political scientist Anatol Lieven clarifies that the democratic foundation of America's national identity prevents the American government from subjugating other nations under its direct rule, which forces it to establish indirect spheres of influence abroad.<sup>141</sup> Historian Thomas Hietala adds that indeed, practices traditionally associated with imperialism like militarism, colonialism,

---

<sup>133</sup> Henry W. Brands, *What America Owes the World: The Struggle for the Soul of Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), vii – viii.

<sup>134</sup> New York Post, "Dubya: War, but first..." *New York Post*, January 29, 2003, 24.

<sup>135</sup> McCartney, "American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 403.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. 403.

<sup>137</sup> Roberta L. Coles, "Manifest Destiny Adapted for 1990s' War Discourse: Mission and Destiny Intertwined," *Sociology of Religion* 63, no. 4 (2002): 404.

<sup>138</sup> David M. Wrobel, *Global West, American Frontier: Travel, Empire and Exceptionalism from Manifest Destiny to the Great Depression* (University of New Mexico Press, 2013), 25.

<sup>139</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 13.

<sup>140</sup> Lundestad, 2012, 152 – 153.

<sup>141</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 15.

and exploitation were in conflict with American values like self-determination and democracy.<sup>142</sup> Expansionists therefore had to come up with imperial tactics that would not violate the basic principles of democracy. So convinced of the righteousness of their cause, from the very moment the United States attempted to extend its borders, expansionists insisted that it would benefit democracy domestically as well as in its spheres of influence.<sup>143</sup>

The dissemination of the American way of life across the globe is an essential aspect of American nationalism.<sup>144</sup> Building upon the exceptionalism thesis, vindicationism asserts that the United States has obtained the responsibility of the world's guardian angel.<sup>145</sup> Lieven claims that one of the reasons that this idea has become so entrenched in American identity is because it was once shared by other nations as well. In the mid-twentieth century, the notion that the fate of the world lay in the hands of the US was common among many Europeans.<sup>146</sup> Norwegian historian Geir Lundestad agrees, stating in his book *The Rise & Decline of the American Empire* that especially the Marshall Plan after World War II increased positive attitudes towards the United States and indeed created the belief that the US had saved Western Europe.<sup>147</sup> He argues that Europeans, in fact, invited the United States to adopt a more influential role in Europe.<sup>148</sup> Lundestad therefore argued that, in this sense, the American "Empire" can be called an 'empire by invitation'.<sup>149</sup> Historian George Herring, on the other hand, downplays the impact of the Marshall Plan, saying it did not single-handedly save Europe's economy and was not received as positively by Europeans as Lundestad claims.<sup>150</sup> Still there is one thing that scholars agree on in terms of the concept of vindicationism: it involves the belief that the United States is burdened with the task of saving the world.<sup>151</sup> Examples of vindicationism in the newspapers of this study were bountiful. One of those examples is a phrase in *The New York Times*: "Mr. Bush asserted that removing Mr. Hussein and replacing the dictatorship with democratic institutions would transform a region known for authoritarianism and repression."<sup>152</sup> This is a clear example of

---

<sup>142</sup> Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest Design: American Exceptionalism and Empire* (Cornell University Press, 1985), 173.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid. 173.

<sup>144</sup> McCartney, "American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 400.

<sup>145</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 44.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. 44.

<sup>147</sup> Geir Lundestad, *The Rise and Decline of the American "Empire": Power and its Limits in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012), 130.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. 176.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. 185.

<sup>150</sup> Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 619.

<sup>151</sup> Madsen, *American Exceptionalism*, 2.

<sup>152</sup> Patrick E. Tyler, "Threats and responses: The White House; Bush Looks Past War to Peace in the Middle East," *The New York Times*, February 26, 2003, 10.

vindicationism in Bush's rhetoric, adopted by *The New York Times*, in what has become known as one of the pillars of Bush's foreign policy.<sup>153</sup>

Lastly, American nationalism is characterized by the practice of othering. Othering is a phenomenon that is not expressed exclusively by American nationalists, but is rather an element of nationalism in general. However, because Bush extensively adopted rhetoric of othering in his rhetoric concerning the War on Terror, it is highlighted as one of the main factors of American nationalism during the Afghanistan and especially the Iraq War.<sup>154</sup> Referring back to Gellner's work on nationalism, he asserted that a community's sense of nationalism can be violated by an outgroup, or a distinct 'other'.<sup>155</sup> On the concept of othering, Lieven explains that especially in times of war, nationalism is rooted in the portrayal of other nations or other ethnic communities as vicious and hostile.<sup>156</sup> Political scientists Cindy Kam and Donald Kinder researched the effect of ethnocentrism on the support for the military invasion of Iraq.<sup>157</sup> Ethnocentrism, they explain, refers to the human tendency to distinguish between people who belong to your group and people who do not. It deals with the classic 'us against them' dichotomy, which was abundantly used by the Bush administration in its efforts to paint a threatening picture of the enemy, the title of this research being one of the most explicit examples.<sup>158</sup> Kam and Kinder add that ethnocentrism implies a feeling of superiority of 'your people's' customs, culture and way of life over another.<sup>159</sup> Whereas Kam and Kinder do not discuss the distinction between ethnocentrism and nationalism in their research, they do briefly mention that they equate nationalism with 'ingroup pride' and subsequently 'outgroup disdain'.<sup>160</sup> American political philosopher Martha Nussbaum indeed asserts that nationalism and ethnocentrism are closely related, saying that adhering to nationalist sentiments will inevitably lead to exclusion of people who do not hold the same views.<sup>161</sup>

The Bush administration was especially adept at painting a vicious image of the Taliban regime and Al Qaeda, but especially at portraying Saddam Hussein as a thug and a tyrant.<sup>162</sup> Government officials framed the Iraq War as part of the War on Terror, by repeatedly claiming

---

<sup>153</sup> Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine," 114.

<sup>154</sup> Gershkoff and Kushner, "Shaping Public Opinion," 526.

<sup>155</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 7.

<sup>156</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 25.

<sup>157</sup> Kam and Kinder, "Terror and Ethnocentrism," 320–39.

<sup>158</sup> Manuel Madriaga, "The Star-Spangled Banner and 'whiteness' in American national identity" in *Flag, Nation and Symbolism in Europe and America*, ed. Thomas Eriksen and Richard Jenkins (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 53.

<sup>159</sup> Kam and Kinder, "Terror and Ethnocentrism," 322.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid. 332.

<sup>161</sup> Martha C. Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," in *The Cosmopolitanism Reader*, ed. Garret W. Brown and David Held (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 156.

<sup>162</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 32.

that the Hussein posed a credible threat to the safety of Americans.<sup>163</sup> This exploitation of rhetoric of othering is at the heart of Bush's preemptive strategy for the Iraq War, which will be elaborated on in the next section of this chapter.<sup>164</sup> The constant emphasis on the danger that Iraq supposedly posed and on Hussein's violations of human rights created a receptive response to this rhetoric among the American public.<sup>165</sup> That the news media were eager to adopt this rhetoric as well, is exemplified by the following excerpt from an article in the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*: "As he has before, Bush condemned Saddam as a 'brutal' dictator who oppresses and tortures his people, who has fought with his neighbors and who has used chemical weapons."<sup>166</sup>

However, Bush's rhetoric of othering was not solely directed at his enemies. As the title of this research indicates, he also had an unmistakably bold message for nations around the world: 'either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.'<sup>167</sup> With this phrase, he made it clear that every nation had to decide on which side they were on, and if they chose wrongly, they would suffer the consequences. Besides, Bush did not shy away from expressing his dissatisfaction with the United Nations for the organization's reluctance to support his plans for military action against Iraq.<sup>168</sup> In a speech delivered on September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2002, Bush said: "The conduct of the Iraqi regime is a threat to the authority of the United Nations and a threat to peace. Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding or will it be irrelevant?"<sup>169</sup> Unsurprisingly, this statement was adopted by all three of the newspapers analyzed in this research. Bush again presented a choice, this time to the UN, implying that the organization would risk losing its legitimacy if it would not support Bush's plans. This is an example of othering in which the president portrayed the United Nations as an organization that neglected to do what it was founded to do.

### 4.3 The Bush Doctrine

The Bush administration was no exception to the implementation of indirect imperial strategies. Although Bush refrained from using the term 'empire', his ambitions clearly resembled those of

---

<sup>163</sup> Gershkoff and Kushner, "Shaping Public Opinion," 526.

<sup>164</sup> Robert Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine," *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 3 (2003): 369.

<sup>165</sup> Kull, Ramsay and Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War," 572 – 573.

<sup>166</sup> Philip Dine, "Resolute Bush Gives Impression that War is Near; And he says little to those who remain uncertain," *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 29, 2003, 1.

<sup>167</sup> George W. Bush, "Address to a joint session of Congress,"

<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911jointsessionspeech.htm>. Date accessed: 22-07-2018.

<sup>168</sup> Schmidt and Williams, "The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War," 198.

<sup>169</sup> George W. Bush, "Speech to the United Nations General Assembly," (speech, New York City, September 12, 2002)

<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbushunitednations2002.htm>. Date accessed: 22-07-2018.

earlier imperial leaders.<sup>170</sup> The administration's imperial activities were conducted under the guise of 'spreading democracy and liberty'.<sup>171</sup> As political scientist Jonathan Monten proclaims, vindicationism rather than exemplarism has been at the core of the Bush doctrine.<sup>172</sup> Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy vividly illustrates this in the phrase "the United States will use this moment of opportunity to extend the benefits of freedom across the globe. We will actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world."<sup>173</sup> Thus, after 9/11, exerting influence in 'failed and threatening states' in the Middle East by modeling them according to the American example became the hallmark of the US security strategy.<sup>174</sup>

Strikingly, however, during his 2000 campaign, Bush heavily criticized the Bill Clinton administration for its extensive nation-building activities in, amongst others, Somalia and Haiti.<sup>175</sup> In October 2000, in a campaign debate with his opponent Al Gore, Bush proclaimed: "I just don't think it's the role of the United States to walk into a country and say: 'We do it this way, so should you.'" <sup>176</sup> However, Bush's initial agenda of adopting a more modest strategy in concerning nation-building was soon disbanded when he unfolded his plans for Afghanistan and Iraq. The scope of nation-building activities in Iraq arguably even exceeded those of Bush's predecessor.<sup>177</sup> Acclaimed political scientist Francis Fukuyama has called attention to this transformation of Bush's foreign policies in his book *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*.<sup>178</sup> In this book, the nation-building enterprise of the War on Terror is compared to the policies of the Cold War, which constituted the remodeling of states to become democratic societies for strategic purposes. Similarly to the Cold War, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were part of a larger campaign to establish exemplary democratic governments, this time in the Middle East, in the hope that other nations in the region would be inspired by their merits.<sup>179</sup> Simon Chesterman, professor of international law and justice, adds that indeed, even though Bush promised a 'humble' approach to foreign policy and restraint from nation-building

---

<sup>170</sup> Lundestad, 2012, 152.

<sup>171</sup> Lieven, 2012, 14.

<sup>172</sup> Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine," 114.

<sup>173</sup> The White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, 4.

<sup>174</sup> Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine," 141.

<sup>175</sup> James F. Dobbins, "America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq," *Survival* 45, no. 4 (2003): 89.

<sup>176</sup> George W. Bush, "The Second Gore-Bush Presidential Debate," *Commission on Presidential Debates*, (October 11, 2000), <http://www.debates.org/?page=october-11-2000-debate-transcript>. Date accessed: 22-07-2018

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. 89.

<sup>178</sup> Francis Fukuyama, "Nation-Building and the Failure of Institutional Memory," in *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*, ed. Francis Fukuyama (Baltimore, MA: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004), 1-263.

<sup>179</sup> David Ekbladh, "From Consensus to Crisis: The Postwar Career of Nation-Building in U.S. Foreign Relations," in *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*, ed. Francis Fukuyama (Baltimore, MA: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004), 19 – 21.

projects, he instead found himself in the most extensive nation-building enterprise in American history.<sup>180</sup>

This shift towards a policy Bush initially resented has much to do with the neoconservative nature of his administration. Although Bush, a traditional conservative, was at the outset of his presidency an advocate of a more exemplarist approach towards foreign nations, he was heavily influenced by neoconservative tendencies of some of his administration officials.<sup>181</sup> Some of the most prominent neoconservative members of his cabinet were Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.<sup>182</sup> The inclination to reconstruct foreign governments according to the example of the United States – a vindicationist approach - is at the heart of neoconservative ideology and the Bush Doctrine.<sup>183</sup> This political movement gained momentum in the mid-1970s in the context of anti-communism.<sup>184</sup> It originated as a response to the transformation of American liberalism, which shifted to the left of the political spectrum in the 1960s. In the 1970s, the most passionate neoconservatives were found among democrats but from 1995 onwards, neoconservatism became a rightwing, Republican movement.<sup>185</sup> In the beginning of this century, the neoconservatives' conviction of what the US' position in the world ought to be was more evident than ever. They had been strong proponents of an invasion in Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein since 1997, hoping it would create a democratic domino effect in the Middle East. Opposed to the realist and traditional conservative notion that culture will inevitably halt a country from adopting fundamental different systems than their own, neoconservatives strongly believe in the universal applicability of democracy and the willingness of any nation to adopt it.<sup>186</sup> Reasoning from a profoundly vindicationist point of view, neoconservatives tend to see unchallenged American dominance as the main condition for peace and order across the world and therefore believe that American foreign policy should be driven by the active, or even forceful, dissemination of democracy. Blinded by this idea, the neoconservatives in the Bush administration wholeheartedly expected the Iraqi people to welcome American troops.<sup>187</sup> Vindicationist practices, however, are not exclusively employed by neoconservatives. Liberals have historically also been enthusiasts of disseminating democracy across the globe. However,

---

<sup>180</sup> Simon Chesterman, "Bush, the United Nations and Nation-Building," *Survival* 46, no. 1 (2004): 101.

<sup>181</sup> Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine," 154.

<sup>182</sup> Western, *Selling Intervention and War*, 177.

<sup>183</sup> Schmidt and Williams, "The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War," 194–95.

<sup>184</sup> Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine," 143.

<sup>185</sup> Justin Vaïsse, *Neoconservatism: The Biography of a Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 11.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.* 2

<sup>187</sup> Schmidt and Williams, "The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War," 198 - 204.

whereas neoconservatives primarily view it as a way to ensure domestic security, liberals justify vindicationism moreover as a humanitarian undertaking.<sup>188</sup>

Another core element of the Bush Doctrine was the preemptive use of military force. This approach to the War on Terror was a response to the belief that Iraq posed a credible threat to American security.<sup>189</sup> In June 2002, in a graduation speech of a military academy, Bush laid out this strategy, stating: “If we wait for threats to fully materialize we will have waited too long. [...] We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge.”<sup>190</sup> The Bush administration maintained that if it refrained from taking action, the response might be a mushroom cloud over New York City or Los Angeles.<sup>191</sup> Governmental officials were quite successful at presenting preventive military action as the only way to stop rogue states such as Afghanistan and Iraq and prevent a possible future attack that could be even more devastating than 9/11. The 2002 National Security Strategy, mentioned earlier in this research, stipulated the United States’ right to launch preventive military strikes to curb credible threats: “We must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends. [...] We must deter and defend against the threat before it is unleashed.”<sup>192</sup> Preemptive warfare was justified by the belief that traditional methods of defense, characterized by containment, were not sufficient in dealing with the threat of rogue states and terrorists.<sup>193</sup>

A logical consequence of this approach of preemption was unilateral military action.<sup>194</sup> The Bush administration’s intention to launch a military operation against Iraq, on the grounds of suspicion that Hussein was plotting against the United States, was not approved by the United Nations Security Council. Professor of international politics Robert Jervis clarifies that it is very difficult for nations to find support for preemptive warfare, because by nature, preemption means that there is no solid evidence but only predictions of an imminent threat.<sup>195</sup> However, the fact that the United States failed to compose a multilateral coalition did not stand in the way of neoconservative foreign policies. Neoconservatives, after all, maintain that a unilateral power does not need to act multilaterally.<sup>196</sup> McCartney adds that because of the idea of American

---

<sup>188</sup> Monten, “The Roots of the Bush Doctrine,” 115 -16.

<sup>189</sup> Schmidt and Williams, “The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War,” 196–197.

<sup>190</sup> George W. Bush, “U.S. Military Academy Commencement Address,” (speech, West Point, NY, June 1, 2002), American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbushwestpointcommencement.htm>. Date accessed 22-07-2018,

<sup>191</sup> Jervis, “Understanding the Bush Doctrine,” 369.

<sup>192</sup> The White House, *The National Security Strategy*, 14.

<sup>193</sup> Schmidt and Williams, *The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War*, 198.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid. 198.

<sup>195</sup> Jervis, “Understanding the Bush Doctrine,” 371.

<sup>196</sup> Schmidt and Williams, *The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War*, 198.

exceptionalism and its unchallenged power, Bush and his aides believed that the United States was not bound by the same rules as other nations.<sup>197</sup>

---

<sup>197</sup> McCartney, "American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 415.

## 5. Framing the News

Given the controversy of the War on Terror, especially concerning Iraq, there is abundant research on the news coverage of the war. The way that government officials managed to frame the war has already been discussed briefly, but in this section the role of the news media is explored deeper. Research on news framing is often done in the fields of political communication and mass communication.<sup>198</sup> The ways that politicians transmit their agendas and interpretation of events to the public via journalists is an interesting phenomenon that has received ample attention in academia. The goal of these government officials is to make sure the public has an understanding of the issues that reflects the way politics intend them to.<sup>199</sup>

Dietram Scheufele, a renowned scholar in the field of political communication, has dedicated much of his academic career to the research of framing theory. In 1999, he examined the effects of news framing and described how the mass media are capable of determining the frames of reference through which the audience understands and talks about contemporary issues.<sup>200</sup> The degree to which news frames affect the public is highly debated among communication scholars.<sup>201</sup> What many have agreed on, however, is that news framing happens in stages: frame-building, frame-setting and the consequences of framing on individuals, as well as on society at large.<sup>202</sup> The frame-building stage refers to the basis on which journalists create their news frames. Frame-setting is concerned with the link between media frames and the audience's existing knowledge. The last stage explores how news frames affect people individually and what the consequences are on a societal level.

Professor of political communication Claes de Vreese clarifies that frames are capable of changing the way people think about certain issues as a result of exposure to a particular frame. On the societal level, frames may assist with decision-making processes or with the organization of collective action.<sup>203</sup> As framing theory rests on a multiplicity of theoretical foundations, de Vreese outlines a number of different popular definitions. One of the broader definitions describes frames as "interpretative packages that give meaning to an issue." Another, more narrow definition, refers to frames as "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion by which 'symbolhandlers' routinely organize

---

<sup>198</sup> Paul D'Angelo and Jim A. Kuypers, *Doing News Framing Analysis: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 1.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid. 1.

<sup>200</sup> Dietram A. Scheufele, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects," *International Communication Association* 49, no. 1. (1999): 105.

<sup>201</sup> Claes H. de Vreese, "News Framing: Theory and Typology," *Information Design Journal* 13, no. 1 (2005): 51.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid. 52.

<sup>203</sup> De Vreese, "News Framing," 52.

discourse.”<sup>204</sup> In other words, by selecting particular issues over others and by choosing the way in which they cover these issues, the press – the symbolhandlers in this definition – has the power to steer the audience’s mind towards certain news topics and, moreover, influence how people think about them.

In terms of framing effects, Scheufele contends that the news media are less successful at changing deep-rooted political principles of the public, but that they do have an impact when more concrete issue-related topics are concerned, such as decisions on foreign policy.<sup>205</sup> Daniela Dimitrova and Jesper Strömbäck, both professors of political communication, add that framing has the possibility of “constructing reality, impacting interpretations and influence audience responses and opinions toward a particular event”.<sup>206</sup> In other words, they assert that the decisions news organizations make in terms of the way they cover particular issues and events potentially influence how their audience interprets them. Similarly, communication scholars Kathleen Jamieson and Paul Waldman argue that “frames tell us what is important” and by highlighting an issue in a certain way, journalists are able to shape public opinion.<sup>207</sup> While the concept of ‘news framing’ has often received rather negative connotations, it does not necessarily mean that journalists actively attempt to spin a story or push their audience’s minds in a certain direction. Framing is often just a way of simplifying an issue, making it more comprehensible for the audience, without misleading or deceiving them.

Covering a war is quite challenging for journalists because of, for example, difficult access to war zones, propaganda efforts that are made by all sides of the conflict, budget cuts in journalistic platforms, and time pressure.<sup>208</sup> Dimitrova and Strömbäck argue that in times of war, journalists rely heavily on government and military sources. News coverage of the Iraq War was no exception. Journalism and Communication scientist Serena Carpenter confirms that indeed, journalists tend to eagerly use official sources because of time constraints.<sup>209</sup> However, she does add that the extensive use of official sources was not unique to the 2003 Iraq War. Jamieson and Waldman agree that journalists, in their hunt for scoops, are likely to fall prey to the frames they are presented with by government officials. This is especially the case in wartime, since in those circumstances it is often difficult to verify claims made by the government because their ability to verify the information is limited by, for example, lack of access to witnesses or the original source of the information.<sup>210</sup>

---

204 Ibid. 52–53.

205 Scheufele, “Framing as a Theory of Media Effects,” 107.

206 Dimitrova & Strömbäck, “Mission Accomplished?” 405.

207 Jamieson and Waldman, “The Press Effect,” xiii.

208 Dimitrova & Strömbäck, “Mission Accomplished?” 400.

209 Carpenter, “U.S. Elite and Non-Elite Newspapers,” 765.

210 Jamieson and Waldman, “The Press Effect,” 13.

Political scientists W. Lance Bennet, Regina Lawrence and Steven Livingston present a more critical account of the press' conduct in the context of the Iraq War.<sup>211</sup> They claim that, in its focus on scoops and speed, the press essentially lost its important function as a watchdog for the political elite and instead have grown too close to government officials.<sup>212</sup> They maintain that alternative sources that challenged the administration's claims were in fact available to reporters, but that they simply failed to cover this information. If they did publish it, they, for example, mentioned it just briefly in the back of the newspaper. A plausible explanation for this is the observation that journalists tend to refrain from critical or skeptical reporting in times of crisis, such as the period after 9/11. As Jamieson and Waldman argue, "September 11 propelled the press into the role of patriot".<sup>213</sup> The communication scholars clarify that multiple studies have concluded that in the event of a national crisis, news coverage becomes more favorable of the president.<sup>214</sup> Rather than the perspective of an outsider that journalists ordinarily strive to maintain, when their fellow citizens find themselves in collective hardship, journalists perceive of themselves as part of the nation. Dimitrova and Strömbäck add that indeed, the mainstream news media covered the Iraq War in a way that highly corresponded to the messages of administration and military sources because of an increased sense of nationalism.<sup>215</sup>

Taking this into account, to examine the role that the nationalism frame played in the news coverage of the War on Terror is a very interesting addition to existing literature. Because framing is done differently in every news organization, the outlets that people choose for their news consumption matters significantly in their perception of major issues.<sup>216</sup> Considering that nationalism has not received as much attention in academia as other news frames surrounding the War on Terror, this research focused on the differences between newspapers in the way they adopted the nationalism frame.

---

<sup>211</sup> Bennett, Lawrence and Livingston, *When the Press Fails*, x.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.* 1.

<sup>213</sup> Jamieson and Waldman, *The Press Effect*, 137.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.* 138.

<sup>215</sup> Dimitrova & Strömbäck, "Mission Accomplished?" 407.

<sup>216</sup> Carpenter, "U.S. Elite and Non-Elite Newspapers," 764-65.

## 6. Methodology

Central to this research was the extent to which the press adopted Bush's nationalist rhetoric, with a focus on the way they differed in their nationalist coverage. To draw coherent conclusions on this approach, the news coverage of Bush's speeches on the War on Terror was analyzed. In the period between September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 and May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003, President Bush delivered 22 speeches in which he outlined his plans for combatting terror in the Middle East. In the last months of 2001, these speeches predominantly focused on eliminating the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. From 2002 onwards, he shifted his focus to Iraq, claiming the Saddam Hussein Regime had links to Al Qaeda and was in possession of WMD.<sup>217</sup> Three newspapers were chosen for this research: *The New York Times*, the *New York Post* and the *Saint Louis Post dispatch*. Articles from these newspapers that covered Bush's speeches were selected and subsequently analyzed. This analysis was conducted by identifying the presence of the three frames that are indications of American nationalism: exceptionalism, vindicationism, and othering. The data collected from the newspapers was examined to find out whether there were significant differences between the level of nationalist phrases adopted from Bush's speeches between the newspapers. On the basis of the results, it can be concluded whether or not readers of one newspaper were more likely to be exposed to the nationalism frame during the War on Terror than readers of other newspapers.

### 6.1 Data collection

Newspapers were chosen as a unit of analysis because at the beginning of this century, newspapers were still the medium that a vast number of people relied on for their understanding of world events, especially foreign policy.<sup>218</sup> The newspapers analyzed for this research were *The New York Times*, the *New York Post* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. These newspapers were chosen because of their different identity and their different locations. *The New York Times* is generally considered a more liberal newspaper while the *New York Post* is perceived as conservative. Apart from analyzing two coastal newspapers with a readership across the country, a more regional, Midwestern paper, the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, was included. Seeing as the city of Saint Louis, Missouri is predominantly liberal, it is expected that the differences between coverage of *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* are less telling than the differences between these newspapers and the *New York Post*. However,

---

<sup>217</sup> Kull, Ramsay, and Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War," 569.

<sup>218</sup> Carpenter, "U.S. Elite and Non-elite Newspapers' Portrayal of the Iraq War," 762.

because Missouri is generally considered a 'red state' – meaning republican presidential candidates have historically won there – it was expected that the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* was a little more prone to exhibited nationalist sentiments than *The New York Times*. Because of its conservative nature, it was expected that the *New York Post* was more inclined to adopt Bush's rhetoric than *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. The following hypotheses were formulated on the basis of these expectations:

- H1: The three elements of nationalism were significantly more present in the *New York Post* than in *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*.
- H2: The three elements of nationalism were more present in the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* than in *The New York Times*, but the difference was not significant.
- H3: The *New York Post* evaluated Bush's speeches rather positively, while *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* were more critical.
- H4: There was no significant difference in the level of nationalist frames in the three newspapers between the war in Afghanistan and the Iraq War.

Newspaper circulation of both New York based newspapers grew in the aftermath of 9/11. *The New York Times'* daily circulation grew with 3.8 percent to almost 1.2 million. The *New York Post's* circulation grew even more, with 15.4 percent to an average of 563,000 sold copies a day.<sup>219</sup> In the beginning of this century, the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* had a weekday circulation of around 300,000 copies a day.<sup>220</sup>

From these newspapers, articles that covered the content of President George Bush's speeches between September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 and May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003 were selected. The attack on the World Trade Center in September 2001 marked the beginning of the War on Terror. On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003, Bush announced the end of major combat operations in Iraq in a speech aboard the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln.<sup>221</sup> Even though American troops in both Afghanistan and Iraq remained in the countries for many years after this speech, it was primarily in this period of two and a half years that Bush outlined his plans of action and attempted to garner support for the wars in these countries.

Only articles that elaborately covered Bush's speeches were included in the analysis, so articles that only briefly mentioned the speeches' content were left out. The articles included both regular news coverage as well as editorials and opinion columns. These were incorporated in the analysis, because editorials tend to reflect the newspaper's overall stance on particular

---

<sup>219</sup> Felicity Barringer, "Some big papers buck trend of circulation drops," *New York Times*, May 7, 2002, <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/07/business/some-big-papers-buck-trend-of-circulation-drops.html>. Date accessed: 28-06-2018.

<sup>220</sup> Jacob Kirn, "Circulation declines quicken at the Post-Dispatch, other regional dailies," *St. Louis Business Journal*, October 28, 2014, <https://www.bizjournals.com/stlouis/news/2014/10/28/circulation-declines-quicken-at-the-post-dispatch.html>. Date accessed: 28-06-2018.

<sup>221</sup> George W. Bush, "End of Major Combat Operations in Iraq," (speech, San Diego, CA, May 1, 2003), American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wariniraq/gwbushiraq5103.htm>. Date accessed: 28-06-2018

issues and therefore contribute to the pervasiveness of particular frames.<sup>222</sup> For each newspaper, the goal was to collect around 50 articles for the 22 speeches on the War on Terror in the chosen time period. Although many times only one article was published about a particular speech and some speeches were not covered at all, more important speeches such as the State of the Union addresses were covered more extensively. In the end, for *The New York Times*, the *New York Post* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* respectively 49, 46 and 45 were collected.

The database used for the data collection was LexisNexis Academic. This database contains a vast number of newspaper archives, among which the newspapers used for this research. For each speech, the period between the day of the speech and three days after was selected. For example, for Bush's speech on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the time frame of articles for this speech was 20-09-2001 up to 23-09-2001. Most articles that elaborately discussed the speeches were published the day after, but occasionally, they were published later. After a few days, the speech was generally mentioned only briefly, which is why the time frame was limited to three days. Only when the speech was on a Saturday, an extra day was included because coverage on these speeches began on Monday since the newspapers were not published on Sundays. For each speech, the terms 'Bush AND speech' were entered in the 'search terms' box. The reason the word AND is capitalized, is because this makes sure that in the article both words are present, but not necessarily consecutive. Because Bush's speeches were often referred to as 'addresses', the search terms 'Bush' AND 'address' word 'speech' were used as well, to make sure no articles were missed. This approach resulted in 148 articles in total for the three newspapers.

## 6.2 Operationalization

Since the concept of nationalism is rather abstract and therefore subject to a high level of ambiguity, it is quite challenging to pinpoint nationalism in rhetoric. When can a particular phrase be seen as nationalist? On the basis of literature on American nationalism, three frames were identified as clear indications of nationalism in American rhetoric. These frames are exceptionalism, vindicationism, and othering. It is of utmost importance to clearly define what is meant by each of these frames, so that there is no confusion on their interpretation. To clarify when a phrase from Bush's speech was marked as exceptionalist, vindicationist or othering, the three concepts are explained briefly in the context of Bush's rhetoric.

American exceptionalism is primarily expressed by emphasizing the sacred and unique values that uphold the American way of life. It refers to the historic belief that the United States

---

<sup>222</sup> Andrew Rojecki, "Rhetorical Alchemy: American Exceptionalism and the War on Terror," *Political Communication* 25, no. 1 (2008): 73.

possesses an unparalleled moral vision as a society freed from corruption and with unique personal freedoms for every citizen, which ought to inspire nations around the world.<sup>223</sup> In the articles for this research, phrases from Bush's speeches that implied American greatness, confidence of victory and the extraordinary American character were marked as exceptionalism. An example of a remark that implies American exceptionalism is the following: "We are a peaceful people - yet we're not a fragile people and we will not be intimidated by thugs and killers."<sup>224</sup> In this phrase, the strength of the American people is emphasized, implying that threats by other nations are not accepted. This is a phrase from Bush's speech on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2003, in which he set an ultimatum to Saddam Hussein.<sup>225</sup> The *New York Post* highlighted this remark in a news article published the day after this speech.

Vindicationism refers to the clear stance that the United States should actively make sure that its principles are spread around the world to transform other nations according to the American example. It implies that the world would be a better place if nations across the world would be more like the US.<sup>226</sup> In the context of the War on Terror, these 'other nations' are countries in the Middle East. Both the war in Afghanistan, as well as the war in Iraq was justified by claiming it would benefit their populations. The US presented itself as a benevolent liberator rather than a hostile occupier. As multiple studies have asserted in the years after the US annexation in Iraq, it was not the fight against terrorism that drove the Bush administration to start *Operation Iraqi Freedom*, but the attempt to establish an example government in Iraq that was to serve as an example for other Middle Eastern countries.<sup>227</sup> The United States hoped it would show the benefits of a democratic government according to the American model, thus creating a domino effect in the region. In order to gain support for especially the Iraq War, the analogy that sending troops was a moral obligation served to justify the war. It implied the emphasis of the sacredness of American values and the justness of 'enforcing' those – though Bush would never use this term – in nations that desperately needed them.<sup>228</sup> The article that was used in the previous paragraph as an example of exceptionalism shows indications of vindicationism as well. "The tyrant will soon be gone," Bush told the Iraqi people. "The day of your liberation is near."<sup>229</sup> These statements, made by Bush and adopted by the *New York Post*,

---

<sup>223</sup> Doyle and van Young, "Independence and Nationalism in the Americas," 106-107.

<sup>224</sup> Deborah Orin and Brian Blomquist, "Bush's Ultimatum to Saddam: Get out or face destruction," *New York Post*, March 18, 2003, 2.

<sup>225</sup> George W. Bush, "Address to the Nation: Ultimatum to Saddam Hussein," (speech, Washington DC, March 17, 2003), *American Rhetoric*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wariniraq/gwbushiraq31703.htm>. Date accessed: 22-07-2018.

<sup>226</sup> McCartney, "American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy," 403.

<sup>227</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 44.

<sup>228</sup> Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine," 116-17.

<sup>229</sup> Orin and Blomquist, "Bush's Ultimatum to Saddam," 2.

suggest that the replacement of Saddam Hussein with the American troops will initiate a free, prosperous and democratic era for the Iraqi people, an era that the United States will induce.

Otherring in this analysis implies a clear distinction of good versus evil. It indicates an evident positioning of the United States as the beacon of success opposing to other groups or nations that do not endorse this American position.<sup>230</sup> In times of war, othering obviously becomes more pervasive in speech than in times of peace. Painting a corrupt and malicious picture of the enemy serves to get support for the nation's cause.<sup>231</sup> Although othering is not an exclusively American aspect of nationalism, it is quite relevant for this research because especially in the prelude to the Iraq War, this frame was extensively employed to convince the American public of the threat posed by Saddam Hussein. The more prevalent this image was presented in the news media, the more likely the public was to adopt this image and therefore be more inclined to believe in the justness of the war.<sup>232</sup> In the articles that have been analyzed, Bush's remarks in which he depicts the enemy as evil were identified as occurrences of othering. Mere mentioning of the enemy was not considered othering. An example from, again, the same article in the *New York Post* about Bush's ultimatum to Saddam Hussein: "In a free Iraq, there will be no more wars of aggression against your neighbors, no more poison factories, no more executions of dissidents, no more torture chambers and rape rooms. The tyrant will soon be gone."<sup>233</sup> This phrase stipulates the horrors that Saddam Hussein has inflicted on his people and portrays him as the embodiment of evil.

Once the intended interpretation of the frames was established, the articles selected for this research were ready to be coded. The articles were downloaded from LexisNexis and subsequently downloaded into AmCat. This is an online program that helps researchers quantify their data. The method of quantitative content analysis was chosen, because it enables researchers to make more unambiguous generalizations on the news coverage on the War on Terror in the chosen period. Social scientists Daniel Riff, Stephen Lacy, and Frederick Fico define quantitative content analysis as a rule-bound method in which content is assigned to categories. The implications of these categories for the real world are then analyzed using statistical methods.<sup>234</sup> They assert that quantitative analyses answer questions by objective evaluation rather than by personal interpretation and reasoning. It is therefore considered an empirical approach rather than a practice based on intuition or ideology. Furthermore, as the same

---

<sup>230</sup> Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 7.

<sup>231</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 25.

<sup>232</sup> Kull, Ramsay and Lewis, "Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War," 576.

<sup>233</sup> Orin and Blomquist, "Bush's Ultimatum to Saddam," 2.

<sup>234</sup> Daniel Riff, Stephen Lacy, and Frederick Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research* (Routledge: New York, 2014), 3.

scholars state, it is a reductionist practice rather than holistic.<sup>235</sup> Quantitative content analysis breaks larger phenomena down into smaller, more basic elements. This relates to communication scholar Kimberley Neuendorf's distinction between the nomothetic and idiographic approach. The nomothetic approach refers to the analysis of several cases to make objective generalizations, whereas the idiographic approach attempts to study one case in-depth and draws non-generalizable, subjective conclusions.<sup>236</sup> Because several newspapers are studied in this research, it qualifies as a nomothetic study. The content of the newspaper articles was coded to reveal patterns applicable to the bigger picture. However, a pitfall of quantitative content analyses is that generalizations are often recklessly assumed. Another limitation of quantitative content analysis is that it often insufficiently takes into account the context of the coded content. It generally only accounts for the 'what' and not the 'why'. Still, quantitative results generally provide a more rational interpretation of their significance for the real world than qualitative data.<sup>237</sup>

In AmCat, a coding scheme was developed that included the three nationalism frames: exceptionalism, vindicationism, and othering. The frames 'explicit approval' and 'critical' were added to indicate occurrences when the newspaper expressed a stance on the speech in that particular article. The three nationalist frames were coded numerically. This means that the number of times the three frames were present in the article were counted. This was done per paragraph. This approach is illustrated clearly in the following example of an article in *The New York Times*: "Mr. Bush, his demeanor solemn and his language purposeful, compared those who carried out the attacks Sept. 11 on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon to the Nazis. "They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century," he said." In this paragraph, the frame 'othering' was clicked once. Even though an evil picture was presented of the enemy in two sentences, they refer to the same phrase by Bush. The 'explicit approval' and the 'critical' frame were coded on the article level. In other words, in the end, if the article provided either criticism or explicitly approved of Bush's message, the applicable box was ticked. In the final statistical analysis, the critical and explicit approval frame were combined, creating one new variable called 'criticism'. The critical frame was characterized by -1 and the approval by 1.

After all 148 articles were coded, the intercoder reliability was calculated. In his book *Basic Content Analysis*, communication scientist Robert P. Weber acknowledged the importance of ensuring the reliability of the coding scheme in a content analysis: "Different people should code the same text in the same way."<sup>238</sup> This is necessary to make sure the interpretation of the

---

<sup>235</sup> Ibid. 4

<sup>236</sup> Kimberley A. Neuendorf, *The Content Analysis Guidebook (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*, (Sage: Los Angeles, 2017), 22.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid. 23

<sup>238</sup> Robert Philip Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*, (Sage: London, 1990), 12

frames is not too ambiguous and to make sure the research is not executed with a confirmation bias. Intercoder reliability is measured by calculating the Cohen's kappa coefficient. This measurement was created by Jacob Cohen in 1960 for the assessment of agreement between different coders. He introduced a technique in which two independent assessors categorize the units of investigation to determine the level to which they agree on the interpretation of the units.<sup>239</sup> The sample coded by the second individual is compared with the corresponding content that was previously analyzed by the researcher. Subsequently, it can be calculated to what extent the two coders agreed.

In this research, the units of analysis are the newspaper articles of the three different newspapers. The Cohen's kappa was calculated for each frame separately. The two assessors are expected to be equally competent to analyze the data. A fellow master student was asked to analyze a sample of the newspaper articles used for this research. The meaning of the three frames – exceptionalism, vindicationism and othering - was explained to him so the articles would be interpreted in the same way. This sample was then compared to the corresponding articles that were already coded. As Cohen himself clarifies, 'a certain amount of agreement is to be expected by chance.'<sup>240</sup> Therefore, the intercoder agreement is deemed sufficient – and therefore not based on chance - for kappas of 0.6 or higher. For the exceptionalism frame, the Cohen's kappa was 0.66, for the vindicationism frame, it was 0.65 and for the othering frame, it was 0.60. For the critical frame, the Cohen's kappa was 1 and for the explicit approval frame the it was 0.85. This goes to show that the reliability for the numerical frames is lower than for the yes/no frames. For each of the nationalism frames, the kappa was just reliable enough and for the measurements of criticism in the article, the kappas were very reliable.

Before the codes of the articles were uploaded into SPSS, the average lengths of the newspaper articles was made relative to one another. The average number of words per article for *The New York Times*, the *New York Post*, and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* were 1230, 580 and 860, respectively. So the average number of words of all three newspapers combined was 890. Since the chance that there is a higher chance that more nationalist phrases are when the article is longer, all articles were made relative to this number of 890. All variables of the articles from *The New York Times* were given the value of 0.724, those of the *New York Post* were given the value 1.534 and those of the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* 1.035.

In SPSS, an ANOVA test was conducted to compare the means of the number of times each frame was present in an article. This test was chosen, because it is the most suitable for a research in which more than three independent variables are present. In this research, there are

---

<sup>239</sup> Jacob Cohen, "A Coefficient of Agreement for Nominal Scales," *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 20, no. 1 (1960): 37 - 38

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.* 38

three independent variables: the three different newspapers. The newspapers were compared for each nationalism frame separately. Then, the three frames were combined, forming a new variable, which was named 'nationalism'. This way, an overall assessment of nationalism could be done for the three newspapers. The 'critical' and 'explicit approval' frames were combined, forming a new variable, which was named 'criticism'. Criticism was labeled 0, with 'critical' being labeled -1 and 'explicit approval' 1. This way, an overall judgment could be made about the extent to which the newspapers were either critical or approved of Bush's speech. Lastly, an independent samples t-test was carried out to determine if the level of nationalism was higher when the speeches were primarily about Afghanistan or when they were primarily about Iraq. This was done for all newspapers combined, because the amount of articles was too low to do this for each newspaper separately.

## 7. Results

In this chapter, the results of the analysis are presented in tables, which resemble the output from the tests that were performed in SPSS. These tables reveal the differences between newspapers in their display of nationalism, broken down by the three frames of nationalism that have been identified in this research: exceptionalism, vindicationism, and othering.

Consequently, another table shows the combination of the three frames, forming the new, overarching frame of nationalism. The differences between the way that the newspapers evaluated Bush's speeches are shown and lastly, this section presents the difference in the level of nationalism of all newspapers combined in their coverage of speeches concerning the Afghanistan War and those concerning the Iraq War. This chapter does not provide explanations for or implications of the observed differences. That is discussed in the next chapter.

### 7.1 Exceptionalism

For the three different frames that are indications of nationalism, it was expected that their presence would be significantly higher in the conservative newspaper, the *New York Post*, than in the liberal newspapers, *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. Because the liberal city of Saint Louis is located in a predominantly conservative state, a slight difference between *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* was expected as well. All results were considered significant if the p-value, the indicator whether or not the hypothesis is to be rejected, was lower than 0.05. This means that it can be said with at least 95 percent certainty that the differences were not based on chance. In table 1, the mean numbers of times the newspapers adopted exceptionalist phrases is presented as well as their standard deviations.

**Table 1**

*Means for the presence of exceptionalism per article*

Medium	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
NYT	49	0.8122	1.0086
NYP	46	2.4685	2.2054
SLPD	45	0.9889	1.0799
<b>Total</b>	140	1.4132	1.6880

Source of all tables: IBM Corp. Released 2017. IBM SPSS Statistics for iOS, Version 25.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.

Table 1 demonstrates the average amount of times the exceptionalism frame was present in the articles for each newspaper. For the 49 articles from *The New York Times*, the average number of exceptionalist phrases adopted from Bush’s speeches in each article was 0.81 (SD=1.01). For the 46 articles that were analyzed from the *New York Post*, the average number of exceptionalist phrases adopted from Bush’s speeches was 2.47 (SD=2.21). In the 45 articles that were analyzed from the *Saint Louis Post Dispatch*, the exceptionalist frame was adopted 0.99 (SD=1.08) times per article, on average. So for *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, the exceptionalism frame was adopted in the articles less than one time per article, on average. For the *New York Post*, this number was much higher. A one-way analysis of variance showed that the overall differences between the newspapers were significant ( $F(2,137)=16.540, p = 0.000$ ). To determine whether the differences between the individual newspapers were significant, a Benferroni post-hoc test was conducted. This test shows the specifics of whether the differences between the newspapers were significant. Table 2 shows the results of this test:

**Table 2**

*Level of significance exceptionalism*

Medium	Medium	Sig
NYT	NYP	0.000
	SLPD	1.000
NYP	NYT	0.000
	SLPD	0.000
SLPD	NYT	1.000
	NYP	0.000

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As table 1 already demonstrated, the difference between *The New York Times* and the *New York Post* and between the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* and the *New York Post* was a lot bigger than the difference between *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. Table 2 shows that indeed, the mean number of times *The New York Times* adopted the exceptionalism frame (M=0.81, SD=1.01) was significantly less than the number of times the *New York Post* adopted this frame (M=2.47, SD=2.21),  $p < 0.05$ . The same goes for the mean difference between the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* (M=0.99, SD=1.08) and the *New York Post*, with  $p < 0.000$ . The difference between *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, however, was not significant, with  $p = 1.000$ . This means that, as expected, the *New York Post* adopted the exceptionalism frame to a significantly higher extent than the other two newspapers. Besides, the expectation that *The New York Times*, on average, adopted less nationalist phrases than the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* was confirmed as well, although the difference was very small. Therefore, it cannot be concluded with certainty that this difference was not based on chance. These results signify that

between September 2001 and May 2003, the *New York Post* was significantly more likely to adopt exceptionalist phrases from Bush's speeches than *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. In other words, when Bush referred to the greatness of the United States and of the American people, for example by claiming that the United States would most certainly win the war, the chance was significantly higher that the *New York Post* would adopt this claim than the other two newspapers.

## 7.2 Vindicationism

For vindicationism as well, it was expected that the level of vindicationist phrases from Bush's speeches adopted by the newspapers, would be the highest for the conservative newspaper, the *New York Post*. Besides, the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* was expected to have a slightly higher number of vindicationist phrases than the *New York Times*. Table 3 demonstrates the mean number of vindicationist phrases per article for each newspaper and their standard deviations.

**Table 3**

*Means for presence of vindicationism per article*

Medium	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
NYT	49	1.4767	1.3290
NYP	46	2.4685	3.0771
SLPD	45	0.9889	1.2276
<b>Total</b>	140	1.4132	2.1275

As is illustrated in table 3, in the 49 articles that were selected for *The New York Times*, the mean number of times a vindicationist remark by Bush was adopted was 1.48 times per article (SD= 1.33). The mean for the *New York Post* was 2.47 (SD=3.08) and for the *Post-Dispatch* it was 0.99 (SD=1.23). What is striking about the means of the latter two newspapers is that the means for vindicationism were exactly the same as for the exceptionalism frame. Both frames occurred on average exactly the same number of times in the *New York Post*, as well as in the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. As expected, the *New York Post* was again the outlier. However, this time, the difference between *The New York Times* and the *New York Post* was not as striking as it was for the exceptionalism frame. Besides, contrary to what was hypothesized, the *Post-Dispatch* had a lower mean number of vindicationist phrases than the *New York Times*. However, this difference was not very large. A one-way analysis of variance showed that the overall differences between

the newspapers were significant ( $F(2,137)=6.166, p = 0.003$ ). To determine whether the differences between the individual newspapers were significant, a Benferroni post-hoc test was conducted. Table 4 shows the results of this test:

**Table 4**

*Level of significance vindicationism*

Medium	Medium	Sig
NYT	NYP	0.060
	SLPD	0.755
NYP	NYT	0.060
	SLPD	0.002
SLPD	NYT	0.755
	NYP	0.002

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The numbers in table 4 illustrate that the difference between *The New York Times* ( $M=1.48, SD=1.33$ ) and the *New York Post* ( $M=2.47, SD=3.08$ ) was not significant, with  $p = 0.060$ . In their news coverage on the War on Terror, the *New York Post* was more likely to adopt vindicationist phrases from Bush's speeches, but it cannot be concluded with certainty that the difference with *The New York Times* was not based on chance. However, the p-value of 0.06 was close to the 0.05 level of significance, which makes it reasonable to conclude that there was a trend towards a significantly higher level of vindicationist phrases in the *New York Post* than in *The New York Times*. The *Post-Dispatch*, which, on average, adopted a lower number of vindicationist phrases from Bush's speeches ( $M=0.99, SD=1.23$ ), did show a significant difference with the *New York Post*, with  $p = 0.002$ . This means that between September 2001 and May 2003, the *Post-Dispatch* was significantly less likely to adopt vindicationist phrases from Bush's speeches in its articles than the *New York Post*. In other words, the expectation that the *New York Post* would have adopted a significantly higher number of vindicationist phrases than the other two newspapers turned out only partly true. *The New York Times* proved to be pretty responsive to vindicationist phrases in Bush's speeches as well. An explanation of this will be given in the next chapter.

### 7.3 Othering

The same test was done for the othering frame. As well as the first two frames, for the othering frame it was expected that the degree to which it was adopted by the *New York Post* was higher than for *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. The *Post Dispatch* was expected to demonstrate a higher level of othering in its articles than *The New York Times* and a lower

level of othering than the *New York Post*, of which only the difference between the *New York Post* was expected to be significant. Table 5 represents the means and standard deviations of each newspaper of the othering frame.

**Table 5**

*Means for presence of othering per article*

Medium	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
NYT	49	2.1855	1.8711
NYP	46	4.3699	3.0854
SLPD	45	3.1736	2.5388
<b>Total</b>	140	3.2209	2.6734

This table shows that on average, the number of times the othering frame was adopted from Bush’s speeches in one of the 49 articles of *The New York Times* was 2.19 (SD=1.87). For the *New York Post* the mean was 4.37 (SD=3.09) and for the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* the mean was 3.17 (SD=2.54). As expected, the othering frame was identified most frequently in articles of the conservative newspaper, the *New York Post*. The othering frame was least pervasive in *The New York Times* and the *Post-Dispatch* was situated in between the two. Compared to the exceptionalism and vindicationism frame, the othering frame was most present in all three newspapers. A one-way analysis of variance showed that the overall differences between the newspapers were significant ( $F(2,137)=8.824, p = 0.000$ ). To determine whether the differences between the individual newspapers were significant, a Benferroni post-hoc test was conducted. Table 6 demonstrates the results of this test:

**Table 6**

*Level of significance othering*

Medium	Medium	Sig
NYT	NYP	0.000
	SLPD	0.183
NYP	NYT	0.000
	SLPD	0.078
SLPD	NYT	0.138
	NYP	0.078

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

From table 6, it can be seen that there was a significant difference between the level of othering phrases in *The New York Times* (M=2.19, SD=1.87) and the *New York Post* (M=4.37, SD=3.09), with  $p < 0.000$ . This means that the *New York Post* was significantly more likely to adopt the othering frame in its articles discussing Bush's speeches than *The New York Times*. The difference between *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* (M=3.17, SD=2.54) was not significant, with  $p = 0.183$ . The difference between the *New York Post* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* was not significant in the analysis of the othering frame, with  $p = 0.078$ . However, there was a trend towards a significant difference between these two newspapers. These results again demonstrate that in its news coverage of President Bush's speeches, the *New York Post* was significantly more likely to adopt the othering frame from these speeches than *The New York Times*. The difference between the *New York Post* and the *Post-Dispatch* was not significant enough to be able to state that this difference was not based on chance. However, a notable difference between these two newspapers was certainly observed as well. In short, when President Bush painted a vicious image of the enemy in his speeches, the *New York Post* was most likely to adopt these statements.

#### 7.4 Nationalism

After having analyzed the articles by identifying the three separate frames, they were combined to form the overarching nationalism frame. Although indications of which newspaper displayed the most nationalist phrases adopted from Bush's speeches have become quite evident already, the combination of the three frames provides a clear-cut overview of the level of nationalism in each newspaper. In this part of the analysis, the first two hypotheses of this research were tested. These were:

- The three elements of nationalism were significantly more present in the *New York Post* than in *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*.
- The three elements of nationalism were more present in the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* than in *The New York Times*, but the difference was not significant.

Table 7 represents the mean number of nationalist phrases in each newspaper and their standard deviations.

**Table 7***Mean number for presence of nationalism per article*

Medium	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
NYT	49	4.4744	3.3082
NYP	46	9.3070	5.5033
SLPD	45	5.1514	3.5198
<b>Total</b>	140	6.2798	4.7010

In table 7, the differences between the newspapers turned out especially evident. As the means demonstrated, the *New York Post*, with a mean of 9.31 (SD=5.50) adopted nationalist phrases from Bush's speeches to a much higher extent than the other two newspapers. Besides, as the previous tables of the three frames already indicated, the levels of nationalism in *The New York Times*, with a mean of 4.47 (SD=3.31) and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, with a mean of 5.15 (SD=4.70) did not differ that much. A one-way analysis of variance revealed that the overall test of nationalism was significant ( $F(2,137)=17.976, p = 0.000$ ). To see whether the differences between the individual newspapers were significant, a post-hoc test was conducted. Table 8 presents the results of this test.

**Table 8***Level of significance nationalism*

Medium	Medium	Sig
NYT	NYP	0.000
	SLPD	1.000
NYP	NYT	0.000
	SLPD	0.000
SLPD	NYT	1.000
	NYP	0.000

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 8 demonstrates that the mean difference between *The New York Times* (M=4.47, SD=3.31) and the *New York Post* (M=9.31, SD=5.50) was significant, with  $p < 0.05$ . The *New York Post* was significantly more likely to adopt nationalist phrases from Bush's speeches than *The New York Times*. While the analysis of the three individual frames of nationalism already pointed out the difference between the two newspapers, the three frames combined provide a coherent assessment of the adoption of nationalism by these newspapers. Similarly, the difference between the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* (M=5.15, SD=3.52) and the *New York Post* was significant,

with  $p < 0.05$ . The *New York Post* was therefore significantly more likely to adopt nationalist phrases in its coverage of Bush's speeches on the War on Terror than the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. As expected after the analysis of the three individual frames, the difference between *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* was not significant, with  $p > 0.05$ . Although the three individual frames were generally more present in the *Post-Dispatch* than in *The New York Times* (with the exception of the vindicationism frame), it cannot be said with certainty that this difference was not based on chance. All in all the first two hypotheses of this research were confirmed. The three elements of nationalism were indeed significantly more present in the *New York Post* than in the other two newspapers, and nationalism was indeed more present in the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* than in *The New York Times*, but this difference was not significant.

### 7.5 Criticism

Apart from the frames that constitute nationalism, two frames were added to evaluate the newspapers' assessment of Bush's nationalist claims. For each article that was analyzed, it was determined if the author of the article positively or negatively evaluated Bush's speech, with a focus on his nationalist claims. Of course, on many occasions, the author of the article did not express an explicit opinion of the speech, but every time this was the case, the box was ticked for either 'critical' or 'explicit approval'. These two frames were then combined to form the new variable of 'criticism', with the number of 1 being attributed to explicit approval and the number of -1 to critical. The hypothesis that was tested in this part of the analysis was: 'The *New York Post* evaluated Bush's speeches rather positively, while *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* were more critical.' Table 9 represents the direction of 'criticism' for all three newspapers.

**Table 9**

*Direction of criticism*

Medium	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
NYT	49	-0.3878	0.6061
NYP	46	0.3696	0.4880
SLPD	45	-0.1333	0.6252
Total	140	-0.0571	0.6545

This table shows that for the 49 articles of *The New York Times*, the average level of criticism was -0.39 (SD=0.61). The fact that it is a negative number indicates that *The New York Times* was

more often critical of Bush's speeches than explicitly positive. In other words, in more than one third of the articles of *The New York Times*, the author questioned the legitimacy or accuracy of Bush's statements. The *New York Post*, on the other hand, showed a similar mean, but on the opposite side of the spectrum. On average, the chance that the author of an article of the *New York Post* approved of Bush's speech was 0.37 (SD=0.49). In other words, in more than one third of the articles of the *New York Post*, Bush's speeches were positively assessed. As for the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, the level of criticism was -0.13 (SD=0.63). This means the newspaper was critical of Bush's statements, but to a lesser extent than *The New York Times*. A one-way analysis of variance revealed that the overall differences between the newspapers were significant ( $F(2,137)=21,043, p = 0.000$ ). The following table presents the differences between the individual newspapers.

**Table 10**

*Level of significance criticism*

Medium	Medium	Sig
NYT	NYP	0.000
	SLPD	0.103
NYP	NYT	0.000
	SLPD	0.000
SLPD	NYT	0.103
	NYP	0.000

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 10 demonstrates that the difference between *The New York Times* (M=-0.39, SD=0.61) and the *New York Post* (M=0.37, SD=0.49) in their level of criticism was significant, with  $p < 0.05$ . The *New York Post* assessed Bush's speeches significantly more positively than *The New York Times*. Or, the other way around, *The New York Times* was significantly more likely to pose critical questions or remarks on the content of Bush's speeches than the *New York Post*. The difference between the *New York Post* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* (M=-0.13, SD=0.63) was significant as well, with  $p < 0.05$ . The *Post-Dispatch* was significantly more likely to pose critical remarks about Bush's speeches than the *New York Post*. The difference between *The New York Times* and the *Post-Dispatch* was not significant, with  $p > 0.05$ . There was a difference between the level of criticism in the two newspapers, but it cannot be said with certainty that this difference was not based on chance. These results are meaningful because the analysis of the nationalism frames merely states the extent to which the newspapers adopted phrases from Bush's speeches, without taking into account the evaluation of these phrases by the newspapers. The criticism frame adds this dimension, which made it possible to draw conclusions on the newspapers'

stance towards President Bush’s use of nationalism in his rhetoric. So apart from the fact that *The New York Post* was significantly more likely to adopt the nationalism frames from Bush’s speeches, the newspaper also reported on these speeches significantly more positively than the other newspapers. *The New York Times* was the most critical of Bush’s nationalist remarks. Conclusively, the hypothesis that the *New York Post* evaluated Bush’s speeches rather positively, while *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* were more critical, is therefore confirmed.

**7.6 Difference Afghanistan and Iraq**

Lastly, it was deemed relevant to determine which of the two wars was subject to the most nationalist rhetoric. It was hypothesized that there would not be a significant difference between the level of nationalism in the newspapers during the final months of 2001, when rhetoric on Afghanistan had the upper hand, and 2002 and the first months of 2003, when Iraq was the primal topic of concern in Bush’s speeches on the War on Terror. The articles were divided into these two groups and subsequently, they were compared using the nationalism variable. This was done for the three newspapers combined. Due to the small number of articles, conducting this test for each newspaper separately did not provide very meaningful results. The table of the outcome for this test will be provided anyway, because although the results were not significant, trends can still be detected. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the period during which the speech was delivered and the level of nationalism in the news coverage. First, the means for the level of nationalism in these two time frames for the three newspapers combined will be presented.

**Table 11**  
*Mean level of nationalism Afghanistan and Iraq*

<b>Nationalism</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
	2001	34	4.5470	2.9774
	2002-2003	106	6.8357	5.0185

Table 11 shows the outcome of the independent samples t-test, which measured the mean number of nationalist phrases adopted by the newspapers in the ‘Afghanistan period’ and the ‘Iraq period’. In the first period, from September until December 2001, in total 34 articles were written about Bush’s speeches on the war on terror. On average, 4.55 times, a nationalist

statement from Bush’s speech was adopted by each article (SD=2.98). In the other period, from January 2002 until May 2003, the content of Bush’s speeches was discussed in 106 articles in total. In this period, on average 6.84 phrases of nationalism were adopted in each article (SD=5.02). Table 12 indicates whether or not the difference between these means is significant.

**Table 12**

*Level of significance nationalism Afghanistan and Iraq*

Nationalism	Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for equality of means
		F	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Equal Variances Assumed	5.099	0.026
	Equal variances not assumed		0.002

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The Levene’s Test for Equal Variances measures whether or not equal variances are assumed. In other words, the Levene’s Test determines if the two conditions – the first and the second period, in this case – have more or less the same variability between the results. Since the test is significant, equal variances are not assumed, so the lower column of the t-test for equality of means is relevant. This column demonstrates that the difference between the level of nationalist phrases in the period 2001 (M=4.55, SD=2.98) was significantly lower than the level of nationalist phrases in the period 2002-2003 (M=6.84, SD=5.02),  $t(138)=-2.52$ ,  $p=0.002$ . In other words, in the period when the Iraq War was dominant in Bush’s speeches, his nationalist phrases were adopted by the newspapers to a significantly larger extent than in the period when the Afghanistan War was the prime concern. This result therefore rejects the hypothesis that there was no significant difference in the level of nationalist frames in the three newspapers between the war in Afghanistan and the Iraq War. This result implies that in the prelude to the Iraq War, President Bush increasingly appealed to nationalism in order to get support for his plans and that subsequently, the newspapers of this research adopted these phrases to a higher level. The same test was done for the newspapers separately. Table 13 represents the mean number of nationalist phrases per newspaper, divided into the same two periods.

**Table 13***Difference in nationalist phrases Afghanistan and Iraq per newspaper*

Medium		Year	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
NYT	Nationalism	2001	12	3.3164	3.4282
		2002-2003	37	4.8499	3.2263
NYP	Nationalism	2001	8	6.3297	2.7739
		2002-2003	38	9.9338	5.7497
SLPD	Nationalism	2001	14	4.5831	2.2496
		2002-2003	31	5.4081	3.9697

Table 13 shows the means of the level of nationalism per period per newspaper. It demonstrates that in the final months of 2001, *The New York Times* published 12 articles that covered the content of Bush's speeches on the War on Terror, which on average adopted 3.32 nationalist phrases each (SD=4.43). In the period 2002 until May 2003, *The New York Times* published 37 articles that covered Bush's speeches. Each article in this period adopted on average 4.85 nationalist phrases from his speeches (SD=3.23). The *New York Post* published 8 articles on Bush's speeches about the War on Terror in the 2001 period, of which each article adopted an average number of 6.33 nationalist phrases (SD=2.77). In the latter period, the *New York Post* published 38 articles on Bush's speeches, with a mean number of nationalist phrases of 9.93 (SD=5.75). Lastly, the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* published 14 articles on Bush's speeches in the first period, with a mean number of nationalist phrases of 4.58 (SD=2.25). In the latter period, the *Post-Dispatch* published 31 articles on speeches about the War on Terror with on average 5.41 nationalist phrases per article (SD=3.97). As the means demonstrate, for each newspaper, the level of nationalist phrases adopted from Bush's speeches was higher during the 'Iraq era' than during the 'Afghanistan era'. However, the number of articles published, especially in the first period, is not very high. This might therefore prove problematic for testing whether these differences are significant. Table 14 shows whether or not this is the case.

**Table 14**

*Level of significance difference in nationalist phrases Afghanistan and Iraq*

Medium	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for equality of means	
		F	Sig.	Sig. (2-tailed)
NYT	Equal variances assumed	0.074	0.786	0.165
	Equal variances not assumed			0.189
NYP	Equal variances assumed	3.216	0.080	0.093
	Equal variances not assumed			0.014
SLPD	Equal variances assumed	5.633	0.22	0.473
	Equal variances not assumed			0.382

\*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 14 demonstrates whether the differences in nationalism between the two time periods are significant per newspaper. For *The New York Times*, equal variances are assumed, so the upper column of the 2-tailed significance is relevant. This demonstrates that there is no significant difference in *The New York Times* concerning the level of nationalist phrases between the two time periods, with  $t > 0.05$ . In the *New York Post* too, equal variances are assumed, so looking at the upper column, this tells us the difference is not significant. However, since the t-value for the *New York Post* is closer to the significant level than the other newspapers, it can be suggested that there is a trend in the *New York Post* towards a higher level of nationalist phrases adopted from speeches in the prelude to the Iraq War. For the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, similarly to *The New York Times*, the upper column reveals an insignificant difference. This means that the difference between the two periods in the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* is too likely to be based on chance to be able to reliably say there is a real difference in the adoption of nationalist phrases. Due to the relatively small sample of articles per newspaper per period, no reliable conclusions can be made about the level of nationalist phrases adopted by each newspapers, relative to the two different periods. However, because especially the t-value of the *New York Post* is not that far from the 0.05 level, a bigger sample of this newspaper might have demonstrated a significant difference in the level of nationalism between the Afghanistan and the Iraq period.

## 8. Conclusion

The role that the news media have played on the public perception of the War on Terror has been extensively studied in the past one and a half decade. In many of these studies, the media have been blamed for relying too much on information presented to them by government officials, without critically assessing their claims. Although covering wars is quite challenging for journalists because of an array of challenges, in the prelude to both the Afghanistan and Iraq War, newsrooms across America were so much fixated on scoops that they failed to assume their role as a watchdog of the government.<sup>241</sup> Due to time pressures, editors were tempted to rush statements in their newspapers, which resulted in news frames that strongly resembled the frames presented by the Bush administration. This research examined the role of American nationalism in the media coverage of the War on Terror. More specifically, it was examined to what extent newspapers adopted nationalist sentiments from Bush's speeches with a focus on how this differed between newspapers.

On the basis of literature on American nationalism in the context of the War on Terror, three elements of American nationalism were identified. These were exceptionalism, vindicationism, and othering. All three of these frames were popular expressions in Bush's speeches and pointed to a sense of national belonging.<sup>242</sup> Taking into account the tendency of the mainstream news media in the prelude to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to act as a soundboard for the American government, a quantitative study was conducted to determine to what extent this was the case in the context of nationalism. Or, in any case, with the comparison of three different newspapers, it was investigated which outlet was most prone to the adoption of nationalist statements expressed by President Bush in his speeches. This provided an indication of whether or not the choice of news outlet was a contributor to the extent to which the audience bought into Bush's nationalist rhetoric. The research question of this research was: To what extent did the mainstream news media differ in their adoption of nationalist sentiments from George W. Bush's speeches on the War on Terror?

To answer this research question, three newspapers were chosen to be the subject of this quantitative content analysis. These newspapers were *The New York Times*, the *New York Post* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. These newspapers were chosen because the two newspapers that target a more nation-wide audience, *The New York Times* and the *New York Post*, adopt two vastly different ideologies: *The New York Times* is known to be a liberal newspaper, while the *New York Post* is considered conservative. Although the *Saint Louis Post-*

---

<sup>241</sup> Jamieson and Waldman, *The Press Effect*, 3.

<sup>242</sup> Monten, *The Roots of the Bush Doctrine*, 115.

*Dispatch* does not explicitly advocate a particular side of the political spectrum, the fact that its target audience, the people of Saint Louis, Missouri, have historically been predominantly liberal, is an indication that the newspaper adopted a more liberal approach to its news coverage as well. Still, because the city of Saint Louis is located in a rather conservative environment, the newspaper was expected to have adopted Bush's nationalist sentiment to a slightly higher extent than *The New York Times*. To answer the research question, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: The three elements of nationalism were significantly more present in the *New York Post* than in *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*.
- H2: The three elements of nationalism were more present in the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* than in *The New York Times*, but the difference was less significant.
- H3: The *New York Post* evaluated Bush's speeches rather positively, while *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* were more critical.
- H4: There was no significant difference in the level of nationalist frames in the three newspapers between the war in Afghanistan and the Iraq War.

These hypotheses were tested using a quantitative content analysis. Every article that discussed the content of Bush's speeches on the War on Terror between September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 and May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003 was collected. This resulted in 49, 46 and 45 articles for *The New York Times*, the *New York Post* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* respectively. The number of times each article adopted a phrase from the speech that fit each of the three indications of nationalism was counted. Furthermore, it was indicated whether the articles expressed criticism on the speech or explicit approval. Subsequently, this data was analyzed in SPSS using a one-way analysis of variance to compare the means of the presence of the nationalism frames and of the level of criticism. The results of these analyses are summarized in this section.

First of all, the exceptionalism frame was significantly more present in the *New York Post* than in *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. In other words, the *New York Post* was significantly more likely to adopt exceptionalist phrases from Bush's speeches on the War on Terror than *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. An example of an instance in which Bush's sentiment of American exceptionalism was highlighted by the *New York Post* is the following: "But know this now: President Bush has effected a tectonic shift in the nation's sense of itself, and of its proper role in the world. 'America is a strong nation, and honorable in the use of [its] strength. We exercise power without conquest, and sacrifice for the liberty of strangers.'" <sup>243</sup> This is a passage of an article published in the *New York Post* on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2003, a day after Bush's second State of the Union. It summarizes the president's vision of the United States as an unchallenged superpower and plays an extremely relevant role in global

---

<sup>243</sup> New York Post, "Courting History's Verdict," *New York Post*, January 29, 2003, 24.

politics. Exceptionalist phrases like this were adopted to a significantly higher extent by the *New York Post* than by *The New York Times* and *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. An example of exceptionalism in an article of *The New York Times* is the following phrase: “ ‘Make no mistake, the United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts,’ Mr. Bush said. Then he concluded: ‘The resolve of our great nation is being tested. But make no mistake: we will show the world that we will pass this test.’ ”<sup>244</sup> This phrase from a speech delivered the day after the terrorist attacks was mentioned by *The New York Times* and is also an example of a statement of American greatness and the assurance that the United States will show everyone that they cannot be defeated. Although many of these exceptionalist phrases from Bush’s speeches were adopted by *The New York Times* and the *Post-Dispatch*, they were much more prevalent in the news coverage of the *New York Post*. The implications of this observation are discussed later in this chapter, when the analysis of the three nationalist frames combined is discussed.

The level of vindicationist sentiments in the *New York Post* was higher than in *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, although only the difference with the *Post-Dispatch* was significant. With a p-value of 0.060, referring to the difference between the two New York-based newspapers, it can be said with a certainty of 94 percent that this difference was not based on chance. However, since the differences were deemed significant at the 0.050 level, this percentage was not convincing enough. However, a trend can definitely be observed. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2002, a year after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Bush addressed the nation. Excerpts from this speech were mentioned in an article of the *New York Post* the next day. In one passage, an explicitly vindicationist element was mentioned: “Without boastfulness or sentimentality, Bush put 9/11 and the response to it in proper historical perspective: explaining that the terrorist attacks were ‘an attack on the ideals that made us a nation’ and reminding people here and abroad that ‘this nation has defeated tyrants, liberated death camps’ and raised the lamp of liberty in oppressed lands.’ ”<sup>245</sup> This excerpt is an example of vindicationism, because it emphasizes the United States’ historic ‘destiny’ to spread its own sacred values and ideals across the globe.

All in all, phrases like this were adopted by the *New York Post* to a significantly larger extent than by the *Post-Dispatch* and to an almost significantly larger extent than *The New York Times*. An interesting aspect about vindicationism in *The New York Times* is that this newspaper tended to call it by its name. Although the term ‘vindicationism’ is not commonly used in the media or in popular language, the historic tendency of the United States to form other nations

---

<sup>244</sup> Elisabeth Bumiller and David E. Sanger, “A Day of Terror: The President; A Somber Bush Says Terrorism Cannot Prevail,” *The New York Times*, September 12, 2001, 1.

<sup>245</sup> New York Post, “9/11/02: The Right Note,” *New York Post*, September 12, 2002, 34.

according to the American example is a recurring theme. This is exemplified by the following excerpt from Bush's speech that was published in *The New York Times*, a day after his State of the Union Address in 2002: " 'America will always stand firm for the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law, limits on the power of the state, respect for women, private property, free speech, equal justice and religious tolerance.' " In response to this quote, *The New York Times* stated in the same article: "His list was telling because it demonstrated that his plans, at their core, involve creating a world that is in America's image."<sup>246</sup> This is a signal that *The New York Times* did adopt vindicationist sentiments, but rather than recklessly copying them, provided some nuance. Still, it is interesting that *The New York Times* displayed a higher level of vindicationism than the *Post-Dispatch*, even though this difference was not significant. *The New York Times*, being an explicitly liberal newspaper, was expected to be less prone to portray a high level of vindicationism than the Midwestern newspaper, which exhibits a more ambiguous ideological base. An explanation might be that liberals, in general, do not perceive vindicationism as an inherently bad policy.<sup>247</sup> Whereas neoconservatives justify vindicationist actions predominantly as a way to ensure domestic security, liberals legitimize the dissemination of democracy across the globe as a noble and humanitarian undertaking.<sup>248</sup>

Thirdly, the number of times the newspapers adopted the othering frame was analyzed. *The New York Post* was again the newspaper that adopted this element of nationalism the most. Besides, othering was the frame that appeared most in every newspaper in general. This can be explained by the notion that in times of war, the 'us-versus them' analogy and expressions of a vicious, evil other is much more pervasive in presidential rhetoric than in times of peace.<sup>249</sup> The conservative newspaper was significantly more likely to adopt othering phrases from Bush's speeches than *The New York Times*, but the difference with the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* was not significant. Still, the p-value of 0.078 was quite close to the 0.05 threshold of significance. A larger sample of articles therefore might have resulted in a significant difference between these newspapers as well. Although the *Post-Dispatch* adopted a higher mean number of othering phrases per article than *The New York Times*, this difference was not significant.

The title of this research is one of the clearest examples of the use of othering by President Bush in one of his speeches, but there were many more. An explicit example of othering as published in the *New York Post* was: " 'They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. They follow in the path of fascism and Nazism and totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way, to where it ends: in history's

---

<sup>246</sup> David E. Sanger, "The State of the Union: The Overview; Bush, Focusing on Terrorism, Says Secure U.S. is Top Priority," *New York Times*, January 30, 2002, 1.

<sup>247</sup> Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine," 115.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid. 115-116.

<sup>249</sup> Lieven, *America Right or Wrong*, 25.

unmarked grave of discarded lies.’”<sup>250</sup> This is a clear example of Bush’s tendency to portray the enemy as the embodiment of all evil. The *New York Post* chose to mention this phrase in one of its articles on Bush’s speech on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the same speech in which Bush delivered the quote that became the title of this research. The article in the *New York Post* in which this example of othering was mentioned was titled ‘The greatest speech of our time’. Judging from this headline, assumptions can already be made about the way in which the *New York Post* assessed the president’s speech. Going back to the title of this research once more, the quote “Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are against us,”<sup>251</sup> implies that the othering sentiment was not just directed at America’s direct enemy. In his speeches throughout the period of this investigation, Bush repeatedly referred to other nations. Quite notably, he directed his frustration towards the United Nations when the organization refused to provide support for his plans to take military action against Iraq. In a speech delivered on September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2002, Bush said: “The conduct of the Iraqi regime is a threat to the authority of the United Nations and a threat to peace. Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding or will it be irrelevant?”<sup>252</sup> All three of the newspapers analyzed in this study adopted this phrase in their articles. This goes to show that othering does not necessarily only refer to the direct enemy, but to allies and international organizations like the UN as well.

To draw clear-cut conclusions on the overall adoption of nationalist phrases by the three newspapers, the three frames of nationalism were combined to form the overarching ‘nationalism frame’. This analysis illustrated the pervasiveness of the different use of nationalism in general by each newspaper. The *New York Post* was, as expected, was the clear outlier in this analysis, with a much higher mean number of nationalist phrases per article than the other two newspapers. As the analysis of the three separate frames suggested already, the *New York Post* was significantly more likely to adopt nationalist phrases from President Bush’s speeches than *The New York Times* and *the Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. As a result, the first hypothesis of this research was confirmed. Since the *New York Post* was significantly more likely to adopt nationalist statements from Bush’s speeches, it can be concluded that conservative newspapers were more prone to cover the president’s messages in the way he intended it.

The *Post-Dispatch* displayed a slightly higher number of nationalist phrases than *The New York Times*, but this difference was not significant. Though nationalist phrases were definitely adopted by the two liberal newspapers to a large extent as well, they were significantly less likely to merely perform as a soundboard for the president’s nationalist sentiments than the conservative newspaper. On the basis of literature on framing effects, it can

---

<sup>250</sup> John Podhoretz, “The Greatest Speech Of Our Time,” *New York Post*, September 21, 2001, 51.

<sup>251</sup> Bush, “Address to a joint session of Congress.”

<sup>252</sup> Bush, “Speech to the United Nations General Assembly.”

be concluded that the audience of conservative outlets were more likely to adopt Bush's nationalist messages in their understanding of the War on Terror than readers of liberal newspapers.

As was already mentioned with the example of vindicationism in *The New York Times*, in a number of articles in the three newspapers, the authors were critical of Bush's speeches or, on the contrary, expressed explicit approval. This aspect of criticism was included because, even though merely the extent to which the newspapers adopted the nationalism frames might have potentially influenced the public perception of the War on Terror, including the evaluation of the speeches by the newspapers allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of the news coverage. Expressing criticism in an article does not mean that the frames present in that article can be dismissed altogether. It does imply that the newspaper took a more cautious approach regarding the routine of simply adopting the frames as presented to them by the president. Posing critical remarks and asking critical questions suggests that the newspaper did not take everything that was presented to them by administration officials for granted, at least to some extent. Expressing explicit approval, on the other hand, implies that the newspaper was less likely to question the legitimacy of the president's claims.

In an article discussing the content of President Bush's second State of the Union address, *The New York Times* posed some critical remarks about his repeated emphasis on the corruption, destructiveness, and pure evil that was supposedly inherent to the Hussein regime. "Mr. Bush offered little new evidence about Iraq's actions today, but he described Mr. Hussein's methods of torture and intimidation in stark terms, and at one point he clearly compared the Iraqi leader to Hitler," is what *The New York Times* stated in its article discussing the address.<sup>253</sup> "In dwelling for so long on Mr. Hussein's abuses, he quite deliberately isolated Iraq from the other two nations that make up what, in last year's address 364 nights ago, he memorably called an 'Axis of Evil'." In this article, *The New York Times* took a critical stance towards Bush's othering frames and acknowledged that the president seemed to have forgotten about the other two 'hostile regimes' he mentioned a year earlier in his State of the Union address. On the same State of the Union, the *New York Post* wrote an article in which the address was reviewed explicitly positively: "President Bush went before Congress last night and - precisely, tactfully and with an occasional twinkle in the eye - left little doubt that America will redeem the challenge of 9/11. The president could not have stated his policy with regard to Iraq more clearly: 'If Saddam Hussein does not fully disarm we will lead a coalition to disarm him,' he said."<sup>254</sup> Contrary to *The New York Times*, the elements of othering in this article are praised. The

---

<sup>253</sup> Richard W. Stevenson and David E. Sanger, "State of the Union: The Overview; Calling Iraq a Serious threat, Bush vows that he'll disarm it, and also Rebuild U.S. Economy," *New York Times*, January 29, 2003, 1.

<sup>254</sup> *New York Post*, "Courtin History's Verdict," 24.

article ended with the following statement: “George W. Bush is nothing if not a leader – in the best sense of the word.” The reason why the box of ‘explicit approval’ was ticked in this case does not need further explanation.

Lastly, the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch* was on average more critical than explicitly positive about Bush’s speeches. Criticism on a statement of othering in one of Bush’s speeches can be found in an article about the president’s address on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2001: “Americans could find strength in Mr. Bush's call to be ‘calm and resolute,’ while his us-or-them warning may be less palatable to a world that sometimes finds the United States arrogant.”<sup>255</sup> In this excerpt, the *Post-Dispatch* explicitly mentions the ‘us-versus-them’ analogy that has been elaborately discussed in this study. The potentially perceived arrogance of this frame is highlighted, saying it might not be as popularly received abroad as it might be domestically. The fact that the conservative newspaper in this study demonstrates both the highest level of nationalist sentiments as well as the highest level of approval of these sentiments, points to the apparent abandonment of the watchdog function of this newspaper. It is safe to say that the journalists of this newspaper, to a much larger extent than their colleagues of the liberal newspapers, performed as a soundboard of their commander in chief: the president of the United States. Because of the lack of criticism on Bush’s nationalist statements, the readers of the *New York Post* were likely to have had significantly more positive ideas on the War on Terror than readers of *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. It is quite plausible that this was the case as well with other conservative newspapers.

Finally, it was analyzed in which period of the War on Terror nationalist sentiments were the most pervasive in the newspapers. The boost of nationalism in the aftermath of 9/11 might be an indication of a higher sense of nationalism in Bush’s speeches and their news coverage in the final months of 2001. However, because of the fact that Bush had to work significantly harder to gather support for the Iraq War, it was expected that the level of nationalism was pretty high in the period from 2002 onwards as well. Therefore, it was expected that there would not be a significant difference between the adoption of nationalist phrases from Bush’s speeches in the two time periods. Surprisingly, it turned out there was. The period of the prelude to the Iraq War demonstrated a significantly higher level of nationalist sentiments than the period of the Afghanistan War. Evidently, the controversy around the Iraq War facilitated a higher level of nationalist statements in Bush’s speeches to ensure American support. To maintain the backing of the American people for this war, Bush increasingly appealed to the Americans’ feelings of nationalism in this period.

All in all, what can be taken away from this research is that the mainstream news media were indeed prone to adopt President Bush’s nationalist statements with little critical analysis.

---

<sup>255</sup> Editorial, “An unprecedented speech,” *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, September 21, 2001, 6.

Especially the conservative newspaper, the *New York Post*, was significantly more likely to merely adopt phrases from Bush's speeches and often even praised his messages. With an average adoption of nationalist statements of 4.47 and 5.15 per article for *The New York Times* and the *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, respectively, it can be argued that these newspapers too had a share in the nationalist news coverage of the War on Terror. Still, they did not nearly reach the level of the *New York Post* and besides, they provided significantly more criticism on these nationalist statements. While *The New York Times* acknowledged its flawed media coverage of the Iraq War, the *New York Post* issued no such apology, even when that newspaper was evidently more 'guilty' of merely copying messages of the Bush administration.

## 9. Suggestions for future research

This research provided insights in the news coverage of the War on Terror and the role that nationalism played in its framing. Even though the functioning of the news media during the War on Terror has been extensively researched, because of the array of different approaches to tackle the topic, there is always room for more and for improvement. This study focused on the analysis of three newspapers, an approach that provides valuable observations on the different ways in which news organizations framed the War on Terror. However, to draw more decisive conclusions on the differences between conservative, liberal, and regional newspapers in the context of nationalism, it is suggested that a more comprehensive study is done including more newspapers. This research was limited by the availability of newspapers in the LexisNexis database, but researchers with broader access to newspapers might be able to elaborate on the findings in this study. Besides, since in some cases the results of the analysis showed trends towards a significant difference, but did not reach the threshold of the 0.05 level, a larger sample of articles might have more telling results. By including more articles, more evident conclusions can be drawn on, for example, the difference in nationalist news coverage between the Afghanistan and the Iraq period per newspaper.

Furthermore, there is a side notes to be placed with the intercoder reliability of the analysis. Even though the Cohen's kappas for the three different frames of nationalism were just reliable enough, ideally, their results would have been higher. Researchers who wish to employ this framework for analyzing nationalism in the future, are advised to make the distinction between the elements of nationalism explicitly and elaborately clear to their second coder. This way, the chances of ambiguity or confusion while coding the articles are reduced.

Finally, while this study provides interesting conclusions on the difference of the adoption of nationalist phrases from President Bush's speeches between newspapers, it would also be quite interesting to compare the nationalism frame to more conventional frames that have been used to study media coverage of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The 'presence of an imminent threat' frame and the frame of fear have been studied extensively already, so a comparison of these frames with the nationalism frame would make for quite an interesting addition to literature on the news coverage of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. This could provide a more insightful outcome of the pervasiveness of the nationalism frame in the news coverage of the War on Terror.

## 10. Bibliography

- Altheide, David L. "Terrorism and the Politics of Fear." *Cultural Studies Critical Methodologies* 10 (2006): 415 – 439.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983, 1–237.
- Barringer, Felicity. "Some big papers buck trend of circulation drops." *New York Times*, May 7, 2002, <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/07/business/some-big-papers-buck-trend-of-circulation-drops.html>.
- Benner, Erica. "Nationalism: Intellectual Origins." in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. John Breuilly. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 1–711.
- Bennett, W. Lance, Lawrence, Regina and Livingston, Steven. *When the Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media from Iraq to Katrina*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007, 1-235.
- Bensahel, Nora. "Mission not accomplished: What went wrong with Iraqi reconstruction." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no.3 (2006): 450–467.
- Bligh, Michelle C. Kohles, Jeffrey C. and Meindl, James R. "Charisma under crisis: Presidential leadership, rhetoric, and media responses before and after the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks." *The Leadership Quarterly* 15 (2004): 211 - 239.
- Brands, Henry W. *What America Owes the World: The Struggle for the Soul of Foreign Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 1-321.
- Brewer, Marilyn B. and Li, Qiong. "What does it mean to be an American? Patriotism, Nationalism, and American Identity after 9/11." *International Society of Political Psychology* 25, no. 5 (2004): 727 - 739.
- Brown, David. "Contending Nationalisms in South-East Asia." In *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, ed. Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar. London: Sage, 2006, 1-555.
- Bumiller, Elisabeth and Sanger, David E. "A Day of Terror: The President; A Somber Bush Says Terrorism Cannot Prevail." *The New York Times*, September 12, 2001, 1.
- Burke, Peter. "Nationalism and Vernaculars, 1500 – 1800," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. John Breuilly. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 1–711.
- Bush, George W. "Address to the Nation: Ultimatum to Saddam Hussein." Speech, Washington DC, March 17, 2003, *American Rhetoric*, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wariniraq/gwbushiraq31703.htm>.

- Bush, George W. "Address to a joint session of Congress." Speech, Washington DC, September 20, 2001. American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911jointsessionspeech.htm>.
- Bush, George W. "Address to the Nation on the Threat of Iraq." Speech, Cincinnati, Ohio, October 7, 2002, American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbushwariniraqcincinnati.htm>.
- Bush, George W. "End of Major Combat Operations in Iraq." Speech, San Diego, CA, May 1, 2003, American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wariniraq/gwbushiraq5103.htm>.
- Bush, George W. "Speech to the United Nations General Assembly." Speech, New York City, September 12, 2002, <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbushunitednations2002.htm>.
- Bush, George W. "State of the Union Address." Speech, Washington DC, January 29, 2002, American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/stateoftheunion2002.htm>.
- Bush, George W. "The Second Gore-Bush Presidential Debate." *Commission on Presidential Debates*. October 11, 2000, <http://www.debates.org/?page=october-11-2000-debate-transcript>.
- Bush, George W. "U.S. Military Academy Commencement Address." Speech, West Point, NY, June 1, 2002, American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbushwestpointcommencement.htm>.
- Byers, Thomas B. "A City Upon a Hill: American Literature and the Ideology of Exceptionalism." *American Studies in Scandinavia* 29 (1997): 85-105.
- Carpenter, Serena. "U.S. Elite and Non-elite Newspapers' Portrayal of the Iraq War: A Comparison of Frames and Source Use." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 84, no. 4 (2007): 761-776.
- Cohen, Jacob. "A Coefficient of Agreement for Nominal Scales." *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 20, no. 1 (1960): 37-47.
- Coles, Roberta L. "Manifest Destiny Adapted for 1990s' War Discourse: Mission and Destiny Intertwined." *Sociology of Religion* 63, no. 4 (2002): 403-427.
- Dadge, David. *The War in Iraq and why the Media Failed us*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2006, 1-167.
- D'Angelo, Paul and Kuypers, Jim A. *Doing News Framing Analysis: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 2010, 1-263.
- Delanty, Gerard and Kumar, Krishnan. "Introduction," in *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*, ed. Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar. London: Sage, 2006, 1-555.

- Dimitrova, Daniela V. and Strömbäck, Jesper. "Mission Accomplished? Framing of the Iraq War in the Elite Newspapers in Sweden and the United States." *International Communication Gazette* 67, no. 5 (2005): 405-435.
- Dine, Philip. "Resolute Bush Gives Impression that War is Near; And he says little to those who remain uncertain." *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 29, 2003, 1.
- Dobbins, James F. "America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq." *Survival* 45, no. 4 (2003): 87-102.
- Doyle, Don H. and van Young, Eric. "Independence and Nationalism in the Americas." In *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. John Breuilly. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 1-711.
- Editorial. "An unprecedented speech." *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, September 21, 2001, 6.
- Edy, Jill A. and Meirick, Patrick C. "Wanted, Dead or Alive: Media Frames, Frame Adoption, and Support for the War in Afghanistan." *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007): 117-141.
- Ekbladh, David. "From Consensus to Crisis: The Postwar Career of Nation-Building in U.S. Foreign Relations." in *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*. ed. Francis Fukuyama. Baltimore, MA: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004, 1-263.
- Fukuyama, Francis. "Nation-Building and the Failure of Institutional Memory." in *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*. ed. Francis Fukuyama. Baltimore, MA: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004, 1-263.
- Grant, Susan-Mary. "A Nation before Nationalism: The Civic and Ethnic Construction of America." in *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*. ed. Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar (London: Sage, 2006), 1-555.
- Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983, 5-153
- Lieven, Anatol. *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, 3-1111.
- Gershkoff, Amy and Kushner, Shana. "Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration's Rhetoric." *Perspective on Politics* 3, no. 3 (2005): 525-537.
- Hayes, Danny and Guardino, Matt. "Whose Views Made the News? Media Coverage and the March to War in Iraq." *Political Communication* 27 (2010): 59-87.
- Herring, George C. *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, 1-965.
- Hiebert, Ray Eldon. "Public Relations and Propaganda in Framing the Iraq War: A preliminary Review." *Public Relations Review* 29, (2003): 2443 - 255.
- Hietala, Thomas R. *Manifest Design: American Exceptionalism and Empire*. Cornell University Press, 1985, 1-273.

- Hobsbawm, Eric J. *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 5–209.
- Holloway, David. *9/11 and the War on Terror*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008, 1–172.
- Holsti, Ole R. *American Public Opinion on the Iraq War*, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2011, 1-226.
- Hopkins, Antony, G. *American Empire: A Global History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018, 1-739.
- Huddy, Leonie and Khatib, Nadia. “American Patriotism, National Identity, and Political Involvement.” *American Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 1 (2007): 63 - 78.
- Hurd, Ian. “Constructivism.” In *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, 1–711.
- IBM Corp. Released 2017. IBM SPSS Statistics for iOS, Version 25.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.
- Jamieson, Kathleen H. and Waldman, Paul. *The Press Effect: Politicians, Journalists, and the Stories that Shape the Political World*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003, 1-199.
- Jervis, Robert. “Understanding the Bush Doctrine.” *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 3 (2003): 365-389.
- Kam, Cindy and Kinder, Donald. “Terror and Ethnocentrism: Foundations of American Support for the War on Terrorism.” *The Journal of Politics* 69, no. 2 (2007): 320-339.
- Kimmelmeier, Markus and Winter, David G. “Sowing Patriotism, but Reaping Nationalism? Consequences of Exposure to the American Flag.” *Political Psychology* 29, no. 6 (2008): 859-879.
- Kirn, Jacob. “Circulation declines quicken at the Post-Dispatch, other regional dailies,” *St. Louis Business Journal*, October 28, 2014, <https://www.bizjournals.com/stlouis/news/2014/10/28/circulation-declines-quicken-at-the-post-dispatch.html>.
- Kull, Steven, Ramsay, Clay and Lewis, Evan. “Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War.” *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 4 (2003-4): 569-598.
- Kumar, Krishnan “Nationalism and the Historians.” In *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*. ed. Gerard Delanty and Krishnan Kumar, London: Sage, 2006, 1–155.
- Lundestad, Geir. *The Rise and Decline of the American “Empire”: Power and its Limits in Comparative Perspective*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012, 1-187.
- Madriaga, Manuel. “The Star-Spangled Banner and ‘whiteness’ in American national identity.” In *Flag, Nation and Symbolism in Europe and America*. ed. Thomas Eriksen and Richard Jenkins. Abingdon: Routledge, 2007, 1-175.
- Madsen, Deborah L. *American Exceptionalism*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998, 1–168.

- McCartney, Paul T. "American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War." *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 3 (2004): 399 - 423.
- Mindock, Clark. "Taking a knee: Why are NFL players protesting and when did they start to kneel?" *Independent*, May 24, 2018, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/taking-a-knee-national-anthem-nfl-trump-why-meaning-origins-racism-us-colin-kaepernick-a7966961.html>
- Moore, David W. "Eight of 10 Americans Support Ground War in Afghanistan." *Gallup* (November 1, 2001), <https://news.gallup.com/poll/5029/eight-americans-support-ground-war-afghanistan.aspx>.
- Murphy, John M. "Our Mission and Our Moment: George W. Bush and September 11<sup>th</sup>." *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 6, no. 4 (2003), 607-632.
- New York Post. "Courting History's Verdict." *New York Post*, January 29, 2003, 24.
- New York Post. "Dubya: War, but first..." *New York Post*, January 29, 2003, 24.
- New York Post. "9/11/02: The Right Note." *New York Post*, September 12, 2002, 34.
- Neuendorf, Kimberley A. *The Content Analysis Guidebook (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*. Sage: Los Angeles, 2017, 1 - 454.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism." In *The Cosmopolitanism Reader*, ed. Garret W. Brown and David Held (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 1 - 373.
- Obama, Barack. "News Conference in Strasbourg." Press conference, Strasbourg, April 4, 2009, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=85959>.
- Pew Research Center. "Americans and Europeans Differ Widely on Foreign Policy Issues". Last modified April 2002, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2002/04/17/americans-and-europeans-differ-widely-on-foreign-policy-issues/>.
- Pew Research Center. "Political ideology among adults in Missouri," (n.d.) <http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/state/missouri/political-ideology/>
- Pew Research Center. "Public Attitudes Toward the War in Iraq 2003 - 2008," last modified March 19, 2008, <http://www.pewresearch.org/2008/03/19/public-attitudes-toward-the-war-in-iraq-20032008/>
- Pei, Minxin. "The Paradoxes of American Nationalism." *Foreign Policy* 136 (2003): 30 - 37.
- Podhoretz, John. "The Greatest Speech Of Our Time," *New York Post*, September 21, 2001, 51.
- Orin, Deborah and Blomquist, Brian. "Bush's Ultimatum to Saddam: Get out or face destruction." *New York Post*, March 18, 2003, 2.
- Ravi, Narasimhan. "Looking beyond Flawed Journalism: How National Interests, Patriotism, and

- Cultural Values Shaped the coverage of the Iraq War." *Press/Politics* 10, no. 1 (2005): 35 – 52.
- Rojecki, Andrew. "Rhetorical Alchemy: American Exceptionalism and the War on Terror." *Political Communication* 25, no. 1 (2008): 67-88.
- Riff, Daniel, Lacy, Stephen and Fico, Frederick. *Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research*. Routledge: New York, 2014, 1 - 179.
- Sanger, David E. "The State of the Union: The Overview; Bush, Focusing on Terrorism, Says Secure U.S. is Top Priority." *New York Times*, January 30, 2002, 1.
- Scheufele, Dietram A. "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects." *International Communication Association* 49, no. 1. (1999): 103 - 122.
- Schmidt, Brian C. and Williams, Michael C. "The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Conservatives Versus Realists." *Security Studies* 17, no. 2 (2008): 191-220.
- Smith, Tom W. and Jarkko, Lars. "National Pride: A Cross-national Analysis." *GSS Cross-national Report* 19 (1998): 1–24.
- Smith, Tom W., Rasinski, Kenneth A. and Toce Marianna. "America Rebounds: A National Study of Public Response to the September 11<sup>th</sup> Terrorist Attacks." *National Organization for Research* (2001): 1 – 21.
- Stevenson, Richard W. and Sanger, David E. "State of the Union: The Overview; Calling Iraq a Serious threat, Bush vows that he'll disarm it, and also Rebuild U.S. Economy." *New York Times*, January 29, 2003, 1.
- The Bay Area Centre for Voting Research. "The Most Conservative and Liberal Cities in the United States." 2004, <https://alt.coxnewsweb.com/statesman/metro/081205libs.pdf>.
- The New York Times, "From the Editors; The Times and Iraq," *The New York Times*, May 26, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/26/world/from-the-editors-the-times-and-iraq.html>.
- The White House. *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington, 2002, 4, <https://library.bowdoin.edu/research/chicago-gov.pdf>.
- Tyler, Patrick E. "Threats and responses: The White House; Bush Looks Past War to Peace in the Middle East." *The New York Times*, February 26, 2003, 10.
- Vaïsse, Justin. *Neoconservatism: The Biography of a Movement*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010, 1-333.
- Vreese, Claes H. de. "News Framing: Theory and Typology." *Information Design Journal* 13, no. 1 (2005): 51-63.
- Weber, Robert Philip. *Basic Content Analysis*. Sage: London, 1990, 5-96.
- Webster, Gerald R. "American Nationalism, the Flag, and the Invasion of Iraq." *The Geographical Review* 101, no. 1 (2011): 2–18.

- Western, Jon. *Selling Intervention and War: The Presidency, the Media, and the American Public*. Baltimore, MA: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1-277.
- Woodward, Bob. *Bush at War*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2002, 1-353.
- Wrobel, David M. *Global West, American Frontier: Travel, Empire and Exceptionalism from Manifest Destiny to the Great Depression*. University of New Mexico Press, 2013, 1-313.