TRAVERSING THE 24-HOUR NEWS CYCLE: A BUSY DAY IN THE RHETORICAL LIFE OF A POLITICAL SPEECH

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by

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CHAPTER 1

RECOUNTING A RHETORICAL LIFE: SITUATING COLIN POWELL’S SPEECH IN JOURNALISTIC TEXTS

Whether the orators of news have an art of inquiry and communication adequate to their mission is a question of large importance. ~ Lloyd Bitzer (1998 [1981], p. 19)

On the morning of 5 February 2003—a Wednesday—Secretary of State Colin Powell addressed the United Nations Security Council in New York City. In a nearly 90-minute PowerPoint presentation, Powell argued that Iraq was hiding weapons of mass destruction from inspectors in direct violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1441. These weapons posed a significant threat to world peace, Powell suggested, not only because Iraq had its own history of violent aggression, but also because Iraq had ties to the al Qaeda terrorist network—a group that might use such weapons without compunction. Powell concluded that the Security Council had an urgent responsibility to disarm Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi leadership. As he put it:

Given Saddam Hussein’s history of aggression, given what we know of his grandiose plans, given what we know of his terrorist associations and given his determination to exact revenge on those who oppose him, should we take the risk that he will not someday use these weapons at a time and the place and in the manner of his choosing—at a time when the world is
in a much weaker position to respond? The United States will not and cannot run that risk to the American people. Leaving Saddam Hussein in possession of weapons of mass destruction for a few more months or years is not an option, not in a post-September 11th world. . . . We must not shrink from whatever is ahead of us. We must not fail in our duty and our responsibility to the citizens of the countries that are represented by this body. (UN/2.5/CP/815-835)

After uttering these words, Powell thanked the Security Council President—and from a certain perspective, his speech had ended. However, from the perspective of this dissertation, the rhetorical life of Colin Powell’s speech had only just begun.

Within ten seconds of Powell’s concluding remarks, his speech was being reanimated and re-represented by reporters and political pundits in a live “Special Report” on NBC News. Later that evening, NBC devoted nearly 20 more minutes of coverage to Colin Powell’s address on the “Nightly News” program with Tom Brokaw. On NBC, one could not only see Powell’s presentation—pictures of unmanned aerial vehicles, videos of mirage jets—but could actually hear him, too, decrying the “sinister nexus” between Iraq and al Qaeda. And, of course, NBC wasn’t the only one. Within 24 hours of Powell’s speech, the New York Times had published about a dozen articles—reports, analyses, and editorials—all devoted to THE POWELL INDICTMENT (as the Times called it). A picture of Powell holding up a model vial of anthrax appeared above the fold on page A1. Meanwhile, on the Internet, CNN.com published additional stories about Powell’s speech, summarizing his arguments, re-displaying still shots of his
PowerPoint slides—and fitting everything in to their running narrative theme: SHOWDOWN IRAQ (see Figure 1.1). All along bits and pieces—and, indeed, large chunks—of Colin Powell’s address were rearticulated and reassessed, stretched and condensed, analyzed and synthesized, twisted and distorted—but, above all, kept alive in journalistic discourse.

FIGURE 1.1. Banner Displayed on CNN.com During the Months Preceding the Iraq War

No, the rhetorical life of Colin Powell’s speech did not end when he stopped talking. Perhaps it changed colors, changed shapes, but there it was: recontextualized—and resuscitated—for the sake of an American public still deliberating about the prospect of war.

In fact, not only was Powell’s speech kept alive by journalists, but, in a sense, it was brought to life by journalists. Like mad Dr. Frankenstein, the journalists tried to force Powell’s speech into existence prematurely. For more than a week before the address—indeed, right up to the moment Powell opened his mouth—they precontextualized the speech, promoted it, previewed it, gave it form, even evaluated it in advance. For instance, in the morning before Powell spoke, CNN.com knew that he would “detail travels in and out of Iraq by al Qaeda operatives” (CNN/2.5/NA/21). Meanwhile, the Times foretold intercepted communications among Iraqi officials “indicating a pattern of hiding chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs from United Nations inspectors” (NYT/2.5/JPSW/12-13). And, mere moments before Powell
uttered his first words, NBC analysts reported not only that Powell would present “a very compelling case” (NBC/2.5/DK/251-2), but that, afterward, the US military would be postured to take down the Iraqis “in one smooth jerk” (NBC/2.5/BM/478). Yes, the journalists labored to bring this speech to life—and tried every tactic they could think of—predicting what Powell would say, how well he would say it, and who he would say it to. But, like Dr. Frankenstein, what they ultimately created was a monstrosity—for what they ultimately helped to bring into existence was a war.

Central Problem & Research Questions

The central phenomenon that this dissertation investigates is the transformation of a rhetorical event—across texts, across semiotic modalities, and across time. In other words, my project studies how one person’s rhetoric was intervened upon and reconfigured by other people in an intertextual and multimodal world. Given the controversy surrounding the campaign for the war in Iraq, I have elected to study 24 hours in the rhetorical life of Colin Powell’s infamous UN speech—as it was disseminated to the public on a major television network, and incorporated into various reports. Specifically, I examine the development and reproduction of this speech in news media—as it was first precontextualized in various journalistic previews, and ultimately recontextualized in subsequent news narratives. In undertaking this project, I hope to provide some preliminary answers to the following major research questions:

1. How is a rhetorical event transformed when it is precontextualized and recontextualized in multimodal contexts? In other words, how is a rhetorical
event transformed over time when i) aspects of it are introduced and previewed in temporally prior multimodal texts, and ii) aspects of it are relocated and reconfigured in temporally subsequent multimodal texts?

2. How do these transformations function to implicate, pre-position, and reposition rhetorical audiences? That is, how do the transformations of a rhetorical event over time function to imply particular audience responses and actions?

**Background of Problem**

In his seminal essay, “Political Rhetoric,” Lloyd Bitzer (1998 [1981]) argues that journalists should be recognized for what they are: rhetoricians in the political arena. As Bitzer explains:

- Today’s journalists, swelled by broadcasters, assisted by new technologies, and involved in the competitive merchandising of news, constitute a new class of orators. Although they would not prefer to be called orators, or rhetoricians, in fact the term fits. . . . Their message-making is voluminous; they have easy access to the most available and effective channels of public communication—channels already linked to audiences prepared to read and hear them; they win our trust more easily and securely than do politicians; and perhaps the journalists, rather than the preachers and politicians, have become the dominant speakers in our political life. (p. 18-19)
Bitzer makes clear that journalists are not just reporters of political events, but political agents in their own right— with unparalleled power to shape public opinion. One implication of Bitzer’s remarks is that scholars of rhetoric should begin taking seriously journalistic discourse. However, there remains a relative dearth of studies that deal specifically with the rhetoric of reporters. Meanwhile, studies that focus on the rhetoric of politicians proliferate.

This is particularly true of rhetorical scholarship dealing with the discursive run-up to the Iraq War. For instance, a fascinating special issue of the journal *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* published in 2007 contains seven articles meant to “scrutinize the rhetoric that brought America into [the Iraq] war” (Simons, 2007). However, only one of these articles (John et al., 2007) attempts to study how the press helped to promulgate the Bush administration’s call-to-arms message. And, even in this study, the focus is not so much on the role that U.S. news coverage played in shaping perceptions of political discourse, but the ways that political actors “shaped U.S. news coverage” (John et al., 2007: 197). In other words, the press is conceived of as a “conduit of the president’s and the administration’s outlook” (John et al., 2007: 201)— and not as an agent responsible for pre- and re-defining that outlook for the public.

Meanwhile, most other studies in the special issue tend to ignore the role of the press altogether. Instead, they thoroughly analyze the call-to-arms arguments of one or a few members of the Bush administration. Jamieson (2007), for example, surveys statements by Bush administration figures, and concludes that their claims about weapons of mass destruction were unwarranted based on the evidence, and, further, that “the
public could have known...that the evidence did not satisfy a high standard” during the run-up to war (p. 267). Similarly, Zarefsky (2007) investigates Colin Powell’s UN address and finds that, while Powell’s reasoning was legitimate given the circumstances, his evidence was tragically flawed. Like Jamieson, Zarefsky suggests that the public—among others—might have realized that Powell’s case was unsound had they been “more committed to critical questioning of [the] evidence” (p. 299).¹

While I am sympathetic to the view that the public could have known in advance that Bush’s case for war was flawed, I find it problematic to make such an assertion based on the analysis of one or a few political speeches. For one thing, I’m not sure it’s fair to assume that the public is (or can be) equipped with the thorough knowledge of rhetoric and argumentation necessary to critically analyze political arguments. More importantly, during times of war, the public does not interface solely with the discourse of politicians. In fact, it is more likely that the public interfaces with journalistic recontextualizations of this discourse—i.e. with press reports and analyses of political discourse. In a sense, the public is bombarded not just with the “talking points” of a given administration, but with mediated versions of these talking points, reinterpretations of political discourse in the news.

I raise these points not to denigrate what I see as an outstanding collection of studies about call-to-arms rhetoric, but to suggest that rhetorical scholars need also to begin adopting an intertextual analytic focus—one that accounts not only for political

¹ Finn (2010), too, who studies the visual representations in Powell’s address, comes to a remarkably similar conclusion: the visual evidence was weak and unpersuasive, and, thus, “people need to be more critically aware” of their own (and presumably others’) representational choices (p. 46).
discourse, but also for the variegated ways that this political discourse is transformed in journalistic texts. I believe that such an intertextual analytic focus is essential when it comes to examining, specifically, how call-to-arms speeches are recontextualized and refracted by reporters. However, I would also like to emphasize that this analytic focus may be employed to investigate how any type of rhetorical event may be re-represented and re-purposed by new rhetors in new discursive contexts.

Thus, a major goal of this dissertation is to introduce a systematic method for analyzing intertextual transformations across texts. More precisely, I aim to introduce a method that accounts for intertextual transformations across multimodal texts—i.e. texts comprised of a variety of semiotic modes (not just written and spoken words). I develop components of this methodology across several chapters in this dissertation. Ultimately, I employ the method to examine the ways journalists gave shape to Powell’s 2003 UN address—both before and after its delivery. Findings from this dissertation suggest that—through a variety of micro-discursive techniques—journalists 1) enhanced Powell’s character and credibility, 2) predisposed audiences to regard his case as warranted even before it had been presented, and 3) recontextualized his arguments, after the fact, in ways that increased their certainty, salience and evidentiality. In light of these findings, I suggest that the micro-transformations that occur as rhetors pre- and recontextualize a discursive event have a cumulative effect that may drastically alter what a text comes to mean for rhetorical audiences. Indeed, a call-to-arms speech made by a political figure

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2 See Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001).
may not even be as relevant to public decision-making about war as are its pre- and reincarnations in the press.

In the next chapter, I will further develop the theoretical orientation that animates this study. However, before moving on, it is important to situate both Powell’s speech and the news narratives that covered it in their proper social and historical context. That is the object of the next section of this chapter.

**Context: Powell’s Speech & the News Narratives**

**The Bush Administration’s Push for War in Iraq**

It is now well-known that even before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001—and indeed before George W. Bush’s inauguration—members of the Bush administration had considered preemptive military action against Iraq.\(^3\) However, the public push for war in Iraq really did not intensify until late 2001—just months after 9/11 (Althaus & Largio, 2004). During his State of the Union Address in January of 2002, Bush strongly hinted at the prospect of violence, declaring that Iraq was continuing “to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror” (Bush, 2002a). By August, Vice President Cheney was practically demanding that the nation take “preemptive”

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\(^3\) Hybel & Kaufman (2006) report that the idea of preemptive violence was not new to members of George W. Bush’s administration. People like Dick Cheney and Paul Wolfowitz were advancing the policy of preemption as a way to sustain superpower status in the early 1990s. Later, the idea of preemption was specifically attached to Iraq. For instance, in January 1998, members of the Project for the New American Century proposed that President Clinton take preemptive measures to remove Saddam Hussein from power. Of the 18 people who signed the recommendation, 11 would eventually serve under President Bush. In 2000, Condoleezza Rice—then an adviser to George W. Bush the presidential candidate—wrote that Saddam must be removed. And, in the days just after 9/11, several members of Bush’s administration, including Donald Rumsfeld, urged Bush to pursue aggressive military action against Iraq.
action against Iraq to facilitate regime change.\textsuperscript{4} At the time, Cheney suggested that a “return of inspectors [to Iraq] would provide no assurance whatsoever” that Saddam would comply with UN resolutions, and that it might even “provide false comfort that Saddam was somehow ‘back in his box’” (Cheney, 2002). Nonetheless, a month later, President Bush (convinced of the need for international legitimacy) addressed the United Nations General Assembly, and requested a new resolution that would place inspectors back in Iraq. He warned that if Iraq failed to comply with new resolutions, action would be “unavoidable” (Bush, 2002b).

The next month, in Cincinnati Ohio, the president took his case directly to the American public for the first time, claiming that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and reason to supply them to the al Qaeda terrorist network. Again, while he expressed his “hope” that violence could be avoided, he cautioned that war would likely be necessary (Bush, 2002c).\textsuperscript{5} Three days later, Congress, in a nearly unanimous vote, authorized the President to use force in Iraq—essentially at his discretion. Then, just one month later (2002, November 8), the UN capitulated to the president’s demands. Finding that Iraq was in “material breach” of earlier resolutions, the UN adopted a new resolution (1441), which gave the Iraqi leadership a final opportunity to disarm. Specifically,

\textsuperscript{4} I place “preemptive” in scare quotes because as Keller & Mitchell (2006) point out, the term was being misused by the Bush administration—at least according to the US Department of Defense \textit{Dictionary of Military Terms}. Preemptive violence confronts \textit{imminent} danger; that is, it preempts a strike that is about to take place. What the Bush administration was calling for was more appropriately called preventive violence, i.e. a strike at a \textit{potential} enemy who might be capable of an attack at some unspecified time in the future (p. 4; 10-11). The rhetorical (mis)use of the term “preemptive” surely helped the administration secure support for the war. See Dunmire (2009) for an intertextual analysis that situates the post-9/11 “Bush Doctrine” of preventative war among its earlier post-Cold War articulations.

\textsuperscript{5} Secretly, the president was determined to invade Iraq, and was not above “cherry-picking” evidence in order to convince the public. In fact, a 2002 memo produced by British intelligence officials said that “intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy’ by the Bush administration to fit its desire to go to war” (Van Natta, 2006).
resolution 1441 required Iraq to cooperate with “enhanced inspections,” or else face “serious consequences.” The term “serious consequences” was “purposefully left undefined” (Isikoff & Corn, 2006: 158) so that nations (e.g. France) that were unconvinced of the need for military action could safely vote for the resolution. Later, of course, the Bush administration would insist that “serious consequences” meant “war.”

For many months, Bush and his team continued to argue that Saddam Hussein presented an urgent threat. Still, by January 2003, the UN inspectors had not found weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. At this point, public support for war with Iraq was already strong. However, roughly 64% of the public believed that, before any invasion, the administration should go back to the United Nations and secure authorization to take military action (Moore, 2002). Thus, even though several members of the Bush administration believed that Resolution 1441 already sanctioned war, they decided to send Colin Powell to the UN to make the case for a second resolution. Of course, if Powell failed, Bush was still determined to invade. In fact, he privately told British Prime Minister Tony Blair that regardless of the outcome at the UN, a “coalition of the willing” would commence fighting sometime in March (Isikoff & Corn, 2006: 180).

So, late in January 2003, Colin Powell began preparing a presentation. At the same time, and presumably unknown to Powell, the National Security Agency (NSA) hatched an illegal operation to spy on “swing voters” in the UN Security Council to ensure that their reactions to Powell’s address would be “favorable to U.S. goals” (Mitchell & Mitchell, 2008: 7-8). In any case, Powell and his staff, along with CIA

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6 According to Moore (2002), roughly 58% supported an invasion.
director George Tenet, and several members of Vice President Cheney’s office, scrutinized intelligence information in order to present the most solid argument against Iraq. Reportedly, the first draft was so riddled with bogus intelligence, that Powell lost his patience, and declared the case “bullshit” (Isikoff & Corn, 2006: 181). But, the team continued working, and Powell eventually settled on a presentation that he believed was reasonably sound. In spite of this “vetting” of evidence, it is clear that Powell ignored advice to remove unsupported claims from his final presentation. In fact, Powell’s own intelligence staff, the State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) sent Powell several memos, flagging for him about forty allegations that they considered “WEAK.” In response, Powell deleted many of these items, but knowingly left about a dozen unsubstantiated claims in the final draft of his speech (Isikoff & Corn, 2006: 179).

Among members of the U.S. public, there was a great deal of interest in Powell’s 5 February 2003 address. In fact, according to polling data taken before Powell’s address (Moore, 2003), nearly 90% of Americans reported that Powell’s presentation would be important in determining their view about an attack on Iraq. In fact, more than half said that they might change their mind—one way or another—depending on the strength of Powell’s case (Moore, 2003). However, most Americans—fifty-seven percent—*did not see* Colin Powell deliver his address, and an additional fifteen percent saw “only a few minutes” of his presentation on television. (CNN/USA Today/Gallup, 2003: 51). In fact, during the evening after his address, a majority of U.S. citizens (62%) reported that they had only “heard or read about what Powell said” (CNN/USA Today/Gallup, 2003: 51). Thus, although approval for Powell’s speech was very high, and although support for an
invasion of Iraq did increase slightly after his presentation, it is clear that most people did not hear Powell speak and, instead, formed their opinions based on news coverage of his address.

In any case, the international community was largely unconvinced that the evidence presented in Powell’s presentation indicated the need for military action. The veto-bearing members of the Security Council—France, Russia, and China—continued to call for increased inspections, rather than war. Meanwhile, among members of the international public, anti-war sentiment was even stronger. In mid-February, millions of people across the world protested a possible invasion (McFadden, 2003). Still, as planned, the Bush administration invaded Iraq in March—without a new UN resolution. Ultimately, of course, a year into the invasion, after many thousands of deaths, no weapons of mass destruction were found. The fighting raged on, only now, more than ever before, “certain blood was being shed for uncertain reasons” (O’Brien, 1990: 40).

**U.S. Press Coverage**

Several journalists report that, after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, and out of fear of being called “unpatriotic,” there was increased pressure to avoid stories critical of the Bush administration. Perhaps, most famously, in 2002, CBS News anchor Dan Rather admitted in an interview with the BBC that he, and other journalists, felt compelled to avoid asking “tough questions” during the Afghanistan War. As Rather explained:
It starts with a feeling of patriotism within oneself. It carries through with a certain knowledge that the country as a whole—and for all the right reasons—felt and continues to feel this surge of patriotism within themselves. And one finds oneself saying: “I know the right question, but you know what? This is not exactly the right time to ask it.” (qtd. in Engel, 2002)

A number of scholars (Glasgow University Media Group, 1976, 1985; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Van Dijk, 1993) have suggested that this kind of reluctance to report stories “unfriendly” to the government is indicative of “more long term structural weaknesses” in western news media (Kumar, 2006: 52). As Kumar (2006) explains, “excessive reliance on government and corporate sources, professional journalism’s deference to official sources, the lack of funding for investigative journalism, the marginalization of dissenting voices, and mechanisms that promote self-censorship” all affected U.S. news coverage during the run-up to the Iraq War (p. 52). As a consequence, news narratives in the mainstream media during this time were typically dominated by pro-war voices.

For example, a study by Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) found that in a two-week period at the beginning of February 2003—the same period in which Powell delivered his address—the vast majority of U.S. guests on network news (NBC, ABC, CBS, PBS) programs were government or military officials who supported invading Iraq. In fact, “just one of 267 U.S. sources was affiliated with anti-war activism—less than half a percent” (FAIR, 2003).
Meanwhile, reporters skeptical of the war effort were sometimes silenced. As Jessica Yellin (2008), a correspondent who covered the White House for ABC News and MSNBC in 2002 and 2003, explained to Anderson Cooper, it wasn’t just “self-censorship,” but pressure from corporate executives that led journalists to produce positive stories about President Bush and his campaign for war in Iraq:

When the lead-up to the war began, the press corps was under enormous pressure from corporate executives, frankly, to make sure that this was a war that was presented in a way that was consistent with the patriotic fever in the nation and the president’s high approval ratings. . . . The higher the president’s approval ratings, the more pressure I had from news executives . . . to put on positive stories about the president. . . . They would edit my pieces. They would push me in different directions. They would turn down stories that were more critical. . . . That was my experience. (Yellin, 2008)

In at least one instance, a political commentator was fired for espousing anti-war views. Specifically, Phil Donahue’s show on MSNBC was cancelled because, as a leaked internal memo reports, Donahue “seems to delight in presenting guests who are anti-war, anti-Bush and skeptical of the administration’s motives” (qtd. in Ellis, 2003). The author of the memo goes on to complain that Donahue presented a “difficult public face for NBC in a time of war,” and openly worries about voicing too much anti-war sentiment given that “our competitors are waving the flag at every opportunity” (Ellis, 2003). (At the time of the cancellation, Donahue’s show was the highest rated on MSNBC.)
But it wasn’t just censorship of reporters. The media also intensified the call-to-arms message by snatching any “independent” sources that would verify the need for regime change in Iraq, while “downplaying or omitting facts that would refute the administration’s case for war” (Kumar, 2006: 60). In an internal review of their Iraq War coverage, the New York Times editors (2004) found that

Editors at several levels who should have been challenging reporters and pressing for more skepticism were perhaps too intent on rushing scoops into the paper. . . . Articles based on dire claims about Iraq tended to get prominent display, while follow-up articles that called the original ones into question were sometimes buried. In some cases, there was no follow-up at all. (‘The Times’)

The Times cites as an example, the case of Iraq’s attempt to purchase aluminum tubes allegedly intended for nuclear weapons manufacturing. An initial article headlined, “U.S. Says Hussein Intensified Quest for A-Bomb Parts,” was the featured front-page story on September 8, 2002. In the article, it is reported confidently that the aluminum tubes are “signs of a renewed Iraqi interest in acquiring nuclear arms.” However, when the Times learned five days later that the use of the tubes was being debated in the intelligence community, “the misgivings appeared deep in an article on Page A13, under a headline that gave no inkling that we were revising our earlier view (‘White House Lists Iraq Steps to Build Banned Weapons’)” (“The Times”).

Not surprisingly, the Bush administration took advantage of the reporters’ willingness to suspend disbelief. In the case of the aluminum tubes mentioned above, an
anonymous official first leaked the information about the tubes to the New York Times. Then, the same morning, on Meet the Press, Vice President Cheney cited the Times article as proof that Iraq was seeking to acquire nuclear weapons. Essentially, he was “citing an article that came from information leaked by his own administration” (Isikoff & Corn, p. 36). According to Cheney, the evidence was “now public.”

It was in this friendly media climate that Colin Powell delivered his address. As you might imagine, most editorials around the country raved. Over a hundred newspapers compared Powell’s speech to Adlai Stevenson’s UN appearance in 1962 (Unger, 2007: 286). The Washington Post (2003) editors called the case “Irrefutable” (“Irrefutable”). The New York Times (2003) described it as “powerful” and “convincing” (“The case”). USA Today (2003) lauded Powell’s “new and forceful evidence” (“Powell lays out”). And the Wall Street Journal (2003) perhaps went furthest of all, declaring that Powell’s evidence amounted not just to a “smoking gun,” but to a “smoking fusillade of Saddam Hussein's efforts to resist and confound the U.N. order that he disarm” (“Powell’s smoking gun”). It was a great victory for Colin Powell. Two years later, he would refer to it as a lasting blot on his record (Weisman, 2005).

News Data in This Study

The editorials praising Powell’s address are fascinating, but in this study, I am more interested in the so-called “hard news.” That is, I am interested in those news stories in which Powell’s evidence was challenged.

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7 To find a truly different opinion of Powell’s speech, one really had to go “off the beaten path.” The editorial from the World Socialist Web Site (2003) is fascinating for its probing critique of Powell’s address (“Powell’s UN speech”). Looking back, this editorial shines in comparison to the fawning coverage evident in mainstream editorials.
narratives that claim to report the news without editorializing. As noted, I have narrowed my focus to news narratives that appeared in the roughly 24-hour period surrounding Powell’s address. Needless to say, this was a critical time in the life of Powell’s address—a time when many Americans, and many others around the world, were “tuned in,” and thus capable of being persuaded. Specifically, I analyze news narratives from three primary sources: television broadcasts on NBC, newspaper articles in the New York Times, and Internet news reports on CNN.com. For each source, I located the “lead story” published before Powell’s address, and the “lead story” published after. In addition, on NBC, I also examined the live “Special Report” leading up to Powell’s presentation, and the live coverage that came directly after he finished. In this way, I could account for how each of the three main news sources (television, newspaper, and Internet) precontextualized and recontextualized Powell’s arguments. In Table 1.1 below I enumerate all of the news narratives analyzed.

The NBC news broadcasts were accessed from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive. The two articles from the New York Times were obtained from microfilm archives. Finally, the two Internet news reports from CNN.com were accessed using the Internet Archive: Wayback Machine (http://www.archive.org/web/web.php), a virtual library of now-expired digital content on the web.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title of Program/ Article</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steve Capus (Executive Producer)</td>
<td><em>NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw</em></td>
<td>4 February 2003, 6:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Capus (Executive Producer)</td>
<td><em>NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw</em></td>
<td>5 February 2003, 6:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia Preston &amp; Steven Weisman</td>
<td>“Powell to charge Iraq is shifting its illegal arms to foil inspectors,” <em>New York Times</em></td>
<td>5 February 2003, (morning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steven Weisman</td>
<td>“Powell, in U.N. speech, presents case to show Iraq has not disarmed,” <em>New York Times</em></td>
<td>6 February 2003, (morning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>“Powell to make case against Iraq: Secretary of State to give crucial address to Security Council,” <em>CNN.com</em></td>
<td>5 February 2003, (morning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John King &amp; David Ensor</td>
<td>“Powell: Iraq hiding weapons, aiding terrorists; Annan: War not inevitable,” <em>CNN.com</em></td>
<td>6 February 2003, (morning)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My decision to review articles from these three primary sources was based on their availability to the public, reputation, and accessibility to me. First, NBC’s “Nightly News” drew more viewers than any other news outlet during the Iraq War (Project of Excellence in Journalism, 2004), making it likely that their news reports about Powell’s address were the most widely watched on television. In addition, polling data suggests that Tom Brokaw, anchor for NBC, was considered the “most trusted anchor” in America around the time of Powell’s address (“Poll,” 2003). Next, I have chosen to analyze the New York Times since it is generally considered the “newspaper of record” and because its articles circulate globally. Finally, I selected the news reports from CNN.com because it was (and remains) one of the most recognizable Internet news outlets. In addition, the CNN.com stories archived in the Wayback Machine had fewer gaps in their content than stories from any other Internet news source.

Notational Scheme

Before moving on, I would also like to briefly explain the notational conventions I use to reference the various journalistic texts. After each excerpt from a given report, you will note a parenthetical citation with the following information: journalistic institution, the date of the report, the speaker or writer of the discourse, and the relevant line numbers from my analytic transcripts. Thus, the following parenthetical—(NBC/2.5/AM/34-42)—refers to the NBC television news broadcast on February 5, 2003, and, more specifically, to Andrea Mitchell’s report appearing on lines 34-42 of my
multimodal transcript. Importantly, there were two NBC broadcasts on February 5, 2003—one was the Special Report that aired live the morning of Powell’s address and included pre- and post-speech commentary, and the other was the regular nightly newscast that aired later that evening. NBC SR/2.5 refers to the live special report; NBC/2.5 refers to the evening news broadcast. Table 1.2 below lists the abbreviations for the names of all speakers and writers that appear in this study.

In addition to the newscasts, I also created a multimodal transcript of Colin Powell’s presentation. I refer to Powell’s presentation as UN since it was delivered at the United Nations. Aside from this, references to Powell’s address follow the same notational conventions. Thus, (UN/2.5/CP/1-8) refers to lines 1-8 of the transcript of Powell’s 5 February 2003 UN address.

Occasionally, the letter “L” appears before line numbers in parenthetical references to NBC broadcasts. Here, “L” refers to the roughly 20-second lead-ins to given news broadcasts in which Tom Brokaw briefly introduces the main news stories of the day. Because I coded these lead-ins separately from the actual news segments, they have their own line numbers. Also, two speakers will occasionally appear together in excerpts of televised newscasts. In such cases, I separate the initials of each speaker by a period (.). Thus, AM.CP means that Andrea Mitchell speaks in the first part of the excerpt, and Colin Powell speaks in the latter part of the excerpt. In such excerpts, it should be obvious when one speaker stops talking and another begins.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journalist/ Speaker</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NBC</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Brokaw</td>
<td>TB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrea Mitchell</td>
<td>AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Miklaszewski</td>
<td>JM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ron Allen</td>
<td>RA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell Brown</td>
<td>CB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Kay</td>
<td>DK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Butler</td>
<td>RB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Barry McCaffrey</td>
<td>BM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Hamilton</td>
<td>LH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dianne Feinstein</td>
<td>DF</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Warner</td>
<td>JW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saddam Hussein</td>
<td>SH</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Amir Al Saadi</td>
<td>AS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin Powell</td>
<td>CP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Rumsfeld</td>
<td>DR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hans Blix</td>
<td>HB</td>
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<td>Dominique de Villepin</td>
<td>DV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Straw</td>
<td>JS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kofi Annan</td>
<td>KA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NYT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia Preston &amp; Steven R. Weisman</td>
<td>JPSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steven R. Weisman</td>
<td>SW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CNN.com</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Author Cited</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John King and David Ensor</td>
<td>JKDE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 2

A THEORETICAL ORIENTATION & ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK

A discourse analysis that is not based on grammar is not an analysis at all, but simply a running commentary on a text. ~ Michael Halliday (1985, p. xvi)

The most pressing issue is the role of the visual semiotic in all forms of communication. It is no longer possible to avoid this issue in critical analyses, on the assumption . . . that all relevant meaning in a text is, as it were, fully glossed in the verbal component of a text. ~ Gunther Kress (1993, p. 188)

Textual meanings are not simply given in texts, but are made and transformed (recontextualized) out of specific intertextual co-patternings of meaning relations and their context-dependent uses in determinate social and historical situations. ~ Paul Thibault (1991, p. 124).

[Critical discourse analysis] should deal primarily with the discourse dimension of power abuse and the injustice and inequality that result from it. ~ Teun Van Dijk (1993, p. 252)

In this chapter, I discuss the general theory of discourse that undergirds this study. After defining discourse as contextualized social interaction, I move on to examine four different—but ultimately synoptic—views of discourse: a rhetorical view, a systemic-functional view, an intertextual view, and a critical view. This study primarily adopts a rhetorical view of discourse; however, I suggest that all four perspectives are indispensable to my project. Specifically, I claim that the rhetorical view, while theoretically rich, lacks a rigorous and systematic methodological program capable of accounting for micro-discursive phenomena in intertextual and multi-semiotic contexts.
To compensate for these methodological limitations, I advocate for the delicate and systematic analytic frameworks which have been developed by systemic-functional discourse analysts. Furthermore, I argue for an intertextual analytic focus—one specifically equipped to address issues of recontextualization, including the ways speakers transform prior discourse to achieve their own rhetorical objectives. Finally, I suggest that the critical approach to discourse analysis is the only one that specifically theorizes discursive power abuse by elite actors—and, thus, is the only approach capable of explaining and challenging the role that news media play in advancing unjust political arguments for war. After detailing the constellation of analytic approaches employed in this study, I end the chapter with an outline of the dissertation structure, including a brief summary of each subsequent chapter.

**Discourse: An Overview**

Following Fairclough (1995) discourse can be defined as “social action and interaction, people interacting together in real social situations” (p. 18). In short, discourse is communication-in-context. As a rule, it involves human participants which we may refer to as dialogic interactants. These might be a speaker and addressee, a writer and readership, a news anchor and television audience, etc. Also, as a rule, discourse occurs in real social contexts. In fact, discursive interaction is always impacted by a confluence of both relatively stable and shifting contextual factors: time, place, occasion, the lived social history and social role of each participant, (shared) cultural understandings, the accumulation of recent and historical events, the type of mediation
involved, etc.\textsuperscript{9} Importantly, discourse as a kind of social action also influences context. There is a dialectical relationship between context and social interaction, whereby context shapes social interaction and social interaction, in turn, shapes context.

In any case, the “stuff” of discourse is semiosis—including language, visuals, gestures, and other types of symbolic actions produced by interactants to make meaning in context. A given instance of such semiosis is called a text. A text may be thought of as a particular manifestation of discourse in a particular situation. It “may be lasting or ephemeral, momentous or trivial, memorable or soon forgotten” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: 3). As Halliday (1989) explains, texts are functional—they do some job in some context (p. 10). Texts are social actions that \textit{unfold in real time}. However, for the purposes of analysis, texts may also be treated as transcriptions of discursive interaction—“records” of a communicative event.

In sum, \textit{discourse} is a general term for contextualized social interaction (or, more technically, contextualized semiosis). Meanwhile, \textit{text} refers to a specific instance of discourse in a specific situation.

Most scholars who investigate situated discourse—regardless of their specific field—would probably agree that text and context are dialectically related, and that the meaning of a given text is always negotiated between dialogic partners. Thus, it can be said that different kinds of discourse analysts view discourse similarly. In the next section, I identify four such similar “views” of discourse: a rhetorical view, a systemic-

\textsuperscript{9} A number of scholars have debated how to theorize social context, and how best to account for it (Biesecker, 1989; Bitzer, 1968; Consigny, 1974; Edbaur, 2005; Fairclough, 2003; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Vatz, 1973; Van Dijk, 2008, 2009; Witte, 1992). But all generally agree on the basic point that social interaction and context are interrelated.
functional view, a critical view, and an intertextual view. Ultimately, I see these views of discourse as compatible and reconcilable. Drawing any hard and fast distinctions between the various perspectives is difficult—and it is not unheard of, for example, for a rhetorical scholar to perform a critical intertextual analysis that draws on systemic-functional linguistics (e.g. Dunmire, 2009).

Still, depending on which view they give primacy, different analysts will ask different questions about discourse, emphasize different features of texts, and glean different insights about a given instance of situated semiosis. For example, a rhetorical scholar might examine a political text-in-context and ask why the politician chooses various lines of argument in response to the given rhetorical situation and in consideration of a particular audience. Meanwhile, a critical discourse analyst might examine the same text, and ask whether and to what degree the lines of argument enact or sustain inequitable social arrangements (Van Dijk, 1993). Bridging the two approaches is, of course, possible. One might ask simultaneously about argumentative strategies in relation to audiences—and in relation to social ethics.\footnote{In fact, for certain texts, it would seem unthinkable to only consider lines of argument without also taking into account ethical considerations. For instance, a rhetorical analysis of Hitler’s argumentative techniques which did not also comment on the ethics of Hitler’s discourse would seem rather inhumane—and pointless.}

I would like to suggest that synthesizing views of discourse can be quite valuable as it helps to fill in some of the gaps that any one view of discourse would inevitably leave open. In other words, I argue that integrating various approaches to discourse study enables analysts to better account for the complexities of their data. Thus, I refer to the four views of discourse discussed in the next section as \textit{synoptic}—not only because they
share certain assumptions about texts-in-context, but also because I find it useful—even necessary—to adopt these four views simultaneously in this study. Below I discuss what is special about each view of discourse, and why each is indispensable to my study.

First, I suggest that the rhetorical view of discourse provides a rich explanation of how rhetors discursively position audiences to accept certain premises and perform certain actions. However, I argue that the rhetorical perspective lacks a rigorous methodology that explains at a fine level of detail how audience positioning works in intertextual and multimodal texts. Thus, I propose that rhetorical scholars 1) utilize the systematic methodologies developed by systemic-functional discourse analysts (Baldry & Thibault, 2005; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Martin & White, 2005), and 2) adopt an intertextual analytic focus. Finally, I advocate for a critical view of discourse that accounts for discursively enacted power abuse.

Four Synoptic Views of Discourse

A Rhetorical View of Discourse

My project is ultimately concerned with tracing the transformation of a political argument as it was pre- and recontextualized in various news reports. Above all, what interests me are the ways that journalists positioned audiences with regard to the certainty, warrantability, and legitimacy of Powell’s claims. Given that I am talking about arguments, audiences and warrants, it is only natural that rhetoric be at the center of my study. As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) note, rhetorical study entails
identifying and analyzing the discursive techniques by which rhetors induce or increase “adherence of minds” (p. 14). In other words, rhetoric is concerned with the discursive choices that agents make to induce or increase persuasion—which we may define as agreement or commitment to certain premises. Of course, rhetoric need not be a purely linguistic phenomenon. As Kennedy (1991) suggests, rhetoric involves “signs, including language” (p. 7, my emphasis); it is not limited to linguistic symbols. Thus, the rhetorical view assumes that discourse is motivated semiotic activity that is adapted to an audience and aimed at securing agreement or inducing action.

For rhetorical scholars, Aristotle’s (2007) tripartite system for classifying discourse is still the standard. Aristotle identified three types of persuasive oratory—forensic, deliberative, and epideictic—each one related to a given context and temporal domain. Forensic oratory concerns past events and is typical of jurisprudential contexts. Deliberative oratory concerns the future, and is typical of legislative contexts. Epideictic oratory concerns the present, and is typical of ceremonial speeches (e.g. eulogies) in which community values are reasserted. Aristotle also identified three artistic proofs that constitute the art of rhetoric—logos, ethos, and pathos. Logos refers to logical reasoning or argument involved in practical decision-making. Ethos refers to the character, credibility, or authority that a speaker creates for him- or herself in discourse. Finally, pathos refers to emotional appeals used to put the audience in the right frame of mind. These basic categorizations remain useful, and I will refer to them occasionally throughout this study.
The study of rhetoric has typically been linked with the study of argumentation—for example, the relationship between premises and conclusions, as in the Aristotelian (2007) enthymeme; or between claims, data, and warrants, as in Toulmin’s (1958) theory of argumentation. However, as Thieme (2010) points out, rhetors not only persuade audiences by means of explicit argumentation, they also (more subtly) “design” audiences, positioning them to accept certain attitudes and act in certain ways by appealing to their ideological convictions and moral beliefs.

This notion of positioning an audience is critical to my study, and is worthy of elaboration. To position an audience is not the same as to persuade an audience. When an audience has been persuaded, their minds have been changed—either they believe in something that they did not believe in before, or they believe in something more strongly than they did before. Positioning an audience, though, does not necessarily yield persuasion. An audience may always resist the way they are being positioned by a rhetor—although resistance may be difficult and often comes with a social cost. For example, if I say baldly, “The capital of Italy is Paris,” then I position my audience to accept this assertion as incontrovertible.\footnote{According to Halliday and Matthiessen’s (2004) view of language, every speaker’s utterance implies a preferred response from the addressee (p. 108-11). For example, when one offers information, s/he prefers that the addressee will acknowledge that information (p. 108).} My audience may, of course, reject the way they are being positioned—and “refuse their adherence” to the given assertion (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969: 65). However, depending on the circumstances, it might be very difficult for my audience to challenge my statement. For instance, if I am an authority figure (e.g. an adult addressing young children or a manager addressing
employees) my audience may assume that I am correct or feel socially awkward about correcting me.\textsuperscript{12}

In this study, I am principally interested in the ways audiences are positioned—i.e. the ways that rhetors \textit{imply} certain audience responses and actions. I make no claims as to whether audiences ultimately accept how they are positioned. On the other hand, because the rhetors under study are journalists who presumably enjoy a certain air of credibility and authority, I shall assume that there is a degree of social pressure exerted on public audiences to regard journalistic reports as accurate and valid.

Without resorting to overt argumentation, there are a number ways that rhetors can position audiences to think and act in certain ways. Many scholars have pointed out, for instance, that the very use of language to construe reality is rhetorical. As Burke (1966) explains, language use is never neutral—it is not a “reflection of reality” but a “selection of reality”—and, ultimately, “a deflection of reality” (p. 45). In other words, language is not a transparent vehicle for communicating truth, but a means for construing and filtering experience—a way of directing audiences “to look at some things and overlook others” (Herrick, 2005: 226). Linguistic descriptions of the world, then, are especially well-equipped to “covertly”\textsuperscript{13} position audiences, since rhetors can define reality in ways that advance certain values and beliefs, “without having to defend such values and beliefs explicitly” (Schiappa, 2003: 131). Often, rhetors attempt to persuade not through “claims supported by reasons,” but through representations of reality that are

\textsuperscript{12} According to Brown & Levinson’s (1978) theory of politeness, interlocutors generally seek to avoid, or at least, mitigate those “face-threatening acts” that cause social embarrassment.

\textsuperscript{13} Indeed, Fairclough (2003) argues that such “hortatory reports” have a “covert prescriptive intent, aimed at getting people to act in certain ways on the basis of representations of what is” (p. 96).
“proclaimed as if they were indisputable facts” (Zarefsky, 1998: 5). Such “factual” descriptions presuppose universal agreement—and, thus, position audiences to see particular (and controvertible) representations of the world as “binding on everybody” (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969: 67).

Of course, representations of reality are often inflected with value-based discourse, which is critical to rhetoric. As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) explain, “one appeals to values in order to induce the hearer to make certain choices rather than others, and, most of all, to justify those choices so that they may be accepted and approved by others” (p. 75). In other words, by referring to values rhetors can represent certain actions as justifiable, and can, thus, create a “disposition toward action” (p. 74). So, while “factual” descriptions position audiences to believe that some state of affairs is true or real, value-based descriptions position audiences to act in accordance with community standards.

In sum, the rhetorical view posits that discourse is not only directed at an audience, but is aimed at persuading an audience. More precisely, discourse—whether it is explicitly argumentative or not—is aimed at positioning audiences to accept certain propositions and/or perform certain actions. Rhetorical analysis, then, involves examining and explaining the discursive strategies rhetors employ to influence audiences in particular contexts.

As I said, the rhetorical view is central to my study. Indeed, it is this view that leads me to ask how journalists positioned public audiences to respond to Colin Powell’s address. However, as Ritivoi (2008) has suggested, exclusively rhetorical approaches to
discourse analysis are often plagued by methodological limitations. First, the rhetorical view lacks a *delicate and systematic* method for identifying the micro-discursive techniques that rhetors use to position audiences. For example, while several rhetorical scholars have suggested that “factual” descriptions are rhetorical, few have discussed the specific features of the discourse that rhetors employ to create varying degrees of “facticity” in texts (Latour & Woolgar, 1986: 80). Likewise, while many rhetorical scholars discuss the importance of values in disposing people to act, few, if any, offer a fine-tuned analytic framework for examining evaluative lexis. Most rhetorical scholars limit their discussions of texts to aspects of figuration or argumentation. What is needed, in my opinion, is a more detailed and rigorous approach that accounts for lexical and grammatical rhetorical choices on a clause-by-clause basis.

Second, while many (not all) proponents of the rhetorical view acknowledge that rhetoric can involve any type of semiosis, the field still lacks a consistent and systematic approach for accounting for the rhetoric of multisemiotic texts. For example, Hill and Helmers’ (2004) edited collection, *Defining Visual Rhetorics*, introduces a variety of interesting approaches to visual-verbal rhetorical analysis. However, not one contributor to the collection articulates a clear and detailed account of his or her methodology—making each approach rather difficult to replicate. Again, what is needed is a well-defined set of analytic techniques and heuristic categories for investigating multimodal rhetoric.

Third, while some rhetorical scholars (Fahnestock, 1986; Porter, 1986; Selzer, 1993) have acknowledged the importance of intertextuality, most rhetorical analyses
continue to treat texts in isolation—i.e. divorced from their intertextual counterparts. Likewise, while many rhetorical scholars have embraced Mikhail Bakhtin as part of the “rhetorical tradition” (e.g. Bizzell & Herzberg, 2001), none to my knowledge has developed Bakhtin’s theories into a systematic framework for rhetorical analysis. Indeed, as I suggest below, we must travel outside of rhetorical scholarship and into the field of linguistics to locate a systematic method for investigating how rhetors exploit resources of dialogicality to position putative audiences (Martin & White, 2005).

To sum up, my criticisms of the rhetorical view have less to do with rhetorical theory, which I generally find very rich, and more to do with current approaches to rhetorical analysis, which I find rather wanting. With this in mind, I now turn to the other views of discourse, which, I argue, offer specific remedies for the methodological limitations of rhetorical analysis—and which suggest additional questions which, I believe, more rhetorical scholars should begin asking.

A Systemic-Functional and Multimodal View of Discourse

Crucial to my study is a multifunctional view of discourse adapted from Halliday’s (1978) systemic theory of language. Indeed, systemic-functional approaches to both linguistic and multimodal discourse analysis can provide the kind of methodological rigor that is currently missing from most rhetorical criticism (Johnstone & Eisenhart, 2008). Systemic-functional linguistics, or SFL, conceives of language as a network of meaning potential—that is, as a social semiotic resource for making meaning (Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). What this implies is that meanings—for example, the meanings of words—are not fixed by some static, rule-bound system.
Instead, meanings are made in contextualized use. People are free to draw from the meaning potential of language—to represent reality in ways that correspond to their perception of the social context, and, importantly, to their rhetorical objective.

As in rhetorical scholarship, SFL views text and context as reciprocally interdependent. In fact, an important theoretical insight in Halliday’s (1978) model is that context is realized in and through language. In other words, language is both the realization of the context, as well as a force that realizes or enacts the context (Thibault 1991). SFL posits that language realizes various aspects of the social context by simultaneously performing three essential metafunctions—ideational, interpersonal, and textual, respectively. The ideational metafunction of language is primarily concerned with construing physical reality, including activities, events, processes, and the participants who carry them out. The interpersonal metafunction construes social relationships and social roles (whether individual or institutional), and expresses modal, evaluative, and affective stances (see below). Finally, the textual metafunction construes relationships between various elements of the discourse, weaving the separate parts into a coherent whole.

As I said above, the greatest value of SFL to rhetoricians is that it provides a method of textual analysis that could serve to ground rhetorical inquiry. Specifically, through a systematic and micro-analytic focus on lexis and grammar, SFL can uncover “constitutive rhetoric” (Charland, 1987) whereby rhetors construe reality and interact with audiences. That is, SFL directs analysts to see the ways that rhetors 1) position

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14 The words “representational” and “experiential” are sometimes used interchangeably with the word “ideational.”
audiences to accept certain “claims to reality,” and 2) align audiences into communities of value which dispose them to act in certain ways.

For instance, an SFL transitivity analysis (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: 179-197) provides a systematic method for examining linguistic representations of reality. Such an analysis reveals how rhetors choose to construe various events, circumstances, and the participants involved in them. A transitivity analysis is important to rhetorical scholars as it can show how rhetors strategically name (or fail to name) actors, and assign (or fail to assign) responsibility for various events. To take an oft-cited and mundane example, there is a difference between saying 1) “I dropped the glass” and 2) “The glass fell” (see Table 2.1).

**TABLE 2.1. SFL Transitivity Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Process: material</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I dropped</td>
<td>The glass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The glass</td>
<td>fell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A transitivity analysis not only accounts for the lexicogrammatical differences between these two constructions, but asks why (from a contextual standpoint) a rhetor may choose to construe the event one way as opposed to the other. Indeed, a transitivity analysis shows well how, in Burke’s (1966) terms, a rhetor may “select” certain representations of reality—and “deflect” others from being viewed.

Transitivity focuses on the ideational metafunction of the language. Perhaps even more important to rhetorical analysis, however, is the *interpersonal* metafunction which is responsible for negotiating rhetor-audience interaction. Drawing on the work of
Bakhtin (1981, 1986) and Halliday (1978), Martin and White (2005) have developed a branch of SFL called APPRAISAL that systematically accounts for this interpersonal dimension of the language. Specifically, Martin and White (2005) offer a method for explaining how rhetors blend linguistic resources of tense, polarity, modality and evaluation to establish rhetor-audience relationships and position audiences to be aligned with or opposed to certain axiological communities. Appraisal linguistics provides precisely the kind of micro-analytic, clause-by-clause approach that is currently missing from rhetorical scholarship. Indeed, as Martin and White (2005) comment, “appraisal analysis provokes a rehabilitation of the study of rhetoric within linguistic theory” (p. 260).

Again, to take a mundane example, we may note a rhetorical difference between

1) Iraq possesses deadly weapons, and 2) Iraq may possess weapons (see Table 2.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iraq</th>
<th>possesses</th>
<th>deadly</th>
<th>weapons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Positive polarity:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monoglossic—unmodalized, bare assertion</td>
<td>a) Negative Judgment: propriety; b) Negative Affect: disquiet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>may possess</td>
<td>weapons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Positive polarity:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dialogically expansive: entertain-modalized assertion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first clause, a negative evaluation (deadly) positions the audience to be both emotionally disturbed by the weapons and ideologically opposed to the principal actor responsible for possessing them (Iraq). Furthermore, the assertion is monoglossic—that
is, it does not recognize the possibility for alternative viewpoints. Thus, the audience is positioned to take it for granted that Iraq possesses these weapons and that these weapons represent a deadly threat. Meanwhile, the second clause contains no overtly evaluative lexis—and, therefore, does not seek to align the audience against Iraq. Furthermore, clause 2 contains a modal auxiliary (*may*) which signals to the audience that the rhetor recognizes and entertains dialogic alternatives. In other words, the rhetor positions the audience to understand that other viewpoints (e.g. Iraq may not have weapons) are possible. An Appraisal analysis, then, provides the rhetorical researcher with a systematic approach for examining how rhetors open up and close down space for audiences to express alternative viewpoints. In addition, it provides a detailed framework for analyzing the evaluative discourse that ultimately implies (and justifies) certain audience actions (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969: 74-5). Such an analysis is also quite useful in grounding Aristotelian concepts. For example, it enables researchers to discern how resources of modality and evaluation are used by rhetors to construe their own credibility and reliability (*ethos*), and to engender solidarity of feeling with their putative addressees (*pathos*).

I will have more to say about Martin and White’s (2005) SFL-based analytic framework in subsequent chapters of this dissertation. At this point, however, I want to suggest another important feature of the systemic-functional view of discourse, namely, the recognition that language is not the only resource capable of enacting meaning-in-context. As Halliday (1989) points out, texts may be spoken or written, but may also involve “any other medium of expression that we like to think of” (p. 10). This
realization led Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001) to develop the concept of *multimodality*, which may be defined as the combination and co-contextualization of various semiotic resources—for instance, verbal and visual resources—in a discursive event. In fact, there is no such thing as a completely monomodal text; *all* communication is inherently multimodal (Kress, 2003, 2005).

Needless to say, trying to transcribe and analyze even a few modes in a multimodal interaction presents many challenges. One difficulty is the nature of multimodal communication itself. In a given communicative event, various modes converge simultaneously, interacting and redefining one another, to make meaning. Thus, a multimodal transcription must be sophisticated and meticulous if it is to account for the interplay of co-deployed semiotic resources, also known as *intersemiosis* (e.g. Royce, 2002). Another obvious challenge is that some modes—especially images and sounds—are not easily “captured” in print-based description. Thus, someone constructing a multimodal transcription must decide on the most adequate way of describing or representing (both for one’s self and for one’s reader) visual and audio modes. Finally, a further difficulty is that multimodal interactions are dynamic and fluid. The images are not necessarily motionless; the words are not always frozen on a page. This means that one creating a multimodal transcription must arbitrarily choose moments to “freeze” in time, without ignoring the dynamism of the multimodal communication.

Thankfully, a number of scholars have developed smart and rigorous approaches to analyzing multimodal texts (Baldry & Thibault, 2005; Iedema, 2003; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996, 2001; Lemke, 2002; Nelson & Hull, 2005; Nelson et al., 2008;
O’Halloran, 2004, 2008; O’Toole, 1994; Royce, 2002). Importantly, the vast majority of these approaches adopt a systemic-functional theoretical framework. Thus, they posit that all social semiotic resources operate according to the same metafunctional principles evident in language. Specifically, all semiotic resources—including images and music—are capable of performing representational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions. This is not to say that all semiotic resources are equally capable of making the same meaning; indeed, some semiotic resources are better suited to carry certain kinds of meanings than others (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996).

In any case, O’Toole (1994) and Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) first opened the doorway to analyzing visual data through a systemic-functional perspective, theorizing, for instance, visual transitivity. However, less apparent in this early work is an account of the collective interaction of multiple modes in meaning-making. More recently, others have sought to correct this oversight, offering ways of understanding intersemiosis between various semiotic resources. For instance, in his discussion of hypertext, Lemke (2002) argues that co-deployed resources produce “multiplicative hybrid meanings” (p. 304). Similarly, O’Halloran (1999, 2008) discusses how meanings may be expanded (through a kind of “semantic effervescence”), contracted, or subverted in multisemiotic texts.

Most of the scholars that I’ve mentioned so far have focused on multimodal meaning relations in static texts (e.g. a still photograph, or a diagram in a science book). Their analyses are useful for understanding the relationship between words and photos in, say, a newspaper, but they are not quite as helpful when it comes to video—where
images appear to move, and even dissolve, on screen. Indeed, in televisual texts spoken words and moving images appear and disappear from moment to moment, presenting special challenges. Fortunately, a few scholars have looked specifically at these dynamic meanings. In particular, in their studies of television advertisements, Baldry and Thibault (2005) have pioneered the systemic-functional transcription and analysis of video texts. They recommend that analysts use a table to capture the chronological sequence of frames over time, and code visual, kinesic, and sound data on a frame-to-frame basis. As you will see, I adapt this methodology in my study.

Most systemic-functional scholars have not explicitly discussed how their approach to multimodal text analysis relates to rhetorical theory. However, it is clear that, as in the case of primarily linguistic texts, verbal-visual texts can position audiences to accept certain representations of reality and perform certain actions—without resorting to explicit argumentation. For example, a rhetor may select a given “visual transitivity frame” (Baldry & Thibault, 2005: 122) that works in conjunction with linguistic transitivity and positions audiences to accept one representation of events rather than another. Likewise, a rhetor can employ visual evaluations (e.g. Maier, 2009) which co-contextualize verbal meanings and position audiences to align themselves with (or against) given social communities. The systemic-functional view of discourse, then, provides rhetorical scholars with systematic and micro-analytic methods for uncovering how constitutive rhetoric is enacted in both linguistic and multimodal texts.

Integrating rhetorical theories with systemic-functional methodologies is a crucial aspect of this study. Indeed, it is only through this integration that I am able to answer in
a grounded way one of the questions at the center of my dissertation: how do multimodal texts (re)position audiences to accept premises and perform actions? However, combining rhetorical theory and systemic-functional analysis is not enough to answer my other central question: How is a rhetorical event transformed when it is precontextualized and recontextualized in multimodal contexts? To approach this problem, an intertextual view of discourse is fundamentally necessary.

An Intertextual View of Discourse

Bakhtin (1981) was perhaps the first to note that discourse “cannot fail to be oriented toward the ‘already uttered,’ the ‘already known,’ the ‘common opinion’” (p. 279). Indeed, texts always refer to prior texts, and draw upon what has come before to make new meanings (Porter, 1986: 34). Intertextuality—a term coined by Kristeva (1980)—is the notion that, in a given text, components of other texts are always present (Fairclough, 2003: 39). Intertextuality is typically a consequence of recontextualization—which involves extracting elements from one discursive context, and relocating them in another.

However, as Linnel (1998) suggests, recontextualization is never the simple movement of a fixed meaning from one text to another (p. 145). Meanings are not simply reiterated; they are transformed. In fact, recontextualization is “always subject to certain semantic changes” (Bakhtin, 1981: 340), as prior discourse is re-represented “with varying degrees of precision and impartiality (or more precisely partiality)” (p. 339). A rhetor may choose to endorse, oppose, or “re-perspectivize” elements of a prior text,
refashioning those elements as demanded by a new situation (Linnel, 1998: 151). Put another way, a rhetor may more or less “faithfully” report meanings that have come before, or distort those meanings to achieve his or her own rhetorical objectives. Recontextualization, then, is best thought of as a rhetorical “tool for re-conceptualiz[ing] and re-accenting” prior discourses (Bakhtin, 1981: 339). As rhetors alter and evaluate prior discourses, they also position audiences to be more or less aligned with those discourses and the communities that espouse them.

A number of scholars have investigated the kinds of transformations and continuities that occur as aspects of one text are recontextualized in another. Thibault (1991), for example, examines how overarching semantic meanings, or thematic formations, are retained across intertextually related texts—even as the specific wordings that instantiate these general thematic formations differ from text to text. Meanwhile, Hodges (2008a) examines how White House officials labored to recontextualize words spoken by a military general—re-representing the general’s utterances in ways that would complement the administration’s goals. Hodges argues that through a process of focalization, administration officials highlighted and made conspicuous certain favorable aspects of the prior utterance. Meanwhile, through a process of erasure (a term first coined by Irvine & Gal, 2000), administration officials ignored or deemphasized aspects of the prior utterance which conflicted with their “preferred reading” (Hodges, 2008a: 493).

In this study, following Thibault (1991), I identify generic meanings that seem to remain consistent across texts even as specific wordings change. And, following Hodges
(2008a), I attempt to uncover the ways that rhetors transform prior discourse to achieve ideological and rhetorical objectives. However, this study is unique in that it attempts, at a micro-discursive level, 1) to account for intertextual transformations across *multimodal* texts, and 2) to suggest how these transformations implicate and reposition putative audiences.

A major component of my project (see Chapter 5) entails comparing the “original” elements of Powell’s multimodal presentation with recontextualizations of these elements in subsequent multimodal news reports. In other words, it involves comparing what Powell *originally* said and displayed with what journalists said and displayed *as they re-represented* Powell’s speech. Systemic-functional analyses of texts (including verbal-visual transitivity and Appraisal analyses) provided me with stable heuristic categories on which I can base my comparisons. For example, I compared texts on the basis of modality. Thus, if Powell said, “Iraq *may* have weapons of mass destruction,” but journalists re-represented him as saying, “Iraq has weapons of mass destruction,” then I noted the deletion of the modal auxiliary (*may*), and noted that this deletion repositioned audiences to regard Powell as *certain* about the existence of WMD—when originally he had left open the possibility for alternative viewpoints.

Recontextualization is, of course, very common in news discourse, since journalists are almost constantly drawing on other texts, and re-purposing what others have said and written. However, given that, in my data corpus, journalists often report events that have *not yet occurred*, I also investigate *precontextualization*. As I explain in Chapter 4, precontextualization is a kind of anticipatory intertextuality, whereby a text
introduces and predicts elements of a future text which is yet to unfold. In my study, for example, various news reports discussed Powell’s address before the address was actually delivered, assigning Powell’s presentation a kind of preliminary meaning in anticipation of its enactment. Again, drawing on delicate systemic-functional analyses, I was able to examine how journalists not only rearticulated the claims of the government, but actually prepackaged and predefined those claims for the public.

Clearly, whether examining recontextualization or precontextualization, the intertextual view of discourse is essential to this study. This view demands that analysts look at texts in relation to one another, and helps to account for the discursive strategies rhetors employ as they struggle to present certain speakers and discourses as legitimate and others as illegitimate. When combined with rhetorical theory and systemic-functional methods of discourse analysis, an intertextual analytic focus is a powerful mechanism for understanding the relationship between political and media texts. However, it is the critical view of discourse which offers a theory of political and media discourse—and a sociopolitical rationale for doing this analysis in the first place.

A Critical View of Discourse

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is not a methodology, but an approach to studying discourse that seeks to challenge the unjust exercise of power. A major tenet of

15 Most CDA scholarship relies, at least partially, on Hallidayan systemic-functional methodologies. Moreover, CDA studies have employed rhetorical analysis (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001; Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999) and intertextual analysis (Fairclough, 1992; Thibault, 1991). Finally, it is worth noting that Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996, 2001), who essentially invented multimodal text analysis, are also critical
CDA is that research should begin with “prevailing social problems” (Van Dijk, 1986: 4, qtd. in Wodak, 2001: 1)—and should try, to the degree that it is possible, to critically intervene in these problems. In particular, CDA posits that scholars should work to expose and confront discursive manifestations of illegitimate power relations, including the ways that dominant groups and elite actors use language and other semiotic resources to enact unjust social arrangements (Van Dijk, 1993: 249-50).

In this study, I begin with what I take to be a serious social problem—namely, the unjust and illegitimate war in Iraq. I describe this war as unjust and illegitimate not only because the U.S. public was misled into the war on the basis of willfully distorted intelligence (Bamford, 2004), but also because the war needlessly killed thousands of U.S. troops (U.S. Department of Defense, 2011) and tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians (Kelland, 2011)—not to mention the millions more who were injured or displaced by the violence. Given this assessment of the Iraq War, a major focus of this study is the degree to which journalists who covered Colin Powell’s 2003 speech contributed discursively to the justification of violence. In lay terms, I want to know whether and to what degree journalists “helped” Colin Powell as he tried to legitimate military action in Iraq.

Several scholars have argued that major news media outlets are often dominated by a kind of “elite discourse”—a discourse which generally serves the interests of the politically and economically powerful (Fairclough, 1995; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Van Dijk, 1993, 1998, 2009). Van Dijk (1993, 1998) defines elites as those people with special power resources—including privileged access to, and control of, channels of mass discourse analysts. Thus, CDA is very much compatible with the rhetorical, systemic-functional, intertextual, and multimodal project that I am undertaking.
communication. Thus, elites include politicians and other government officials, and, of course, members of the media (who act as gatekeepers). Because these elites have unique access to mass media channels, Van Dijk (1993) reasons, they have unsurpassed power to influence public opinion. Indeed, power abuse occurs when elites attempt to manufacture consensus (Herman & Chomsky, 1988) for unjust social practices—for example, when political leaders convince the public that participation in an expensive and deadly war is actually in their own best interest. In short, the target of Van Dijk’s criticism is discursive power abuse—the unethical and hegemonic (Gramsci, 1971) persuasion of the public.

For Van Dijk, elite actors tend to work in concert to mislead the public and sustain unequal power structures. Other scholars take a more nuanced view of discourse and elite domination. Fairclough (1989, 1995, 2003), for instance, recognizes the role of resistance in the face of dominance. While he generally accepts the notion of hegemony, he also emphasizes that power relations are relations of struggle. Those who hold power must work constantly to reaffirm it, while those who do not hold power are always capable of resisting or perhaps seizing power for themselves. In fact, Fairclough argues that every text contains traces of this social struggle. In every text, various “voices”—some aligned with each other, some opposed to each other—are articulated together. Fairclough (1995, 2003) is also much more sensitive to the often discrepant and varying discourses of the dominant class. While he (1995) does not deny that there is a degree of complicity between news media and government, he is quick to point out that there is
also a great deal of complexity, even direct conflict, in their relationship. Again, traces of this conflict can be observed in texts.

In this study, I do not assume that news media merely reiterate the discourse of political leaders, pandering to the agenda of the state. This is surely an oversimplification. However, I also do not assume that news media, as “vanguards of the public,” carefully interrogate political rhetoric, challenging unjust and inaccurate claims. This is surely a myth. Instead, I propose that insofar as journalists promote and legitimate (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Fairclough, 2003; Habermas, 1976, Van Dijk, 1998; Van Leeuwen, 2007) the call-to-arms discourse of politicians, they behave irresponsibly and against the public interest. Like Fairclough (1995), I believe that public audiences may always resist how they are discursively positioned to think and act. Still, I am persuaded by Van Dijk’s (1993, 1998) argument that journalists’ privileged access to mass media gives them enormous power to influence public attitudes.

The critical view, then, supplies a theory of discursively enacted power abuse. More importantly, it asks researchers to present their work as a challenge to the social and material problems that such manipulative discourse helps to sustain (Van Dijk, 2006). In this study, I am not only interested in unraveling academic problems, such as how intertextual transformations occur across multimodal texts. I am also interested in analyzing socially relevant problems, such as the role that news media play in advancing political arguments for war. Ultimately, I adopt a critical view because I believe that a project that does not at least attempt to address social problems is not worth doing.
A Multi-Faceted Analytic Framework

In the preceding section, I have tried to identify the key features of four “synoptic views” of discourse, and to explain what each view contributes to my study. A key notion in the above discussion is that, in order to contend with the multimodal, intertextual, and rhetorical aspects of my data, a multifaceted analytic framework is necessary. Below, I attempt to make more explicit the four-phased analytic approach I employed in this study. For the sake of simplicity, I have charted my descriptions of each analytic phase in tables below. The tables 1) identify the particular procedures involved in each analytic phase, 2) describe each procedure in some detail, and 3) provide a rationale for conducting the procedures in light of my research questions. Following these tables, I conclude with a preview of the remaining chapters in this dissertation.

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16 Additional details of my methodology are provided in each of the next three chapters.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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</table>
| Transitivity Analysis  | • Conducted focused SFL transitivity analysis on all verbal news data (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004).  
                   |   • Identified nominalizations and passivizations.                                                                                                                                                        | • Reveals how rhetors position audiences to accept as true particular representations of reality.  
                   |                                                                                                                                            |   • Considers why rhetors choose to construe events one way rather than another.                                           |
| Attitude Analysis      | • Following Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal framework, analyzed verbal data for inscriptions of attitude, i.e. evaluative discourse.  
                   |   • Coded tokens of affect (emotional language), judgment (evaluation of human behavior), and appreciation (evaluation of semiotic or natural events).  | • Highlights micro-features of language that align audiences into communities of value, and dispose them toward action (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969).  
                   |                                                                                                                                            |   • Shows how rhetors assess certain social actions favorably and others unfavorably, i.e. one way that rhetors (de)legitimate social activity.  
                   |                                                                                                                                            |   • Indicates how rhetors construe their own ethos, and the ethos of others.  
                   |                                                                                                                                            |   • Suggests how rhetors appeal to pathos, i.e. position audiences to adopt an emotional response to some representation of the world. |
| Legitimation Analysis  | • Following Van Leeuwen (2007), examined discourse used to explain and justify institutional activities—particularly discourse that (de)legitimated journalistic or political practices.  
                   |   • Identified authorizations, moral evaluations, rationalizations and mythopoesis (Van Leeuwen, 2007).                                                                                               | • Reveals how rhetors justify social actions—not only through evaluative discourse, but through other discursive strategies—e.g. credentials flashed on screen during a field reporter’s story legitimate (i.e. authorize) that journalist’s assertions. |

**Table 2.3. Examining the Rhetoric of Representation and Evaluation: Analyzing Transitivity, Attitude, and Legitimation**
• Identified “Us and Them” (de)legitimation (Van Dijk, 1998)
• Identified temporal legitimation (Dunmire, 2008; Cap, 2006).
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<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
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| Engagement Analysis | - Following Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal framework:  
  - Identified unmodalized monoglossic assertions and presuppositions which do not acknowledge room for debate.  
  - Identified modal resources, evidentials, attributions which open up space for dialogic alternatives.  
  - Identified proclamations, denials, counter-expectancies, which seek to suppress the expression of alternative viewpoints. | - Indicates the signals rhetors employ to tell their putative audiences how they expect them to respond to the current assertion (Martin & White, 2005: 93).  
  - Shows how rhetors position audiences to respond to their utterances—in some cases, utterances are represented as uncertain or contentious; in other cases, they are represented as maximally warrantable, or even incontrovertible. |
| Graduation Analysis | - Following Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal framework:  
  - Identified intensified lexis (e.g. “fell” vs. “plummeted”).  
  - Identified sharpening and softening of attitudes (e.g. “scary” vs. “a little scary”). | - Suggests how rhetors may “up-scale” or “down-scale” the intensity of their evaluations or the degree of their commitment to an assertion (Martin & White, 2005: 135-136).  
  - Shows how rhetors endow certain lexical items with presence or “anti-presence” (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969).  
  - Highlights how rhetors acknowledge alternative viewpoints—e.g. saying that something is “a little scary” opens space for an alternative assessment. |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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</table>
| Multimodal Transcription & Analysis of Video Texts | - Following Baldry and Thibault (2005), conducted a systemic-functional multimodal analysis of news videos.  
- Inserted into a table the sequence of visual frames, visual images, kinesic actions, and the soundtrack (including transcription of spoken discourse).  
- Compared visual text with verbal text, and glossed each “phase” of the news videos with metafunctional codes that account for the overall interplay of meanings. | - Accounts for the meaningful interplay of verbal-visual resources.  
- Suggests how readers/viewers are positioned to accept representations of reality, and aligned into communities of value based on the configuration of multimodal textual elements. |
| Multimodal Transcription & Analysis of Newspaper & Internet Texts | - For printed and digital pages, began with cluster analysis (Baldry & Thibault, 2005).  
- Transcribed visual transitivity and attitudinal stance (Baldry & Thibault, 2005; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996)  
- Again coded overall metafunctional derived from the interplay of verbal-visual resources.  
- Identified generic thematic formations to facilitate intertextual analysis (Thibault, 1991) | - Accounts for the meaningful interplay of verbal-visual resources.  
- Suggests how readers/viewers are positioned to accept representations of reality, and aligned into communities of value based on the configuration of multimodal textual elements. |
TABLE 2.6. Tracing Voices, Continuities, and Transformations across Texts: Intertextual Analysis

<table>
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<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| Voice Analysis                                 | • Cataloged explicit voices “speaking” in each text—including “authorial voices” and “external sources.”  
• Listed all speakers by title and generated relevant “role” coding categories (politician, journalist, government official, etc.).                                                                                                           | • Catalog of various voices indicates degree to which news discourse is dominated by “elite” speakers.                                                                                                                          |
| Comparison of Re-contextualized Speech with    | • Identified explicit recontextualizations of Powell’s address—recordings, reports, or quotations.  
• Using these recontextualizations as a guide, returned to Powell’s speech and conducted analyses described in phases 1-3 on antecedent source material in Powell’s address.  
• Entered into a “Comparison Table” each instance of recontextualized speech—including its framing by the authorial voice, as well as co-deployed visual data.  
• Also entered into “Comparison Table” the verbal-visual from Powell’s speech that served as the antecedent source material from which recontextualizations were drawn.  
• Compared recontextualized speech with original speech and identified micro-transformations based on systemic-functional heuristic categories. Coded these transformations as suggested by data (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Strauss 1987; Haas & Witte, 1998).  
• Interpreted how putative audiences were repositioned as a consequence of these transformations. Coded various types of audience re-positioning.                                                                 | • Charts the semantic and rhetorical transformation of Powell’s address as aspects of it are recontextualized in journalistic texts.  
• Indicates how rhetorical audiences are repositioned and realigned as a consequence of recontextualization.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Speech with Speech in its Original Context     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Selective Analysis of                          | • Located multimodal representations in the news narratives that did not overtly reference Powell or his speech as the   | • Illustrates whether “talking points” from Powell’s speech are                                                                                                                                                               |
**Implicit Intertextuality**

- Identified overarching thematic formations (Thibault, 1991).
- Reviewed Powell’s presentation and identified similar (and contrary) thematic formations.
- Determined the degree to which speakers rearticulated or rebutted Powell’s claims (without directly referring to him).

Speaks to the overall rhetorical presence of generic meanings from Powell’s case (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969).

rearticulated by other “voices” in the news.
Summary of Remaining Chapters

Chapter 3: The ‘Chief Prosecutor’ and the ‘Iraqi Regime’: Intertextual Ethos and Appraisal

This chapter begins with Aristotle’s argument that ethos (including character, credibility and authority) is not only something that a rhetor possesses as a matter of reputation, but something that a rhetor constitutes in speech. I suggest that, in an intertextual environment, a rhetor’s ethos may be constituted by other rhetors across many texts. Drawing on the work of rhetorical scholars, discourse analysts and Appraisal theorists, I investigate the ways journalists constituted the ethos of Colin Powell and Iraqi political leaders in their news narratives. Findings suggest that the journalists—directly and indirectly—evaluate Powell positively and Iraq negatively, and, thus, position audiences to regard Powell’s voice as authoritative and Iraqi voices as untrustworthy.

Chapter 4: ‘Undercutting Saddam’s Denials’: Precontextualization and Audience Alignment

This chapter is one of two that “zooms in” on an NBC newscast. What interests me here is the way that an NBC broadcast selects certain verbal-visual representations of past events in order to enact a context for a future discursive moment: Powell’s speech. Drawing on the Appraisal framework and scholarship on the rhetoric of futurity (Dunmire, 2008; Grusin, 2010), I show how journalists precontextualized Powell’s address on the night before its delivery—and presented viewers with a supportive context for understanding Powell’s argument. By representing Saddam Hussein as deceptive and
even deserving of future violence, the journalists essentially prefigured and pre-confirmed arguments that Powell employed the next day. More importantly, because the news representations were presented as factual and universally agreed upon, they allowed viewers little space to consider alternative viewpoints—and little reason to question or resist the seemingly inexorable push for war.

Chapter 5: ‘America’s Best Intelligence’: Recontextualization and Rhetorical Transformation

Chapter 5 focuses on an NBC news narrative’s recontextualization of Powell’s speech. More specifically, the chapter concerns what I term rhetorical transformation—that is, the way elements of one rhetor’s discourse are transformed as they are recontextualized in another rhetor’s discourse. I identify four main types of rhetorical transformation (deletion, addition, relexicalization, and reordering). In addition, I introduce a systematic procedure for charting these transformations and the concomitant realignment of audiences across multimodal texts. The chapter illustrates how, in reporting Powell’s address, NBC journalists deleted some of Powell’s meanings, and added other meanings that were not originally apparent. In so doing, the journalists tended to enhance Powell’s argument, increasing the certainty, salience, and warrantability of his utterances—and even adding new “evidence” to support his claims.

Chapter 6: Brace Yourself for Some Bad News: Conclusions and Implications
The final chapter of my dissertation describes some of the implications of my research, and identifies directions for future research. I argue that more work should focus on the rhetorical impact of precontextualization and recontextualization, particularly as these phenomena occur in news narratives.
CHAPTER 3

THE ‘CHIEF PROSECUTOR’ & THE ‘IRAQI REGIME’: INTERTEXTUAL ETHOS & APPRAISAL

You can crush a man with journalism.  ~William Randolph Hearst

A number of sources have suggested that George W. Bush deliberately chose Colin Powell to deliver the UN address because Powell, unlike other members of the Bush team, had a sterling public reputation. As Isikoff & Corn (2006) put it: “The idea—not a subtle one—was to attach Powell’s credibility to the case for war” (p. 174). Similarly, Unger (2007) argues that the lack of evidence in Powell’s presentation was compensated for by the fact that “the presentation was being made by a man who had…become the most admired and respected person in America” (p. 285). Unger reports that, at the time of his speech, 86 percent of the American public approved of Colin Powell. Indeed, he writes, Powell came “before the U.N. as a voice of reason, as a man who appeared to have unassailable moral authority...” (p. 285). Finally, in his examination of Powell’s presentation, rhetorical scholar David Zarefsky (2007) repeats this sentiment, claiming that Powell’s “reputation as a skeptic on Iraq, if not an outright ‘dove’ within the administration, enhanced his credibility” (p. 279). In the end, Zarefsky

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17 Quoted by Douglas Fairbanks Jr. in The Battle over Citizen Kane (Epstein & Lennon, 1996).
18 According to Powell’s former chief of staff, Larry Wilkerson, Vice President Cheney told Powell before the speech that he could “afford to lose some poll points” (qtd. in Isikoff & Corn, 2006: 174).
argues, “the credibility of the source” was able to “outweigh internal deficiencies in the evidence” (p. 298).

What interests me about these sources is the way that they talk about Powell’s “credibility” as if he owned it and carried it with him from place to place. Indeed, the assumption appears to be that Powell’s credibility resided within him—as much a part of him as his heart, lungs, and brain. In this chapter, I begin with a different assumption. Instead of viewing credibility as a possession or an internal trait, I treat it as a textual construction—something a rhetor constitutes and enacts in discourse. In other words, I follow Aristotle (2007) in believing that rhetorical ethos—a concept that encompasses credibility, character, and authority—is a result of discourse, not just a consequence of “a previous opinion” about a speaker (On Rhetoric, 1.2.4).

This is not to say that I dismiss the importance of such “previous opinions.” Indeed, I believe that audience perceptions of a speaker’s credibility and a speaker’s history of past acts (including speech acts) serve as important elements of the social context for a given rhetorical event. However, I don’t believe that these contextual elements are autonomous “containers” in which rhetorical events occur. A speaker’s reputation is not a self-evident, a priori aspect of the rhetorical situation. It is “alive” in discourse—constantly being produced and reproduced across texts.¹⁹ Thus, the question

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¹⁹ And even if one’s prior reputation were an autonomous and self-evident element of the context, it would still be worth asking where this reputation came from in the first place. For instance, how is it that Powell came to be regarded as the ‘dove’ in the administration? One might be tempted to say that his actions distinguished him as such. However, given Powell’s background as an army general—indeed a general who oversaw the first Persian Gulf War in 1991 and who famously coined the “Powell Doctrine,” which called for the use of “overwhelming force” in military interventions (Schmitt 1999)—it is difficult to see how his actions could mark him as a “dove.” Nor is it very easy to see how Powell’s actions set him apart as a “moral authority.” Indeed, when asked during the first Gulf War about the number of Iraqi civilians
that interests me is not whether Powell’s ethos was pivotal in securing public approval for
the Iraq War. (It seems apparent that it was). The question that interests me is how
Powell’s ethos was constituted in texts in ways that apparently positioned audiences to
regard his character and authority as unassailable.

Beginning with Aristotle (2007) I might choose to look at Powell’s own rhetoric
in the UN presentation. After all, Aristotle claimed that ethotic arguments involve a
speaker “construct[ing] a view of himself” in discourse (2.2.3, emphasis added). And,
indeed, if we were to look at Powell’s speech, we would find that he employs a number
of interesting argumentative strategies to enact his own authority. 20 But it would be a
mistake to assume that Powell was the only one responsible for constructing his
credibility in discourse. After all, Powell delivered his address on a Wednesday morning,
while most Americans were busy at work. These Americans may not have had an
opportunity to listen to Powell construct his own credibility, but they did have
opportunities to hear other rhetors—specifically journalists—talk about Powell’s
credibility at length. Therefore, to investigate how Powell’s ethos was constituted in

being killed, Powell famously said, “It’s not a number I’m terribly interested in” (qtd. in Zinn, 2002, p. 86).
This is evidence of moral disengagement, not moral authority (Bandura, 1998). I bring these facts up not to
denigrate Powell, but to suggest that his ethos did not simply “emerge” from his actions.
20 For instance, Powell uses a rhetorical strategy of dubitatio—or feigned doubt about his authority to
speak—portraying himself as a plainspoken non-specialist as a way of identifying with his audience. A
good example of this occurs when Powell comments on Iraq’s aluminum tubes, which, he alleged, were
being used to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons: “I am no expert on centrifuge tubes, but just as an old
Army trooper, I can tell you a couple of things…” Powell’s self-effacing comments (“no expert” and “just
an old Army trooper”) position his audience to regard him as a straight-talking man whose knowledge is
founded in a kind of “blue-collar” experience. In feigning doubt about his expertise, Powell represents
himself as a more trustworthy speaker. Interestingly, he then goes on to provide what may only be
considered expert knowledge about how the “anodized coating” on the tubes exceeds typical manufacturing
specifications.
texts, it is probably wise to look at the journalistic (inter)texts surrounding Powell’s address.

That is precisely what this chapter aims to do. Specifically, this chapter examines how journalists not only worked to enact their own ethos, but also how they constituted the ethos of Colin Powell—and other rhetors—whose voices were incorporated into their news narratives. I begin the chapter by introducing the term *intertextual ethos* which describes the process by which one speaker recontextualizes the discourse of other speakers in ways that position audiences to regard the ethos of those other speakers as positive or negative. Following Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s (1969) notion of act-person interaction, I argue that intertextual ethos may involve either 1) characterizing a given recontextualized speech-act, or 2) characterizing the person who is construed as responsible for that speech-act.

To study intertextual ethos, I employ Martin and White’s (2005) approach to examining linguistic evaluations. In fact, I extend Martin and White’s work—introducing a new analytic framework for discerning visually inscribed evaluations, and new methodological procedures that may better account for the overall evaluative effect of verbal-visual resources. Ultimately, my analysis focuses on the multimodal evaluative discourse employed to constitute the ethos of Colin Powell on the one hand, and the Iraqi government on the other. I find that the news narratives generally authorized Colin Powell as a rhetor, but discredited the Iraqi leadership. This ethos-building and ethos-destroying was accomplished via the journalists’ explicit evaluations of Powell and Iraq. But, I contend, it was also accomplished indirectly through *transitive chains of authority*,
in which journalists lent their authorial credibility to external voices who shared their Attitudes.

**Intertextual Ethos and the Act-Person Connection**

We may define intertextual ethos as the process by which one speaker recontextualizes the words of other speakers in ways that position audiences to regard the character, authority, or credibility of those other speakers as positive or negative. My term “intertextual ethos” is probably a new way of describing a phenomenon that has been discussed since the time of Aristotle (2007). In fact, Aristotle explains that we, as speakers, are “able to make both ourselves and any other person worthy of credence in regard to virtue” (1.9.1, emphasis added). In this way, Aristotle makes clear that rhetors don’t just constitute their own ethos in speech; they also seek to discursively construct the ethos of others. Insofar as Aristotle was referring to the strategies for characterizing other speakers and their speech, he was hinting at a kind of intertextual ethos.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) also describe what may be called intertextual ethos. Like Aristotle, they define oratorical ethos as “the impression that a speaker, by means of his words, gives of himself”21 (p. 319). However, the Belgian authors go further than Aristotle in suggesting how speaker ethos is complicated by processes of recontextualization. First, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca explain that audiences generally presume an “act-person interaction,” whereby a person’s acts are

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21 As Leff (2009) points out, Perelman is somewhat unclear about the nature of ethos in the *New Rhetoric*. On the one hand, he supports Aristotle’s position that ethos is constituted by a rhetor in text. On the other hand, he sometimes advocates Isocrates’s argument that ethos includes the reputation of the speaker based on things done and said before the speech (p. 306-7).
considered to be revelatory of that person’s stable character or ethos. For them, the interaction between speech and speaker is a special type of act-person interaction. They suggest that the presumed interaction between a speaker and speech is “perhaps the most characteristic part of argumentation” (p. 317). The speaker is assumed to be “the best context for evaluating the meaning … of an assertion,” while at the same time the assertion is thought to be indicative of the speaker’s identity (p. 317).

Crucially, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca argue that the act-person connection is complicated when a speaker recontextualizes another person’s words. In fact, they assert that “the words of other people, when repeated by a speaker, have changed their meaning,” since in repeating those words, the speaker inevitably “adopts toward them a position that is in some way new” (p. 317). Later, they make this point more emphatically:

The statement made is in fact not the same coming from one person as from another; its meaning does change. There is not just a simple transfer of values, but a reinterpretation in a new context, which is provided by what one knows of the presumed author. (p. 318)

As I see it, implicit in these passages is the concept of intertextual ethos. However, to uncover this concept, I need to take Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s reasoning about the speaker-speech connection a step further. The Belgian authors suggest that the meaning of an utterance changes when that utterance is repeated by a new speaker. The new speaker provides a new context for the speech and, thus, alters its meaning and significance. By saying this, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca highlight what happens to
the original meaning of an utterance, but they fail to point out what happens to the original speaker of that utterance. After all, if the interaction between speech and speaker is assumed, then any time one recontextualizes and thus redefines an utterance, s/he also potentially recontextualizes and thus redefines the original utterance’s source. By the same token, any time someone evaluates (praises or blames) a person, s/he not only defines that person’s ethos, but s/he also signals to the audience how they should interpret that person’s speech.

So, there are really two ways of enacting intertextual ethos that relate to Perelman’s act-person connection. On the one hand, by commenting on a speech-act, I imply something about the speaker. For instance, I can evaluate Colin Powell as a character by saying that his speech was sloppy and unpersuasive. On the other hand, by commenting on a speaker, I may imply something about that person’s speech. Thus, if I call Colin Powell a notorious liar and an utter fool, I provide my audience with a framework for understanding his discourse. Of course, in either case, the way I constitute my own ethos will influence whether the audience will accept my judgments of other speakers and texts. Indeed, we might call the ethos a rhetor constructs for him- or herself—authorial ethos or the ethos of the internal authorial voice. Meanwhile, we might refer to the ethos a rhetor constructs for others as intertextual ethos since it ultimately involves voices from external texts.

Framing Voices through Evaluation

“Voice” is a useful term when discussing matters of intertextuality (and thus matters of intertextual ethos). As Fairclough (2003) points out, a theory of intertextuality
begins with the premise that “for any particular text...there is a set of other texts and a set of voices which are potentially relevant, and potentially incorporated into the text” (47, my emphasis). Fairclough recommends that researchers ask two important questions about voice—questions which bear on the present study of intertextual ethos. First, **which voices are represented in a given text and which are left out?** Answering this question reveals something about intertextual ethos in that it reflects how authorial voices may implicitly assign authority to other voices in the text. Second, Fairclough (2003) asks, **how does the authorial voice “frame” the other voices brought into a text from the outside?**

This latter question is essential for the study of intertextual ethos. As Fairclough notes, different voices can be represented in a positive or negative light, as different values are attached to different speakers and discourses. This is consistent with Aristotle’s (2007) rhetorical theory, which posits that certain values can be “points of reference” for assigning blame and praise to particular individuals (1.9.1). Such “moral evaluations,” as Van Leeuwen (2007) calls them, are evident in my earlier example, when I called Powell “a notorious liar.” By choosing this representation of Powell, I referenced a value system that I believe my audience shares. Specifically, by suggesting that Powell violates shared social norms, I positioned my audience to be opposed to Powell—to find his character objectionable and contrary to their values. In short, making value positions explicit in a text is the key means by which a rhetor constructs his or her own ethos as well as the ethos of any other speaker in a text. It is also, as suggested in Chapter 2, a good way of disposing audiences to act in desired ways. Thus, the question is: how do
we examine evaluative discourse in a delicate and systematic way? In the next section, I suggest that Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal framework provides a useful answer.

The Appraisal Framework: Analyzing Evaluative Discourse

Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal framework evolved from the general theoretical framework of systemic-functional linguistics (SFL) developed by Michael Halliday and colleagues (see, for instance, Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The Appraisal model of evaluation focuses on *interpersonal meaning*. More specifically, it attends to the lexical and grammatical resources by which rhetors 1) evaluate phenomena by expressing *Attitudes*, and 2) position themselves with regard to their audiences via resources of *Engagement*. In this chapter I will focus on Attitudes: i.e. the discourse of evaluation.

Martin and White (2005) cite three main “regions” of Attitude: Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation. **Affect** involves resources for construing emotional responses. **Judgment** involves resources for evaluating human behavior according to shared community norms. Finally, **Appreciation** involves resources for assigning value to *things*—including natural phenomena and semiotic artifacts. Resources in each region of Attitude can be either positive (e.g. *good* job) or negative (e.g. *poor* performance)—and each region can be further broken into subcategories which I enumerate briefly in Table 3.1 below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude Categories and Subcategories</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>+ e.g.</th>
<th>- e.g.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AFFECT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un/happiness</td>
<td>affairs of the heart</td>
<td>happy</td>
<td>sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In/security</td>
<td>ecosocial well-being</td>
<td>anxious</td>
<td>confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dis/satisfaction</td>
<td>pursuit of goals</td>
<td>fascinated</td>
<td>bored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JUDGMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normality</td>
<td>how special?</td>
<td>normal</td>
<td>odd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>how capable?</td>
<td>competent</td>
<td>incompetent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenacity</td>
<td>how dependable?</td>
<td>careful</td>
<td>reckless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veracity</td>
<td>how honest?</td>
<td>honest</td>
<td>deceptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propriety</td>
<td>how far beyond reproach?</td>
<td>law abiding</td>
<td>corrupt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPRECIATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction: Impact</td>
<td>did it grab me?</td>
<td>engaging</td>
<td>tedious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction: Quality</td>
<td>did I like it?</td>
<td>beautiful</td>
<td>ugly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition: Balance</td>
<td>did it hang together?</td>
<td>logical</td>
<td>contradictory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composition: Complexity</td>
<td>was it hard to follow?</td>
<td>detailed</td>
<td>simplistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuation</td>
<td>was it worthwhile?</td>
<td>convincing</td>
<td>unconvincing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Adapted from Martin and White (2005)
Particularly important to this study are Martin and White’s (2005) categories of Appreciation and Judgment, since, as I see it, these categories map onto Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca’s act-person dyad. Specifically, resources of **Appreciation** can be used to express attitudes about semiotic performances—such as arguments, speeches, and presentations. Meanwhile, resources of **Judgment** may be used to comment *directly* on the character and credibility of another person (or one’s self) in a text. Thus, studying Judgment and Appreciation allows the analyst to discern *both* components of Perelman’s (1969) act-person dyad. Indeed, such an analysis makes it possible to differentiate between act-related ethos and person-related ethos, while simultaneously revealing how closely related the two categories are. As Martin and White (2005) point out, “the same attitudinal lexis can be used to judge or appreciate”—the only difference is whether the target of the Appraisal is a person or a thing (p. 59-60). Take the following examples:

- **Powell** was *compelling* as he made the case **judgment**
  (Person)
- **Powell’s case** was *compelling* **appreciation**
  (Act)

In each of the above instances, the precise target of the Attitude changes, as does the meaning of the given clause. Nevertheless, from a rhetorical standpoint, each instance enacts a positive ethos for Powell.\(^{22}\)

\(^{22}\) Resources of Affect may also suggest something about the ethos of a given person. For instance, saying “I’m ashamed of my mother,” not only inscribes a feeling of unhappiness, it also invokes a negative judgment of a person (my mother). According to Martin and White (2005) such Attitudes can be double-coded as both Affect and Judgment (p. 67-68). In any case, this kind of Affectual language serves to *characterize* people, and, thus, constitutes rhetorical ethos.
Visual Attitudes: A New Analytic Framework

Analyzing ethos in this study was particularly challenging because—especially in the televised newscasts—there was a great deal of visual data that also seemed to suggest things about the character and authority of certain persons. Talking about the ethotic impact of such visual data is tricky. After all, unlike words, which have evolved in ways that make it more or less easy to note when an Attitude about character is being inscribed, visual resources are perhaps more open to interpretation. In this section, I discuss the framework I developed for analyzing resources of Visual Attitude, which, I suggest, also constitute intertextual ethos in texts.

Martin and White (2005) do not offer a framework for analyzing visual resources which may also inscribe Attitude. However, a number of scholars have suggested ways of analyzing visual evaluation. For instance, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) suggest that the direction of a depicted individual’s body suggests Attitudes of *involvement* with the viewer. Specifically, if the body faces front, it indicates involvement; but, if the body is turned obliquely, it suggests *detachment* from the viewer. Meanwhile, the point of view of the camera depicting the action suggests Attitudes of *power*. Accordingly, a high angle in which the viewer is “looking down” on a depicted world suggests viewer power, while a low angle in which the viewer is “looking up” at represented participants suggests participant power.  

I have some difficulties with Kress and Van Leeuwen’s (1996) theorization of visual Attitudes. I agree that when a depicted body is facing the viewer—and, especially,

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23 See also Macken-Horarik (2004)
when the gaze of a depicted face seems to be fixed on the viewer—this implies a kind of personal relationship between viewer and represented participant. However, this doesn’t tell us anything about the nature of that relationship—i.e. whether it is a relationship of empathy or antipathy. To glean that, one would need to look at the surrounding context—including the audience viewing the given image, as well as the verbal resources that accompanied it. As I discuss below, one cannot overestimate the importance of contextual considerations—including the multi-semiotic context in which an image is deployed. In fact, I find Kress and Van Leeuwen’s (1996) notion that power is related to camera angle to be unpersuasive. The power dynamics between a viewer and a depicted image are so dependent on context that it seems useless to try to make generalizations based on the angle of the camera. (To take a mundane example, I don’t think the high camera angle from which I view professional baseball players delivering fast-balls suggests to me that I have more power than them.)

Perhaps, more useful, for my study is Maier’s (2009) study of evaluation in film trailers. Drawing on the Appraisal framework, Maier (2009) explains that “evaluative stance in the visual mode is created through an intensifying or repetitive use of close-up shots, camera movements, captions, and various special effects” (p. 167). Maier argues that the close-up shot is a strong evaluative device that usually serves to enhance the importance of the moment or the action. Next, camera movement may enhance the evaluative effect of both verbal and visual information contained in shots. For instance, a hand-held camera that is bouncing may increase feelings of disquiet and unsteadiness. Meanwhile, visual captions demand the audience’s attention and may repeat—and
increase the salience of—spoken language on the audio track of a film. Finally, transitions and special effects (dissolves, direct cuts to black, whip pans, animation, slow motion, etc.) may serve to evaluate whatever is being depicted on the screen.

Maier’s work is insightful—particularly her observation that transitions and special effects have an evaluative function.24 Still, her analysis of Hollywood film trailers is not necessarily pertinent to my study of news narratives. So, I ultimately decided to develop my own approach to studying Visual Attitude. I will discuss my procedures more fully in the Method section below, but for now, it is important to lay down some of the types of visual evaluative resources that I looked for.

Following Baldry and Thibault (2005), I find it useful to make a distinction between the “depicted world of the text,” and the “visual kinaesthesia in the viewer” (p. 191). The depicted world includes what is actually represented in a visual image. Meanwhile, the visual kinaesthesia of the viewer specifies the viewer’s virtual bodily position with regard to the depicted world. If, for instance, a camera pans left this creates the illusion of the viewer turning his head left—and thus specifies a kind of virtual body position for the viewer (who may in reality be looking straight ahead at a screen). As I see it, either the depicted world or visual kinaesthetic information (provided by camera angle and movement) can be resources for expressing Attitudes—and thus resources for constructing ethos in a text.

With this in mind, I offer a preliminary scheme for analyzing visual attitudes (see Table 3.2). To develop this scheme I drew from extant research on visual analysis and

24 In fact, a similar insight was made by Barthes (1977, p. 21).
visual evaluation (Baldry & Thibault, 2005; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Macken-Horarik, 2004; Maier, 2009). Particularly useful were Baldry and Thibault’s (2005) discussions of the interpersonal dynamics of gaze, perspective, movement and distance, as well as the ideational aspects of visual collocation and visual transitivity (p. 122; pp. 178-209). However, subcategories of Attitude (personal vs. impersonal, propriety vs. impropriety, etc.) were generated based on the data in this corpus.

In generating these categories, I started with Martin and White’s (2005) overarching regions of Attitude. In other words, I decided from the outset that I would focus on the attitudinal impact of visuals in the general categories of Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation. Affect concerns the emotional impact of an image. Judgment concerns the social acceptability of depicted visual actions performed by human agents. And, Appreciation concerns the value of non-human aspects of the depicted world—including semiotic artifacts and natural phenomena. I examined all visual content in the news narratives—which I had previously incorporated into multimodal transcriptions (following Baldry & Thibault, 2005). (For the moment, I put aside the linguistic content of the texts.) For each visual transitivity frame25, I took a “compliant” viewing position and asked myself

- How is the depicted image making me feel—close, distant, happy, sad, etc?

(Affect)

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25 Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) were the first to discuss visual transitivity, which they call the “narrative” dimension of images. Citing this work, Baldry and Thibault (2005) explain that visual transitivity frames are configurations of processes, participants, and associated circumstances in a given visual text (p. 122). A visual transitivity frame can be identified in a single photograph or across a series of shots (in a film). In any case, the analyst can identify Participants (volumes or shapes in the visual text) and Processes (including vectors and movements) and determine “what is happening” (i.e. ideational meaning) in a visual text (p. 230-232).
- How am I judging (from an ethical standpoint) the human participants and processes—good, evil, proper, improper? (Judgment)
- How am I evaluating non-human participants—are they beautiful, ugly, un/important, worthwhile, useless? (Appreciation)

Answering these questions provided me with necessarily subjective interpretations of Attitudes suggested by visual data. However, the interpretations were not merely impressionistic. In each case, I was able to identify specific visual resources that had provoked in me emotional, judgmental, or aesthetic responses. As noted, in some cases, these resources came from the depicted world—the visual transitivity frame. At other times, they emerged from the visual kinaesthetic information suggested by camera position and distance.

In any case, I adopted a grounded theory approach or GTA (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss 1987) to develop glosses for the subtypes of attitudes I was observing (as well as their opposites, which were not always in the text). In the Method section, I explain the reiterative nature of GTA coding procedures in more detail. Suffice it to say here that the subcategories of Attitude in Table 3.2 were settled upon after several rounds of coding.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude Type</th>
<th>Resources from Depicted World</th>
<th>Kinaesthetic Resource</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFFECT Personal Relationship</td>
<td>Gaze and/ or Body Angle of Depicted is directed at viewer.</td>
<td>Viewer is virtually close to the depicted image.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Example Image" /></td>
<td>CNN 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal Relationship</td>
<td>Gaze and/ or Body Angle of Depicted is directed away from viewer.</td>
<td>Viewer is virtually far away from the depicted image.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Example Image" /></td>
<td>NBC SR 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affinity</td>
<td>Facial expression of Depicted is warm, inviting, or otherwise friendly.</td>
<td>---</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Example Image" /></td>
<td>NBC 2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antipathy</td>
<td>Facial expression of depicted is cold, dead, or otherwise off-putting.</td>
<td>---</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Example Image" /></td>
<td>NBC 2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Depicted image is performing some action that connotes feelings of security, safety,</td>
<td>no instances</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Example Image" /></td>
<td>no instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Insecurity</strong></td>
<td>Depicted person is performing some action that connotes feelings of insecurity, danger, vulnerability (e.g. terrorists training at a camp).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera tricks (e.g. spinning an image), irregular camera movements (e.g. shaking), or disorienting transitions from shot to shot.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **JUDGMENT** | **Propriety** | Depicted person is performing an action that is striking for its praiseworthiness—according to audience standards (e.g. a doctor administering medicine to sick children). |
| **Impropriety** | Depicted person is performing an action that is considered socially and perhaps ethically improper to the audience. |

| **APPRECIATION** | **Remarkable** | Non-human item serves as visual focus of depicted world (e.g. a sunrise) |
| Close-up shot or zoom may further suggest the importance of that which is depicted. |

| **Unremarkable** | Non-human item* serves as background of depicted |
| Standard camera movements and angles | unremarkable and therefore uncoded |

*Non-human item*
world. suggest nothing remarkable (i.e. not worth “zooming in for a better look”).

* If non-human item was being operated by a human—e.g. a car being driven—I tended to judge the agent responsible for driving—and not evaluate the item itself.
As noted, I have abided by Martin and White’s (2005) method of classifying Attitudes according to a system of oppositions (personal vs. impersonal, empathy vs. antipathy, etc.). However, this is certainly not the only method of classification. In fact, it may not be the best method. This heuristic should be thought of as suggestive of the kind of visual resources that may help to constitute ethos in a multimodal text. Though I found the framework to be useful, I do not claim it to be exhaustive or without its deficiencies.

Importantly, none of the visual devices that I have identified automatically indicates a given category of Visual Attitude. Visual attitudes must always be interpreted in light of context variables—including the wider socio-historical situation in which a text unfolds, as well as the local, multimodal co-textual environment. Indeed, one simply cannot consider Visual Attitude as separate or distinct from Linguistic Attitude in a given text. As Maier (2009) insists, “No single semiotic mode is supposed to carry the whole or only evaluative information … Visual, verbal, and aural devices are co-deployed to maintain or subvert each others’ evaluative load” (p. 172). Thus, the analyst can rely on verbal inscriptions of Attitude to help discern the attitudinal implication of visual images. By the same token, the analyst can draw upon explicitly evaluative visuals to help discern the attitudinal implication of co-deployed linguistic representations.

As Barthes (1977) has noted, when language is co-deployed with an image it has a tendency to anchor—limit or fix—the possible interpretations of an image’s meaning (p. 38-39). Thus, we can expect that evaluative language can suggest “evaluative readings” of images.
To review, Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal theory offers a useful framework for analyzing linguistic markers of Attitude. Based on this framework, I have presented a preliminary outline of Visual Attitude. However, I have insisted that, in a given text, visual and verbal Attitude be interpreted in relation to one another, and in view of the wider situational context. Most importantly, this entire discussion of Attitude has been undertaken in the interest of developing a systematic method for investigating how credibility, authority, and character—in a word, ethos—is enacted within multimodal texts. I have suggested that resources of Judgment and Appreciation (whether verbal or visual) are the primary ways that rhetors constitute their own ethos—as well as the ethos of other voices. In the following section, I will describe my method for analyzing Attitude—and, thus, intertextual ethos—in the present study.

**Method**

To account for intertextual ethos in the news narratives under study, my first task was to identify and categorize the various “voices” in the texts. As noted, I first drew a distinction between authorial voices (in this case journalistic voices) and external voices (the voices of non-journalists, such as politicians, that were incorporated into the texts). I grouped all the different journalistic voices under one superordinate heading—Authorial Voices—and all of the recontextualized voices under another superordinate heading—External Voices. Next, using a grounded theory approach or GTA (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss 1987), I began developing more delicate categories to describe the voices under each superordinate heading. I illustrate my initial coding categories in Table 3.3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate Category</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Sub-Class</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authorial Voices</strong></td>
<td>Journalist/ Anchor</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1. Tom Brokaw, NBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Julia Preston and Steven R. Weisman, NYT 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. John King and David Ensor, CNN.com 2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Reporter</td>
<td></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1. Andrea Mitchell, NBC 2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Ron Allen, NBC 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invited Analyst with</td>
<td></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1. Richard Butler, NBC 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or w/o News Affiliation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. David Kay, NBC SR 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Lee Hamilton, NBC SR 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Voices</strong></td>
<td>U.S. Political Voices</td>
<td>1. President</td>
<td>1. George W. Bush, NYT, 2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Cabinet Member, VP</td>
<td>2. Colin Powell, all texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Senator/ Congressman (Republican, or Democrat)</td>
<td>3. Senator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Official affiliated with elected office (named,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Voices</td>
<td>United Nations Voices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. European Political</td>
<td>1. Secretary General</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Middle Eastern Political</td>
<td>2. Other Office Holder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Veto-Bearing Member of Security Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. ‘American intelligence officials,’
NYT 2.5

4. Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage,
NYT 2.5

3. Al Jazeera, NBC
2.5

2. Saddam Hussein, NYT
2.5

1. Jacques Chirac, NBC
2.4

1. Kofi Annan, CNN.com 2.6

2. Joschka Fischer, NBC SR 2.5

3. Hans Blix, NBC 2.4

4. Chinese Foreign Minister Tang
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vox Populi—American Public</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Polling Data, NBC</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After comparing these codes against each other and against the data, I eventually settled on a refined list of categories (see Table 3.4):

**TABLE 3.4. Final Coding Categories for ‘Voices’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate Category</th>
<th>Subordinate Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authorial Voices</strong></td>
<td>Journalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>External Voices</strong></td>
<td>U.S. Voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Nations Voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iraqi Voices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My next step was to examine how multimodal evaluative discourse in each text was employed to constitute the ethos of various speakers. First, I focused on linguistic Attitudes. Following Martin and White (2005), I made a distinction between *inscribed* and *invoked* attitudes. In the first case, explicitly attitudinal lexis is employed. In the latter case, “the selection of ideational meanings is enough to invoke evaluation, even in the absence of attitudinal lexis that tells us directly how to feel” (62). As Martin and White (2005) explain, explicit inscriptions of attitude “act as sign-posts…telling us how to read the ideational selections that surround them” (Martin & White, 2005: 64, my emphasis). In other words, an inscription of attitude can tell us how to discern invoked attitudes elsewhere in a text even when, strictly speaking, there is no evaluative lexis to speak of. For instance, in the following clauses

1. that man is *evil.*
2. he keeps the mice locked in cages all day.
the inscription “evil” works as a sign-post which directs the reader to interpret the latter clause as evaluative (and not merely factual).

Following Martin and White’s (2005) analytic scheme, I annotated a verbal transcript of each text, placing a code in brackets [ ] after **bolding** a given Attitude. Thus, I coded Tom Brokaw’s introduction to Powell’s address as follows:

The speech that **will be heard round the world** [t + APPRECIATION: reaction, impact] at the Security Council. There at the center of the picture and **the center of attention** [t + JUDGMENT: normality] Secretary of State Colin Powell … as the United States now tries to make its **very best** [+ APPRECIATION: valuation] case against Iraq. (NBC SR/2.5/15-34)

The lowercase “t” before a given bracketed code represents that the given instantiation is an invoked token of Attitude, as opposed to an explicit inscription. Meanwhile, (+ / -) indicates whether the Attitude being advanced is positive or negative.

Next, to analyze the interaction of verbal and visual Attitudes, I examined previously made multimodal transcriptions27 (Baldry & Thibault, 2005) of the news narratives. I flagged any visual images that were co-deployed with the verbal instantiations of Attitude that I had already identified in brackets above. In addition, I identified clear instances of visual Attitude (based on the scheme discussed earlier)—and highlighted any spoken or written discourse that was co-deployed with these visual Attitudes. Finally, I inserted all instantiations of Attitude into a table. An illustrative excerpt is provided in Table 3.5 below. In the first column of the table, I inserted linguistic instantiations of Attitude. This column also included linguistic data that was not, in and of itself attitudinal, but which had been co-deployed with explicit visual

---

27 For an illustration, see Table 4.1 in the next chapter
Attitudes. In the second column, I inserted visual instantiations of Attitude. Again, this column also included visual data that was not, by itself, attitudinal but which had been co-deployed with linguistic instantiations of Attitude.

To account for the attitudinal interplay of visual and linguistic data, I placed co-deployed linguistic Attitudes and visual Attitudes side by side in the table, and assessed their net attitudinal effect. Columns 1-2 depict co-deployed verbal-visual resources at various moments over the course of the text. Columns 3-7 focus on the linguistic aspects of Attitude at a given textual moment. Columns 8-11 focus on visual aspects of Attitude. Finally, column 12 indicates the overall attitudinal coloration of a given textual moment—taking into consideration the semiotic integration of co-deployed linguistic and visual resources. Reading the first row of Table 3.5 from left to right can help to reveal how aspects of Attitude from both the linguistic and visual domains contributed to the overall attitudinal impact. When Brokaw says (column 1) that Powell’s speech “will be heard round the world” he suggests something positive about the enormous impact that the speech will have—(and thus, ethotically, something about Powell’s capacity to generate worldwide attention). Meanwhile, in the visual track (column 2) the visual focus is a non-human object—UN headquarters. The focus on the UN building suggests that it is remarkable or important to the viewer. In this case, both the verbal and visual attitudes complement one another—they are both Appreciations. Thus, both contribute to the overall Attitude (column 12) of this textual moment: indicating that Powell’s speech and its setting are noteworthy, momentous, and special to the viewer.
### Table 3.5. Multimodal Attitude Analysis from NBC SR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verbal Instantiation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Appraiser</strong></td>
<td><strong>Visual Instantiation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Appraising</strong></td>
<td><strong>Verbal Appraised</strong></td>
<td><strong>Visual Appraised</strong></td>
<td><strong>Visual Appraised</strong></td>
<td><strong>Overall Attitude</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will be heard round the world.</td>
<td>Brokaw</td>
<td>t + reaction, impact</td>
<td>Powell’s speech</td>
<td>+ remarkable</td>
<td>UN headquarters</td>
<td>+ Appreciation: reaction, impact</td>
<td>+ Judgment: normality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the center of attention</td>
<td>Brokaw</td>
<td>t + normality</td>
<td>Powell</td>
<td>- imper-</td>
<td>UN</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- **Verbal Instantiation:** VERBAL APPRCTN.
- **Verbal Appraised:** VERBAL APPRCTN.
- **Visual Instantiation:** VERBAL JUDGMNT.
- **Visual Appraised:** VERBAL AFFECT
- **Overall Attitude:** VERBAL AFFECT

**Explanation:**
- **Brokaw:** The speaker.
- **T + reaction, impact:** The reaction and impact of Powell’s speech are considered remarkable.
- **UN headquarters:** UN headquarters are mentioned as a place of appreciation.
- **+ Appreciation:** The speaker's appreciation is highlighted.
- **+ Judgment:** The judgment is towards normalcy.

**Context:**
- **Brokaw:** NBC anchor Tom Brokaw.
- **UN headquarters:** United Nations headquarters.
- **Powell’s speech:** Likely a reference to Secretary of State Colin Powell’s speech.

**Analysis:**
- The table shows a multimodal analysis where both verbal and visual elements are appraised and combined to form an overall attitude.
- The attitude is evaluated as mixtures of normalcy and appreciation.

**Relevance:**
- This analysis is crucial for understanding the emotional and interpretative space within news broadcasts, particularly within the context of significant events or speeches.
After tabulating the Attitudes in each news narrative under study, I began counting the frequency with which certain speakers and their texts were evaluated—either positively or negatively. In other words, rather than focusing on every single expression of Attitude, I zeroed in on those in which the Appraised (target) of the Attitude fit one of the following categories:

**Table 3.6. Appraised Persons or Texts Examined in this Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speakers</th>
<th>Speech-Acts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colin Powell</td>
<td>Powell’s Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Official</td>
<td>Iraqi Rebuttal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I focused on appraisals of these speakers and speech-acts because they corresponded with the two principal—and contradictory—arguments featured in the news narratives. On the one hand, the texts featured Colin Powell’s argument in which he charged that Iraq possessed WMD, and would likely supply these to terrorists. On the other hand, the news texts sometimes featured the Iraqi response to this charge—a counterargument in which they asserted that they did not have WMD, and no reason to supply such weapons to terrorists. By constituting a positive or negative ethos for either disputant in the conflict, the journalistic texts potentially positioned the audience to align itself on one side of the debate over future war.

Aside from these two main targets of Appraisal, I also looked at Appraisals of *journalists* (including invited “analysts” in TV newscasts). Essentially, I wanted to see how journalists constituted their own ethos in the news narratives—through self-
evaluations and evaluations of each other. As I discuss below, this eventually led me to an important notion in the study of intertextual ethos: transitive chains of authority.

Analysis

Constructing Authorial Ethos—Journalists Endorse Themselves

I begin with an examination of journalists’ construction of their own ethos in the news texts. Here, I focus on journalists’ Attitudes about themselves and other journalists from the same news organization. Again, following Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969), I assume that Attitudes expressed about the news narratives (acts) are also suggestive of Attitudes about the journalists responsible for producing those narratives (person). Thus, this analysis also includes journalists’ Attitudes about their own semiotic work.

I identified two main kinds of journalists. On the one hand there were journalists proper—anchors, field reporters, and press writers/contributors. These journalists were responsible for reporting the hard news “objectively.” On the other hand, there were invited consultants with journalistic credentials. These consultants, who only appeared on the NBC newscasts, presented “expert opinions” about current events. However, because they were anointed with a journalistic title (e.g. “NBC Analyst”), they were basically indistinguishable from other NBC reporters. I also decided to include invited consultants who were not explicitly given an NBC title. I did this because these consultants were similar to the other consultants (who had NBC credentials) in that they
were invited to speak live on camera about current events. Moreover, as I point out below, these non-affiliated consultants were *always* assigned some kind of credibility by a journalist. This suggested that their authority was on par with that of the news-affiliated consultants. Finally, I included Attitudes not related to any individual journalist, but to the journalistic organization responsible for producing a given news narrative. In other words, I examined Attitudes about NBC, NYT, and CNN as *journalistic institutions*.

In Table 3.7 below, I tally the negative and positive Attitudes expressed about these four groups in each news narrative:

**Table 3.7. Journalists’ Attitudes about Themselves**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPRAISER</th>
<th>JOURNALIST/REPORTER</th>
<th>INVITED ANALYST WITH NEWS CREDENTIAL</th>
<th>INVITED ANALYST W/O NEWS CREDENTIAL</th>
<th>NEWS INSTITUTION</th>
<th>TOTAL FOR EACH NEWS STORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NBC news (2.4)</td>
<td>0 1</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 3</td>
<td>4+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC news (2.5)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 3</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 3</td>
<td>6+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC news (SR 2.5)</td>
<td>0 2</td>
<td>0 9</td>
<td>0 3</td>
<td>0 2</td>
<td>16+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYT (2.5)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>0 1*</td>
<td>1+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYT (2.6)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>0 1*</td>
<td>1+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN.com (2.5)</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>0 1</td>
<td>1+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN.com (2.6)</td>
<td>0 2</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>-- --</td>
<td>0 1</td>
<td>3+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals by Category</td>
<td>0 5</td>
<td>0 12</td>
<td>0 3</td>
<td>0 12</td>
<td>32+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Attitude is expressed outside the body of the news narrative in the masthead of the newspaper.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the journalists in this study never evaluated themselves (or each other) negatively. They did, however, express positive Attitudes about themselves and
their reporting—if sparingly. In other words, the journalists expended some rhetorical labor not just to report the news, but to indicate to their audiences that they were qualified as news reporters.

This ethotic move is not always explicit—and often entails invoked positive Judgments of the journalists themselves. For instance, the by-line of one CNN.com article reads: “CNN Senior White House Correspondent John King and National Security Correspondent David Ensor contributed to this report” (CNN/2.6/JKDE/75-6). In this example, I have bolded the only inscribed positive Attitude—the word “Senior” which is a positive Judgment of capacity. In other words, this word indicates that John King has experience that makes him an especially capable White House Correspondent. However, I also coded “National Security Correspondent”—the description of David Ensor—as an invoked token of positive Judgment. Even though there is no explicitly positive lexical resource in this title, it nevertheless suggests that Mr. Ensor has a special capacity—a unique credential—that qualifies him as a reporter.

Similarly, on the NBC newscasts, Tom Brokaw typically offered some positive remark about a given reporter’s ethos as he introduced that reporter to the public. For instance, in introducing Andrea Mitchell just after Powell’s speech, Brokaw said, “We’re going to go to NBC’s Andrea Mitchell now, who is our Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent who has been tracking this minute by minute, and hour by hour, day in and day out” (NBC SR/2.5/TB/918-925). Here, Mitchell’s authority as a journalist is constituted with an inscribed Judgment of positive capacity (Chief), but also with an invoked Judgment of positive tenacity (underlined text). In other words, Mitchell’s
ethos is constructed in ways that suggest that she is both experienced and tireless in her journalistic efforts. In fact, Brokaw expressed positive judgments about reporters like Mitchell, but also about news-affiliated consultants. For example, General Barry McCaffrey is described not only as an “NBC News Consultant,” but also as a “one of the key American military commanders during Operation Desert Storm” (NBC SR/2.5/TB/437-42). Likewise, other non-journalistic consultants were praised. For instance, Former Congressman Lee Hamilton is described as “one of the most highly regarded members of the Washington community” (NBC SR/2.5/TB/818-22). Indeed, on NBC, anyone explicitly brought on to report or analyze the news was judged positively. In a sense, people were not allowed to speak to the television audience, until Brokaw had made clear why their speech was authoritative or trustworthy.

The New York Times was the only news outlet that did not explicitly express a positive attitude about its journalists. However, in a slogan on the masthead at the top of the paper the Times includes the following famous motto: “All the News That’s Fit to Print.” I included this as an asterisked token of positive attitude since the phrase appears on the same page as the news stories about Powell—but is not included in the body of the actual news narratives. Nevertheless, the motto provides the reader with an interpretive framework for evaluating the Times as a credible news institution. Here, by expressing a positive appreciation of the news stories in its pages (fit to print)—the Times suggests something about its own authority to assess the newsworthiness of certain stories. In other words, the Times is saying that the reader can trust its judgment when it comes to deciding what is and is not news.
Interestingly, news organizations also employed visual resources to constitute themselves as authoritative news providers. One good example of this occurs on NBC Nightly news, when Tom Brokaw unveils a segment called “Iraq Watch.” In this segment, as Brokaw verbally describes how Powell’s speech is being received by the international community, a virtual radar screen appears above his left shoulder—and a virtual radar vector spins clockwise, presumably to “pick up” Iraq-related news stories all over the gridded globe (see Excerpt 3.1).

**Excerpt 3.1. (NBC/2.5/TB/677)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>how’s it playing?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I coded this instance as a positive visual Appreciation—since the virtual radar device seemed to be indicating something about the global importance of the (non-human) news stories that Brokaw was now reporting. However, this visual also suggested something about NBC’s ethos as a news provider—one with the commitment and (technological) capacity to locate stories around the world and present them to the public.

**Intertextual Ethos (Part 1): Journalistic Constructions of the Ethos of Powell and Iraq**
By evaluating themselves positively, the journalists positioned audiences to accept them as authoritative and credible. Having constituted themselves as such, they also positioned audiences to accept their Judgments of other characters in the news as equally credible. Thus, I also traced intertextual ethos—which was created by the journalists’ evaluations of external speakers and texts brought into their news accounts “from the outside.” As noted, I was particularly interested in the ways journalists constructed the character of Colin Powell and Iraqis in their news narratives. Table 3.8 presents results in this category.

**Table 3.8. Journalists’ Attitudes about Powell and Iraq**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPRAISER</th>
<th>POWELL/ POWELL’S PRESENTATION</th>
<th>IRAQ/ SADDAM / IRAQI REBUTTALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NBC (2.4)</td>
<td>NEG 0, POS 2</td>
<td>NEG 7, POS 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC (2.5)</td>
<td>NEG 0, POS 23</td>
<td>NEG 19, POS 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC (SR 2.5)</td>
<td>NEG 0, POS 23</td>
<td>NEG 6, POS 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYT (2.5)</td>
<td>NEG 0, POS 2</td>
<td>NEG 2, POS 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYT (2.6)</td>
<td>NEG 2, POS 13</td>
<td>NEG 1, POS 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN.com (2.5)</td>
<td>NEG 0, POS 6</td>
<td>NEG 2, POS 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN.com (2.6)</td>
<td>NEG 0, POS 2</td>
<td>NEG 1, POS 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for News Voices</td>
<td>NEG 2, POS 71</td>
<td>NEG 38, POS 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The various journalistic institutions differ in terms of how frequently they expressed Attitudes about Powell and Iraq. The reporters on NBC offered numerous evaluations (82); the NYT journalists employed evaluations less frequently (20); and the CNN.com reporters expressed attitudes relatively sparingly (11). Nevertheless, across all three
news sources, there is a very clear discrepancy in the ways that journalists evaluated Colin Powell and his speech as opposed to Iraqis and their response to Powell’s speech. In fact, the journalists expressed Attitudes about Powell and his performance that were overwhelmingly positive; meanwhile, they expressed Attitudes about Iraqis and their speech-acts that were overwhelmingly negative. In addition, they expressed Attitudes about Powell more frequently than they did Attitudes about Iraq. Thus, they endowed Powell’s positive ethos with a special rhetorical presence in their texts (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969). I examine a few illustrations of this trend below.

Perhaps, the most interesting phenomenon is that the journalists in this study—who frequently credit themselves with objectivity—practically fawned over Colin Powell and his speech. For instance, the Times reported following Powell’s address:

> Overall, the picture that emerged today in the Council—and also on television screens across the nation and around the world—was that an administration that for many weeks had tried and failed to persuade skeptics of the urgency of the Iraq problem was now getting a chance to lay out its indictment of Iraqi conduct. It came in the form of a nearly encyclopedic catalog that reached further than many had expected. (NYT/2.6/SW/46-50).

Here, I have bolded only those Attitudes that can reasonably be categorized as evaluations of Powell’s speech (there are other Attitudes expressed in the passage, as well). First, note how the verbal process and verbiage chosen to represent the administration’s speech act—to lay out its indictment—subtly endorses the content of
that speech-act. Not only does the *Times* refer to Powell’s speech as an indictment (suggesting that Powell is some kind of prosecutor)\textsuperscript{28}, it also suggests that this indictment was *laid out*. This choice of lexical resources indicates that what Powell said was warrantable (see Martin and White, 2005, p 126). If this doesn’t seem immediately apparent, just imagine the other verbal processes that might have been chosen but were not: to make an argument about Iraqi misconduct, to make a claim about Iraqi misconduct, to charge Iraq with misconduct, etc.\textsuperscript{29}

In addition to this endorsement of Powell’s speech act, the *Times* also expresses explicitly positive Appre\textsuperscript{2}ciations of Powell’s presentation both in terms of its composition (*encyclopedic*) and its impact (*reached further than many had expected*). In addition, the *Times* referred to Powell’s presentation as an “*extraordinary* public revelation of the C.I.A.’s tools” (NYT/2.6/SW/67)—and thereby positively evaluated both the impact and the quality of the evidence in Powell’s case. Finally, the *Times* offered that “part of the impact of his materials was that they seemed in some ways to *evoke the U-2 photographs presented by Adlai E. Stevenson* in this same chamber in 1962” (NYT/2.6/SW/56-7). In this case, the *Times* invokes a positive Attitude about Powell’s case by enacting what Van Leeuwen (2007) calls a “moralized comparison” (p. 99)—essentially painting Powell’s speech as positive by comparing it favorably to a

\textsuperscript{28} In fact, at the top of the page inside the *Times* a brief headline for the story reads: “*THREATS AND RESPONSES: The Powell Indictment.*”

\textsuperscript{29} In fact, the journalists and invited analysts in other news stories also occasionally chose Saying verbs that subtly endorsed Powell, the Sayer: *spelled out* (NBC 2.5), *laid out* (NBC 2.5 SR), and *laid down the fact* (NBC 2.5 SR). Such endorsements were never employed to describe the Iraqi response to Powell’s case. In other words, the Iraqis always *claimed, said, or asserted*. They never *laid out or spelled out* their rebuttal.
different speech in which an American diplomat famously presented compelling (and true) evidence of hidden weapons.

Similar positive Appreciations of Powell’s case were rare, but evident on CNN, which referred to Powell’s allegation of Iraq’s links to terrorism as “the most detailed explanation yet” offered by the Bush administration (CNN/2.6/JKDE/38). Meanwhile, positive assessments of Powell’s case proliferated on NBC, which commented on the impact of Powell’s speech (e.g. critical, NBC/2.4/TB/L4; important, NBC/2.5/TB/9), the composition of Powell’s speech (detailed, NBC/2.5/JM/229; comprehensive, NBC SR/2.5/DF/703), and the value of Powell’s evidence (compelling, NBC SR/2.5/DF/720; powerful, NBC SR/2.5/DK/640; a bill of particulars, NBC SR/2.5/TB/545; etc). Needless to say, these positive evaluations of Powell’s presentation positioned the viewer to regard his case as convincing and to regard Powell himself as credible and authoritative.

However, the journalists did not stop at expressing positive Attitudes about Powell’s case; they also expressed positive attitudes about Powell, the person. For instance, in NBC’s Special Report, NBC analyst David Kay remarks—before Powell has even delivered his speech—that “the most compelling piece of evidence is actually going to be the integrity of Colin Powell” (NBC SR/2.5/DK/268-73). Then, literally seconds after Powell’s address, Brokaw calls Powell the “chief prosecutor for the Bush administration” (NBC SR/2.5/TB/534-6). And, a bit later, Lee Hamilton—an invited analyst without news credentials—describes Powell as follows: “the administration’s most persuasive advocate who has the greatest credibility in the world, the dove in the
administration” (NBC SR/2.5/LH/847-54). In each of these instances, there is at least one positive Judgment about Powell’s character—including positive Attitudes about his capacity as a speaker and arguer (chief prosecutor, most persuasive), his trustworthiness (credibility), and even his ethics (integrity, dove). Once again, assuming act-person interaction, these positive representations of Powell’s personal ethos position audiences to regard Powell’s case as convincing, accurate, and, perhaps, even morally righteous.

In contrast, Saddam Hussein, Iraq, and the Iraqi response to Powell’s allegations were evaluated negatively by the journalists. In rare cases, journalists expressed a negative Attitude about Iraq by using an unflattering epithet. For instance, CNN referred to the “Iraqi regime” (CNN/2.5/NA/33), a term which invokes a negative Judgment of Iraq’s propriety since the word is almost always used to describe states that are especially oppressive. Again, such negative epithets were used only rarely to describe Iraq, but they were never used to describe the United States. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a U.S. journalist referring to the “American regime.”

In any case, the journalists’ negative Judgments about Iraq more usually referred to that country’s alleged weapons of mass destruction (WMD). In fact, the news narratives often assumed that Iraq was hiding WMD or posing some threat, and thus invoked negative Judgments about Iraq’s ethos. For instance, NBC Analyst Richard Butler comments before Powell’s speech that the case against Iraq is already “substantially proven” because, as he baldly asserts, Iraq “does have weapons of mass destruction” (NBC SR/2.5/RB/159-62). Given that this is precisely what Iraq was denying at the time, Butler’s assertion positions the audience to view Iraq as both
threatening and deceptive. Meanwhile, CNN displayed the following content box right next to its story about Colin Powell’s speech (see Figure 3.1):

Not only does this content box include an Attitude that promotes the conflict with Iraq as a kind of exciting melodrama (SHOWDOWN), it also presumes the existence of Iraq’s WMD—after all, advertising a “Weapons Hunt” tends to suggest that there are weapons, and that these weapons are being hidden. Again, this implicitly suggests that Iraq, who is presumably keeping the weapons hunters from finding their weapons—is behaving improperly and dishonestly. Even Tom Brokaw seems to assume that Iraq presents a threat to the United States. He says before Powell’s address: “the administration recognizes that it must still persuade the American people war is not only likely, but now the best means of dealing with the dangers that Iraq poses” (NBC
SR/2.5/TB /81-2). Here, the notion that Iraq poses dangers seems to be presupposed—what is at issue is whether or not war is the best means of dealing with those dangers.\(^{30}\)

Interestingly, the journalists rarely offered explicit evaluations of Iraqi speech-acts, such as the rebuttals offered by Saddam Hussein, Tariq Aziz, Amir Al-Saadi, and Mohammed Aldouri. In some of the news narratives in this study, these rebuttals were not mentioned—and thus could not be evaluated. And, for those news texts that did report them, they typically avoided assessing whether the retorts were good or bad. Thus, while Powell’s argument was represented as a *compelling*, *powerful*, *persuasive* case, the Iraqis’ rebuttal was represented simply as a response. Of course, when journalists did advance Attitudes about the Iraqi response to Powell’s charges, those Attitudes were negative. For example, Brokaw refers to Iraq’s rebuttal as “*mocking* of the United States” (NBC/2.5/TB/429-30)—a representation that likely positioned his American audience to regard the Iraqi response as offensive.

In the televised newscasts, the visual data tended to reinforce a sense of moral “polarization” between Powell’s positive character, and the negative character of the Iraqis (Van Dijk, 1998). Take the following frames from the lead-in to NBC’s Nightly newscast which aired in the evening after Powell’s address (Excerpt 3.2). The commas (,) in the spoken text represent pauses; *italicized* text represents vocal emphasis:

**EXCERPT 3.2.** (NBC/2.5/TB/L4-11)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

\(^{30}\) In addition to these negative Judgments of “Iraq,” there are also a number of negative Judgments about Iraq’s (then) leader, Saddam Hussein. I will treat these in greater detail in the next chapter.
In the first frame, Brokaw offers a kind of headline for the entire news segment: “TEXT, LIES & VIDEOTAPE.” There are two things worth noting about this headline: 1) its play on “sex, lies and videotape” positions the viewer to regard this news story as salacious, juicy, and entertaining; and 2) the word “LIES” suggests a negative Judgment of Iraq’s veracity that positions the viewer to regard Iraq as deceptive. Interestingly, it is the visual data in this frame that directs the reader to associate the word “lies” with Iraq. Specifically, the green color of the wording creates an eye-rhyme and thus a semantic
link with the green color of the Iraqi flag that waves in the background. In addition, the image of Saddam Hussein—raising his arm in a Hitler-esque salute—is co-deployed with the text. Indeed, he is the only human figure on the screen, and thus the only person who may be interpreted as the “liar.”

A moment later, in frame 2, Powell appears on the screen holding up, and apparently speaking about, a model vial of “anthrax.” (If the viewer was not aware that this was Powell, Brokaw makes it clear by uttering Powell’s name as his image appears on screen.) The nameplate reading “UNITED STATES” in the shot with Powell guides the viewer in understanding that Powell is not of Iraq, but is an American talking about Iraq. More importantly, Powell’s reported allegation—specifically that Saddam deceives inspectors—is semantically linked to the word LIES in NBC’s headline. Indeed, lies and deceives are synonymous.

Thus, Brokaw suggests a “SADDAM LIES” thematic formation through a verbal-visual link between the word “lies” and an image of Saddam Hussein. Then, moments later Brokaw reports Colin Powell’s synonymous allegation that Saddam deceives. In this way, Brokaw not only denigrates Saddam Hussein’s character; he also represents Colin Powell as an agent who tells the truth. After all, if the viewer accepts as true Brokaw’s verbal-visual implication that Saddam/ Iraq lies, then the viewer should also accept as true Powell’s synonymous assertion that Saddam deceives. I’ll have more to say about this in the section on “transitive chains of authority” below.

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31 As discussed in Chapter 2, a thematic formation is an overarching generic meaning realized by more specific wordings within and across texts (Thibault, 1991).
Intertextual Ethos (Part II): External Voices’ Construction of Ethos

The above example illustrates that the authorial voices of journalists are not the only ones that appear in news narratives. In fact, news narratives almost always feature attributed voices—what I have referred to as external voices. These external voices are incorporated into the news stories “from the outside.” In other words, the voices are recontextualized (and re-represented) by journalists. As indicated in Table 3.9, this often involves representing a Sayer, a Verbal Process, and Speech that is (usually) either quoted or reported:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sayer</th>
<th>Verbal Process</th>
<th>Receiver</th>
<th>Reported Speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretary of State Powell</td>
<td>tells</td>
<td>the U.N</td>
<td>Iraq <em>hides weapons</em> [t - JUDGMENT: veracity], <em>deceives inspectors</em> [t - JUDGMENT: veracity] and <em>supports terrorists</em> [t - JUDGMENT: propriety]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, there are a number of Attitudes being expressed—all negative Judgments about Iraq—but, in each case, the Judgment is being attributed to an external speaker, Powell.

Recall that I identified four categories of external voices: US voices (which include Powell’s voice), UN voices, Iraqi voices, and International Voices. In Table 3.10 below, I indicate the kinds of Attitudes that each of these groups reportedly expressed about Colin Powell and Iraq.
TABLE 3.10. Attitudes of External Voices in News Narratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPRAISER</th>
<th>POWELL/POWELL’S PRESENTATION</th>
<th>IRAQ/SADDAM/IRAQI REBUTTALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>POS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Voices in NBC (2.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US voices+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN voices</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi Voices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internl voices</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Voices in NBC news (2.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US voices+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN voices</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi voices</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internl voices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Voices in NBC news (SR 2.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US voices+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN voices</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi voices</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internl voices</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Voices in NYT (2.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US voices +</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN voices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi voices</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internl voices</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Voices in NYT (2.6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US voices +</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN voices</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi voices</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internl voices</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Voices in CNN.com (2.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US voices +</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN voices</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi voices</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internl voices</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

External Voices CNN.com (2.6)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>US voices</th>
<th>UN voices</th>
<th>Iraqi voices</th>
<th>Internl voices</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ Powell’s voice is included among ‘US voices’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US voices</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN voices</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraqi voices</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internl voices</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for External Voices</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, the results indicate that the news narratives’ external speakers produced slightly more positive Attitudes about Colin Powell and his speech (29) than negative ones (21). Importantly, most of these positive evaluations of Powell were attributed to U.S. voices—typically U.S. politicians. Meanwhile, almost all of the negative evaluations of Colin Powell were attributed to Iraqi voices—and roughly half of them were attributed to Iraqi voices in a single news narrative (NBC/2.5). Not surprisingly, then, there is an evident polarization between Iraqi voices and U.S. voices when it comes to Attitudes about Powell’s presentation. This polarization is equally clear when it comes to Attitudes about Iraq and the Iraqi rebuttal. Almost all of the negative evaluations of Iraq were attributed to U.S. voices; while nearly all positive evaluations of Iraq were attributed to Iraqi voices. However, overall, there are far more negative evaluations of Iraq than there are positive ones (141:12). This is because the news narratives were dominated by U.S. voices—especially Powell’s—while Iraqi voices were far less present. Consequently, audiences were exposed to negative evaluations of Iraq more than they were exposed to any other kind of Attitude.

As noted, negative Attitudes about Powell were expressed almost exclusively by external Iraqi voices. The most stunning examples occur in the NBC evening news broadcast following Powell’s address, when a number of negative Appreciations of Powell’s presentation are attributed to General Amir Al-Saadi. For instance, Al-Saadi is reported to have called Powell’s speech “nonsense” (NBC/2.5/RA/472) and is reported to have said that “any third-rate intelligence agency could have produced such fabrications” (NBC/2.5/RA/494-6) as were evident in Powell’s address. In addition, Al-
Saadi is also represented on video saying that “this was a typical American show complete with stunts and special effects” (NBC/2.5/AS/473-80). In both instances, Al-Saadi suggests something negative not only about the evidence in Powell’s case (nonsense, fabricated, showy), but also about the character of the people who produced that evidence (third-rate, inauthentic liars).

This NBC news broadcast was unique in that it attributed to Iraqis so many negative evaluations of Powell and his address. Most of the other news narrative featured external speakers who expressed more positive evaluations of Powell than negative ones. Sometimes, the positive Attitudes about Powell were attributed to U.N. delegates. For instance, the Times reports the following: “Diplomats said the most compelling information seemed to prove that Iraq had cleaned up and removed incriminating information at countless sites, in many cases just before inspectors went there” (NYT/2.6/SW/98-9). Here an explicit positive valuation of Powell’s information (compelling) is complimented by a positive, if “toned down,” endorsement of Powell’s evidence (seemed to prove). Interestingly, among U.N. voices there were more positive evaluations of Powell and his speech than negative ones (6:1). Meanwhile, among International voices there were only two Attitudes expressed about Powell—one positive and one negative. Overall, then, the news narratives represented a world of voices—outside Iraq and the U.S.—expressing mostly favorable attitudes about Powell and his address.

As noted, most of the positive evaluations of Powell were attributed to U.S. voices. Interestingly, a number of these U.S. voices expressed positive Attitudes about
Powell and his presentation even before Powell spoke at the U.N. For example, before Powell’s speech, CNN attributed several positive assessments of Powell and his case to unnamed U.S. officials. I present two examples in the bullets below:

- Officials said Powell’s highly technical and elaborate presentation will include about 30 slides, several audiotape intercepts and satellite photographs. (CNN/2.5/NA/23-4).

- Powell has been intimately involved in reviewing U.S. intelligence on Iraq’s alleged weapons of mass destruction program and links to terrorist groups, officials said. (CNN/2.5/NA/46-7).

In the first bullet above, CNN attributes a positive Appreciation of Powell’s case to “officials.” More specifically, the officials comment positively on the complexity of Powell’s presentation. Then, in the second bullet, CNN attributes a token of positive Judgment about Powell (suggesting his tenacity in preparing for the presentation).

Following Powell’s address, other American voices were represented in the news narratives, again lauding Powell and his presentation. For example, NBC reported that “almost all Republicans and Democrats” were “praising the strength of Powell’s case” (NBC/2.5/CB/574-7). Moments later, they featured Republican Senator John Warner saying that Powell had “laid out the facts” (NBC/2.5/JW/578-9) and Democratic Senator Diane Feinstein saying that Powell had presented a “very impressive chain of evidence” (NBC/2.5/DF/590-1).

Meanwhile, external voices’ positive Attitudes about Iraq were exceedingly rare in these news narratives. And, almost always, these positive evaluations of Iraq came
from Iraqis themselves. For instance, the Times attributed the following quotation to Saddam Hussein: “There is only one truth, and therefore I tell you [t + JUDGMENT: veracity] as I have said on many occasions before, that Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction [t + JUDGMENT: propriety]” (NYT/2.5/JPSW/100-1). In this instance, Saddam Hussein presents himself as honest, and presents the Iraqi government as behaving properly according to the expectations of the international community (laid out in the first U.N. resolution). Elsewhere in the news narratives, other Iraqi voices expressed similar sentiments: presenting themselves as truthful, and their behaviors as morally respectable.

However, these positive attitudes about Iraq were, in a sense, “drowned out” by the overwhelming number of negative Attitudes that were attributed to external U.S. voices in these news narratives. Most notably, Powell himself was represented in the news, expressing all sorts of negative Judgments about the Iraqi leadership. The instance I referred to earlier in Excerpt 3.2 is representative of this phenomenon. But, even if we put Powell’s voice aside, the news narratives contained other U.S. voices which also condemned Iraq.

For instance, even before Powell’s speech, the Times attributed the following quotation to Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage: “Our fear has been, as we've tried to explain, the nexus of [Saddam Hussein’s] weapons, his bloody-mindedness and terrorist groups” (NYT/2.5/JPSW/97-8). Here, Armitage is

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32 In fact, in news narratives that came after Powell’s presentation, there were more attributions to Powell than to any other external voice.
33 These other U.S. voices consistently outnumbered the Iraqi voices represented in the news reports.
represented as expressing negative Attitudes that are both Affectual (fear) and Judgmental (weapons, bloody-mindedness, terrorist groups) with regard to Iraq. Similarly negative Attitudes are found elsewhere in the pre-speech coverage in the *Times*:

‘There is a clear, concerted effort by Iraq to *hide component parts, weapons sites and witnesses from the inspectors,*’ another official said” (NYT/2.5/JPSW/25-26). In this case an invoked negative Judgment (indicating Iraq’s dishonesty) is attributed to an unnamed U.S. official.

Post-speech coverage also included U.S. voices, other than Powell’s, that expressed negative Attitudes about Iraq. For instance, CNN gave a great deal of attention to the comments of Condoleezza Rice. Below I include an excerpt from this news narrative, with annotations marking negative Attitudes about Iraq:

U.S. national security adviser Condoleezza Rice said *Saddam had to know what Zarqawi was doing* [t - JUDGMENT: veracity] and she accused the Iraqi leader of being responsible for “a network that is spreading poisons throughout Europe.” [t - JUDGMENT: propriety]. “The potential marriage of weapons of mass destruction with terrorism [t - JUDGMENT: propriety] is everyone’s nightmare,” [t - AFFECT: insecurity, disquiet] said Rice. She suggested that the cost of not taking action against Iraq could be another September 11-type attack [t - AFFECT: insecurity, disquiet], but this time with weapons of mass destruction that could kill tens of thousands [t - AFFECT: insecurity, disquiet]. … Saddam had one final opportunity to “come completely clean” with weapons
inspectors, but **he wasted it by deceiving** them [t - JUDGMENT: veracity], she said. (CNN/2.6/JKDE/46-55)

This example includes both negative Judgments suggesting the improper and immoral behavior of Saddam Hussein as well as invoked negative emotions (i.e. fear and disquiet) which could result from Iraq’s immoral behavior. In other words, Rice is represented as expressing Attitudes that present Iraq as unethical now (*spreading poisons throughout Europe, deceiving*) and potentially very threatening in the future (*another September 11-type attack ... could kill tens of thousands*).

One might ask *why* the news narratives chose to include so many external voices that condemned the Iraqi government. However, I’ll leave that question aside. Suffice it to say here that the negative evaluations of Iraq were endowed with more *rhetorical presence* than any other kind of evaluation in these journalistic texts (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969).

**Transitive Chains of Authority**

As noted before, journalists can explicitly *endorse* an external speaker’s words by choosing a verbal process that indicates that those words are warrantable.\(^{34}\) However, it was more typical in this study for the journalists to represent attributed speech with relatively neutral verbal processes (e.g. says, asserts, tells), or distancing verbal processes

\(^{34}\) For instance, if in the above example, Brokaw had said, “Powell **points out** to the UN…” or “Powell **shows** the UN…” or “Powell **demonstrates** to the UN”—it would have suggested an authorial endorsement of Powell’s negative evaluations of Iraq.
(e.g. claims). For example, returning once more to Excerpt 3.2, a neutral verbal process (tells) is used to construe Powell’s speech act: “Secretary of State Powell tells the U.N. Iraq hides weapons, deceives inspectors, and supports terrorists.”

When speech is attributed in this way it positions the audience to view the proposition being advanced as just one among a number of alternatives, as Martin and White (2005) explain:

To the degree that the reader interprets the writer in such instances as having nothing invested in the position being advanced in the reported material … such acknowledgments [of other voices] allow the writer to remain aloof from any relationships of either alignment or disalignment. They present the writer as some sort of ‘informational fair trader’ who simply conveys the views of others and who is therefore unimplicated in any relationship of solidarity which the reader may enter into with the quoted source whose viewpoint is being reported. (p. 115).

However, Martin and White are careful to point out that even when statements are attributed to sources in more or less neutral ways, there are still myriad ways that an author can indirectly indicate his or her support for (or opposition to) an attributed value position. The above example is a case in point. Brokaw does not directly endorse Powell’s negative evaluation of Iraq. But he does deploy visual and verbal resources which produce a negative thematic formation (IRAQ LIЕS) that is synonymous with the one attributed to Powell moments later (IRAQ HIDES/DECEIVES).

\[35\] See Martin and White, 2005, p 112-17.
This is certainly an indirect endorsement of Powell—which simultaneously positions audiences to view Powell as credible and to view Iraq as untrustworthy. This indirect ethos-building (and, indeed, ethos-destroying) works by what I call a *transitive chain of authority*, whereby an authorial voice lends credibility to an external voice by implication. In other words, transitive chains of authority position audiences to *infer* that certain external speakers have the endorsement of the authorial voice.\(^\text{36}\)

In my study, transitive chains of authority were grouped under two main headings: corroboration and vouching. **Corroboration** occurs when an Attitude expressed by the authorial voice is elsewhere rearticulated and thus corroborated by an external voice. In other words, an evaluation advanced by the authorial voice is semantically similar to an evaluation advanced by a speaker brought in from the outside. Consequently, the audience is able to infer that the authorial voice and the external voice are “on the same side,” and, thus, whatever credibility the authorial voice may have is indirectly bestowed upon the external voice that shares the author’s view. The example form the NBC newscast that I’ve been discussing is a good illustration of corroboration. First, the authorial voice of Tom Brokaw expresses a negative Judgment about Iraq, and moments later the external voice of Colin Powell is represented as expressing virtually the same negative Judgment. Because both speakers are essentially saying the same thing, the audience is positioned to infer that Brokaw’s viewpoint is being *corroborated*.

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\(^{36}\) Following Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969), these transitive chains of authority may be classified as quasi-logical arguments of transitivity, which make it possible to infer a relationship between two variables based on argumentative implication (p. 227-230).
by Powell. Put another way, the audience is being positioned to regard Powell’s assertion as valid since it corresponds to the “facts” being reported by Brokaw (see Table 3.11):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive Chain of Attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Brokaw produces attitudinal meaning ➔ “IRAQ LIES”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) “IRAQ LIES” also an attitudinal meaning produced by Powell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Brokaw and Powell are related in their attitudinal assessment of Iraq, i.e. part of the same shared community of attitude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Importantly, a given authorial Attitude can be corroborated by more than one external speaker, or at more than one moment in a text. Thus, if later in the newscast, the “IRAQ LIES” Attitude were again attributed to Powell, it would still implicitly carry Brokaw’s authorial credibility. And, if the “IRAQ LIES” Attitude were to emerge again in the newscast—this time attributed to Donald Rumsfeld—Rumsfeld would be viewed as corroborating a position advanced by both Brokaw and Powell. And, Rumsfeld, too, would enjoy Brokaw’s authorial credibility. In either case, the negative Judgment of Iraq would gain added rhetorical presence.

Closely related to corroboration is vouching. **Vouching** occurs when the authorial voice of the journalist explicitly endorses an external voice, which later explicitly evaluates some other person or text. In other words, if a journalist deems one rhetor’s speech as authoritative, then that rhetor’s evaluations of others become more authoritative. In a sense, the journalist “vouches” for a speaker, positioning the audience to regard that speaker’s evaluations of others as credible.

When the *Times* referred to Powell’s case as a “nearly encyclopedic catalog,” called Powell’s revelations “extraordinary,” and compared Powell’s presentation to the
presentation by Adlai Stevenson, it vouched for Colin Powell. Thus, any words attributed to Powell elsewhere in the article—and most of the words in the article were attributed to Powell—were implicitly “marked” by the authorial voice as credible. For instance, the Times reported the following elsewhere in the article: “[Powell] said various records and intelligence showed that Mr. Hussein was making nuclear weapons and developing rockets and aircraft to deliver all his weapons” (NYT/2.6/SW/19-21) By itself, this reported assertion appears to belong only to Colin Powell; the Times is not explicitly endorsing it. However, the explicitly positive evaluations of Powell’s case cited above prepared the reader to regard this assertion as credible—as part of the “encyclopedia catalog” that was Powell’s case. Ultimately, the audience is positioned to regard Powell’s negative evaluations of Iraq as authoritative (see Table 3.12).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.12. Vouching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transitive Chain of Attitudes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) NYT vouches for Powell ➔ “encyclopedia catalog”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Powell discredits Iraq ➔ “making nuclear weapons”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) NYT implicitly sanctions Powell’s negative Judgment of Iraq</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At this point, it is worth pointing out that corroboration and vouching have their opposites: contradiction and discrediting. Thus, an Attitude expressed by a journalist may be **contradicted** by the Attitude expressed by some external speaker. For instance, when General Al-Saadi of the Iraqi government says “we have nothing to hide” during the NBC/2.5 broadcast, this positive Judgment of Iraqi behavior stands in direct contradiction to Brokaw’s verbal-visual Attitude: “IRAQ LIES.” The viewer, because s/he has already been positioned to trust Tom Brokaw, is “set up” to distrust the Iraqi official.
Meanwhile, instead of being vouched for, an external speaker may be **discredited** by a journalist. For instance, when Brokaw calls the Iraqi response to Powell’s speech “mocking of the United States,” he essentially discredits the nature of this response. Thus, moments later, when it is reported that, in issuing the Iraqi response, Al-Saadi called Powell’s presentation “nonsense,” the viewer is positioned to disregard this negative assessment of Powell’s case as something that is merely “mocking” and not substantive.

Transitive chains of authority reveal how the external voices brought into a text may be “re-perspectivized” by a text’s authorial voice (Linell, 1998, p. 151). Certainly, I cannot trace every transitive chain of authority in this corpus. However, there is really no need to. One need only compare the results in Table 3.8—which indicates journalists’ Attitudes about Powell and Iraq—with the results in Table 3.10—which indicates external voices’ Attitudes about Powell and Iraq.

The pattern is clear enough: the journalists overwhelmingly evaluate Powell and his speech positively, and evaluate Iraq and its response negatively. These evaluations—even if there are only a few of them in a given report—serve as important signposts which articulate authorial Attitudes and suggest to audiences how they ought to respond to the other attributed voices that appear in a news narrative. From the start, in this study, authorial voices positioned audiences to be aligned with Powell and his arguments, and opposed to Iraq and its arguments. Thus, Powell and other U.S. speakers’ negative portrayals of Iraq were implicitly **vouched for** by the journalists. Or indeed, Powell and others’ negative evaluations of Iraq implicitly **corroborated** the negative portrayals of
Iraq produced by the journalists themselves. Meanwhile, the assertions attributed to Iraqi speakers were implicitly *discredited* by the journalists. Or indeed, the negative evaluations of Powell’s speech attributed to Iraqi speakers were *contradicted* by the positive portrayals of Powell and his speech produced by the journalists. In short, insofar as audiences trusted the credibility of the journalists reporting and interpreting the news, they were positioned to regard Colin Powell and his case as credible, and the Iraqis and their response as untrustworthy.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have argued that rhetorical ethos is not merely a consequence of a speaker’s prior reputation. Instead, ethos—including authority, credibility and character—may be constituted discursively. I introduced the term *intertextual ethos* to refer to the process by which one speaker recontextualizes the words of other speakers in ways that position audiences to regard the ethos of those other speakers as positive or negative. Drawing on a diverse body of scholarship (Baldry & Thibault, 2005; Martin & White, 2005; Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969), I introduced a framework for examining intertextual ethos as it is enacted through *multimodal evaluative discourse*. Using this framework, I analyzed several news narratives, and found that they generally authorized Colin Powell as a rhetor, but discredited the Iraqi leadership.

One of the most surprising findings to emerge from this analysis was that there were so many overt evaluations of Powell and Iraq evident in these supposedly neutral news narratives. As noted, NBC distinguished itself in this regard—offering an
extraordinary number of evaluations. The Times and CNN.com offered many fewer evaluations, but this does not necessarily mean that their reporting was more impartial. In fact, a crucial implication of this chapter is that journalists may use evaluative discourse sparingly but strategically to build and destroy ethos. In other words, even a few journalistic evaluations signal to audiences how to “read” the ethos of various other voices in a given text.

In a sense, the rhetorical impact of an explicit evaluation is not localized to the specific textual moment in which it appears. Instead, like a dye injected into the human body, the substance of a given evaluation seeps out of its original location to color other aspects of a text. Thus, for example, a journalist’s negative evaluation of Iraq at the beginning of a report eventually serves to discredit discourse attributed to Iraqi voices later in the unfolding text. By the same token, a journalist may choose to offer only a restrained negative evaluation of a group (e.g. the Iraqi regime), but also recruit other voices into a text that can make the same negative evaluation far more transparent (e.g. the brutally repressive dictatorship of Iraq.) Indeed, external voices that corroborate a journalistic attitude are resources for journalists—“hired guns” who can freely and repeatedly express those ethotic opinions that journalists—because of their professed commitment to objectivity—may only hint at on occasion.

Intertextual ethos, then, is a complicated matter involving a whole array of voices in a given text and the various attitudes that these voices espouse about real people and semiotic performances. I have introduced the concept of transitive chains of authority as a way of tracing how the authorial voice in a text “links up” with—or dissociates itself
from—other voices—ultimately in ways that align audiences with certain characters and oppose them to others. In this study, the authorial voices of journalists endorsed, whether explicitly or indirectly, other “like-minded” voices from the U.S. political arena. Taken together, these voices created an evaluative chorus so powerful that it drowned out and subverted other voices in the text—namely, Iraqi voices. Meanwhile, Powell’s ethos was enhanced as both his character and his presentation were represented by journalists—and their intertextual allies—as unassailable.

In any case, it is clear that many voices are at work in the construction of ethos. It is the job of the rhetorical analyst to consider the relationship among these voices—to understand how they interact within and across texts to characterize certain actors and performances. This is particularly important when analyzing journalistic texts, since journalists have the capacity to signal to enormous audiences how various people and events ought to be evaluated. Indeed, members of the public may never meet Colin Powell—or even hear him speak—but they will still form an opinion of him based on how he is characterized by a mix of voices in the news. The same can be said for other public figures—from General David Petraeus to Hugo Chavez. Their ethos does not merely reside within them—it is at least partially created by the media.

Of course, during the run-up to war, how a given person’s ethos is constructed by journalistic texts can literally have life-and-death consequences. After all, evaluative discourse not only positions audiences to align themselves with certain people—but it also disposes them to act against certain others. In the present study, any journalist who
signaled that Powell was good enough to trust simultaneously, if indirectly, suggested that Saddam Hussein was bad enough to kill.
CHAPTER 4

‘UNDERCUTTING SADDAM’S DENIALS’: PRECONTEXTUALIZATION & AUDIENCE ALIGNMENT

There are those who despise us [journalists] for writing the news before it happens. They fear us not because we are journalists but because we can predict the future; you should see how amazed they are when things turn out exactly as we’ve written them. And quite a few things do happen only because we’ve written them up first. This is what modern journalism is all about. ~ From Snow by Orhan Pamuk (2004, p. 29)

As noted in Chapter 2, recontextualization involves extracting elements from one context and relocating them in another. Thus, a journalist reporting Colin Powell’s speech necessarily recontextualizes that speech—extracting Powell’s words from his address and relocating them in a given news narrative. Importantly, this kind of reporting is oriented towards the past. However, it is also possible for a journalist (or another speaker) to preview a projected event—a future event that has not yet taken place, but is expected to occur. I refer to this process of framing an anticipated event as precontextualization.

Precontextualization occurs any time a text introduces and predicts elements of a semiotic event which is yet to unfold. However, precontextualization is not only about predicting (or representing) what will happen in the future. It also entails providing a context for interpreting anticipated future events. In other words, (precontextualized)
representations of future events are embedded in (recontextualized) representations of events from the present and past. As a consequence, audiences are prepositioned to interpret the future in relation to representations of what has happened before and what is happening now. To put things in rhetorical terms, a projected future event may be construed as reasonable, desirable, or necessary in relation to representations of the past and present. On the other hand, a projected future event may appear unreasonable, undesirable, or unnecessary in relation to temporally prior events. In either case, the unrealized future is prepackaged and predefined for audiences in ways that suggest whether they should support or oppose a projected course of action.

I begin this chapter by situating the notion of precontextualization within existing work on the discourse of futurity (e.g. Dunmire, 2008; Jaworski et al., 2003). Arguing that studies of futurity must begin to contend with the impact of multimodality, I lay out a three-part analytic framework that integrates multimodal text analysis, Appraisal analysis (Martin & White, 2005), and rhetorical analysis. Using this analytic framework, I account for the precontextualization of an anticipated rhetorical event (i.e. Powell’s speech), and the often simultaneous precontextualization of an anticipated material event (i.e. war with Iraq).

More specifically, I examine how Colin Powell’s speech was precontextualized in an NBC news narrative the evening before Powell delivered his address. I suggest that journalists selected certain multimodal representations of both the recent past and the distal future in order to enact a context for Powell’s near-at-hand address. I investigate how these representations helped to prepare viewers to imagine Powell’s speech and its
sociopolitical impact as already present and “real,” and I study the degree to which putative audiences were positioned to interpret Powell’s address and its consequences as probable, reasonable, or otherwise legitimate.

Overall, the analysis reveals that journalists positioned audiences 1) to align themselves with Powell and to oppose Iraq, and 2) to regard war with Iraq as legitimate and inevitable. I close the chapter with some reflections on the special role that journalists play in naturalizing the future, and an appeal for additional research on the multimodal rhetoric of futurity.

Premediation, Precontextualization, and the Rhetoric of Futurity

Richard Grusin (2010) argues that in post-9/11 America the practice of premediating future events before they happen has supplanted the practice of reporting events from the present and recent past. Grusin asserts that this “logic of premediation” (p. 41) has intensified in U.S. media—particularly U.S. news media—because of the widespread desire to avoid the shock experienced on 9/11. As Grusin puts it:

the desire of demand among US media has been to make sure that when the future comes it will already have been premediated, to prepare the public to be ready for the future not as it emerges immediately into the present, but before it ever happens. (p. 12)

According to Grusin, premediation is not necessarily concerned with getting the future right. Instead, it is concerned with propagating many competing future scenarios, so that any future that eventually emerges cannot come as a surprise. This culture of
remediation, Grusin asserts, was particularly evident in U.S. news media coverage during the run-up to the Iraq War. In fact, he argues that leading up to the war journalists premediated so many future military scenarios that “the war in Iraq came to be seen as an inevitable event, indeed seemed … to have already been a televisually mediated news event” (p. 43, emphasis added).

Grusin’s concept of premediation is insightful in that it sheds light on the ways that rhetors position audiences with regard to the future. Most relevant to this study is Grusin’s claim that journalists premediated the war in Iraq in ways that positioned audiences to regard the war as inevitable and perhaps unchallengeable. As I suggest below, my own analysis of pre-war news narratives tends to confirm this notion.

Still, for a number of reasons, I prefer to use the term precontextualization as opposed to premediation. Notably, Grusin’s concept, premediation, is meant to be suggestive of the culture of “the media” as a whole. In fact, Grusin refers to a new “logic of premediation”—which he sees as “characterizing the media regime of post-9/11 America” (p. 47). In choosing the term precontextualization, I aim to avoid making any claims about a new media regime. Instead, precontextualization refers to a process by which rhetors introduce, preview, and contextualize future semiotic events before they occur. Like Grusin, I am interested in the ways that rhetors perpetuate many possible futures; however, unlike Grusin, I am also interested in the ways that rhetors privilege or legitimate certain futures above others (see Dunmire, 2005). In other words, precontextualization should be looked at as a kind of deliberative rhetoric whereby rhetors favor certain future events by representing them as reasonable, desirable, or
necessary—and de-privilege other future events by representing them as unreasonable or undesirable, or by failing to represent them at all. Above all, whereas Grusin’s (2010) term, premédiation, focuses attention on a media culture that prepares viewers for any future, my term, precontextualization, focuses attention on a rhetorical strategy whereby rhetors depict and contextualize an unrealized future in ways that position audiences to regard it as (il)legitimate.

The study of precontextualization, then, concerns the rhetoric of futurity—the semiotic processes by which rhetors position audiences to imagine and interpret the future. Aristotle (2007) was perhaps the first to note that rhetors are capable of “projecting the course of the future” (1.3.4) in their deliberative discourse. Specifically, Aristotle suggests that deliberative rhetoric involves exhortation and dissuasion, as rhetors represent future courses of action as advantageous or harmful (1.4-8). For Aristotle, rhetoric about the future is generally linked to rhetoric about the past since “we judge future things by predicting them from past ones” (1.9.40). Following this line of reasoning, this chapter will examine how the rhetorical “movement” from past to future implicitly positions audiences to regard certain projected events as more or less advantageous.

However, as Dunmire (1997, 2005, 2008) has contended, the movement from past to future is not the only, or most important, aspect of deliberative rhetoric. Rather than seeing the future as the “terminus of deliberation” (Dunmire, 2008: 85), Dunmire argues that the future can function as a “starting point” of argumentation (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). That is, representations of the distal future (relatively distant in
time from the speech moment) may function to legitimize action in the proximal future (relatively close in time to the moment of speaking).  

Following Cap (2006, 2008, 2010), this legitimation technique may be understood as a kind of *temporal proximization*, whereby events, which may be “remote and inconsequential,” are represented as proximal *in time*—so close that they are capable of “exerting an … impact on both the speaker and the addressee” (Cap, 2010, p. 392-93). This might involve construing the impact of past events in such a way that they seem to suggest a future course of action. Or as Dunmire (2005, 2008) points out, rhetors may shift from representations of what *will happen* in the future to exhortations of what *must happen* now (Dunmire, 2008, p. 83).

In her work, Dunmire (1997, 2005, 2008) has focused on the linguistic means by which rhetors represent the future—and privilege certain futures over others. For instance, Dunmire shows how lexicogrammatical resources such as nominalization and modality may be employed by speakers to represent the future for rhetorical ends. *Nominalization* involves naming processes, and, in essence, transforming verbs (e.g. invade) into nouns, objects, and entities (e.g. invasion). Dunmire (1997) illustrates that nominalizations can transform possible future events into objectified future “facts.” For instance, a representation of a possible future (e.g. Iraq may invade Saudi Arabia) might be transformed into a nominalized future reality that demands a response (an Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia must be stopped). As Dunmire (2005) puts it: “Such representations construe future events as assumed rather than contingent,” transforming

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37 As Dunmire notes, the distinction between “proximal” and “distal” futures was first identified by Fleischman (1982).
“potential future actions that could or might be taken … into an objectified and atemporal reality that exists in and of itself in the present.” (p. 493)

*Modality* refers to those resources by which rhetors qualify the certainty or the social desirability of their propositions. More specifically, *epistemic* modality tends to qualify the certainty of given utterances. Meanwhile, *deontic* modality concerns social obligation, and, in the future, comments on the desirability of partaking in a proposed course of action. As indicated before, Dunmire (1997, 2005, 2008) has shown how epistemically modalized distal futures may serve as the grounds for enacting more proximal deontically modalized futures: e.g. Iraq will *definitely* invade (distal/epistemic); therefore, we *must* confront Iraq (proximal/deontic).

Dunmire’s work is extremely helpful in understanding how future events may be precontextualized in linguistic discourse. My focus, however, is the impact of *multimodality* on the rhetoric of futurity. In fact, I am not aware of any scholarship that specifically examines the role that visual representations play in constraining how audiences imagine and interpret future events. Yet it is clear that visual representations are often critical in positioning audiences to regard certain futures as more likely or more desirable than others. Take, for example, the image in Figure 4.1 below, which was taken from the cover of a recent issue of *Time* magazine:
Here, a “visual collocation” indicates the social role of the depicted girl. More specifically, the girl is marked as a Muslim “Other” both by her hijab and her skin color. Meanwhile, resources of distance, gaze and expression enact a close interpersonal relationship between the depicted girl and the viewer (see Baldry & Thibault, 2005). That is, the “close shot,” direct eye contact, and slight frown all work to establish a relationship of intimacy and sympathy. However, it is the physical mutilation—the girl’s missing nose—that complicates the interpersonal dynamics of this image. In fact, the depicted mutilation is naturally endowed with rhetorical presence (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969), and capable of eliciting powerful emotions of disgust and alarm.

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Note. Photograph by Jodi Bieber / INSTITUTE for TIME
Source: http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2007238,00.html

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As Baldry and Thibault (2005) explain, the term visual collocation refers to the cluster of secondary items—such as dress, location, body, and occupation—depicted in an image and which together “function to specify either the role of the participant or the activity which he or she is performing” (p. 198).
in the viewer. By itself, the image would appear to be a recontextualization of some past event: namely, the brutal disfigurement of a young girl. However, the image should be interpreted in conjunction with the written headline—What Happens If We Leave Afghanistan—and, in its multimodal context, it is not a recontextualization of the past, but a *precontextualization* of the future. In other words, it is being proposed through a conditional (if/then) statement that the mutilation of the girl will happen—if “we” leave Afghanistan. Thus, the future mutilation of young Afghani girls is dependent on our actions; presumably it can only be prevented if we stay in Afghanistan to fight a war.

This kind of multimodal argument is very similar, then, to the linguistic arguments described by Dunmire (2008) in which epistemically modalized representations of the future serve as grounds for more immediate (deontically modalized) courses of action. In this instance, the argument would go something like the following:

- Young girls will be mutilated in the future, if we leave Afghanistan (*distal future*)
- We can prevent the mutilation of young girls, if we stay in Afghanistan.
- Therefore, we should stay and fight in Afghanistan. (*immediate future*)

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39 In fact, a number of psychological studies (e.g. Schienle et al., 2006) have suggested that images of mutilation elicit emotions of fear, disgust, and arousal, and generally have a greater capacity to capture attention. See also Hill’s (2004) discussion of visual rhetoric, which relates Perelman’s concept of presence with psychological research on “vivid information.”

40 In fact, it doesn’t seem that visuals are particularly suited for representing temporality on their own. However, once anchored in time by verbal data, the visuals tend to endow future events with a kind of objectified reality.

41 Indeed, the headline is not a question open to debate (what happens if we leave Afghanistan?), but an assertion that presents an awful future that is guaranteed—*unless* US troops stay in Afghanistan. Importantly, the viewer is subsumed in the “royal we” of the if-clause. That is, the viewer is among the “we” who are already in Afghanistan, and, thus, the viewer is construed as capable of preventing the horrible mutilation of young girls in that country.
Obviously, this enthymematic linguistic transcription is by no means equivalent to the multimodal argument.\textsuperscript{42} In fact, linguistic representations of the future—even nominalized representations—could never match the rhetorical \textit{presence} of futures objectified in images.

In this chapter, I examine how such multimodal precontextualizations “prepare the way” for future events—making the future appear real before it has even happened. As in the example above, I will show that, even when images are recontextualized from the past, they can be re-purposed to precontextualize a future event.

\textbf{Methods}

The overarching research question that I seek to answer in this chapter is: How are future semiotic events precontextualized in multimodal news narratives? More specifically I ask:

- How are representations of the future privileged, legitimized, or implicitly “argued for”? That is, how are represented future events situated in multimodal narrative contexts such that they seem warranted, reasonable, desirable, or expedient?

- How, and to what degree, are represented future events endowed with \textit{rhetorical presence} through verbal and visual resources?

\textsuperscript{42} See Blair (2004) for a discussion of verbal-visual arguments.
• How are audiences positioned with regard to representations of the future?
  That is, to what degree are audiences allowed “space” to intervene in or
  challenge the projected course of future events?

I integrated a number of methods to account for precontextualization in televised
news. Specifically, I conducted

• Multimodal Text Analysis: Examining the meaningful interplay of semiotic
  resources at various stages of the news texts; including systemic-functional
  linguistic analysis, and intra- and intertextual analysis.

• Appraisal Analysis: Accounting for the evaluative and dialogic resources
  used to align audiences with certain communities and ideologies; including an
  analysis of Attitude and Engagement.

• Rhetorical Analysis: Accounting for both constitutive and argumentative
  rhetoric of futurity; based in part on the Multimodal and Appraisal
  analyses, but also based on the theoretical insights of various rhetorical
  scholars and discourse analysts (Aristotle, 2007; Blair, 2004; Cap, 2006;

I discuss each of these in turn; however, it should be noted that I consider each method to
be part of a unified approach to answering my research questions.

Multimodal Text Analysis

As I stressed above, precontextualization may be realized by visual resources, or,
more accurately, by the multimodal interplay of verbal and visual resources. To account
for this multimodal interplay in this chapter, I followed Baldry and Thibault’s (2005) method of multimodal transcription for filmic texts. There is not enough space to give a full account of this incredibly detailed micro-analytical approach to transcription and analysis. Suffice it to say that Baldry and Thibault recommend that analysts studying video texts use a table to capture the chronological sequence of frames over time, and code visual, kinesic, and sound data on a frame-to-frame basis.

In Table 4.1 below, I have shown an excerpt of such a multimodal transcription—in this case, the table transcribes the first 3 seconds of the NBC Nightly news broadcast that preceded Powell’s speech. The table represents a systemic-functional approach to multimodal text analysis. In columns 2-4, the analyst accounts for visual meanings—including print-linguistic data on the screen as well as the components of visual transitivity frames (e.g. gaze, facial expression, body features/ movements, camera positioning/ movement, camera distance, etc.). In column 5, the analyst accounts for sound data—including spoken language, rhythm groups, pauses, emphases, and the ambient sounds of the depicted world. Finally in column 6, the analyst suggests the overall metafunctional interpretation of the resources co-deployed during various phases of the text. More specifically, the final column seeks to account for the overall representational meanings (the experiences and events being represented), interpersonal meanings (the social relationships being established and maintained) and textual meanings (the way messages organized and linked together).

One aspect of Baldry and Thibault’s work that is particularly important for this study is their approach to identifying thematic formations on the basis of jointly
constructed verbal and visual semiotic resources. Briefly, a thematic formation is a recurrent, abstract semantic pattern—a kind of generic meaning that underlies specific verbal-visual “wordings” in a text. In Chapter 3, I discussed how the thematic formation “IRAQ LIES” was enacted by Tom Brokaw in the NBC 2.5 broadcast through the “intersemiotic complementarity” of spoken and visual resources (see Excerpt 3.2). Also, in Chapter 3, I examined how the “IRAQ LIES” thematic reappeared in speech attributed to Colin Powell—thus creating a transitive chain of authority as Brokaw implicitly corroborated Powell’s view that “IRAQ LIES.” In this chapter, I once again identify such overarching thematic formations, and examine their reoccurrences within the text under study. Importantly, this intra-textual analysis also lays the groundwork for an intertextual analysis—wherein the analyst construes links between thematic formations across texts. In this chapter, and especially in the next one, I analyzed the intertextual thematic links between the news narratives and Powell’s actual presentation. In this way, I was able to uncover instances in which news narratives implicitly precontextualized or recontextualized meanings made by Powell in his address.

Beyond this, in my study, Baldry and Thibault’s (2005) method of multimodal text analysis (which I combined with a systemic-functional linguistic analysis) served as an initial analytic procedure, which was used to ground subsequent interpretations of multimodal rhetoric. For example, the transcription provided me with a descriptive catalog of the multimodal resources that were used to suppress or enhance rhetorical presence at various moments in the video news texts (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). Thus, I was able to warrant any claims about presence by referring to specific
verbal-visual features of the text, such as the nominalizations, vocal emphases, the “visual salience” of the depicted world, camera distance, gaze, body movement, etc. In addition, I was able to discuss presence in relation to the recurrence of intra- and intertextual thematic formations. Insofar as these thematic formations recurred, their rhetorical presence was enhanced. In short, the multimodal analysis laid the groundwork for more specific rhetorical analyses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Visual Image</th>
<th>Kinesic Action</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
<th>Metafunctional Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Actor; action: Brokaw’s spoken discourse + images (Saddam Hussein^ Colin Powell)+ wording (Target Iraq) enact joint thematics: Colin Powell to give speech for war; Saddam Hussein/ Iraq is the enemy; the war is imminent in Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>[Brokaw speaks] Image appears on screen in background</td>
<td>[RG: Brokaw] NBC news</td>
<td></td>
<td>• “Showdown with Iraq” ➔ promotional discourse ➔ CONFLICT</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• “Target Iraq” ➔ military discourse ➔ WAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Countdown to a speech ➔ promotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Actor/ Pr/Goal/ Location: [speech] could move the world closer to war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brokaw: As above for Saddam:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP: stationary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP: direct/oblique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP: median</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D: CS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC: Saddam: microphone, suit, desk papers, —some kind of address</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VF: Saddam: median, off screen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wording: IN DEPTH, bold white, caps, median size and salience, Q3-4 in backgrounded screen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As above; wording appears; Saddam speaks on television screen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in depth tonight* INT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “in depth” positions viewer to understand this as far-reaching reporting special</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “countdown” and “showdown” are both promotional, they position the viewer as spectator of a conflict that is exciting and entertaining</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appraisal Analysis: Engagement

In Chapter 3, I discussed an approach to analyzing multimodal evaluative discourse following Martin and White (2005). In this chapter, I once again conduct an Attitude analysis to account for the multimodal evaluative discourse in the news texts. However, while in the last chapter I was concerned with the role of evaluative discourse in representations of ethos, in this chapter I turn my attention to the role of evaluative discourse in legitimizing future semiotic events. In other words, I turn my attention to the ways that evaluation is used to make projected future events seem warranted, reasonable, or appropriate.43

However, my main concern in this chapter is the degree to which journalists used Engagement resources to open up or close down “space” for alternative viewpoints. Engagement is a major category of Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal theory. On the one hand, it accounts for the ways rhetors position themselves within the intertextual field of voices represented in a text—i.e. whether rhetors present themselves as standing in solidarity with, standing against, or standing neutrally in relation to other speakers and their value positions (p. 93). On the other hand, Engagement accounts for the ways that rhetors position themselves with regard to their putative audiences—i.e. the signals rhetors use to reflect how they expect audiences to respond to them and their representations of others. As Martin and White (2005) suggest,

43 Of course, as noted in Chapter 3, establishing positive ethos for a speaker is a good way of legitimizing that speaker’s future rhetorical contribution, so there will be some overlap between this chapter and the last one. In any case, the framework for Attitude Analysis which I laid out in Chapter 3 is still applicable here.
resources [of Engagement] act to ‘write the reader into the text’ by presenting the speaker/writer as, for example, taking it for granted that the addressee shares with them a particular viewpoint, or as anticipating a given proposition will be problematic (or unproblematic), or as assuming that the reader may need to be won over to a particular viewpoint, and so on. (p. 95)

Engagement, then, is related to constitutive rhetoric (Charland, 1987)—indeed it is the primary means by which rhetors constitute and enact relationships with their “imagined” audiences.

Martin and White (2005) suggest that rhetors manage their relationship with putative audiences by signaling their “tolerance for alternative viewpoints” (p. 96). On the one hand, rhetors’ utterances can indicate “zero tolerance” for alternative viewpoints. In Bakhtin’s (1981) terms, such utterances are monoglossic—they simply do not recognize the possibility for dialogic alternatives and essentially close off debate on a given subject. Opposed to monoglossic utterances are heteroglossic utterances which do recognize alternative viewpoints—even if these viewpoints are ultimately challenged. Martin and White (2005) recognize two broad categories of heteroglossic resources. First, rhetors may attempt to open up the possibility for alternative viewpoints through resources of dialogic expansion. On the other hand, through resources of dialogic contraction, rhetors may attempt to close off the interaction—suppressing, fending off, or challenging the expression of divergent viewpoints. Dialogic contraction suppresses alternative viewpoints, but, unlike monoglossic assertions, it at least recognizes that these
alternative viewpoints exist. In Table 4.2 below, I summarize Martin and White’s (2005) overall Engagement scheme.

In this chapter, my focus on resources of Engagement is intended to suggest the degree to which journalists open up or close down the “space” for alternative viewpoints about the future. For instance, as noted, resources of modality can be used to render the future epistemically certain or uncertain—and thereby position audiences to regard the course of the future as changeable or inevitable. Of course, Engagement resources can also be used to expand or contract space for alternative viewpoints about the past and present—and this can also impact how audiences regard the future. For example, a monoglossic assertion about the past that leaves no space for alternative viewpoints (e.g. Iraq produced WMD) can make a deontically modalized future seem more reasonable to an audience (e.g. We should disarm Iraq).

In any case, in terms of my specific procedures, I entered color-coded Engagement headings into the verbal transcripts of the news narratives that already contained my bracketed Attitude codes. Any occurrence of an unmodalized, categorical assertion or presupposition was followed by the word MONOGLOSS written in pink; any occurrence of dialogic expansion was followed with an appropriate code (e.g. ENTERTAIN, ATTRIBUTE) written in blue; finally, any occurrence of dialogic contraction was followed with an appropriate code (e.g. DISCLAIM, DENY, PROCLAIM) written in orange. A short sample of such coding is provided below:

1. And **the countdown** [t APPRECIATION: reaction, impact] to a speech by Secretary of State Colin Powell at the UN tomorrow. **MONOGLOSS**
2. That could **ENTERTAIN: EPISTEMIC** move the world **closer to war**. [t AFFECT: insecurity, disquiet]. **MONOGLOSS: PRESUPPOSITION (WORLD ALREADY CLOSE TO WAR)**

3. Saddam Hussein is already **DISCLAIM: COUNTER trying to do damage control**. [t APPRECIATION: valuation—case damaging]

Upon completing this Engagement coding, I returned once more to the multimodal transcription to examine how linguistic Engagement resources might be (re)interpreted in the context of visual images.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Categories</th>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Subtypes</th>
<th>Typical Realizations</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MONOGLOSS</td>
<td>Undialogized</td>
<td>Bare Assertion</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Iraq has WMD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Presupposition</td>
<td>---</td>
<td><em>Iraq’s WMD could threaten the US</em> (presupposes WMD exist).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HETEROGLOSS</td>
<td>Dialogic Expansion</td>
<td>Entertain</td>
<td>Modality</td>
<td>perhaps, probably, possibly, maybe, it’s possible, may, must, should….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evidentiality</td>
<td>it seems, apparently, evidently…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attribute</td>
<td><em>X said, X believes, According to X, etc.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td><em>X claims, it is rumored that…</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dialogic Contraction</td>
<td>Disclaim</td>
<td>Deny/ Negate</td>
<td>not + verb, non- X, no X…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Counter</td>
<td>although, even though,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
still, but, however, yet... happen, *even though* Iraq has WMD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proclaim</th>
<th>Endorse</th>
<th>Concur</th>
<th>Pronounce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X demons...</td>
<td>X shows, X proves...</td>
<td>Naturally, of course, obviously, admittedly...</td>
<td>I contend, there is no doubt that, the facts are...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from Martin and White (2005)*
I would like to point out in passing that some scholars have suggested—albeit indirectly—that Engagement can also be enacted through visual resources. Most notably, Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) have theorized that multiple visual resources (including color saturation, color modulation, etc.) impact a viewers’ sense of visual modality, i.e. “what ‘we’ consider true or untrue, real or not real” (p. 176).

In this study, I am not interested in trying to find visual “equivalents” for linguistic types of Engagement. Instead, I take for granted that the visuals in the news narratives—which are mostly photographic—are meant to be “credible” representations of reality (and are generally taken as such). That is, journalists attach their ethos to the images in news narratives, so that, at the very least, audiences are positioned to assume that they are not doctored or fake. In any case, as I’ve emphasized earlier, I am much more concerned with the multimodal interaction of verbal and visual resources. Thus, I am much more concerned with the ways that linguistic resources of Engagement may enhance or reduce the credibility of a co-deployed visual image. Likewise, I am concerned with the ways that the rhetorical presence (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969) of visual images (see below) may enhance or counteract the dialogic expansiveness of a linguistic assertion. As I have suggested throughout this study, I am principally interested in the ways audiences are positioned by the overall configuration of multimodal resources in a given text.

Rhetorical Analysis
Recall that precontextualization is the process by which rhetors represent and provide a context for future semiotic events. Thus, to study precontextualization, I had to examine representations of the future in relation to representations of the present and past. To begin, I examined linguistic resources of tense and temporality to determine whether a given representation was located in the past, present, or future. I developed the following scheme for temporality outlined in Table 4.3. I have included examples from various news narratives in my corpus:\(^{44}\)

**Table 4.3. Dimensions of Temporality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal Dimension</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISTAL PAST</strong></td>
<td>[Adlai E. Stevenson’s] presentation coincided with the most dangerous moment of the cold war, when the United States confronted the Soviet Union over the placement of missiles in Cuba. (NYT/2.6/SW/57-59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROXIMAL PAST</strong></td>
<td>Today, Hans Blix said Iraq must do more to cooperate (NBC/2.4/AM/67-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRESENT</strong></td>
<td>And an update on U.S. troops in the Gulf. There are now one hundred and thirteen thousand within striking distance of Iraq. (NBC/2.5/TB/709-716)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROXIMAL FUTURE</strong></td>
<td>Here in the Security Council tomorrow, France will be the hardest sell. (NBC/2.4/AM/119-21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISTAL FUTURE</strong></td>
<td>If [the Security Council] does not address this now in a truly consequential way, we will all face a very great danger in the future. (NBC/2.5/RB/410-17)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Importantly, I also accounted for what might be called invoked futures—whereby the future is called to mind even when the simple future tense is not used. Note, for example, the present-tense utterance in Table 4 above: “And an update on U.S. troops in the Gulf.

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\(^{44}\) For the sake of simplicity, I have left out the visual data that accompanied these spoken reports; obviously, the visuals were taken into account during the analysis.
There are now one hundred and thirteen thousand within striking distance of Iraq.” Even though this is a present-tense assertion, the circumstantial element (within striking distance of Iraq) seems to invoke future military violence. Indeed, it almost seems as though US troops are preparing to strike Iraq at any moment. Such utterances were double-coded in terms of temporality as both present and invoked future, since they appeared to be simultaneously descriptive of present events and projective of future ones.

Next, I investigated the explicit and implicit “rhetorical movements” between various temporally-anchored representations. Specifically, I identified two broad types of rhetorical movements in time (see Table 4.4). First, following Aristotle (2007) is the rhetorical movement from past and present to future. In this movement, representations of the past and present implicitly or explicitly justify anticipated courses of action in the future. Second, following Dunmire (2008) is the rhetorical movement from the distal future to the immediate future (or present). Here, a projected distal future is used to justify a more immediate course of action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Rhetorical Movement</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
<th><strong>Example</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAST/PRESENT ➔ FUTURE</strong></td>
<td>A past or current event suggests that it is necessary, warranted or legitimate to carry out some future course of action.</td>
<td>We now have the international community on our side, so we should attack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISTAL FUTURE ➔ IMMEDIATE FUTURE/PRESENT</strong></td>
<td>A distal future event suggests that it is necessary, warranted, or legitimate to take some course of action now, or in the more immediate future.</td>
<td>We will all face a very great danger in the future; so the Security Council should pass a war resolution now.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aside from these argumentative moves, I also analyzed how representations of the past, present, and future were endowed with *rhetorical presence* (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969) in the news narratives. In Table 4.5, I contend that presence may be dimensionalized in various ways. Of course, by drawing a distinction between visual and linguistic presence in Table 4.5, I do not mean to suggest that presence may take only one or the other form. As I have emphasized throughout, presence and other rhetorical strategies are multimodal, and were analyzed as such.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Typical Realizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LINGUISTIC PRESENCE</strong></td>
<td>Motivated selection of elements and “verbal magic” are used to make a certain events seem more salient and captivating (Perelman &amp; Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 169).</td>
<td>nominalization, metaphor, vivid description, vocal emphasis, repetition, lexical proliferation, spatio-temporal proximization (Cap, 2006).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VISUAL PRESENCE</strong></td>
<td>Visual resources make a represented event spatially proximate, salient, or emotionally evocative.</td>
<td>emotionally evocative images (typically photographic, rather than abstract charts and graphs), camera movements (e.g. zoom), close distance, direct gaze, facial expression, body movement, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRA- &amp; INTERTEXTUAL PRESENCE</strong></td>
<td>Jointly enacted verbal-visual thematic formations recur (within and/ or across texts) and thus become more salient for the audience.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The NBC 2.4 Report

Near the end of the NBC Nightly newscast which aired on February 4, 2003, Tom Brokaw introduced a news report featuring correspondent, Andrea Mitchell. This segment of the news broadcast, which lasted about three minutes, was devoted to contextualizing and previewing Powell’s speech the night before its delivery. In fact, NBC had been reporting on Powell’s speech for more than a week. The NBC 2.4 segment, then, was one of many that precontextualized Powell’s address, and prepositioned audiences to understand it. This analysis will focus on two major phases of the NBC 2.4 report: 1) Tom Brokaw’s Introduction—a kind of preview of the news story, and 2) Andrea Mitchell’s Report—the “meat” of the story.

Analysis: Part I

Setting the Stage for a ‘Showdown’: Brokaw’s Introduction

Below, in Excerpt 4.1, I have transcribed the first 12 seconds of Brokaw’s introduction to the segment. Time (in seconds) is indicated in Column 1, a snapshot of

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45 Probably, this report would have been featured earlier, but the news of this day was dominated by a story about the Space Shuttle Columbia. The Columbia had disintegrated during re-entry into Earth’s atmosphere on February 1st—just a few days before Powell’s address—and all seven crew members had died.

46 Powell’s address was first mentioned on NBC Nightly News on January 28th, 2003—eight days before Powell spoke at the UN. Over the next week, NBC pre-reported Powell’s speech six more times. (February 1st—the day of the Columbia disaster—was the only day that did not include some report about Powell’s upcoming address). This string of news stories included a detailed preview of the speech on February 3rd as well as a “countdown” to Powell’s speech on February 4th which is the subject of this chapter. In any case, the sheer number of anticipatory reports suggests the degree to which Powell’s speech had been precontextualized in news narratives before its delivery.
each corresponding visual frame is provided in Column 2, and the audio soundtrack—in this case Brokaw’s voice—is transcribed in Column 3:

**EXCEPRT 4.1. (NBC/2.4/TB/1-12)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Frame Image" /></td>
<td>NBC news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Frame Image" /></td>
<td>in depth tonight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Frame Image" /></td>
<td>The showdown with Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Frame Image" /></td>
<td>And the countdown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. to a speech

6. by Secretary of State

7. Colin Powell

8. at the UN tomorrow

9. That *could* move
10. the world closer to war

11. Saddam Hussein is already

12. trying to do damage control

Visually, in frame 1, the newscast opens with a medium close shot of Brokaw standing in front of a rather large screen. As the camera zooms in on Brokaw, he speaks directly to the television audience; his gaze is directed at the viewer. Thus, the viewer is entered into a close interpersonal relationship with the anchor—in fact, the viewer is positioned as an interactant in a dialog with Brokaw. At the same time, the words “IN DEPTH” are repeated in horizontal rows on either side of the screen. The salience of these words is enhanced since Brokaw also utters them aloud (NBC news *in depth* tonight). In this way, not only is the viewer positioned to regard Brokaw as socially close, s/he is also positioned to regard this journalistic report positively—as an “in-depth”
look at a future event. Here, then, is one more example of a news institution constructing its own ethos.

In the visual track, aside from Brokaw, there are two main actors depicted on screen: first, Saddam Hussein in frames 2-6, and, later, Colin Powell in frames 7-11. Both men are displayed on the screen behind Brokaw—each is framed in an oval shape, each is seated at a table, and each is speaking to someone out of shot (not to the viewer). Visually, then, Saddam Hussein and Colin Powell are depicted as figures who are similar to one another (i.e. framed the same way; performing the same action) and important for the viewer to contemplate and observe. Still, they are not interactants in a dialog with the viewer. Indeed, even though they are depicted in separate shots, they almost seem to be interacting with each other based on the way their bodies are turned. Arguably, this heightens the sense of the “showdown” that Brokaw reports. In any case, both men are represented as significant thematically—in fact, both are also talked about in Brokaw’s spoken report.

Meanwhile, in the soundtrack, I’ve italicized those portions of Brokaw’s speech in which he placed a stress on a given syllable. Note that he stressed certain key words: showdown, countdown, Powell, could, and war, and damage control. Vocal stress is often overlooked in rhetorical analysis, but it is not without rhetorical impact. In this case, Brokaw’s forceful articulation of certain words renders these words more present for the viewer—more salient and more pertinent than the others (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). Some of these stressed words represent events (showdown, countdown, war, damage control); one of them represents an actor (Powell), and one of them is a
modal auxiliary—in this case an epistemic modal (could) that qualifies the likelihood or probability of a future event (i.e. war).

In terms of temporality, there are no references to past events, but three of the events that Brokaw emphasizes—the showdown, the countdown, and the damage control—appear to be happening now in the present. Interestingly, Brokaw selects rather salacious words to represent these presently happening events. First, the conflict with Iraq is represented as a “showdown”—a word that calls to mind both Western gunfights and advertisements for sporting events (e.g. “Showdown in St. Louis! The Rams take on the Broncos…”). This word positions the viewer to regard a potential military conflict as an entertaining spectacle. Importantly, the word showdown is co-deployed with the video image of Saddam Hussein. Thus, in this verbal-visual interaction, Saddam Hussein is represented as a key player in the current melodrama.

Meanwhile, the word “countdown” is used to represent the run-up to Powell’s speech. Once again, the word calls to mind promotional advertising. Indeed, the viewer is implicated as one who is counting down the minutes to Powell’s address. As such, Powell’s speech is construed as exciting and important—something the viewer should not miss. Moreover, “countdown” metaphorically suggests a sense of inevitability. The “clock” is ticking down inexorably to a scheduled event that is bound to happen. In any case, as Brokaw discusses the countdown, the words “IN DEPTH” fade from the screen—and two new words appear just below Saddam Hussein’s image. First, the word “TARGET” appears along with a colon (:).
Crucially, the proximity of (TARGET:) to Mr. Hussein’s image creates for the viewer a meaningful relationship of equivalency. Specifically, the viewer is to understand that the target is Saddam Hussein. Of course, the word “target” has an anticipatory bent; it is something to be aimed at—or, in a military context, to be shot at—in the future. And, if we follow the gunslinger metaphor suggested by the spoken word “showdown,” the viewer is positioned to regard Mr. Hussein as the “villain” in an ongoing melodrama—the one who will be targeted, and presumably gunned down by the “hero” in the “final scene.”

The “target” is expanded a moment later in frame 6. Now, the wording reads, TARGET: IRAQ. Of course, Saddam Hussein is a part of Iraq—arguably, he is the “face of Iraq.” So, the TARGET may be considered both Saddam Hussein and Iraq. In any case, it is worth asking who is targeting this pair. Who is aiming at Saddam Hussein and his country? While there is more than one possible answer to this question, it seems likely that “we” are aiming the metaphorical gun. After all, the words, TARGET: IRAQ, are presented to the viewer. So, it’s reasonable to assume that the viewer is to regard Saddam Hussein + IRAQ as an enemy, as a legitimate target for violence. In this way, NBC not only predicts future violence, it practically demands it.

Aside from the showdown and the countdown, there is one other event that is represented as happening now: namely, the damage control. With the video image of Colin Powell now playing on the screen, Brokaw reports that “Saddam Hussein is already

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47 See Lule (2004) for an excellent study of predominant metaphors in NBC’s prewar coverage.
48 Specifically, the lexical relationship between “Saddam Hussein” and “Iraq” is one of meronymy (see Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 574-575).
trying to do damage control,” in anticipation of Powell’s UN speech. It’s worth noting that “doing damage control” generally has a negative connotation. According to Wikipedia, the term, once used in a military context, “has been adopted for use in politics and media to describe a need to suppress information or employ spin doctors to represent a response to a situation.” Needless to say, suppressing information and “spinning” a response are generally not considered to be noble endeavors.

So, Saddam Hussein is again represented negatively—discredited (see Chapter 3)—as someone who is trying to manage the press in the face of Powell’s impending “leak.” He is not “defending his reputation,” or “denying accusations,” he is doing “damage control.” And this damage control is represented as anticipatory. Importantly, Saddam Hussein might have been represented as responding to past allegations of wrongdoing. After all, the Bush administration had been accusing Iraq of transgressions for many months. But, here, Saddam Hussein is represented as responding directly to Powell and his future address. This not only enhances the sense of a personalized conflict—a showdown as it were—between Saddam Hussein and Colin Powell.49 It also enhances the sense that Hussein’s response is somehow remarkable. Indeed, by choosing the word “already,” Brokaw projects onto his audience a feeling of counterexpectancy (Martin & White, 2005: 120-1). In other words, while Brokaw and the audience would have expected Saddam to wait until after Powell’s speech to issue a response, Saddam has surprised us all and issued a pre-emptive response instead. This subtly positions the viewer to regard Powell’s speech—which hasn’t yet occurred—as already damaging to

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49 See Martín Rojo (1995) for a study of how conflicts may be personalized in the press.
Saddam Hussein and Iraq. Thus, even before Powell has opened his mouth, NBC subtly vouches for him, positioning viewers to regard his argument as devastating.

So, the showdown, the countdown, and the damage control are all represented as happening now, in the present moment. But, as I’ve already begun to suggest, Brokaw’s report also includes references to future events. Most explicitly, Brokaw refers to Powell’s speech as a future event. Powell is represented as an actor who will give a speech at the UN tomorrow—in the proximate future. Meanwhile, war is an event that could happen in the more distal future—at some point after Powell’s speech, and, in part, as a result of Powell’s speech. After all, Powell’s speech is represented as the potential catalyst for war—indeed something that can “move the world closer to war.” Of course, the word “closer,” presupposes that the citizens of the world—including the individuals watching this newscast—are already close to war. So, perhaps, it’s not quite right to say that the war depends on Powell’s speech. Instead, the war seems to be near-at-hand regardless of Powell’s speech. In fact, the speech could merely make the war a bit more proximate than it already is. Even in the first few seconds of the newscast, then, war with Iraq is represented as nearly inevitable.

To review, Brokaw represents events going on in the present (showdown, countdown, damage control), events in the very near future (Powell’s speech), and events in the slightly more distal future (war). He also implicitly suggests a kind of state of affairs that straddles the border between present and future: the world is (presently) close to (future) war. Importantly, most of these representations of events are presented in monogloss assertions that leave no space for alternative viewpoints. Specifically,
Brokaw positions the viewer to regard it as self-evidently true that they are in the midst of a showdown and a countdown, and that the world is already close to war. The only thing that Brokaw leaves open to debate (through the modal auxiliary could) is whether or not Powell’s speech will move the world closer to war.

Presumably, this near-at-hand war will succeed in eliminating the viewer’s “target”—Saddam Hussein and Iraq. So, the war—should it occur—may be considered a good thing for the viewer. Of course, this means that Powell’s speech is also potentially a good thing for the viewer. After all, the viewer’s target is also Powell’s target—and insofar as Powell moves the world closer to the elimination of that target, he helps to fulfill what has already been represented as the viewer’s goal. So, we see an implicit rhetorical movement from distal future to proximal future—the distal war is a good thing since it eliminates “our” target; thus, Powell’s more immediate speech aimed at war is also a good thing.

Analysis: Part II

Introducing the ‘Covert Protagonist’

Following his ten-second introduction of the news segment, Brokaw presents Andrea Mitchell, “NBC’s chief foreign affairs correspondent,” for the “in depth” report (NBC/2.4/TB/14-18). However, in the next shot, instead of seeing and hearing Andrea Mitchell, the viewer sees Colin Powell. Powell is outside walking away from the camera and toward a car—but looking back, presumably to answer a question that the viewer can
hear being posed to him by an unseen reporter: “Mr. Secretary, are you confident you will make your case, sir?” (NBC/2.4/AM/21-4). To this, Powell smiles and remarks, “You’ll see” (see Excerpt 4.2).

**Excerpt 4.2.** (NBC/2.4/CP/24)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td>you’ll see</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This brief exchange between Powell and the unseen reporter, once again establishes Powell as the covert “protagonist” of the news story (Fairclough, 2003). Brokaw first enacted this “protagonist” theme by presenting Powell in a showdown with his moral counterpoint and antagonist, Saddam Hussein. Now, Powell is singled out as the “main character”—the one who is literally followed by the camera (not to mention the

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50 The apparent protagonist/ antagonist binary is consistent with the “actant model” of narrative (Greimas, 1971; Griemans and Porter, 1977). According to this model, various actants, or generic character types, perform classic functions in every narrative. Typically, a Subject (protagonist) is the focus of the narrative as s/he tries to secure or deliver some valuable object. Meanwhile, an Anti-Subject (antagonist) opposes the Subject and tries to thwart his or her efforts. In this case, Colin Powell is the Subject trying to deliver a valuable message to the UN about the dangers of Iraq. Meanwhile, Saddam Hussein is the Anti-Subject who tries to frustrate the successful delivery of this message by deceiving inspectors and lying about his hidden weapons. Following Van Dijk (1998), the protagonist/ antagonist pairing can be mapped onto an implicit “Us / Them” binary. In other words, the viewer is positioned to regard Powell as the protagonist who is one of Us, while Saddam Hussein, as antagonist, is one of Them. Arguably, this ideological alignment is built into the generic structure of the narrative.
reporters), the one who smiles self-assuredly at the viewer, and, with this expression, projects confidence that he will “make his case.”

After this brief exchange, Powell remains the central focus of the camera. As he circles around his car, Andrea Mitchell’s voiceover begins:

**Excerpt 4.3. (NBC/2.4/AM/25-29)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>The day before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>his make or break UN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>appearance Colin Powell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td>came to New York</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here, in Excerpt 4.3, Powell is simultaneously represented as the actor in the visual frame and in the verbal report. The viewer is told by Mitchell that Powell is an agent who performed an action (i.e. he came to practice his speech), in a specific location (in New York), and at a particular time (the day before his make-or-break appearance). From this verbal report, the viewer infers that New York is also the location of the visual shot. In addition, Powell’s confident smiling is further contextualized temporally—he is feeling self-assured after practicing his “make-or-break” address. In any case, Powell’s role as the lead actor of the news story is, by this point, firmly established.

A moment later, Mitchell continues her report, saying that Powell “also tried to soften up Security Council skeptics like China—one of five members who can block UN support for war with Iraq” (NBC/2.4/AM/30-7). This verbal report is co-deployed with a new visual shot: Powell is displayed sitting at a table—again staring at the camera with a smirk on his face—and as the camera pans to the other side of the table, the viewer sees several Asian men and women seated across from Powell. What interests me here is the way that both Powell’s speech and a future war with Iraq are subtly precontextualized in Mitchell’s discourse. First, Powell’s represented action—“softening up” the Chinese delegates—is a preparatory one. In other words, Powell is construed as having taken
actions to “prepare the way” for, and reduce resistance to, his future rhetorical endeavor. Thus, Powell’s future speech-act is implicitly invoked.

However, it is the possible response to Powell’s speech—not Powell’s speech itself—that is the focus of Mitchell’s report. Specifically, Mitchell construes an epistemically modalized future in which any Security Council (SC) member can block UN support for war with Iraq. First, this assertion implies that the purpose of Powell’s speech is to garner UN support for war with Iraq. So, the audience is once again prepositioned to regard war as the ultimate goal of Powell’s address. I shall note, in passing, that during his speech, Powell never explicitly called for war. In fact, he reportedly told French delegates after the speech, “I wasn't talking about war, but about strengthening inspections”51 (CNN/2.6/JKDE/69-70). But, as in Brokaw’s introduction, Mitchell does not entertain the possibility that Powell’s speech might be about strengthening inspections—it is presupposed to be a call-to-arms address. Again, what is at issue is not the purpose of the speech (war), but how the UNSC will react. In this regard, the modal qualifier can allows the audience space to imagine a couple of future scenarios:

- The SC members can block UN support for war;
- Or, they can permit UN support for war.

51 Of course, there is good reason to doubt Powell’s insistence that he “wasn’t talking about war.” He suggested in his speech that continuing inspections would not work since Iraq would simply continue to hide weapons and deceive the inspectors. And, he certainly seemed to imply at various points that war was necessary. Nonetheless, the fact that Powell never explicitly called for war should not be overlooked. In fact, it could be argued that journalists’ precontextualization of Powell’s speech primed viewers to see it as a call-to-arms address and not as a diplomatic appeal to strengthen inspections.
The latter scenario is presumably the one that Powell desires; the former is presumably the one he does not want. But, it’s important to note that in either scenario, a more distal future of war with Iraq is “still on the table.” Notice that the SC members can block or permit UN support for war; they cannot necessarily block the war itself. Once again, it seems that war is a potentiality (perhaps even a probability) regardless of Powell’s rhetorical success or failure at the UN.

A Preemptive Response with ‘Five Minutes to Midnight’

Following this assertion, Mitchell’s narrative takes a turn away from Powell and toward the other central actor in the showdown: Saddam Hussein. In a new visual shot, Saddam Hussein appears puffing on a cigar while seated at a table. Just before he erupts in audible laughter (see frame 42 in Excerpt 4.4 below), Mitchell reports the following:

EXCERPT 4.4. (NBC/2.4/AM/38-42)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td></td>
<td>But, in Baghdad, Saddam Hussein was not waiting for Powell’s speech*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For simplicity, I have included only one representative visual frame—even though the spoken report in Column 3 spanned many similar frames. To save space, I use this convention at several points throughout the rest of this chapter. These condensed transcriptions are marked by a star (*) in the soundtrack.

With this, Mitchell reiterates Brokaw’s earlier representation of Saddam Hussein as someone preemptively responding to Colin Powell’s future address (rather than reactively
responding to past accusations). And, once again, Mitchell construes Saddam’s “preemptive response” as countering the viewer’s expectation through her use of the coordinating conjunction but. As before, the viewer is prepositioned to regard Powell’s speech as “demanding a response” even before it has been delivered. The viewer is positioned, then, to interpret Saddam’s jolly laughter not as “quiet confidence,” but as “false bravado.” After all, if he was truly confident, he wouldn’t be doing “damage control.”

A moment later, the shot changes to show Saddam Hussein seated at a different table, across from three reporters (see frame 44 of Excerpt 4.5). And Mitchell continues her report:

**Excerpt 4.5.** (NBC/2.4/AM/42-50)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td></td>
<td>In his first interview in twelve years, airing tonight on British TV, he told an anti-war British politician he has no links to al Qaeda and no illegal weapons.*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this case, Saddam Hussein is represented as a Sayer in a verbal process. Because, Mitchell uses the relatively neutral verb told to represent Saddam’s speech act, the viewer is positioned to regard Saddam’s denials (no links to al Qaeda; no weapons) as dialogically “open.” In other words, Mitchell does not “take sides” with regard to Saddam’s reported speech—and the viewer is relatively free to interpret his speech-act as one of many in a range of dialogic options. Of course, this apparent “openness” to
Saddam’s assertions is complicated by the earlier suggestions throughout this news narrative that Saddam Hussein is an enemy of the viewer (“TARGET”) who is trying to preempt Powell’s speech because 1) it will be (or perhaps already is) damaging and 2) because it will bring the world closer to what has been projected as the viewer’s desired goal: a war to eliminate Saddam Hussein. In other words, Saddam Hussein has already been discredited earlier in the text, and this inevitably colors how viewers later regard his represented speech.

In any case, in Excerpt 4.6, Saddam Hussein is given a chance to “speak” and defend himself. I put “speak” in quotation marks because the viewer actually hears the voice of a translator speaking “on top of” Saddam’s natural voice (which is audible, but not salient in the soundtrack):

**EXCERPT 4.6.** (NBC/2.4/SH/51-66)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction whatsoever. We challenge anyone who claims that we have [weapons] to bring forward any evidence and present it to public opinion.*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, Saddam Hussein is represented expressing a strong denial—i.e. that Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction whatsoever. Of course, this denial presupposes the opposite positive assertion—that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction—and it is thus a partially dialogic utterance. However, Saddam distances himself from those who claim that Iraq has weapons, and goes so far as to challenge such claimants to “bring forward” evidence
and prove their charge. In this way, Saddam is represented doing all he can to suggest that the accusations against him are not credible and unsubstantiated. And despite the fact that he has already been tagged as the “antagonist” in this newscast, his assertions are endowed with *rhetorical presence*. After all, his vocal emphases tend to enhance the strength of his denials (no weapons whatsoever, we challenge anyone), and the fact that he is allowed to speak (almost) directly to the camera heightens the salience of his assertions.

However, Saddam’s emphatic denials are immediately followed by a shot of Hans Blix, the chief weapons inspector in Iraq, seated at a press conference at the United Nations. Blix is relatively distant from the camera, seated with his legs crossed in front of several reporters. Mitchell reports, “Today Hans Blix said Iraq *must* do more to cooperate” (NBC/2.4/AM/67-69). Here Blix is introduced both visually and verbally as a new actor in the news report. Importantly, unlike Saddam Hussein, Blix has not previously been represented by journalists as a “target” of any kind. Instead, Blix’s authority is *enhanced* on screen by a visual caption which appears beneath his image in bold white letters: DR. HANS BLIX / CHIEF UN WEAPONS INSPECTOR. In a sense, Blix is *vouched for*, and the viewer is positioned to trust him much more than Saddam Hussein.

More specifically, the viewer is positioned to accept Blix’s deontically modalized assertion that it is Saddam Hussein who *must* do more to cooperate in order to prevent a war. In other words, Saddam Hussein is represented as the agent who is most responsible for determining whether or not war will happen. In this way, future war is precontextualized as contingent on the behaviors of only one actor, who happens to be
the “antagonist” in the news narrative. The viewer is not to understand the projected war as contingent on the behaviors of the United States—the principal aggressor in the conflict! While Saddam Hussein must do more to cooperate, the United States need not do anything at all.

In any case, as a new close shot of Mr. Blix appears on screen, Mitchell continues her report, introducing a “juicy” soundbyte:

**EXCERPT 4.7.** (NBC/2.4/AM.HB/70-75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>73.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mitchell: and [Blix] said ominously,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Blix:** Isn’t there five minutes to midnight in your political assessment?*

Here, in Excerpt 4.7, war is once again invoked as a nearly inevitable future. In fact, Blix’s use of a metaphor (*five minutes to midnight*) in a rhetorical question endows this future with special presence: indeed, it is mere minutes away. Moreover, however “ominous” it may be, the war is “naturalized” in Blix’s metaphor—it is represented as “just as impossible to stop as the rhythm of day and night” (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 99).

**Undercutting Saddam’s Denials: Enacting the ‘SADDAM LIES’ Thematic**

Blix’s grim political assessment is followed by what may be the most crucial representation in Mitchell’s report (see Excerpt 4.8).
Visually, in a very distant shot, three UN weapons inspectors (their role, as inspectors, is specified both verbally by Mitchell and visually by their blue UN caps and white “hazardous material” suits) descend a staircase—presumably somewhere in Iraq. Meanwhile on the soundtrack, Mitchell reports that these inspectors “found another empty chemical weapons warhead, undercutting Saddam’s denials.” This is a crucial representation of a past event—one that implicitly diminishes Saddam’s credibility. First, notice that this is a monogloss assertion—an unchallengeable “fact”—that leaves no space for alternative viewpoints. In fact, this representation positions the viewer to reassess Saddam’s earlier denials (*no weapons, no links to al Qaeda*) in the light of this newly unveiled information. Now, in retrospect, Saddam’s earlier speech-act is no longer to be regarded as one of many in a range of possible dialogic options. Instead, it is to be regarded as a falsehood—a story that has been “undercut”—**contradicted**—not by someone else’s assertions, but by the “facts.” In a sense, reality itself is construed as the arbiter of truth—and, in this case, reality seems to have judged that Saddam Hussein is an untrustworthy scoundrel.
However, there is a good reason to question Mitchell’s monogloss assertion. For one thing, the chemical weapons warhead was “empty”—and, one would think, rather unremarkable. In any case, it is arguable, and thus open to debate, whether one (or more) empty warheads “undercut” Saddam’s claims that he has no weapons of mass destruction. In fact, it could be argued that an empty warhead is not a weapon of mass destruction at all, but a useless scrap of metal. Indeed, Mitchell’s choice to report that this warhead self-evidently undercut Saddam’s denials is baffling, if not manipulative. In fact, in other news accounts, the meaning of these empty warheads is not at all clear. Take the following excerpt from the *New York Times*:

In Baghdad today, the weapons inspection team said it had discovered another empty Sakr-18 chemical warhead, at the Al Taji ammunition depot north of Baghdad. The warhead was similar to one found at another depot on Jan. 16. Mr. Blix said it was still unclear whether the empty munitions were “the tip of the iceberg” of chemical warheads Iraq has not accounted for, or the “debris” of their destruction. (NYT/2.5/JPSW/37-41, emphasis added)

In the *Times* report, you can see how resources of Engagement might have been used by NBC to open up the space for alternative viewpoints. First of all, the proposition that empty warheads were found in Iraq is not taken for granted in the *Times*. In fact, this assertion is attributed to “the weapons inspection team,” making it possible for dialogic alternatives. Second, the empty chemical warhead is not just described vaguely as “another” —making it possible for the viewer to imagine that a fleet of such warheads
had been located—but as a warhead that is “similar to” (not identical to) one found elsewhere in Iraq. Finally, and most importantly, the meaning of the empty munitions is not presented as self-evident. Instead, a possible interpretation of the empty warheads is attributed to Mr. Blix. In fact, in a highly modalized assertion, Blix is represented as saying that the weapons could be “debris” left over from the destruction of a chemical weapons program. If true, this would confirm Saddam’s denials, not undercut them.

But Mitchell’s “in-depth” report simply does not allow for this dialogic possibility. The empty warheads undercut Saddam’s denials, and that’s that. Importantly, not only does Mitchell’s report position the viewer to retroactively reinterpret Saddam’s earlier assertions; it also positions the viewer to interpret subsequent assertions made by other voices in the news narrative. In fact, a moment after Mitchell reports that the warheads undercut Saddam’s denials, Donald Rumsfeld appears on screen making assertions that corroborate Mitchell’s negative assessment of Saddam Hussein’s credibility (see Chapter 3). Rumsfeld, who is not introduced by Mitchell, simply emerges on the screen already talking. In fact, the viewer first hears Rumsfeld speak while the shot of the weapons inspectors is still on the screen. Thus, the presence of this new—and as of yet unidentified voice—captures the viewer’s attention as s/he is forced for a moment to imagine who is speaking. When Rumsfeld’s image appears a moment later, he is speaking from behind a podium at the Pentagon and gesturing emphatically (see Excerpt 4.9):

EXCERPT 4.9. (NBC/2.4/DR/81-92)
Obviously, Rumsfeld’s discourse is full of negative judgments—both explicit (local liar) and inscribed (he never...rarely tells the truth) that characterize Saddam Hussein as habitually untruthful. Interestingly, Rumsfeld never mentions Saddam’s name. He refers only to “the local liar.” In fact, it is left to the viewer to infer that this liar is Saddam Hussein, and the viewer is able to make this inference only because of what came before: namely, Mitchell’s reporting about Saddam’s untrustworthy denials. Thus, a thematic-semantic link is formed between Mitchell’s report and Rumsfeld’s accusation. In particular, the thematic formation “SADDAM LIES” which was implicit in Mitchell’s report is, here, made explicit in Rumsfeld’s diatribe. Ironically, the notion that “SADDAM LIES” is repeated and endowed with presence in the news narrative—even as Rumsfeld identifies this theme as something that people are “forgetting to say.”

Providing Support for a Precontextualized Claim

Notably, it is at this point in the news narrative, on the heels of Rumsfeld’s disparaging remarks, that Mitchell turns to Powell’s upcoming speech. In fact, her report precontextualizes Powell’s speech by linking it explicitly to Rumsfeld’s “local liar” comments:

EXCERPT 4.10.  (NBC/2.4/AM/93-4)
Here, in Excerpt 4.10, “that point” refers anaphorically to Rumsfeld’s earlier assertion: “This is a case of the local liar coming up again and people repeating what he said and forgetting to say that he never… almost never…rarely tells the truth.” Thus, the “SADDAM LIES” thematic is repeated again, and further endowed with presence. However, this time, the thematic is represented as a point that Powell “will try to make” in his upcoming address at the (now empty) UN Security Council that is pictured in the shot. Mitchell’s prediction of the future leaves very little space for alternative viewpoints. That Powell will try to make the “SADDAM LIES” point appears to be inevitable.52

In any case, there is a clear rhetorical movement from a representation of the past (weapons inspectors found another warhead) to a precontextualization of the proximal future (Powell will try to make that point). Importantly, this movement represents Powell’s future claim as warranted based on past “facts.” This is clear in the following simplified Toulmin (1958) diagram (see Figure 4.2):

52 Of course, Mitchell leaves some space to wonder whether his efforts to make this point will succeed. After all, Powell will try to make the point; he might not succeed at making the point. My concern here, however, is that NBC prepositioned audiences to accept this point by making it seem warrantable.
DATA

Weapons inspectors found another empty chemical weapons warhead, undercutting Saddam’s denials that he has no WMD.

PRECONTEXTUALIZE D CLAIM

Powell will try to make the point that Saddam is a local liar who never, almost never, rarely tells the truth.

WARRANT

If someone lies about hiding WMD, he can’t be trusted to tell the truth about anything.

FIGURE 4.2. Toulmin Diagram of Precontextualization on NBC

In short, NBC prepositions audiences to interpret Powell’s future claim as reasonable based on the unchallengeable “evidence” found by weapons inspectors. Interestingly, Powell did go on to enact the “SADDAM LIES” thematic formation at several moments in his address the next day. For example, at one point, he remarks that “Iraqi denials of supporting terrorism take their place alongside the other Iraqi denials of weapons of mass destruction. It is all a web of lies.” At another point, he asserts that “Saddam Hussein … has not told the truth,” and goes on to suggest that his “lies [have been] graphically and indisputably demonstrated by intelligence” (UN/2.5/CP/638-9). Thus, Powell reiterates the overarching thematic formations evident in Mitchell’s report: SADDAM LIES—and we know he lies because his denials are contradicted by the evidence. The NBC 2.4 report, then, not only precontextualizes Powell’s address, but also prefigures and pre-corroborates one of Powell’s central arguments. At the same time, NBC reinforces the
“POWELL VS. SADDAM” thematic formation first suggested by Brokaw in his introduction to the segment. If Saddam Hussein is “the local liar,” then Colin Powell is—or, rather, will be—the “bringer of truth.”

Seeing the Future: Displaying Powell’s Evidence

In Excerpt 4.11, Mitchell goes on to report that Powell will try to make the “SADDAM LIES” point, “using equipment brought into the Security Council today” (NBC/2.4/AM/95-97)

Excerpt 4.11. (NBC/2.4/AM/98-103)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98.</td>
<td></td>
<td>so he can show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99.</td>
<td></td>
<td>satellite pictures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What interests me here is the way that Mitchell prepares audiences to “look for” certain evidence (*satellite pictures* and *intercepted communications between Iraqi officials*) that presumably will help Powell make the “SADDAM LIES” point. Again, even before Powell has delivered his address, NBC endows some of his evidence with presence. In particular, satellite pictures are made salient to the viewer. Not only does Mitchell
identify satellite pictures in her spoken report, she also presents an actual satellite image in the visual track. Importantly, the camera zooms in and focuses on this satellite photograph, giving the viewer the sense that s/he is descending from outerspace—getting closer and closer to some important object on the ground. As the virtual space between the depicted world and the viewer is reduced, the viewer can’t help but wonder what is being depicted on the ground. But this information—as well as where this image actually came from—is difficult to determine. All the viewer knows, at present, is that images like this will be used to prove Powell’s point, i.e. “SADDAM LIES”. S/he can “tune in” for details when Powell actually presents his case.

Identifying the ‘Hardest Sell’ & Envisioning the Path to War

A bit later in the newscast, after reporting that French Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac, is still doubtful of “the war option” (NBC/2.4/AM/108-16), Mitchell appears on screen for the first time—in the empty Security Council chambers and at a great distance from the camera (see Excerpt 4.12). More specifically, Mitchell appears behind the horseshoe shaped table that is the centerpiece of the Security Council. After a moment (frame 121), Mitchell begins walking around the perimeter of the table, and a new camera begins to track her as she walks—in a much more intimate medium-close shot (see frame 122):

EXCERPT 4.12. (NBC/2.4/AM/119-29)

53 As far as I can tell, this particular image did not appear in Powell’s address. However, Powell did use other, similar satellite images in making his argument. In this case, Mitchell’s report merely prepares viewers to regard these images as important.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>119.</td>
<td>Here in the Security Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120.</td>
<td>tomorrow, <em>France</em> will be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121.</td>
<td>the hardest <em>sell</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>122.</td>
<td>But U.S. officials believe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123.</td>
<td>if Colin Powell’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
124. evidence is strong

125. enough to win

126. over France

127. the other critics

128. even Russia
In this instance, Mitchell precontextualizes both the proximal future (Powell’s address) and a more distal future (other nations’ reactions to Powell’s address). In particular, the visual information works to preview for the viewer what it will be like in the actual Security Council chambers during Powell’s proximal address. The horseshoe-shaped table, the chairs where delegates will actually sit, and the placards (reading GERMANY, MEXICO, PAKISTAN, RUSSIAN FEDERATION) make present for the viewer both the location and the prospective audience of Powell’s speech.

At first, the viewer is positioned as a distant observer of the scene, as Mitchell (who is presumably standing behind the seat where the French delegate will sit) reports that “France will be the hardest sell.” Interestingly, here, the viewer is prepositioned to view France from the perspective of Colin Powell and the administration. For one thing, France is singled out as an important audience member of the future address, an audience member whose reaction to Powell’s address will, one assumes, be more significant than the reactions of other “less important” nations (Mexico, for example). In fact, France is represented as an audience member who will present special difficulties, i.e. who will be “the hardest sell.” Importantly, this future role is brought into existence by Mitchell; it is not a self-evident characteristic of France. Equally important, France is not projected to be the hardest sell for Powell, or the hardest sell for the administration. Instead, the
viewer is prepositioned to regard France simply as the hardest sell—presumably, for anyone. In other words, the viewer is positioned to regard France as Powell does—as an obstacle to be overcome, or a client to be “sold” on a given argument. Other possible future roles for France during the speech (e.g. “France will be the greatest advocate for peace”) are not made available to the viewer.

Moments later, in the tighter camera shot, Mitchell’s spoken discourse enacts a slightly more distal future—beyond the immediate reactions to Powell’s address and on to subsequent reactions. This more distal future is construed as highly contingent. For one thing, it is attributed to U.S. officials, a general and ambiguous category of speakers. As such, this future scenario is represented as one dialogic option among many. For another thing, the future is represented in a conditional (if/ then) statement, where the epistemically modalized proposition in the “then” clause—the other critics, even Russia, may follow—is construed as dependent for its realization on the proposition in the “if” clause—if Colin Powell’s evidence is strong enough to win over France. Once again, the viewer is positioned to regard France as the most crucial audience for Powell’s address. Indeed, other nations are construed rather like dominos that will fall in line if only Powell can persuade the French.

More importantly, even though the projected future is represented in ways that leave a good deal of space for audience members to imagine other future possibilities, it still presents one future as preferred above the others. Specifically, Mitchell presents—

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54 On the other hand, the “facelessness” of these unidentified speakers makes them difficult to challenge (see below).
55 It’s also worth noting that the word “even” in the “then” clause enacts a counterexpectancy in which the viewer’s presumed expectation—that Russia cannot be won over by Powell’s case—is countered by the claim that even Russia can be won over.
and leads the audience to imagine—a future that would be very desirable for Powell and the administration: a future in which, perhaps, France and the other nations will be won over by Powell’s strong evidence. Of course, Mitchell could have chosen to represent any number of highly contingent futures—for example, “if Powell’s evidence is too weak to win over France, other nations, including Russia, are unlikely to support a second resolution.” Such a future possibility is certainly not out of the question in Mitchell’s construction, but it is certainly not made present either. In a sense, the future that the viewer is positioned to be interested in is the one that leads to war. Once again, it seems that the news is being reported from the perspective of the administration. What is desirable for them is what is made most available to the viewer.

**Evaluating Future Rhetoric: How Good Will the Evidence Be?**

After suggesting (in frames 122-129 above) that other nations’ support for a UN resolution authorizing war will ultimately depend on the strength of Powell’s evidence, Mitchell asks the following question: “How good will the evidence be?” (NBC/2.4/AM/130-2). The question is interesting for a number of reasons. First, the answer to this question is directly relevant to whether or not, according to Mitchell’s precontextualization of the future, France and other nations will be won over by Powell’s evidence. Depending on how the question is answered, the viewer will be positioned to imagine a future in which other nations support a new resolution, or in which other nations reject a new resolution.
Second, even though the question remains unanswered at this point, it nevertheless presupposes that Powell’s evidence will be at least somewhat good. Just imagine if Mitchell had asked, “How bad will the evidence be?” The viewer would have been positioned to presuppose that Powell’s evidence will be to some degree “bad.” Instead, by asking the opposite question, Mitchell positions the viewer to presuppose that Powell’s evidence will be to some degree “good” (somewhat good, moderately good, quite good, very good, etc.). Once again, Powell’s argument is presumed to be strong, even before Powell has spoken a word of it.

Finally, what’s interesting about this question is that it also presupposes an answer. Indeed, Mitchell is not asking an open question about Powell’s future evidence. She is not asking her audience to wonder about how good Powell’s evidence will be with the expectation that we’ll all find out tomorrow when he actually delivers his address. She is posing this question because she intends to answer it—now—almost a full day before Powell’s speech is scheduled to take place. In asking and answering this question, Mitchell presumes that the future is knowable, and positions her audience to believe this, as well.

So, how good will the evidence be? In Excerpt 4.13, Mitchell answers this question:

EXCERPT 4.13. (NBC/2.4/AM/132-42)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>132.</td>
<td>Today Powell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133.</td>
<td>was still reviewing whether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134.</td>
<td>they can prove significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135.</td>
<td>links between Saddam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136.</td>
<td>and al Qaeda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
But officials say Powell is convinced he can still establish a pattern that will be an indictment
Mitchell answers the question regarding how good Powell’s evidence will be not by referring to any specific pieces of evidence in Powell’s case, but by modalizing to various degrees what arguments Colin Powell will be able to “prove.” At work in this excerpt, then, is a particular kind of epistemic modality known as *potentiality*. As Feez, Iedema & White (1994) suggest, potentiality concerns “the capacity of an individual to perform some function”:

> When we address the capacity of an individual to perform some function we are not saying that they will, or necessarily do perform that function. Rather, we are making a statement about the likelihood of the action based on our assessment of the participant’s capabilities. (p. 10)

Mitchell’s report addresses Powell’s potential to accomplish two related rhetorical goals: 1) proving significant links between Saddam and al Qaeda, and 2) establishing a pattern that will be an indictment of Saddam Hussein.

Before moving on to an analysis of how these future potentialities are modalized, it is worth pointing out that by identifying these two rhetorical goals, Mitchell directs her viewer to “be on the lookout” for them in Powell’s address. In fact, as in the case of the “SADDAM LIES” thematic formation, both the “TERROR TIES” formation, and the “INCRIMINATING PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR” formation do appear in Powell’s actual address.
In Table 4.6 below, I have italicized instantiations of each of these thematic formations, as they were construed in both the NBC 2.4 news narrative and in Powell’s presentation.

For the sake of simplicity, I have left out the visual data that accompanied the spoken utterances:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic Formation</th>
<th>NBC 2.4</th>
<th>Powell’s Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TERROR TIES</strong></td>
<td>Today Powell was still reviewing whether they can prove significant links between Saddam and al Qaeda. (NBC/2.4/AM/132-6)</td>
<td>I want to bring to your attention today is the potentially much more sinister nexus between Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist network, a nexus that combines classic terrorist organizations and modern methods of murder. (UN/2.5/CP/663-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCRIMINATING</strong></td>
<td>But officials say Powell is convinced he can still establish a pattern that will be an indictment of Saddam Hussein. (NBC/2.4/AM/137-42)</td>
<td>What you will see is an accumulation of facts and disturbing patterns of behavior [which] demonstrate that Saddam Hussein and his regime have made no effort—no effort—to disarm as required by the international community. (UN/2.5/CP/132-4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the NBC precontextualizations do not necessarily corroborate the arguments that would be made by Powell in his speech. In fact, as I suggest below, NBC modalizes whether these arguments will, in fact, be made. However, by focusing on these particular thematic formations, NBC does endow them with presence, and, in a sense, prepares the audience to attend to them if—and, indeed, when—they appear in Powell’s address.

With this in mind, let’s return to a consideration of potentiality as it is expressed in the NBC broadcast. First, the likelihood that Powell will prove significant links
between Saddam and al Qaeda is represented as “under review.” Or, put another way, Powell’s ability to accomplish this argumentative goal in the future is construed as dependent upon his current review of the evidence. Since no information is given about the status of this review, the viewer is positioned to believe that this one “could go either way.” Powell may find that he has the evidence to prove significant links, or he may not. This doesn’t really tell the viewer much about “how good Powell’s evidence will be.” In fact, it suggests that we still don’t know.  

However, even as Mitchell’s spoken report leaves unanswered the question of whether Powell will prove links between Saddam and al Qaeda, the visual information that is co-deployed with this report helps to endow such links with rhetorical presence in the here-and-now. Specifically, just as Mitchell utters the words “links between Saddam,” an image of Saddam Hussein appears on the screen (frame 135). The shot of Saddam is on screen only for a moment, but the viewer can nevertheless identify him—the most salient figure on the left side of the picture—as he walks toward a point in space just to the right of the camera. Meanwhile, several Iraqi soldiers are also discernible as they stand and salute. Literally a second later, just as Mitchell utters the word “al Qaeda,” a new shot appears on the screen, in which several men dressed in black hoods pull themselves across a horizontal ladder (frame 136). Of course, Mitchell’s spoken discourse and the visual image position the viewer to understand that these men are members of al Qaeda—they are terrorists in training. Interestingly, within this scene one

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56 Notice that the leak of this potentially negative information about Powell’s future argument—i.e. that he may not be able to prove the “TERROR TIES” argument—is not represented as the administration doing “damage control.”

57 And even if the viewer could not identify him visually, Mitchell’s speech (i.e. her utterance of the word “Saddam”) enacts an identity for the man in the video.
of these al Qaeda terrorists, who, like Saddam in the shot before, is the most salient figure on the left side of the screen—also moves toward a point in space just to the right of the camera. The succession of images from Saddam to al Qaeda implies a mutual relation between these two entities. In fact, the sheer proximity of these two images in the visual track gives this mutual link a visual presence that arguably compensates for and counteracts Mitchell’s assertion that Powell is still reviewing whether such a link can be proven.

With regard to the next represented argumentative goal, Mitchell positions the viewer to be somewhat more confident about Powell’s ability to “establish a pattern that will be an indictment of Saddam Hussein.” First, Mitchell’s use of the conjunction but serves to suggest that Powell’s ability to prove the second argumentative goal is not jeopardized by his potential inability to prove the first. Specifically, but enacts a counterexpectancy whereby the viewer’s presumed expectation (that Powell won’t be able to indict Saddam Hussein because he may not be able to prove significant links between Saddam and al Qaeda) is countered and supplanted by the proposition that Powell (according to U.S. officials) is confident he can still indict Saddam. In a sense, this is a concede + counter pairing (Martin & White, 2005: 125-6). NBC concedes that Powell may not be able to prove the “TERROR TIES” thematic, but counters that he can still prove an “INCRIMINATING PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR.”

Importantly, the counter proposition is attributed to US officials—and, in a sense, attributed again to Powell and his conviction that he’ll prove the case. By attributing the assertion to US officials, Mitchell does open the dialogic space for alternative viewpoints.
However, this dialogic expansion is mitigated by the fact that the assertion is attributed, once again, to a general and ambiguous category of speakers—“U.S. officials.” As Edelman (1977) observes, journalists often attribute speech to such “mythical groups”—groups which cannot be monitored and whose titles are self-legitimizing. Thus, even though Mitchell attributes the assertion about Powell’s ability to indict Saddam, she attributes it to a group that is essentially invisible and, thus, unchallengeable. Moreover, the lexical term chosen to represent these invisible speakers, officials, overtly suggests that the assertion itself is “official.” Thus, the “good news” about Powell’s ability to indict Saddam is represented as “insider knowledge” from credible sources, rather than “political spin” passed on by administration propagandists.

In spite of this, it might be argued that Mitchell’s report is still dialogically expansive since the assertion attributed to U.S. officials is additionally sourced to Powell, who must have expressed to those officials his conviction about his ability to indict Saddam before those officials reported this “news” to NBC. That this is obvious to the viewer is true enough. However, one must keep in mind that Powell himself has already been implicitly authorized as a credible speaker—vouched for—elsewhere in the news report (e.g. as the one who will expose Saddam Hussein’s lies). Given this characterization, the viewer is positioned to regard Powell’s conviction as an indication that his case will be solid. Moreover, the notion that Powell is “convinced” that he can indict Saddam Hussein further establishes a thematic formation that has been in the works since the beginning of the report: “POWELL IS CONFIDENT.” Indeed, Powell’s confidence was made present in the very beginning of Mitchell’s report (see analysis of
Excerpt 4.2 above) in which Powell was displayed smiling self-assuredly. Now, he is “convinced”—a word that Mitchell endows with presence through vocal emphasis—that he will prove his case. In short, Mitchell’s attributions ultimately position the audience to believe that Powell is *quite capable* of establishing an incriminating pattern of behavior to indict Saddam Hussein.

So far, this analysis has not even touched the interesting visual data that is co-deployed with Mitchell’s report in frames 137-142. Previous visuals in this news narrative typically enacted a clear relationship of co-referentiality with the verbal text. For instance, the visual image of hooded men on a vertical ladder is co-deployed with and co-referential with spoken words “al Qaeda.” In other words, the viewer is positioned to understand that these hooded men *are* al Qaeda. In frames 137-142, however, co-referentiality is not easily observed. Instead, as Mitchell’s report focuses on Powell and his conviction, the visual track does not include images of Powell, but displays various shots of what is apparently a military rally in Iraq.

First, in frames 137-38, as Mitchell utters the words “But officials say Powell is convinced,” the viewer sees, in very long shot, many hundreds of people standing under a large portrait of Saddam Hussein and holding up signs that reveal the colors of the Iraqi flag. The portrait of Saddam and the Iraqi flag colors collocate to suggest that this is some kind of rally or parade in Iraq. On the surface, this image has nothing to do with Powell being “convinced.” However, it does serve to characterize the country of Iraq which has been mentioned several times throughout the news narrative—and which has already been characterized as a “TARGET” in this news narrative. To this point, this
visual narrative of Iraq conveys a celebration both of Iraq and of the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein.

In frames 139-140, the verbal-visual interplay begins to get interesting. The shot changes from the distant picture of hundreds of Iraqis rallying to a close shot of one Iraqi leading a march toward the camera—and toward the viewer. The person leading the march is dressed in a white hood that completely covers his face, but for the eye-holes. He holds a rifle on his left shoulder, and appears to have other weapons attached to his white uniform. Also discernible in the image are several rows of soldiers dressed in military fatigues, who march in unison behind the hooded man and who also carry rifles. As Mitchell reports, that Powell “can still establish a pattern…,” one can hear chanting and shouting—ambient sounds of the depicted world.

Again, there is little obvious correlation between the verbal track and the visual track in these frames. As Mitchell talks about Powell establishing a pattern, the visual track tells its own story about a military rally in Iraq. Crucially, in this visual narrative, the viewer is positioned to regard Iraq as threatening, particularly in light of the “TARGET: IRAQ” thematic which appeared earlier in this newscast. First, it is not insignificant that the “virtual proximity” between the viewer and the Iraqi soldier in the hooded white uniform is maximal. Here, I am measuring “virtual proximity” as a product of camera angle and distance, as well as the body position and visual salience of the depicted participant. This Iraqi soldier is pictured at a direct camera angle and in a close shot. He appears “large on screen”—indeed larger than any other depicted figure in this newscast (including Tom Brokaw)—as he walks toward, and almost into, the viewer.
This unusual proximity endows this hooded soldier with presence. However, this proximity is regarded as threatening to the viewer, not only because the soldier is “invading the viewer’s space,” but because he is carrying weapons and hiding his face behind a white hood. In fact, the white hood that covers this man’s face is intratextually linked to the black hoods worn by the al Qaeda terrorists in frame 136. This visual similarity positions the viewer to regard this man not just as a soldier, but as some kind of Iraqi terrorist. Once again, the “TERROR TIES” thematic formation is enacted visually and intratextually by NBC, moments after NBC has reported that Powell may not be able to prove that this link exists.

In the final two frames (141-142), the image changes once again to a more distant shot of this march. The terrorist-soldier is no longer visible; however a cluster of soldiers dressed in traditional military fatigues and berets are displayed marching. These soldiers carry several Iraqi flags, a poster inscribed with the Iraqi insignia (what appears to be an eagle), and a portrait of a mustachioed man that appears to be Saddam Hussein. The rhythmic chant of these marchers is heard in the background, as Mitchell utters the words “an indictment of Saddam Hussein.” This time, verbal-visual co-referentiality is established as Mitchells’ utterance of “Saddam Hussein” seems to refer to the mustachioed man in the poster. As a result, Mitchell’s spoken report about the possible

58 Interestingly, the New York Times (Fisher, 2003) also carried an image of this marcher in a story about the military rally. The caption reads: “Suicide bombers in hooded white uniforms hung with sticks of explosives marched...yesterday in Mosul, Iraq.” There is a lexical tie between “suicide bomber” and “terrorist” due to the fact that the first term is very likely to be collocated with the second in texts. In any case, even without this helpful caption, a viewer would nevertheless regard this hooded man as a threatening and terrorist-like given his dress. In fact, he appears to be a cross between several different “villains” familiar to an American audience: a stereotypical Muslim terrorist (as in frame 136), a KKK member, and a storm trooper from the movie Star Wars.
future “indictment of Saddam Hussein” is related to the military rally being depicted in the visual track. In a sense, it appears that Saddam Hussein will be indicted *because* of what’s going on in the visual track—because he is the leader of a country that harbors terrorist-soldiers, because he oversees a military that threatens the viewer, and, by extension, the United States.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has been concerned with 1) the ways that future semiotic events are precontextualized before they occur and 2) the ways that audiences are prepositioned to regard these events. I have argued that precontextualization should be viewed as a rhetorical strategy whereby rhetors seek to privilege, warrant, and legitimize certain futures as opposed to others. Moreover, I have argued that in some cases rhetors may actually “prepare the way” for certain futures by making those futures “present” before they actually occur. Drawing from scholarship on the rhetoric of futurity as well as scholarship from the field of social semiotics, I have sought to develop a principled method for analyzing precontextualization and audience alignment in *multimodal* texts. I applied this analytic method to the NBC newscast that predated Powell’s address, and found that NBC prepositioned audiences to interpret Colin Powell’s speech as highly warrantable, and to regard Saddam Hussein and Iraq as dangerous and deserving of violence.

There are several important implications of this chapter. First, from a methodological standpoint, this study makes clear that scholars interested in the rhetoric
of futurity should not neglect the role of multimodality in their analyses. Put another way, this analysis makes clear that studies which focus only on print-linguistic aspects of texts are destined to give an incomplete picture of those texts’ rhetorical features. If, for instance, I had only focused my analysis on the linguistic aspects of this NBC news text, I would have missed crucial visual data (e.g. the “TARGET IRAQ” headline; the virtual proximity to the terrorist-soldier) that surely impacted how audiences were positioned to interpret both the proximal future (e.g. Powell’s speech) and distal future (e.g. war with Iraq). Rhetorical scholars who overlook or dismiss such visual data may ultimately diminish the credibility of their research.

Next, from a theoretical standpoint, this chapter illustrates that intertextuality is not an exclusively past-oriented phenomenon. Not only do rhetors draw upon prior texts, but they also “draw upon” future texts. In fact, in media discourse, the precontextualization of future rhetorical events is not all that uncommon. Often, journalists not only speculate about what will be said in a future political address, but they may actually pre-quote a given speaker based on advanced copies of that speaker’s remarks. While it does not seem that journalists in this study were given verbatim copies of Powell’s speech in advance, it is clear that the Bush administration preemptively leaked to journalists the “key points” that Powell would make—key points that the journalists dutifully reported.

This practice gives political actors power to shape the news. That is, they can selectively leak only those portions of a speech that they want the press to emphasize. Nevertheless, the press has incredible freedom to give shape to future political
discourse—perhaps more freedom than they have to re-shape past discourse. After all, when journalists recontextualize prior speech, they necessarily draw on actual remarks—and at least attempt to remain faithful to original meanings (however impossible this may be). But, when journalists precontextualize speech, there are no actual remarks to refer to, and, thus, nothing to be faithful to. In fact, journalists may independently predict and recommend future courses of action—courses of action that seem to naturally follow from the stories they tell about the past and present.

Of course, the future is necessarily contingent and unknowable, and, consequently, representations of the future are necessarily “fictitious.” But journalists position audiences to regard their predictions of the future as “based on real events”—i.e. as plausible reports of what may well—and should—happen. Indeed, because journalists frequently construe past events as “factual” and universally agreed upon, they often offer viewers a seemingly self-evident context for understanding future happenings. For instance, the NBC journalists represented the finding of empty chemical weapons munitions as naturally indicative of Saddam Hussein’s untrustworthiness. This “fact” provided an unchallengeable (and ultimately supportive) contextual lens through which audiences could view Colin Powell’s future accusations of Iraqi deceit and Saddam Hussein’s past denials of hiding WMD. Indeed, even before Powell spoke, the “evidence” supplied by NBC already seemed to warrant his case; and even as Saddam Hussein claimed to have no weapons, the same evidence “undercut” his denials.

Similarly, journalists may also construe present events in ways that position audiences to view some future course of action as desirable. In this study, representations
of the present were often characterized by ideological polarization, which predisposed audiences to adopt a violent posture toward some other (Van Dijk, 1998). For instance, NBC journalists tended to construe an adversarial conflict—indeed a “showdown”—between America and Iraq, which was personified in the dispute between the covert protagonist, Colin Powell, and the covert antagonist, Saddam Hussein. Not only were audiences positioned to “take sides” in this conflict, but they were also positioned to view one side—Iraq—as a legitimate “target” for aggression.

Crucially, at the same time, audiences were positioned to regard the conflict itself as an entertaining melodrama—a spectacle that one can sit back and watch. In fact, as the current “showdown” was represented as leading almost inevitably to war, audiences were positioned as passive spectators—“watchers” of the future, rather than agents who might give the future a shape. In a sense, “the path to war” was laid out by the journalists themselves. And without other available pathways, it is no wonder that the path to war was followed.
CHAPTER 5

‘AMERICA’S BEST INTELLIGENCE’: RECONTEXTUALIZATION & RHETORICAL TRANSFORMATION

The result of the politics of recontextualization is to favorably position one representation of an issue over another—that is, to instill a given representation with cultural value so that it becomes shared or “common sense” knowledge. Therefore, the way in which the politics of recontextualization plays out impacts broader social understandings of the world. ~ Adam Hodges (2008a, p. 501).

Chapter 4 focused on the ways journalists pre-represented a future rhetorical event and pre-positioned audiences to adopt certain attitudes toward Powell and his rhetoric. I termed this type of anticipatory intertextuality “precontextualization.” In a sense, journalists pre-formed Colin Powell’s address—construing it as a “real thing” even before it took place. The present chapter shifts focus to the ways that journalists re-represent a rhetorical event that has already occurred. This type of past-oriented intertextuality is known as recontextualization. Here, instead of pre-forming Powell’s presentation, the journalists transform Powell’s presentation—and reposition audiences to interpret Powell’s argument. Thus, this chapter concerns what I term rhetorical transformation—that is, the way elements of one rhetor’s discourse are transformed as they are recontextualized in another rhetor’s discourse.

I begin the chapter by positing that recontextualization involves multimodal discourse. In other words, recontextualization involves the relocation (and
transformation) of both print-linguistic and visual-kinesic textual elements. After examining some of the scholarship on multimodal intertextuality, I propose new analytic methods for studying this phenomenon. First, I catalog the explicit and implicit types of recontextualization evident in my study. Then, drawing on critical intertextual analysis (Thibault 1991; Baldry & Thibault 2005) and grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987), I introduce a systematic procedure for charting intertextual transformations and the concomitant realignment of audiences across multimodal video texts.

Ultimately, I use this method of intertextual analysis to examine how Powell’s speech was transformed in the NBC 2.5 news narrative—and how, consequently, audiences were repositioned to interpret Powell’s argument. I illustrate how NBC journalists deleted some of Powell’s meanings, and added other meanings that were not originally apparent in Powell’s presentation. In so doing, the journalists tended to render Powell’s assertions more certain, more substantiated, more salient, and more legitimate. In fact, they overwhelmingly represented Powell as authoritative, and re-represented his case in ways that maximized its warrantability.

Recontextualization across Multimodal Texts
Most studies of intertextuality have focused exclusively on the recontextualization of *verbal* data—speech and writing.\(^{59}\) However, it is clear that recontextualization involves *multimodal* discourse—including language, sounds, gestures, images, etc. This means that when elements of one text are recontextualized in another, these elements are themselves multi-semiotic—and are transformed in multi-semiotic ways. For instance, when Powell’s speech is reported in a televisual news narrative, interesting multimodal transformations occur. Not only is Powell’s spoken discourse paraphrased by news correspondents, but it is also supplemented with photographs, graphics, and videos not originally present in Powell’s address.

Recent scholarship has begun to consider recontextualization and intertextuality in the light of multimodality. The theoretical insights of two such pieces of scholarship are particularly important for this chapter:

- Baldry and Thibault’s (2005) notion of multimodal intertextual thematic formations; and
- Van Leeuwen’s (2005) consideration of the transformation of social practices into discourse.

I have already discussed Baldry and Thibault’s (2005) work on intertextuality in previous chapters; however, for the sake of clarity, I will re-summarize some of their key points now. Baldry and Thibault (2005) assert that multimodal texts always “incorporate other texts and other textual voices in their internal organisation,” and, thus,

intertextuality is a critical component of multimodal text analysis (p. 50). For Baldry and Thibault, intertextual patterns are established across texts on the basis of shared meaning relations. Thus, when a group of texts shares patterns of movement, color, visual-verbal grammar, etc—that group may be considered an intertextual set. As noted in Chapter 4, especially important in Baldry and Thibault’s work is the notion of *multimodal thematic formations*—overarching meanings that are common to some set of texts, and which are construed “on the basis of joint verbal-visual resources which work in partnership” (p. 50). Tracing multimodal thematic formations across texts was productive for me in this analysis. As I suggest below, identifying these thematic formations allowed me to discern when general meanings from Powell’s address were rearticulated, often implicitly, in journalistic reports.

While Baldry and Thibault’s (2005) work suggests the ways that general meanings are retained across texts, Van Leeuwen’s (2005) work suggests how elements from one social context are transformed when they are recontextualized in another. Specifically, Van Leeuwen (2005) views discourse as way of recontextualizing *actual social practices* (p. 103). That is, discourse *transforms* real social actions (including actors, tools, times and spaces) into textual representations. According to Van Leeuwen (2005), four basic types of transformation occur when social reality is transformed into discourse:

- **Exclusion**—the discourse excludes elements of the social practice.
- **Rearrangement**—the discourse reorders elements of a social practice, or imposes an order on elements of a social practice.
• **Addition**—the discourse adds elements to the social practice—such as legitimations.

• **Substitution**—semantic concepts substitute for concrete elements of the social practice. E.G. the general term “aerobic exercise” substitutes for the specific physical movements involved in doing such exercise. (p. 110-11).

Van Leeuwen offers a thoughtful classification of the kinds of transformations that take place during recontextualization. In fact, as I discuss below, using a grounded theory approach, I identified four overarching types of *intertextual transformation* that are very similar to the ones outlined by Van Leeuwen. Of course, unlike Van Leeuwen, I am not studying how actual physical practices (e.g. weight lifting) are transformed into discourse (e.g. handbooks describing weightlifting). Instead, I am studying how discourse transforms other discourse—how texts re-represent other texts.

Together, Baldry and Thibault (2005) and Van Leeuwen (2005) offer useful guidelines for identifying multimodal thematic formations and categorizing the transformations that are associated with recontextualization. However, neither suggests a systematic *methodology* for examining how an “original” multimodal text is transformed as it is recontextualized. Moreover, neither addresses how rhetorical audiences are *repositioned* as a consequence of these recontextualizations. The next section of the chapter, then, aims at developing a detail-oriented analytic method that accounts for intertextual transformation and rhetorical repositioning in multi-semiotic contexts.
The subsequent account of my methodology is elaborate, and is, thus, divided into three main parts. In Part A, I differentiate various types of recontextualization. Specifically, I draw a distinction between explicit recontextualization and implicit recontextualization. In the former, elements from one text are re-represented in ways that explicitly refer to the original text through some sort of attribution. In the latter, elements from one text are re-represented in ways that do not explicitly refer to the original text, yet nevertheless “repeat” key thematic formations. Next, in Part B, I move to develop new methods for examining how discourse is explicitly recontextualized and transformed across multimodal texts. Specifically, my approach to the study of explicit recontextualization includes principled methods for 1) discerning an explicit recontextualization and its antecedent source material, 2) charting the multimodal transformations that occur as elements of one text are explicitly recontextualized in another, and 3) accounting for the subsequent repositioning of rhetorical audiences. Finally, in Part C, I outline my method for examining implicit recontextualization. In this case, my approach includes 1) identifying thematic formations in one text, and 2) determining whether these thematic formations implicitly rearticulate or invalidate thematic formations from a temporally prior text. Following this discussion of my methodology, I offer a detailed analysis of the NBC 2.5 newscast.

Analytic Method

A. Differentiating Types of Recontextualization
A first step in analyzing recontextualization is to discern the various types of recontextualization that are possible. A number of scholars (Bazerman, 2004; Fairclough, 2003; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Thibault, 1991) draw a distinction between two common types of recontextualization: quotation and reported speech. Briefly, *quotation* attempts to re-represent prior speech verbatim and is marked by a paratactic dependency structure—and, in written texts, by quotation marks (e.g. Jack said, “I ate the sandwich.”) Meanwhile, *reported speech* attempts to rearticulate the meaning or “gist” (not the wording) of an earlier assertion, and is marked by a hypotactic dependency structure (e.g. Jack said that he ate lunch). Of course, reporting speech allows a person more freedom to reinterpret or “spin” recontextualized discourse for persuasive ends. As Bazerman (2004) explains, reporting “filters the meaning” of the original text such that it may be “thoroughly infused” with the reporter’s attitudes and purpose (p. 88).

In my study, quotations and reports are certainly apparent. However, other kinds of recontextualization are evident, which are not as frequently discussed in the literature. For instance, *recordings* of prior speech events were used frequently in the NBC news broadcasts. In a recording, speech filmed in its original context is replayed in a new context. In fact, recording, not quotation, is the closest one can come to reproducing an

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60 Briefly, in paratactic structures, two “equal” clauses are placed side by side. In other words, the meaning of one clause does not depend on the other. Conversely, in hypotactic arrangements, one clause is subordinate to or dependent upon another.

61 This is not to say that quoting does not also transform original discourse. For instance, Calsamiglia & López Ferrero (2003) point out that journalists often employ direct quotation to recontextualize others’ speech based on the assumption that quoting is more objective and neutral. However, their study makes clear that even when journalists directly quote other speakers, presumably to “remain faithful” to what was originally said, they still (inadvertently) reshape the meaning of prior discourse.
original speech event since it retains aspects of the original context (ambient sounds, visuals of setting, original vocal inflection, etc.). Still, even recorded speech is transformed as it is recontextualized. For instance, as I pointed out in Chapter 3, if a recorded speaker’s name and “credentials” are flashed on the screen as s/he speaks, this speaker may be considered more authoritative than a recorded speaker who remains anonymous and who is given no institutional title. In any case, recordings, quotations, and reports all involve some kind of clear attribution to a prior speaker—either through language (X said, according to X, etc.) or visual data (a figure on the visual screen appears to be speaking “for himself”). Thus, these may be considered explicit forms of recontextualization which overtly source meanings to their “original context.”

In addition to these explicit forms of intertextuality, I also identified more implicit types: namely, thematic formations and assumptions. In fact, one can recontextualize a (verbal-visual) thematic formation, without ever citing (or even knowing) the antecedent source from which it was drawn (Thibault, 1991: 125). For instance, if I say “In America, all of us are equal,” I may not realize it, but I am rearticulating and recontextualizing a thematic formation “originally” expressed in the Declaration of Independence.

But intertextuality can be even more implicit (and unintentional) than this. For instance, a semantic meaning may be present only in the form of an unstated assumption or presupposition—62—and these unstated assumptions may be considered

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62 Different scholars have used different terms to refer to these taken-for-granted assumptions. Fairclough (2003) prefers the term assumption, as noted below. Others prefer the term presupposition (Martin & White, 2005; Porter 1986). And still others prefer the term presumption (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969).
recontextualizations of what were originally *stated* propositions in prior texts (Fairclough, 2003: 17). So, for example, when journalists in this study refer to “Iraq’s weapons,” they presuppose that these weapons exist. Of course, the implicit thematic formation—“IRAQ HAS WEAPONS”—may be found, stated explicitly, in antecedent texts (e.g. speeches by George W. Bush).

Thus, we can imagine a cline of intertextuality, ranging from explicit and typically intentional forms (like quotation) to implicit, often unintentional forms (as when rhetors draw upon the same thematic formations in different texts). I have charted this cline of recontextualization in Table 5.1 below.63

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63 For an alternative catalog of “levels of intertextuality” see Bazerman (2004).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cline</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPLICIT</td>
<td>Recording</td>
<td>Original speech or event is replayed in a new context. This is the closest one can come to reproducing the original event as it retains aspects of the original context.</td>
<td>[Video clip of Powell speaking at UN in NBC 2.5 broadcast.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quotation</td>
<td>Textual voice specifies an original speaker and restates verbatim what was said.</td>
<td>“You’re going to have to use your mind as well as your eyes and ears to take in the complete picture,” a White House official said. (NYT/2.5/JPSW/14-15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Textual voice specifies the original source and (purportedly) attempts to reproduce the “gist” of the original speech.</td>
<td>Powell claimed that Zarqawi and his lieutenants helped establish this terrorist training camp in Northern Iraq. (NBC/2.5/JM/264-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thematic</td>
<td>One text is linked to another text on the basis of a shared meaning relation (synonymy, meronymy, hyponymy, similar argumentative pattern, visual repetition, similar visual transitivity frames, colors, movements, etc.)</td>
<td><strong>Thematic:</strong> UN FACES IRRELEVANCY IF IT DOES NOT CONFRONT IRAQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formation</td>
<td>According to my scheme, shared thematic formations are considered implicit recontextualizations when there is no attribution to the original speaker who first issued the theme.</td>
<td>a) Colin Powell: This body places itself in danger of irrelevance if it allows Iraq to continue to defy its will without responding effectively and immediately. (UN/2.5/CP/297-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) Richard Butler: The Security Council must now address this</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is an implicit assumption that one text is linked to another text on the basis of an unstated and taken-for-granted assumption. Either an implicit presupposition in one text is stated outright in another text, or both texts share the same assumptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implicit Assumption</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One text is linked to another text on the basis of an unstated and taken-for-granted assumption. Either an implicit presupposition in one text is stated outright in another text, or both texts share the same assumptions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assumption:** IRAQ POSSESSES / CONCEALS ILLEGAL WEAPONS

| a) NYT 2.5: Mr. Powell also planned a furious round of diplomatic pressure on Security Council nations to accept the evidence as convincing enough to lead to a second resolution authorizing force in coming weeks if Iraq does not quickly cooperate in revealing *its illegal weapons* and permitting them to be destroyed (NYT/2.5/SWJP/79-82) |  |

| b) Colin Powell: My second purpose today is to provide you with additional information, to share with you what the United States knows about *Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction* (UN/2.5/CP/31-2) |  |

*For the sake of simplicity, I have not included visual data or vocal emphases in the examples.*
B. Analyzing Explicit Journalistic Recontextualizations

Identifying Explicit Recontextualizations and their Antecedent Source Material

Having differentiated between various types of recontextualization, the next step was a grounded analysis of journalists’ explicit recontextualizations of Powell’s address: recordings, direct quotations, and reported speech. First, I examined my initial multimodal transcriptions of the news narratives (Baldry & Thibault, 2005), and identified those portions of the news narratives that overtly indicated that a given (verbal-visual) meaning was being attributed to Powell. Attributions to Powell were most often realized in linguistic clauses in which Powell was featured as the Sayer in a verbal process (e.g. *Powell said*…, *Powell gave a speech*). However, Powell was also sometimes featured as an Actor in material processes which construed him as a “presenter” of visual evidence (e.g. *Powell played tape of a mirage jet*). I counted such material clauses as explicit recontextualizations of Powell’s address when they clearly referred to Powell’s (physical) presentation of evidence.

Importantly, because I was examining televisual news, these linguistic attributions to Powell were always co-deployed with some kind of visual data. Typically, this visual data also came from Powell’s presentation (e.g. one of his PowerPoint slides). However, at other times visual data that did not originate in Powell’s address was nevertheless co-deployed with a report of Powell’s speech. In any case, I considered co-deployed verbal-visual resources that overtly recontextualized some element of Powell’s address to be multimodal units. Thus, the following verbal-visual segment of Andrea Mitchell’s NBC
2.5 report (see Excerpt 5.1) was coded as a single overt recontextualization of Powell’s address:

**EXCEP**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>79.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Powell played</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.</td>
<td></td>
<td>tape of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81.</td>
<td></td>
<td>a mirage <em>jet</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82.</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>retrofitted to</em> spray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>simulated</em> anthrax</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Once I had identified these explicit recontextualizations, I “worked backwards” to the “antecedent source material” in Powell’s address from which these recontextualizations were drawn. Usually, this analytic “back-tracking” was a rather straightforward process—particularly when journalists played recordings or directly quoted Powell. And even when journalists paraphrased Powell’s speech they typically repeated key words or phrases from a few short clauses in Powell’s address. This made it rather obvious what portion of Powell speech the journalists were referring to. And, in these cases, I had no trouble locating the thematically related clauses (and visuals) from Powell’s presentation.

At other times, however, the journalists summarized long stretches of Powell’s discourse—condensing lengthy arguments into a single sentence, or even summarizing the main thrust of his entire presentation in a pithy phrase. Adapting the work of Martin (1992), I called recontextualizations of major arguments from Powell’s address hyperThematic, and called recontextualizations of Powell’s overall thesis macroThematic.

64 In short, I only analyzed portions of Powell’s speech in detail if they were recontextualized in the various news narratives. This is in line with the principles of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Strauss 1987), which suggest that data analysis should guide further data collection.

65 Demarcating the boundaries of the “source material” for a given recontextualization was a matter of interpretation. Essentially, I attempted to locate those clauses (and related visuals) that were most thematically and logico-semantically relevant to the given recontextualization. For instance, when it came to Andrea Mitchell’s recontextualization of Powell’s mirage jet tape (see Table 3 below), I identified a series of verbal-visual semantic tokens in Powell’s address that suggested the thematic “Mirage Jet Aircraft.” These tokens specifically displayed and/or discussed “Mirage Jet Aircraft”—and were thus the key source material for Mitchell’s recontextualization. I also noted, however, what seemed to be relevant co-text “surrounding” these explicit references to “Mirage Jet Aircraft” in Powell’s speech. Here, the relevance of the surrounding co-text was a matter of lexical cohesion and logico-semantic relations (see Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). For example, Powell cites Iraq’s alleged mirage jet as an example in support of his primary thesis: “The Iraqi regime has also developed ways to disburse lethal biological agents, widely and indiscriminately into the water supply, into the air” (UN/2.5/CP/386-7). Thus, it made sense to include this primary thesis as well as the mirage jet exemplification as relevant source material for Mitchell’s recontextualization.
According to my scheme, HyperThematic recontextualizations summarized major
claims in Powell’s presentation. In Powell’s address, these major claims were typically
introduced in some kind of “topic sentence,” and then developed for several minutes.
Thus, technically, entire arguments spanning several minutes might be considered
relevant source material for such hyperThematic recontextualizations. Meanwhile,
macroThematic recontextualizations construed what the journalists took to be the “main
point” of Powell’s entire presentation. I observed that, in his address, Powell identified
his overarching thesis in his introductory and concluding remarks. Thus, I considered
Powell’s introduction and conclusion to be relevant source material for the journalists’
MacroThematic recontextualizations, even though these recontextualizations technically
referred to Powell’s entire address.

Aside from hyperThematic and macroThematic summaries, journalists sometimes
employed nominals to represent Powell’s discourse. These tended to compress entire
stretches of discourse into a single noun or short noun phrase. Again based on Martin
(1992), I categorized these noun phrases as Thematic, hyperThematic, or macroThematic.
If the noun phrase referred to a singular assertion in Powell’s address, I called it thematic
(e.g. the charge against [General Amir Al-Saadi], NBC/2.5/RA/468-9). If the noun
phrase referred to a major and sustained argument in Powell’s address, I called it
hyperThematic (e.g. the most detailed explanation yet of possible links between Baghdad
and al Qaeda, CNN/2.6/JKDE/38-9). Finally, if the noun phrase referred to Powell’s
entire address, I called it macroThematic (e.g. the administration’s case against Saddam
Hussein, NBC/2.5/TB/23-5).
In Table 5.2 below, I suggest a scale of recontextualizations evident in my corpus. On one end of the scale, thematic recontextualizations are the most concrete and delimited in terms of the length of the antecedent source material they refer to. Meanwhile, on the other end of the scale, macroThematic recontextualizations are the most abstract and extensive in terms of the length of the source material they refer back to.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale of Recontextualization</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example from News Narrative</th>
<th>Antecedent Material from Powell’s Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THEMATIC</td>
<td>Refers back to a brief stretch of discourse—a single point Powell made in support of his broader arguments.</td>
<td>Powell said Iraq has failed the test. (NBC/2.5/AM/159-161)</td>
<td>A Few Clauses Share Common Theme: We wrote [Resolution 1441] this way to give Iraq an early test ... Would they give an honest declaration and would they early on indicate a willingness to cooperate with the inspectors? It was designed to be an early test. They failed that test. By this standard, the standard of this operative paragraph, I believe that Iraq is now in further material breach of its obligations. I believe this conclusion is irrefutable and undeniable. (UN/2.5/CP/290-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HYPERTHEMATIC</td>
<td>Refers back to a long stretch of discourse—usually a major phase of Powell’s argument.</td>
<td>Powell also gave the most detailed explanation yet of possible links between Baghdad and al Qaeda. (CNN/2.6/JKD/E/38-9)</td>
<td>Topic Sentences Predicting a Lengthy Argument with a Central Theme: What I want to bring to your attention today is the potentially much more sinister nexus between Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist network, a nexus that combines classic terrorist organizations and modern methods of murder.... (UN/2.5/CP/663-5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Colin Powell tried to persuade the world that Saddam Hussein will never let UN inspectors find his hidden weapons. (NBC/2.5/AM/37-42)

Introductory Sentences
Predicting the Central Theme of the Entire Text:
What you will see is an accumulation of facts and disturbing patterns of behavior. The facts on Iraq's behavior demonstrate that Saddam Hussein and his regime have made no effort -- no effort -- to disarm as required by the international community. Indeed, the facts and Iraq's behavior show that Saddam Hussein and his regime are concealing their efforts to produce more weapons of mass destruction....
(UN/2.5/CP/42-46)
After demarcating the relevant source material for each journalistic recontextualization, I analyzed this source material in greater detail. First, I focused on Powell’s spoken discourse and performed an SFL transitivity analysis (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) as well as an Appraisal analysis (Martin & White, 2005). These linguistic analyses uncovered the rhetorical (lexicogrammatical) choices Powell made as he represented reality, evaluated actors and events, and positioned audiences to (dis)align themselves with various communities. In addition to this intense analysis of Powell’s spoken discourse, I also more fully analyzed co-deployed visual images and kinesic action, and interpreted the overall metafunctional significance of Powell’s verbal-visual discourse (Baldry & Thibault, 2005). Performing this multimodal text analysis allowed me to more fully account for the intersemiotic dynamics of Powell’s text, and also allowed me to compare Powell’s text to the journalistic recontextualizations according to the same analytic criteria.

After completing this analytic groundwork, I could finally compare explicit recontextualizations of Powell’s presentation to the antecedent source material in Powell’s address. To do this I created a table, an excerpt of which appears in Table 5.3 below. The table essentially consisted of two groups of columns: one group representing Powell’s original verbal-visual text (columns 4-5) and another group representing explicit verbal-visual recontextualizations of Powell’s text in the news (columns 1-3). The next step was to compare the two groups in order to identify specific transformations across

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66 This multimodal transcript of Powell’s address was fashioned from a digital video of the NBC Special Report in which Powell’s presentation was broadcast live. The visual frames in the transcript amounted to whatever was “picked up” by the NBC cameras at the UN Security Council. Thus, the transcript is not really of Powell’s address, but of NBC’s televisual mediation of that address.
the multimodal texts, and interpret how putative audiences were repositioned as a consequence of these transformations. Thus, I added column 6 to identify transformations, and column 7 to describe audience repositioning. As is evident in Table 5.3 below, I developed coding categories in each of these areas. Following the table, in the next two subsections, I describe how codes for transformation and audience repositioning were derived from the data.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explicit Recontextualization</th>
<th>Original Text: Source Material</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
<th>Audience Repositioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NARRATOR</td>
<td>SPEECH/ NARRATIVE</td>
<td>NBC VISUAL</td>
<td>POWELL SPEECH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell</td>
<td>Powell played tape of a mirage jet retrofitted to spray simulated anthrax</td>
<td>The Iraqi regime has also developed ways to disburse lethal biological agents, widely and discriminately into the water supply, into the air. For example, <strong>Iraq had a program to modify aerial fuel tanks for Mirage jets.</strong></td>
<td>&lt; Powell’s contextualizing remarks in which he reports purpose “to disburse…” and describes Iraq’s PAST practices—“Iraq had a program…” &lt; assertion that the video was obtained by UNSCOM &lt; Temporal Circumstance—“some years ago” &lt; amt of spray Powell claims the jet is spraying &lt; many frames from Powell’s video of the mirage jet are excluded from the NBC report ≈ Powell says “modify aerial tanks”; M says</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E—Enhancing</th>
<th>L—Legitimizing</th>
<th>Q—Qualifying</th>
<th>X—“Impartial”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<sup>67</sup> To save space, I have deleted several visual frames from Powell’s presentation.
This video of an Iraqi test flight obtained by UNSCOM some years ago shows an Iraqi F-1 Mirage jet aircraft. Note the spray coming from beneath the Mirage; that is 2,000 liters of simulated anthrax that a jet is spraying.

“This claim is NOT ATTRIBUTED to Powell."

“retrofitted” makes Powell’s claim appear to be a self-evident fact.
Analyzing Transformations

Initially, my analysis of transformations involved writing descriptive comments of the discrepancies between Powell’s text and the journalistic recontextualizations. After writing these descriptive, I began to categorize each of them through a process of open coding (Strauss, 1987). My goal here was to interpret what kind of transformation was being indicated in each of my written descriptions. I arrived at (and defined) coding categories rather quickly in the course of my analysis; however, after reviewing the data several times, I found that one of four categories accounted for every single descriptive comment I had written. In Table 5.4 below, I present and define the four kinds of transformations evident in my study. For the sake of transparency, I have also included in the table those features of my written comments that indicated each of these four categories.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Indicators of Category</th>
<th>Sample Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deletion</td>
<td>Meanings that were present in the original speech were deleted or omitted in the recontextualized version.</td>
<td>Tokens in descriptive comment such as: excludes, omits, deletes, leaves out, drops, etc.</td>
<td>Andrea Mitchell <strong>does not include</strong> Powell’s pronunciation and attribution, i.e. “we know, we know from sources…”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td>Meanings that were not present in the original speech were added by the journalist.</td>
<td>Tokens in descriptive comment such as: adds, inserts, or includes.</td>
<td>NBC <strong>added</strong> image of US/Iraqi flags.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relexicalization</td>
<td>A thematic formation from the original speech was retained in the journalistic text, but different tokens (i.e. new semiotic resources) were used to realize it.</td>
<td>$X$ becomes $Y$ pattern where $X$ stands for Powell’s original speech and $Y$ stands for a journalistic paraphrase. $X$ and $Y$ were often synonymous, but never identical.</td>
<td>Powell’s assertion—“a high-level committee to monitor the inspectors … to spy on them and keep them from doing their jobs”—<strong>becomes</strong> “spy committee” on NBC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reordering</td>
<td>Elements from the original speech were reordered—resequenced or juxtaposed in new ways.</td>
<td>Tokens in descriptive comment such as: originally located elsewhere, came later, appeared earlier, did not appear here, etc.</td>
<td>The temporal circumstance, “in December 2000,” <strong>appears at a later point</strong> in Powell’s address. 68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

68 These written descriptions are all taken from my analysis, though I have paraphrased them for the sake of clarity. After settling on coding categories, I went back through these descriptive comments, and, for each comment in column 6 of my table, assigned a symbolic notation corresponding to each type of transformation: /<| />| |=| /\/.
The first two categories, deletion and addition, were the most common in the
data—and also the most fundamental transformations that accompany
recontextualization. In fact, deletion occurred every time Powell’s speech was
recontextualized by virtue of the fact that journalists selected only a portion of Powell’s
antecedent material in a given case, leaving the rest “behind.”

Similarly, addition occurred almost of necessity because the journalists produced
new (and therefore “additional”) text. In fact, addition occurred even when the journalist
attempted to reiterate verbatim Powell’s speech. After all, resources of attribution
(usually a Sayer and reporting verb) were not included in Powell’s original utterances.
For example, a journalist might say Powell said, “Iraq has weapons of mass
destruction.” However, the Sayer (Powell) and the reporting verb (said) are additions
that were obviously not uttered by Powell in the original speech. In fact, the addition of
attributions is so typical of news discourse that it is notable when these attributions do not
occur. In other words, one would expect journalists to attribute Powell’s claims to
Powell (e.g. Powell said, Iraq has WMD), but not to baldly re-assert Powell’s claims
without attributing them (Iraq has WMD).

Next, when journalists essentially recast Powell’s meanings using different but
near-synonymous lexical forms, I referred to this as relexicalization (McCarthy, 1988).
Actually, relexicalization amounts to a combination of deletion and addition in which
global meanings are, for the most part, retained. For example, the nominal, Saddam
Hussein, might be recontextualized as the noun phrase, the Iraqi dictator. In a technical
sense, the words Saddam Hussein are deleted, and the words the Iraqi dictator are added
in their place. To be sure, the meanings of the two different constructions are not identical, and one might choose one construction over another depending on his or her rhetorical objective. Still, in spite of the deletions and additions, a general thematic formation is retained: **THE LEADER OF IRAQ**.69

The final category of transformation, *reordering*, has to do with altering the sequence of items from the original speech. Typically in my data, reordering was not all that significant in terms of changing the meaning of Powell’s original discourse. For example, when certain nominals were transposed (e.g. “denial and deception” is recontextualized as “deception and denial”) it did little to alter the overall sense of Powell’s original address. Nevertheless, I noted each instance—and, as noted below, identified subcategories of this general type of transformation.

As the above discussion suggests, these four categories are not mutually exclusive. In fact, it’s not uncommon for all four types of transformation to be going on at once. And even when only a single kind of transformation appears to be at play, it can nevertheless produce a dramatically different meaning. For example, the addition or deletion of a single modal adjunct can qualify the certainty of an assertion, and reposition audiences in significant ways (e.g. *Iraq has WMD → Iraq possibly has WMD*). Much more can be said about each of the four categories. In fact, there are many possible ways that each transformation might be realized. Table 5.5 is an attempt to enumerate some of

69 Also included in the category of relexicalization are Thematic, hyperThematic and macroThematic noun phrases and summaries. For instance, when Powell’s entire speech is represented with the macroThematic noun phrase “the case,” I call this a relexicalization. In this instance, the actual content of Powell’s entire speech is deleted, and the nominal “case” is added “in its place.”
the more common types of deletion, addition, relexicalization, and reordering evident in my data⁷⁰:

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⁷⁰ The enumeration of possibilities in Table 4 is not meant to be exhaustive.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Transformation</th>
<th>Subtype</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DELETION</td>
<td>Attribution</td>
<td>Recontextualization (ReCon) excludes original speaker’s attribution to a source.</td>
<td>Powell: We know, we know from sources that a missile brigade outside Baghdad was disbursing rocket launchers and warheads … (UN/2.5/CP/179-180)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Circumstance</td>
<td>ReCon omits circumstance from original discourse—i.e. temporal, spatial, manner, etc. (reason and purpose circumstantial analyzed separately; see Halliday &amp; Matthiessen, 2004: 259-80).</td>
<td>Powell: During this [Zarqawi’s] stay [in Baghdad in May 2002], nearly two dozen extremists converged on Baghdad and established a base of operations there. (UN/2.5/CP/687-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journalist: Powell also claimed that two dozen Islamic extremists with ties to al Qaeda have set up a base in Baghdad … (NBC/2.5/JM/281-87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Deployed Image</td>
<td>Image in original discourse not included in journalistic ReCon</td>
<td>Powell: The four that are in red squares represent active chemical munitions bunkers. (UN/2.5/CP/195-6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journalist: Powell also showed satellite photos that he said indicated the presence of &quot;active chemical munitions bunkers&quot; that had been disguised. (CNN/2.6/JKDE/29-30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>ReCon omits original evaluative discourse—Affect, Judgment, Appreciation. (Martin &amp; White, 2005)</td>
<td>Powell: <strong>But they're worried</strong>. “We have this modified vehicle. What do we say if one of them sees it?” (UN/2.5/CP/81)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journalist: In the U.S. translation, one official is heard to say, “We have this modified vehicle. What do we say if one of them sees it?” (CNN/2.6/JKDE/19-20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement Resources</td>
<td>ReCon deletes modalizations, evidentials, counters; denials, pronouncements (Martin &amp; White, 2005)</td>
<td>Powell: <strong>we know, we know</strong> from sources that a missile brigade outside Baghdad was disbursing rocket launchers and warheads … (UN/2.5/CP/179-180)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Journalist: Powell said… a missile brigade outside Baghdad was dispersing rocket launchers and warheads. (NBC/2.5/AM.CP/120-32)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Addition</strong></td>
<td><strong>Attribution</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rationale</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ReCon adds Sayer +</strong></td>
<td>Reporting verb, or other marker of attribution.</td>
<td>Journalist: <strong>Powell also claimed</strong> that two dozen Islamic extremists with ties to al Qaeda have set up a base in Baghdad. (<em>Distancing</em>; *<em>NBC/2.5/JM/281-87</em>)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journalist: He showed a satellite photo <strong>he says</strong> reveals chemical weapons bunkers. (<em>Neutral</em>; *<em>NBC/2.5/AM/93-6</em>)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journalist: <strong>[Powell] spelled out</strong> with visual aids and a prosecutor’s rhetoric the administration’s case against Saddam Hussein. (<em>Endorsing</em>; *<em>NBC/2.5/TB/19-25</em>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Circumstance</strong></td>
<td><strong>ReCon adds circumstance not in original discourse—i.e. temporal, spatial, manner, etc. (reason and purpose circumstantial analyzed separately; see Halliday &amp; Matthiessen, 2004: 259-80).</strong></td>
<td>Journalist: <strong>[Powell] spelled out with visual aids and a prosecutor’s rhetoric</strong> the administration’s case against Saddam Hussein. (*<em>NBC/2.5/TB/19-25</em>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rationale</strong></td>
<td><strong>ReCon adds purpose or reason for given assertion or event</strong></td>
<td>Journalist: <strong>To drive home the point</strong>, <strong>[Powell] showed</strong> a chart of the group’s network in Europe. (*<em>NYT/2.6/SW/90-1</em>)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Co-Deployed Image

Image(s) not in original discourse co-deployed with verbal ReCon

Journalist: [Powell claimed] that members of Zarqawi’s network have been arrested recently in London and Paris. (NBC/2.5/JM/274-80)

Attitudes

ReCon adds evaluative orientation—Affect, Judgment, Appreciation. (Martin & White, 2005)

Journalist: It was a masterful performance… (NBC/2.5/TB/26-28)

Engagement Resources

ReCon adds modalizations, evidentials, counters; denials, pronouncements (Martin & White, 2005)

Journalist: Powell also gave the most detailed explanation yet of possible links between Baghdad and al Qaeda. (CNN/2.6/JKDE/38-9) [Powell never refers to links between Iraq and al Qaeda as merely “possible.”]

Narrative Context

ReCon reports contextual events that are not part of the original discourse. (Past Events, Current)

Journalist: Secretary of State Colin Powell has given a lot of important speeches in his lifetime to a lot of large audiences. (NBC/2.5/TB/1-7)
### RELEXICALIZATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Synonymy</strong></th>
<th>New lexis in ReCon is roughly synonymous with original lexis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Powell: He reported that when UNSCOM was in country and inspecting, the biological weapons agent production always began on Thursdays at midnight because Iraq thought UNSCOM would not inspect on the Muslim Holy Day, Thursday night through Friday. (UN/2.5/CP/342-44)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Hyponymy</strong></th>
<th>New lexis in ReCon is “type of” original lexis, or vice versa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Powell: We know that Iraqi government officials, members of the ruling Baath Party and scientists have hidden prohibited items in their homes. Other key files from military and scientific establishments have been placed in cars that are being driven around the countryside by Iraqi intelligence agents to avoid detection. (UN/2.5/CP/163-6)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Meronymy</strong></th>
<th>New lexis in ReCon is “part of” original lexis, or vice versa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Powell: We know that Iraq has at least seven of these mobile biological agent factories. The truck-mounted ones have at least two or three trucks each. That means</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
that the mobile production facilities are very few, perhaps 18 trucks that we know of… (UN/2.5/CP/366-8)

Journalist: Powell said … Saddam has eighteen trucks carrying mobile biological weapons labs. (NBC/2.5/AM/113-19)

Condensing Nominal/Summary

New lexis in ReCon converts stretches of discourse into HyperThematic or MacroThematic nominals or summaries.

REORDERING

Transposition

The chronological order of elements from the original discourse is reversed in the ReCon.

Reorder

Journalist: [Powell and Tenet] tried to build a case of Iraq’s deception and denial. (NBC/2.5/AM/53-6)

A macroThematic PowerPoint slide in Powell’s presentation reads: IRAQ/FAILING TO DISARM/ DENIAL & DECEPTION

Juxtaposition

Two or more elements of original

Journalist: Scratchy-sounding voices in Arabic saying, “We evacuated everything,” “Remove,” and “Forbidden
discourse which were separate, are juxtaposed in ReCon (necessarily includes deletion)

ammo," echoed eerily in a chamber clearly tense over the possibility of war. (NYT/2.6/SW/15-16)

[Here the Times juxtaposes quotations from three different voice intercepts—i.e. it brings together quotations from three different conversations among Iraqi officials and makes them appear to be much more incriminating than they really were]
Analyzing Audience Repositioning

Once I had identified and analyzed the transformations that occurred as Powell’s presentation was recontextualized in the news narratives, I turned my attention to the rhetorical impact of these transformations. That is, I sought to examine the ways that rhetorical audiences were *repositioned* with regard to Powell’s speech as elements of it were re-represented and transformed in the journalistic texts.

I began by adding interpretive comments in column 7 of the analytic table (see Table 5.3 above). The purpose of these comments was to explain how the transformations identified in column 6 had resituated audiences to respond to Powell and his arguments. In writing these comments, I inevitably drew upon my knowledge of contemporary rhetoric and discourse analysis. Thus, it was not uncommon for me to discuss how the given transformations added or suppressed rhetorical presence (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969), affected data-claim relationships (Toulmin, 1958), legitimized or delegitimized certain actors or discourses (Van Leeuwen, 2007), and altered the degree to which alternatives to a given assertion would be tolerated (Martin & White, 2005).

Knowing that I would eventually be reporting about my findings, I tried to be somewhat detailed in writing these interpretive comments. However, I also wanted a short-hand way of indicating the rhetorical significance of each transformation. So, I began open-coding (Strauss, 1987) the interpretive comments—labeling each comment with a brief gloss that summed up how audiences had been repositioned as Powell’s multimodal discourse was relocated in the news narratives. As I generated these codes, I...
operationalized them in coding memos. That is, I identified the features of the data that indicated each code. After recursively refining my codes for several sessions, I eventually settled on a list of codes that seemed to account for all the different ways that audiences had been repositioned. My final step was to compare the various codes with each other to determine if they could be re-organized according to a more superordinate scheme. In other words, I attempted to group various codes together under more general headings or “core categories” (Strauss, 1987). I identified four such core categories:

- **Enhancement**—news discourse positions audiences to regard Powell’s claims as more salient, more certain, or more warranted than they otherwise would have. Journalists 1) endow Powell’s claims with enhanced presence (through additions, reorderings, or relexicalizations), 2) close down dialogic space for alternative viewpoints (by failing to attribute claims to Powell, or by deleting elements of Powell’s speech that would tend to reduce the certainty of his claims), or 3) add “supporting evidence” not present in Powell’s speech.

- **Legitimation**—news discourse positions audiences to regard Powell and his argument as legitimate: authoritative, justified, reasonable, etc. Journalists add evaluations (both visual and verbal), endorsements, or other forms of legitimation discourse (rationalization, moralized analogy, etc.) that essentially comment on Powell or his speech in positive ways, enacting a positive ethos for Powell (see Chapter 3).\(^7\)

\(^7\) If you are wondering why there is no “delegation” category, it is because the journalists never explicitly commented on Powell or his discourse in negative ways. On two occasions, the NYT/2.6 article does suggest that Powell may not have persuaded his audience. In the entire corpus, these are the only two
• **Qualification**—news discourse positions audiences to view Powell’s argument as less certain or less substantive than they would have if they had viewed the original speech. Journalists open up dialogic space to question Powell’s claims by adding modalizations, evidentials, or distancing attributions which qualify the certainty of Powell’s assertions. Also occurs when news discourse deletes elements from Powell’s multimodal discourse (e.g. pronouncements) such that Powell’s argument is “depleted” in the journalistic context.

• **“Impartial” Re-Representation**—news discourse recontextualizes Powell’s speech in ways that are basically “faithful” and “disinterested” with regard to the original discourse. Journalists attribute claims to Powell and do not comment on, qualify or enhance Powell’s discourse in any overt way. Audiences are positioned to regard Powell’s claims more or less as they were during Powell’s speech. However, since the journalists select these claims for re-representation, they are still, to a certain degree, endowed with rhetorical presence.

It is worth noting that coding was non-exclusive. That is, more than one code could be assigned to a given recontextualization. In fact, it was common for audiences to be repositioned in multiple and divergent ways as Powell’s discourse was recontextualized. Thus, the overall count (number of instances) for each core category does not necessarily reflect the complex ways that rhetorical audiences were repositioned from moment to moment in the news texts. With this in mind, observe Table 5.6 below. In this table, I potentially negative assessments of Powell’s case made by journalists, as reflected in Chapter 3 (Table 10). However, I deemed these evaluations far too mild to be considered delegitimizing.
exemplify core categories (and their subtypes), and identify the frequency with which each category occurred in the NBC 2.5 newscast that is the subject of this chapter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Categories (##)</th>
<th>Core Definition</th>
<th>Subtypes (#)</th>
<th>Subtype Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENHANCEMENT (47)</td>
<td>Recontextualization adds elements to Powell’s argument that position audience to view Powell’s argument as stronger, more present, more warranted.</td>
<td>Enhanced Presence (34)</td>
<td>Added verbal-visual resources, more forceful (Martin &amp; White, 2005) relexicalizations, or deletion of key circumstances render Powell’s argumentative points more salient, proximal, or striking to the audience.</td>
<td>Piece by piece the new case laid out today linking Iraq to Osama bin Laden’s al Qaeda network. (NBC/2.5/TB/14-19) (the images of the terrorists in training and Osama bin Laden add visual presence to the “terror threat” described in Powell’s presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogic Contraction (8)</td>
<td>Powell’s claims are rendered less open to debate because of failure to attribute to Powell (bare assertions), deletion of modals and evidentials that originally qualified Powell’s argument, or</td>
<td></td>
<td>[In the voice intercept] two top officers are heard plotting to deceive top nuclear inspector Mohamed El Baradei. (NBC/2.5/AM/147-51) (This is Powell’s interpretation of the voice intercept, but it is represented as a self-evident fact).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEGITIMATION (27)</td>
<td>Recontextualization</td>
<td>Positive Evaluation (19)</td>
<td>Journalistic text adds positive evaluation (Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation) or endorsement of Powell and/or his speech.</td>
<td>It was a <strong>masterful</strong> performance… (NBC/2.5/TB/26-8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting Evidence (5)</td>
<td>Visual or verbal elements not originally present in Powell’s speech are added in news discourse in ways that seem to lend support to claims attributed to Powell.</td>
<td>[Powell claimed] that members of Zarqawi’s network have been arrested recently in London and Paris. (NBC/2.5/JM/2 74-9)</td>
<td>addition of counters, pronouncements, and denials.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Us/ Them Signals (7)</td>
<td>Added visual discourse signals an Us-Them conflict between America (Us) and Iraq (Them) and reminds viewer that Powell is “with Us”</td>
<td>[Powell] spelled out with visual aids and a prosecutor’s rhetoric the administration’s case against Saddam Hussein. (NBC/2.5/TB/19-25)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good Reason (1)</td>
<td>A “good” rationale is provided for Powell’s speech or other rhetorical act.</td>
<td>As evidence Iraq was cheating the inspectors all along Powell played a conversation taped the day before they returned to Iraq last November. (NBC/2.5/AM/138-45)</td>
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<tr>
<td>QUALIFICATION (18)</td>
<td>Recontextualization qualifies Powell’s utterances, positioning audiences to view Powell’s argument as less certain or warranted</td>
<td>Journalist asks open question or employs other resources which raise doubt as to whether Powell accomplished his argumentative goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teleological Uncertainty (6)</td>
<td>Colin Powell tried to persuade the world that Saddam Hussein will never let U.N. inspectors find his hidden weapons. (NBC/2.5/AM/37-42)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Depletion (5) | Journalists delete pronouncements or compelling evidence from Powell’s case and, thus, reduce the strength of Powell’s argument. | Powell: **we know, we know** from sources that a missile brigade outside Baghdad was disbursing rocket launchers and warheads … (UN/2.5/CP/179-180)  
NBC 2.5: Powell said … a missile brigade outside Baghdad was dispersing rocket launchers and warheads … (NBC/2.5/AM.CP/120-32) |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modalization (4)</td>
<td>Added modal resources and evidentials qualify the epistemic certainty of Powell’s claims, or added counterexpectancy tends to diminish the “expected” strength of Powell’s case.</td>
<td>There was plenty of new detailed information about Iraq’s <strong>alleged</strong> ties to terrorists. (NBC/2.5/JM/227-231)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distancing Attribution (3)</td>
<td>Use of distancing reporting verb (especially <em>claims</em>) dissociates journalist from Powell’s claim and leaves viewer maximal space to consider dialogic.</td>
<td>Powell <strong>claimed</strong> that members of Zarqawi’s network have been arrested recently in London and Paris. (NBC/2.5/JM/274-80)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journalists re-represent Powell’s speech (through recordings, quotations, or reports) in ways that are generally faithful to the original discourse, but which nevertheless add presence to certain moments in Powell’s discourse.</td>
<td>Powell’s speech is relexicalized in news; a “neutral” reporting verb is chosen, and the relevant additions and deletions do not strengthen or reduce the “force” of Powell’s original claim.</td>
<td>Powell: [Resolution 1441] was designed to be an early test. They failed that test. (UN/2.5/CP/292-3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table only reports findings from the NBC 2.5 broadcast.*
C. Analyzing Implicit Recontextualizations

Recall that, according to my scheme (see Table 5.1 above), implicit recontextualizations are formed when speakers rearticulate thematic formations and shared assumptions from prior texts—without referencing those prior texts in any obvious way. Using the grounded theory approach described above, I identified two overarching types of implicit recontextualization in my data:

- **Implicit Rearticulation**—without attributing to Powell, a journalist or other speaker makes an assertion or an assumption that is semantically similar to assertions or assumptions made by Powell. Implicit rearticulation is a kind of relexicalization in which Powell’s generic meanings are “paraphrased” (via synonymy, meronymy, or hyponymy) by other speakers.

- **Implicit Rebuttal**—without attributing to Powell, a journalist or other speaker makes an assertion that is semantically antonymous or contrary to Powell’s assertion. In a sense, the speaker implicitly recontextualizes a thematic formation from Powell’s address, only to negate it.\(^{72}\)

---

\(^{72}\) Implicit rearticulation and implicit rebuttal are similar to the concepts of corroboration and contradiction discussed in Chapter 3. However, there are some important distinctions to be made. Corroboration and contradiction relate to *transitive chains of authority*—that is, how the authority of journalists is indirectly “transferred” (or not) to other external speakers within a text. For example, when the presumably authoritative Attitude of a journalist is corroborated by an external speaker in the same text, the credibility of that journalist is indirectly bestowed onto that external speaker. Thus, if a newspaper article reads, “An *unfortunate* yelp by Howard Dean will cost him in the primaries,” and within the same article an anonymous voter is represented saying that the yelp was “regrettable,” then a reader of this article will likely find this voter’s Attitude credible since it corroborates that of the journalist. By contrast, implicit rearticulation and implicit rebuttal need not have anything to do with ethos or transitive chains of authority. These occur when any speaker in one text rearticulates a meaning from some prior text. For instance, if I say today that February follows January, and six years later you say that January precedes February, you have implicitly (and inadvertently) rearticulated my assertion. However, there is no transitive chain of authority here. A person listening to your utterance won’t compare it to mine, and won’t assume that you...
My first step in discerning these implicit recontextualizations was to identify the thematic formations evident in the news narratives. First, I located all the multimodal representations in the news narratives that did not overtly reference Powell or his speech as the “source.” I abstracted from these representations to identify overarching thematic formations. Once I had identified these thematic formations in the journalistic texts, I returned to Powell’s presentation to see if his address shared similar thematic formations. In some cases, I identified thematic formations in Powell’s address that very closely approximated those in the journalistic texts. In other cases, however, I noted thematic formations in Powell’s address that implicitly invalidated those in the journalistic texts. In Table 5.7 below, I identify the thematic formations that were rearticulated or rebutted in the NBC 2.5 newscast. Illustrative examples and frequencies are provided.

_____

are any more credible for having reiterated my meaning. In short, transitive chains of authority occur within a single text and rather obviously position viewers to understand that an authorial voice and non-authorial voice share the same Attitude. Meanwhile, an implicit rearticulation or rebuttal indirectly refers to meanings in a prior text, and may be undetectable to someone unfamiliar with that prior text.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Category</th>
<th>Thematic Formation</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REARTICULATION (14)</td>
<td>Iraq possesses / seeks WMD</td>
<td><strong>Powell:</strong> We have amassed much intelligence indicating that Iraq is continuing to make these weapons. (UN/2.5/CP/327-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Iraq cheats inspectors</em> (3)</td>
<td><strong>Richard Butler:</strong> [Iraq is] continuing to make new weapons of mass destruction while this process is going on. (NBC/2.5/RB/383-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Saddam Hussein poses a current / future threat</em> (3)</td>
<td><strong>Powell:</strong> The facts on Iraq’s behavior demonstrate that Saddam Hussein and his regime have made no effort -- no effort -- to disarm as required by the international community. (UN/2.5/CP/42-44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Saddam Hussein supports / permits terrorism</em> (2)</td>
<td><strong>Richard Butler:</strong> Iraq has clearly not made any decision at all to get rid of these weapons, or to cooperate with the inspectors. (NBC/2.5/RB/370-78)</td>
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<td><strong>Powell:</strong> When we confront a regime that harbors ambitions for regional domination, hides weapons of mass destruction and provides haven and active support for terrorists, we are not confronting the past, we are confronting the present. And unless we act, we are confronting an even more frightening future. (UN/2.5/CP/788-91)</td>
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<td><strong>Richard Butler:</strong> If the UN does not address this [threat posed by Saddam Hussein] now in a truly consequential way, we will all face a very great danger in the future. (NBC/2.5/RB/410-17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Powell:</strong> Saddam was a supporter of terrorism long before these terrorist networks had a name. And this support continues. (UN/2.5/CP/783-4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                     |                                | **Jack Straw:** It defies imagination that all of
this [terrorist activity] could be going on without the knowledge of Saddam Hussein. (NBC/2.5/JS/323-7)

**It is Iraq’s responsibility to disarm to prevent war**

*Powell:* This council placed the burden on Iraq to comply and disarm and not on the inspectors to find that which Iraq has gone out of its way to conceal for so long. Inspectors are inspectors; they are not detectives. (UN/2.5/CP/22-4)…We wrote 1441 to try to preserve the peace. We wrote 1441 to give Iraq one last chance. Iraq is not so far taking that one last chance. (UN/2.5/CP/831-3)

*Kofi Annan:* War is not inevitable, but a lot depends on Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi leadership. (NBC/2.5/KA/182-9)

**The United Nations must act or face irrelevancy**

*Powell:* And this body places itself in danger of irrelevance if it allows Iraq to continue to defy its will without responding effectively and immediately. (UN/2.5/CP/297-8)

*Richard Butler:* The security council must now address this in the most serious way, or at the very least face resigning itself to irrelevancy. (NBC/2.5/RB/401-8)

**REBUTTAL**

*Inspections can succeed*

*Powell:* The issue before us is not how much time we are willing to give the inspectors to be frustrated by Iraqi obstruction. But how much longer are we willing to put up with Iraq's noncompliance before we, as a council, we, as the United Nations, say: “Enough. Enough.” (UN/2.5/CP/299-301)

*Dominique de Villepin:* There is room for enhancing the inspections’ regime. (NBC/2.5/DV/177-80)

*Saddam Hussein does not support terrorism*

*Powell:* Saddam was a supporter of terrorism long before these terrorist networks had a name. And this support continues. (UN/2.5/CP/783-4)
NBC: U.S. officials stress there is no evidence that links Saddam Hussein to nine-eleven here in the U.S. or any other terrorist attacks. (NBC/2.5/JM/329-36)

Powell: This effort to hide things from the inspectors is not one or two isolated events, quite the contrary. This is part and parcel of a policy of evasion and deception that goes back 12 years, a policy set at the highest levels of the Iraqi regime. (UN/2.5/CP/123-5)

Gen. Amir Al Saadi: We have nothing to hide; therefore we don’t talk about hiding anything. (NBC/2.5/JM/504-10)
In analyzing these implicit recontextualizations, I was less concerned with the micro-transformations that occurred as elements of Powell’s presentation were recontextualized. That is, I did not analyze particular deletions, additions, relexicalizations, or reorderings that attended each implicit recontextualization. In fact, I did not really think it fair to do so, since the speakers were not really re-representing Powell’s speech. They were merely making assertions of their own which could be related thematically to key points in Powell’s presentation. My goal then was to indicate the degree to which “talking points” from Powell’s presentation were indirectly reiterated by other speakers in the news, or, indirectly negated by these speakers. To the extent that speakers in the news implicitly rearticulated Powell’s arguments, these thematic formations were endowed with greater rhetorical presence (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969: 117) and audiences were indirectly positioned to find elements of Powell’s case more salient. By contrast, to the extent that speakers in the news implicitly rebutted Powell’s claims, audiences were positioned to entertain arguments other than those presented by Powell. In other words, arguments other than Powell’s were made dialogically available to the audience.

Results

Overall, the results for the NBC 2.5 broadcast indicate that:

1) Powell’s presentation was most often explicitly recontextualized. That is, journalists most frequently recontextualized Powell’s speech by explicitly
specifying him as the person responsible for a given utterance or other rhetorical act. Less frequently, aspects of Powell’s presentation were recontextualized implicitly. In these cases, journalists and external speakers indirectly rearticulated thematic formations from Powell’s presentation—without attributing these thematic formations to Powell.

2) When aspects of Powell’s presentation were explicitly recontextualized by journalists, they were most often enhanced and legitimated. In other words, journalists typically re-represented Powell’s arguments in ways that made them appear more certain, more salient, and more substantive than they first appeared in Powell’s presentation. Likewise, journalists employed evaluative language and legitimation techniques suggesting that Powell and his arguments were effective. Meanwhile, although journalists rarely qualified Powell’s arguments, they did offer a few indications that Powell may not have persuaded the international audience, and they did omit a few details from Powell’s case that tended to reduce the certainty of his arguments (see Table 5.6 above). Thus, overall, audiences were repositioned to regard Powell’s presentation as stronger than they otherwise would have.

3) When aspects of Powell’s presentation were implicitly recontextualized in the NBC news narrative, thematic formations from Powell’s address were much more likely to be rearticulated than rebutted. In other words, various “talking points” from Powell’s presentation were likely to be reproduced by other speakers in the news narratives. But, rebuttals to these talking points—assertions which
implicitly invoked Powell’s thematic formations only to negate them—were rare.

Thus, it could be said that Powell’s arguments were implicitly endowed with greater rhetorical presence in the news narrative (see Table 5.7 above).

In order to more clearly illustrate how recontextualizations transformed Powell’s discourse and repositioned audiences in the news narratives, I have elected to analyze two segments of the NBC 2.5 broadcast in greater detail below. In Part I of the analysis, I study Andrea Mitchell’s report in which she recontextualizes Powell’s arguments about Iraq’s alleged weapons of mass destruction and efforts to deceive UN inspectors. Then, in Part II of the analysis, I examine Jim Miklaszewski’s report in which he recontextualizes Powell’s arguments regarding Iraq’s supposed ties to the al Qaeda terrorist network.

Analysis: Part I

Extolling ‘A Masterful Performance’

Andrea Mitchell’s report followed a brief introduction by Tom Brokaw (see Excerpt 5.2). In this introduction, Brokaw stands next to a recontextualized video image of Colin Powell speaking at the UN Security Council. Behind Powell’s image, two large digital flags—one American and one Iraqi—wave in the background; and beneath Powell’s image is the caption: “Making the Case”:

EXCEPRT 5.2. (NBC/2.5/TB/19-30)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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</table>
He spelled out with visual aids and a prosecutor’s rhetoric the administration’s case against Saddam Hussein. It was a masterful performance but was it enough?

*For simplicity, I have included only representative visual frames—even though the spoken report in Column 3 spanned many more similar frames. To save space, I use this convention at several points throughout the rest of this chapter. These condensed transcriptions are marked by a star (*) in the soundtrack.

Here, Brokaw introduces several macroThematic recontextualizations of Powell’s presentation. Specifically, Powell’s entire speech is condensed into the following nominal phrases: “THE CASE,” (printed on the screen) “the administration’s case against Saddam Hussein,” and “a masterful performance.” Moreover, Powell’s presentation is enhanced with a kind of Us-Them thematic (Van Dijk, 1998), supplied by the American and Iraqi flags waving in contradistinction to one another. Keep in mind that earlier in this newscast, Iraq had already been associated with a negative value: deception. In fact, as noted in Chapter 3 (see Excerpt 3.2), at the very beginning of this broadcast, Brokaw presented the lead “headline”—Text, lies and videotape—as an image of the Iraqi flag waved on screen (NBC/2.5/TB/L4-11). Thus, when the Iraqi flag reappears on screen in the frames above, it does not merely represent “one of the nations involved in a conflict.” It represents a negatively moralized “Them.”

Meanwhile, Powell, the American, is legitimated in Brokaw’s spoken discourse. First, the verbal process used to represent Powell’s speech (spelled out) suggests a subtle endorsement of Powell’s case (Marin & White, 2005). Powell did not merely present the
administration’s case, but he spelled it out—presumably with clarity and aplomb. Furthermore, in a circumstance of manner (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: 267), Powell is construed as having spelled out his case “with a prosecutor’s rhetoric.” This implicit comparison to a prosecutor is evaluative, suggesting both Powell’s skill as a rhetor and the lawfulness of his case. Finally, in an exceedingly positive Appreciation, Powell’s semiotic performance is described as “masterful.” Indeed, like the previous clauses, this bare, monogloss assertion (it was a masterful performance) leaves no space for dialogic alternatives. The audience is to take for granted that Powell skillfully “spelled out” the American case for war. In fact, this positive depiction of Powell’s ethos is qualified only by a degree of teleological uncertainty: was his masterful performance enough? Mitchell’s report presumably answers this vague question.

Legitimizing the Case: ‘America’s Best Intelligence’

Standing outside, and gazing directly into the camera in a close shot, Mitchell begins her report as follows: “Armed with America’s best intelligence, Colin Powell tried to persuade the world that Saddam Hussein will never let U.N. inspectors find his hidden weapons” (NBC/2.5/AM/34-42). Here, is another macroThematic recontextualization in which the central thesis of Powell’s entire presentation is converted into a compact assertion.

73 It also indexes that Powell’s rhetoric was forensic—i.e. concerned with determining the nature and cause of past events (as is often done in jurisprudential proceedings).
Like Brokaw, Mitchell also adds to Powell’s performance an element of teleological uncertainty. Powell has “tried to persuade the world,” but it is uncertain if he has succeeded\(^{74}\). Elsewhere, however, Mitchell transforms Powell’s presentation in ways that position audiences to believe that it ought to have been persuasive—even if it didn’t necessarily succeed with the international community. Most importantly, Mitchell enhances the argument attributed to Powell by adding a highly legitimizing clause: “armed with America’s best intelligence.” The Judgment that Powell is “armed” metaphorically suggests that he is well-prepared for rhetorical combat. Of course, the metaphor enacts an Us-Them logic (one does not take up arms unless there is an enemy), and likely positions the audience to regard Powell’s address as one that could lead to actual war\(^ {75}\). Meanwhile, the added circumstantial element (another circumstance of manner)—“with America’s best intelligence”—undoubtedly suggests that the evidence that Powell presented was authoritative. After all, if America’s best evidence didn’t persuade the world, then nothing can. Moreover, the assertion practically demands a nationalistic response. In this way, Mitchell continues vouching for Colin Powell, and reaffirms the Us-Them dyad first suggested by Brokaw. While They are associated with deception, We are associated with the kind of superlative evidence that can expose their lies.

\(^{74}\) It is not insignificant that the Receiver of Powell’s speech is represented as “the world.” Interestingly, in his earlier discourse, Powell never actually addresses “the world.” Instead, on six different occasions, he interpellates a much more local audience: his “colleagues” in the Security Council. Through a kind of hyperbole, Mitchell, thus, transforms a local audience into a worldwide audience, and arguably positions the viewer to regard the impact of Powell’s speech as greater than it actually was.

\(^{75}\) Keep in mind, that Powell never explicitly said that the U.S. desired war with Iraq.
In addition, as Mitchell relexicalizes Powell’s thesis, she transforms one of Powell’s allegations into a taken-for-granted assumption. Specifically, “hidden weapons” alleged to exist by Powell and the Bush administration are assumed to exist empirically in Mitchell’s report. Put another way, according to Mitchell, Powell did not try to persuade people that Saddam Hussein has hidden weapons, but that Saddam Hussein will never let inspectors find these weapons. Thus, from the beginning of Mitchell’s address, one can observe dialogical contraction by which one of Powell’s key claims—that Iraq is hiding weapons—is transformed into a presupposed fact.

**Cataloging Powell’s Evidence & Re-Representing a ‘Chilling Example’**

A moment later, Mitchell disappears from the visual track of the news narrative and a video image of Colin Powell and then-CIA Director George Tenet talking with delegates at the UN Security Council emerges on screen. In a voiceover, Mitchell explains that “Powell came prepared,” after working together with Mr. Tenet for several days “to build a case of Iraq’s deception and denial” (NBC/2.5/AM/45-56). Here, once again, Powell’s presentation is enhanced with a positive Judgment (“prepared”), and transformed into a macroThematic nominal phrase (“a case of Iraq’s denial and deception”) that rearticulates the prosecutor metaphor first issued by Tom Brokaw.\(^76\) Then, as a distant, high-angle shot of the Security Council appears on screen, Mitchell reports that Powell and Tenet “showed satellite photos, quoted defectors, and played audio tapes of intercepted conversations” (NBC/2.5/AM/57-62). All of the clauses in this

\(^{76}\) After all, “cases” are built by prosecutors in a court of law.
clause complex may be considered hyperThematic recontextualizations, since they condense entire phases of Powell’s argument into relatively brief assertions. The relexicalizations are also essentially “impartial;” there are no enhancements, legitimations, or qualifications. However, the juxtaposition of the three clauses in a single clause complex essentially reorders Powell’s case—bringing together in close proximity elements of Powell’s argument that were originally relatively dispersed. Arguably, as the sentence is expanded clause by clause, the viewer gets the impression that Powell’s “evidence” is proliferating with each piece piling on top of the last.

A moment later, in Excerpt 5.3, Mitchell introduces a recording from Powell’s address in which Powell translates an intercepted conversation—in Mitchell’s words, “a chilling example” of Powell’s evidence:

EXCERPT 5.3. (NBC/2.5/AM.CP/62-72)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mitchell:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One *chilling* example:
[arabic male voice]

Powell:

Remove.
Remove.
The expression.
The expression.
I got it.

Nerve agents

Nerve agents.
Wherever it comes up.

The senior officer is concerned that somebody might be listening. Well somebody was.*

NBC enhances this recording of Powell’s address in two important ways. First, as the transcript of the voice intercept emerges on screen, and Powell’s voice is heard in the soundtrack, NBC once again adds digital images of waving Iraqi and American flags. To be sure, the flags are not nearly as salient as the transcript in the foreground; however, their presence suggests a (now) recurring “nationalist” thematic that pits Americans against the Iraqis.
Next, and more obviously, Mitchell’s introductory evaluation (“chilling”) signals to viewers what affectual response they should adopt toward Powell’s “evidence”—essentially prepositioning the audience to regard the voice intercept as scary and alarming. Of course, there is nothing inherently scary about the voice intercept. Mitchell, like Powell, assumes that the officers in the recording are working to remove references to “nerve agents” in an effort to hide weapons from inspectors. But this was is the only possible interpretation of the intercepted communication. In fact, according to the *Iraqi Perspective Project*, a study published by the United States Joint Forces Command, the intercept was actually evidence of “an attempt by the [Iraqi] regime to ensure that it was in compliance with UN resolutions” (Woods et al., 2006: 93). As it turns out, the officers were trying to “prevent suspicion” of wrongdoing by removing “lingering traces of weapons fielded in the past” (p. 93). I don’t mean to suggest that Mitchell (or Powell for that matter) could have known this at the time. However, Mitchell did not have to assume that Powell’s (perhaps not unreasonable) interpretation of the intercept was the only one. And, certainly, she did not need to *enhance* Powell’s suggestion of Iraqi wrongdoing by positioning viewers to regard as “chilling” Powell’s translation and interpretation of this innocuous conversation.

**Enhancing the Danger: Transforming Possible Concerns into Menacing Threats**

In the next portion of her report (Excerpt 5.4), Mitchell recontextualizes visual-verbal elements of Powell’s argument about Iraq’s alleged chemical and biological weapons capabilities:
First, as Mitchell reports that “Powell played tape of a mirage jet retrofitted to spray simulated anthrax,” a grainy, black and white reconnaissance video appears in the visual track. In the video, an aircraft (presumably the mirage jet from Mitchell’s spoken discourse) zips through the air emitting a fog-like spray (presumably the simulated anthrax). In his presentation, Powell did indeed play (a slightly longer version of) the “mirage jet” video in Mitchell’s report. However, Mitchell’s recontextualization of this video enhances Powell’s argument in very significant ways.

Originally, when Powell played the video, he said:
Iraq had a program to modify aerial fuel tanks for Mirage jets. This video of an Iraqi test flight obtained by UNSCOM some years ago shows an Iraqi F-1 Mirage jet aircraft. Note the spray coming from beneath the Mirage; that is 2,000 liters of simulated anthrax that a jet is spraying. (UN/2.5/CP/387-9).

Notice that Powell says that Iraq had a program to modify mirage jets—not that Iraq currently has a program. In her report, however, Mitchell makes no indication that the presumably no longer exists. Notice also that Powell asserts that the video of the mirage jet was “obtained by UNSCOM [the United Nations Special Commission] some years ago.” As it turns out, “according to U.N. inspectors’ reports, the video predated the 1991 Persian Gulf war, when the Mirage was said to have been destroyed” (Hanley, 2003, my emphasis). But Mitchell deletes both the source of the video and, crucially, the temporal circumstance indicating that the video was obtained in the past. In doing so, she effectively detemporalizes Powell’s video “evidence,”—enhancing Powell’s argument by repositioning viewers to regard a past (and presumably defunct) “threat” as a proximal (and presumably) dangerous one.

But Mitchell’s deletion of the temporal circumstance from Powell’s address is just the first significant transformation of the “mirage jet” argument. Equally important, Mitchell does not attribute the assertion that the mirage jet in the video has been “retrofitted to spray simulated anthrax” to anyone. In other words, instead of attributing the assertion to Powell (and positioning the viewer to consider Powell’s assertion as just one dialogic option among many), Mitchell makes an unattributed and unmodalized
assertion that positions the viewer to disregard alternative viewpoints.77 Indeed, this is another a clear instance of dialogic contraction in which one of Powell’s debatable claims has been converted into a self-evident and incontrovertible fact.

Just after re-playing the mirage jet video, Mitchell recontextualizes a different PowerPoint slide from Powell’s presentation: a still photograph of an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). Mitchell reports that this is “a model of Iraq’s unmanned drones capable of spraying chemical or germ weapons within a radius of at least five hundred-fifty miles.” Here is another instance of dialogic contraction. Once again, instead of attributing to Powell the claim that Iraqi UAVs are capable of spraying chemical and biological weapons, Mitchell positions her audience to regard this information as factual. In fact, not only does Mitchell fail to attribute the UAV allegation to Powell, but she also skews what Powell actually said about the drones.

For one thing, Powell did not say that the UAVs were “capable of spraying chemical or germ weapons.” In fact, while Powell said that UAVs are “well-suited for dispensing chemical and biological weapons,” 78 he left some room for doubt as to whether Iraq had equipped their UAVs for this purpose. As Powell put it: “There is ample evidence that Iraq has dedicated much effort to developing and testing spray devices that could be adapted for UAVs” (UN/2.5/CP/636-7). Here, Powell says that

77 Mitchell seems to assume that the anthrax spray is something the viewer can see with his or her own eyes in the video. She might have questioned how one can determine with any certainty that something is “simulated anthrax” by looking at a grainy reconnaissance video. She might have also considered why one should be alarmed about “simulated anthrax” (whatever that is) in the first place.

78 Interestingly, before Powell delivered his presentation, the State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research warned him that the claim that Iraq’s UAVs were well-suited for this purpose was “WEAK” (Schwarz, 2008). Obviously, this warning did not prevent Powell from including the questionable charge in his presentation.
Iraqis have *dedicated much effort to* developing and testing spray devices. He does not say that they have *succeeded* in their efforts to develop functional spray devices. Furthermore, he modalizes the probability that the spray devices (which may or may not have been successfully developed) will be used in UAVs. Specifically, he says that they *could* be adapted for UAVs—not that the spray devices *will be* adapted for UAVs, and certainly not that the spray devices *have already been* adapted for UAVs. But Mitchell deletes Powell’s modalizations—essentially increasing the certainty of his assertions and positioning viewers to regard Iraq’s UAVs as already equipped to spray WMD. What is a *potential* threat in Powell’s presentation becomes a *current capability* in Andrea Mitchell’s report.\(^{79}\)

Moreover, Powell *never* said that the drones were “capable of spraying weapons within a radius of at least 550 miles.” Specifically, the spatial circumstance, *within a radius of at least 550 miles*, simply does not appear in Powell’s address. This makes Mitchell’s report somewhat baffling. Mitchell positioned viewers to believe not only that Iraq had UAVs equipped with functioning spray tanks (something Powell represented as uncertain), but that these UAVs were already capable of delivering weapons within a well-defined radius (something Powell never even said). In so doing, Mitchell enhanced Powell’s argument almost beyond recognition, even adding new evidence to strengthen his claims.

\(^{79}\) In fact, the UAVs had never been designed to spray WMD. About a year after Powell’s speech *The Washington Post* reported: “Since Powell's speech...investigations by U.S. weapons inspectors have determined that the UAVs, or drones, were not designed to spread deadly toxins, but to fly unarmed reconnaissance missions” (Kessler & Pincus, 2004).
A bit later in the newscast (see Excerpt 5.5), Mitchell reported about another intercepted communication presented in Powell’s presentation:

**Excerpt 5.5. (NBC/2.5/AM.CP/138-58)**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mitchell:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As evidence Iraq was <em>cheating</em> the inspectors all along, Powell played a conversation taped the day before they returned to Iraq last <em>November</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145</td>
<td></td>
<td>Two top officers are overheard plotting to <em>deceive chief</em> nuclear inspector Mohamed El <em>Baradei</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152</td>
<td></td>
<td>Powell:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>But they’re <em>worried</em>. We have this modified vehicle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here, in the first shot of the visual track, NBC displays a video of several UN inspectors walking (presumably in Iraq). As the camera follows these inspectors, Mitchell reports that Powell played another voice intercept “as evidence Iraq was cheating the inspectors all along.” Thus, through a kind of verbal-visual intersemiosis, the inspectors referred to in Mitchell’s verbal report are co-referential with the inspectors pictured in the visual track. The viewer is to understand that Powell played a tape as evidence that Iraq was cheating *these* (or similar) inspectors in the visual track. Importantly, when introducing the tape in his presentation, Powell never describes it “as evidence that Iraq was cheating the inspectors all along.” He certainly implied this argument, but he never stated it directly. Thus, by assigning a circumstantial role to the recorded conversation, Mitchell makes explicit an argument that was only implicit in Powell’s presentation—and, thus, helps Powell to transform an ambiguous recording into “evidence” of cheating.

More importantly, in the next shot, Mitchell positions the viewer to interpret the taped conversation as self-evidently revelatory of Iraqi wrongdoing. She reports in an unmodalized, unattributed assertion: “Two top officers are overheard plotting to deceive
chief nuclear inspector Mohamed El Baradei.\textsuperscript{80} This is yet another instance of dialogic contraction. Instead of attributing to Powell the claim that officers are plotting to deceive El Baradei, Mitchell represents this allegation as an undisputed and obvious fact.\textsuperscript{81} This is truly amazing since, as far as I can tell, there is nothing in the tape that overtly signals deception. Look closely at the clip of Powell’s presentation beginning in frame 152. (You’ll note that this clip is once again enhanced with digital images of the US and Iraqi flags waving in the background.) In Powell’s translation of the intercept—which is notably a recontextualization in its own right—an officer reports having a “modified vehicle” (whatever that is) and asks his superior what he should say if one of the inspectors sees this vehicle. Nowhere in the conversation do the Iraqis say that the “modified vehicle” is a weapon; nor do they say that they will hide it from El Baradei. So, the interpretation that this tape is a “plot to deceive” is a real leap.\textsuperscript{82} But Mitchell not only accepts this interpretation—she makes this interpretation the only one available to the viewer, effectively dissuading her audience from considering dialogic alternatives.

Re-Representing the International Response: They Didn’t Budge???

After presenting Powell’s apparently “incriminating evidence,” Mitchell finally describes the international response to Powell’s speech as follows (see Excerpt 5.6):

\textsuperscript{80} As she utters this remark, a young Iraqi soldier is displayed holding a rifle in the visual track. Perhaps, this soldier is supposed to be representative of the two Iraqi officers in Powell’s voice intercept.

\textsuperscript{81} In fact, as before, Powell never explicitly says that the officers are plotting to deceive El Baradei—though it is implied in his argument. So, not only did Mitchell fail to attribute this claim to Powell, she also made his claim explicit when it was only implicit in his address.

\textsuperscript{82} See Bamford (2008) for a discussion of intelligence officials’ admissions about the ambiguity of the NSA intercepts included in Powell’s presentation (p. 143-145).
EXCERPT 5.6.  (NBC/2.5/AM.DV/173-180)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>174.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mitchell:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>But opponents like the French foreign minister did not budge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>De Villepin:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>There is <em>room</em> for ENHANCING the inspections’ regime.*</td>
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</table>

Here, de Villepin’s assertion that there is “room for enhancing the inspections’ regime” is an implicit rebuttal of a claim made in Powell’s address: namely, that further inspections cannot succeed because Iraq will only continue to obstruct the inspectors’ progress (see Table 5.7 above). The presence of de Villepin’s rebuttal in the newscast provides viewers with a dialogic alternative to Powell’s argument. Moreover, the assertion that Powell’s “opponents…did not budge,” as Mitchell puts it, creates additional teleological uncertainty. That is, it positions viewers to regard Powell as potentially unable to reach his rhetorical goal of persuading an international audience.

However, what really interests me in this instance is the coordinating conjunction “but,” which Mitchell utters as a kind of transition from her report about Powell’s address
to her report about international reactions to Powell’s address. Here, “but” functions as what Martin & White (2005) call a counter. That is, it suggests that an expectation shared by speaker and addressee is countered or supplanted by the current proposition. In this case, the proposition that “opponents did not budge” is represented as a counterexpectation. In other words, Mitchell indicates that both she and the viewer would have expected Powell’s opponents to change their minds, and counters this expectation with the (surprising) news that they did not. Of course, given some of the overtly positive evaluations of Powell’s presentation that came before in the newscast (masterful performance, armed with America’s best intelligence), perhaps it would seem surprising that Powell did not win over his critics. In any event, it is interesting that even as Mitchell portrays speakers who essentially rebut Powell’s arguments, she positions the audience to regard these speakers as almost stubborn “opponents” who “don’t budge” in the face of evidence that “we” all know to be compelling.83

Analysis: Part II

Introducing Uncertainty: Is There an Al Qaeda Link?

Following Andrea Mitchell’s report, Tom Brokaw introduces a segment by correspondent Jim Miklaszewski (see Excerpt 5.7). In this introduction, Brokaw stands

83 In fact, at the conclusion of her report, Mitchell reports that “U.S. officials believe that the opponents to military action were reading from scripts prepared before Powell’s presentation.” This assertion, sourced to unnamed (and, thus, unchallengeable) officials, only strengthens the idea that Powell’s opponents were simply unwilling to listen to his convincing evidence.
next to a cluster of images: a video of Saddam Hussein speaking at a press conference, a digital illustration of the Iraqi flag, and a large caption reading, “AL QAEDA LINK?”:

EXCERPT 5.7. (NBC/2.5/TB/213-226)

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<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>214</td>
<td>Brokaw: And today for the first time the administration provided details for what it has always insisted was a connection between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. How strong is that case?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215</td>
<td>Here’s NBC’s Jim Miklaszewski at the Pentagon.*</td>
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This introduction may be considered a hyperThematic recontextualization of Powell’s case—which condenses and relexicalizes the phase of Powell’s argument in which he seeks to establish a “connection between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda.” At this point, Brokaw positions the viewer to regard the strength of this argument as somewhat open to question. He says that the administration (here a meronym for Colin Powell) provided details of the alleged connection. Of course, in an argumentative context, the provision of details is generally a positive thing, so Brokaw positions viewers to regard Powell’s case as thorough (as opposed to simplistic). However, the caption in the visual track
literally includes a big question mark that renders the “al Qaeda link” uncertain. Moreover, Brokaw himself casts some doubt on whether the allegations of an Iraq-al Qaeda connection are compelling by openly asking, “How strong is that case?” Notably, in framing the question this way, Brokaw *presupposes* that Powell’s case is to some extent strong (somewhat strong, moderately strong, quite strong, very strong, etc.). More importantly, however, he suggests that Miklaszewski’s report will answer his question. In other words, Brokaw positions the viewer to regard Miklaszewski’s report as an authoritative assessment of Powell’s “al Qaeda link” allegations.

**Qualifying Powell’s Argument: ‘Possible Links’ & ‘Thin Ice’**

Miklaszewski first appears on camera in a split-screen with Tom Brokaw, during Brokaw’s introduction to the segment (see above). Just as Brokaw completes the introduction, though, Miklaszewski is featured by himself—still gazing directly into the camera as he stands outside the Pentagon. He says the following:

Tom, there was plenty of new, detailed information about Iraq’s alleged ties to terrorists. But a Pentagon official says when Powell got to possible links between Baghdad and al Qaeda he was skating on thin ice.

(NBC/2.5/JM/232-238)

Here, Miklaszewski begins his segment with some legitimizing evaluations of Powell’s argument. Specifically, he calls Powell’s information both *new* and *detailed*. However, Miklaszewski also qualifies Powell’s argument, using a hearsay evidential (*alleged*) that positions viewers to understand that someone has *claimed* that Iraq has ties to terrorists,
and that this claim is open to question. Furthermore, in the report attributed to a Pentagon official, one of Powell’s argumentative thrusts is essentially delegitimized. Not only is the Pentagon official reported to have used a modalization (possible) that in itself reduces the certainty of Powell’s argument; but the Pentagon official is also represented as saying that Powell was “skating on thin ice” as he described “links between Baghdad and al Qaeda.” The fact that this assertion came from an American—what’s more a Pentagon official—makes it both difficult to challenge and especially damaging to Powell. After all, the viewer is being positioned by Miklaszewski to regard this Pentagon official as a kind of “expert” who is credible to assess the strength of Powell’s argument. Thus, though Miklaszewski opens his report with some legitimizing evaluations of Powell, he generally positions viewers to regard as questionable Powell’s allegations of an Iraq-al Qaeda connection. This was a rare “weakening” of Powell’s case—and it didn’t last long in Miklaszewski’s segment.

Visualizing the Saddam-Osama Connection

After this introduction, Miklaszewski disappears from the screen and an image of Osama bin Laden, smiling and looking directly into the camera, emerges in his place (see Excerpt 5.8). Bin Laden appears to be speaking, but only Miklaszewski’s voice is audible in the soundtrack:

**Excerpt 5.8.** (NBC/2.5/JM.CP/239-253)

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Miklaszewski:

In making his case, Powell claimed the ties between Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein go back nearly ten years.

Powell:

And the threat continues today.

A nexus that combines classic terror organizations and modern methods of murder.*
In this recontextualization, Miklaszewski reports that “Powell claimed the ties between Osama bin Laden go back nearly ten years.” Powell, in fact, did make a roughly synonymous assertion in his presentation. However, Miklaszewski qualifies Powell’s assertion by using a distancing reporting verb (Powell claimed) that positions the viewer to regard Powell’s utterance as open to debate. Meanwhile, in the visual track, the image of bin Laden is immediately followed with video image of Saddam Hussein sitting at a table and presiding over a meeting with Iraqi military commanders. Thus, even as Miklaszewski’s spoken report positions viewers to regard the ties between bin Laden and Saddam Hussein as debatable, the visual information that is co-deployed with this report helps to endow these ties with rhetorical presence. In fact, in terms of presence, the rapid transition—from images of bin Laden to images of Saddam Hussein—perhaps created more of an impact on viewers than Miklaszewski’s distancing reporting verb.

Also, when Miklaszewski says, “And the threat continues today,” he is somewhat ambiguous as to whether this proposition is being attributed to Powell. Did Powell claim that the threat continues today? Or is “the threat” simply a reality? I tend to view this proposition as a part of Powell’s claim, but there is some space for confusion. After this ambiguous attribution, Miklaszewski plays a brief clip of Colin Powell speaking at the UN Security Council. In the clip, Powell suggests that the “nexus” between Iraq and al Qaeda “combines classic terror organizations and modern methods of murder.” This clip represents a relatively “impartial” re-representation of Powell’s argument. That is,  

84 Powell certainly never says, “and the threat continues today,” though this is implied throughout his discussion of the “ties” between Iraq and al Qaeda.
the re-representation doesn’t “distort” Powell’s colorful remarks in any significant way, but it does endow these remarks with a great deal of rhetorical presence.

A New Spin on Powell’s Visual: Re-Representing ‘A Bin Laden Collaborator’

Next, in Excerpt 5.9, Miklaszewski reports the following:

**EXCERPT 5.9. (NBC/2.5/JM/254-63)**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>254.</td>
<td>but the <em>strongest</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>255.</td>
<td>terrorist link</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
made today was not with bin Laden but with this man
Abu Musab

Al-Zarqawi who

Powell described

as a *bin Laden* collaborator
In frames 254-257 of Excerpt 5.9, Miklaszewski asserts that “the strongest terrorist link made today was not with bin Laden,” as a distant shot of the UN Security Council appears on the screen. In this case, the visual track of the newscast is not all that remarkable. The shot of the UN Security Council serves merely to anchor Powell’s rhetorical event in its physical context. The viewer sees the UN Security Council from a distance, and is essentially unable to see the faces of the participants in the shot. As such, the viewer is positioned to interpret this scene merely as a space where Powell made his assertions.

More interesting is Miklaszewski’s spoken discourse in these frames. Once again, the coordinating conjunction—*but*—plays an important role in establishing a shared sense of *counterexpectancy* between Miklaszewski and the viewer. Specifically, Miklaszewski implies that based on Powell’s assertion of ties between Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein, both he and the viewer *would have expected* Powell’s strongest evidence to link Iraq directly “with bin Laden.” However, Miklaszewski suggests that Powell’s case actually defied this shared expectation. That is, instead of linking Iraq directly “with bin Laden”—the very face of al Qaeda—Powell (merely) linked Iraq with a bin Laden collaborator, Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi. This qualification would tend to suggest to the viewer that Powell’s assertions of Iraq’s terrorist ties were perhaps not as compelling as they *might* have been.

Nonetheless, one cannot overlook Miklaszewski’s explicitly positive appraisal of Powell’s assertions about Zarqawi. Indeed, Miklaszewski refers to the “link” between Iraq and Zarqawi as “the *strongest* terrorist link made today.” This use of the superlative
“strongest”—a word which Miklaszewski stresses vocally—clearly suggests a positive valuation of Powell’s case. And, importantly, the viewer is positioned to accept this valuation as an undisputed feature of the report.

Of course, one might ask by what criteria Miklaszewski evaluated the “strength” of this “terrorist link.” More importantly, one might ask what constitutes a “terrorist link” in the first place. “To link” is a process. In an argumentative context, one links “entity A” to “entity B” on the basis of some grounds. However, in Miklaszewski’s report, Powell’s argumentative process of relating Saddam Hussein to al Qaeda is not represented. Instead, Miklaszewski chooses to condense Powell’s argument into a nominal phrase: “the strongest terrorist link.” In so doing, Miklaszewski transforms a “fuzzy” relational process (i.e. to link) into a solid, objectified thing (i.e. a terrorist link). Consequently, the audience is confronted with a terrorist link that seems to have its own concrete reality, rather than Powell’s rhetorical act of linking (by some vaguely known criteria) one group to another.

Perhaps an even more compelling feature of this excerpt concerns the recontextualization and transformation of a visual element from Powell’s presentation—specifically the image of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi that emerges clearly in frame 259. Originally, this image of Zarqawi appeared in the 40th slide of Powell’s PowerPoint presentation—a slide titled “Al-Zarqawi’s Iraq-Linked Terrorist Network” (see Figure 5.1). The image of Zarqawi’s face was one of many faces displayed in Powell’s chart:
The chart in Figure 5.1 represents what Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) refer to as classificational diagram in which a superordinate figure—in this case Al-Zarqawi—is related to other inter-ordinate and subordinate figures—in this case, the other “terrorists” in the diagram (p. 81-88). The viewer looking at this slide is positioned to observe that Al-Zarqawi is an important figure in the diagram, but is also positioned to observe all the other relationships between the various participants in the chart. In short, the viewer is positioned to discern how various people are connected to each other and to (linguistically represented) locations in Europe.

However, in frame 259 of Miklaszewski’s report, Zarqawi’s image is presented by itself—completely extracted from the chart and its other photographs, and magnified for the viewer. This extraction and enlargement brings Zarqawi’s image closer to the viewer. Consequently, the viewer gets to engage with Zarqawi’s face in ways that were perhaps not possible during Powell’s address. Zarqawi’s gaze—directed into the camera—enacts a kind of personal relationship with the viewer. And, arguably, his blank
expression—unsmiling and stern—suggests that this relationship with the viewer is not a friendly one. Meanwhile, the absence of color in the photograph suggests that Zarqawi is not a part of the viewer’s world\textsuperscript{85}. Indeed, the photo has all the features of a “mug shot”—marking Zarqawi as a criminal Other. All of this is communicated instantly as Miklaszewski brings “\textit{this} man” into the viewer’s living room in frame 259.

The extraction of this image from Powell’s chart and its magnification in the newscast are noteworthy transformations. However, NBC further enhanced the “eeriness” of this image by animating it on screen. Indeed, in frames 260-263, the image “comes to life.” What was originally a static shot of an alleged terrorist is here a dynamic image that literally approaches the viewer as it rotates on the screen. Needless to say, in terms of pathos, this movement positions the viewer to feel a sense of disquiet and alarm. Zarqawi seems to be “coming at” the viewer—and threatening to invade the viewer’s world. This animation clearly represents an instance of a visual evaluation—a negative Judgment of Al-Zarqawi that simultaneously elicits a negative affectual response from the audience: fear.

Miklaszewski’s report of Powell’s speech in the soundtrack is, thus, complicated by this emotionally arresting image. Arguably, the rhetorical \textit{presence} of this image prevents the viewer from assessing Powell’s evidence of Iraq’s links to terrorism. Certainly, the salience of the image demands the viewer’s attention. And perhaps it requires that the viewer focus on the “scariness” of this “bin Laden collaborator”—and not on the quality of Powell’s case.

\textsuperscript{85} See Baldry and Thibault (2005) for a discussion of how gaze, facial expression, and color may enact interpersonal relationships between viewer and image.
The Image Speaks for Itself: Converting another Claim into a Fact

In the next several frames (see Excerpt 5.10), as Zarqawi’s face fades away, Powell’s “Slide 40” does eventually appear on screen. Miklaszewski reports the following:

**EXCEPRT 5.10. (NBC/2.5/JM/264-274)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>265.</td>
<td>[Image]</td>
<td>Miklaszewski:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Powell claimed that Zarqawi and his lieutenants helped establish <em>this</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>269.</td>
<td>[Image]</td>
<td>terrorist training camp in Northern Iraq that is producing the <strong>deadly toxin r</strong>icin and other poisons*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, once again, Miklaszewski uses the reporting verb “claimed” to distance himself from Powell’s assertion and open up space for his audience to consider dialogic alternatives. However, in the same breath, he also enhances the certainty of several of Powell’s claims. First, Miklaszewski refers to “this terrorist training camp in Northern
Iraq” and displays a satellite photograph from Powell’s presentation. The deictic—*this*—clearly establishes a relationship of equivalency between the “terrorist training camp” mentioned in Miklaszewski’s spoken report and the photograph displayed in the visual track. Crucially, that this satellite photograph *actually depicts* a terrorist training camp is represented as self-evident. Miklaszewski does not say “this alleged terrorist training camp;” he simply says “this terrorist training camp.” Likewise, the assertion that the camp is “producing ricin and other deadly poisons” is not attributed to Powell. Once again, through a kind of dialogic contraction, Powell’s claims are converted into incontrovertible facts.

This is particularly significant because, even at the time of Miklaszewski’s report, there were serious questions about the credibility of this specific argument. In fact, the *New York Times* reported that Kurds in Northern Iraq were confused by Powell’s suggestion of a terrorist training camp there. According to the *Times*, these Kurds were “unaware of a terrorist training camp” in the area, and had “questioned whether Powell was mistaken or had mislabeled the photograph” (Chivers, 2003). But Miklaszewski fails to represent any sort of dispute about Powell’s allegations. In fact, he transforms these allegations into certainties.86

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86 Miklaszewski might also have questioned whether an ambiguous, black and white photograph taken from outerspace can demonstrably *show* a terrorist training camp producing deadly toxins.
A few moments later in the newscast, as another shot of Osama bin Laden speaking to a crowd appears on the screen, Miklaszewski reports the following (see Excerpt 5.11):

**Excerpt 5.11.** (NBC/2.5/JM/298-304)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Soundtrack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>298.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><strong>The most direct terrorist link between Iraq and bin Laden apparently comes from a senior al Qaeda leader now in custody.</strong>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this recontextualization, a few clauses from Powell’s presentation are relexicalized and condensed into a brief nominal phrase: “the most direct terrorist link between Iraq and bin Laden.” Here, we find another superlative positive evaluation (*most direct*), and another nominalization (*terrorist link*) that seems to have its own concrete reality. Once again, Miklaszewski selects discourse that clearly **vouches for** Powell—legitimizing his evidence. Miklaszewski also opens up some space for the audience to entertain alternative viewpoints. For instance, he says that the terrorist link “apparently comes from a … detainee now in custody.” This is a kind of attribution to an outside source. In fact, the evidential (*apparently*) qualifies, to some degree, the certainty that this evidence
actually came from this unnamed al Qaeda leader.\textsuperscript{87} This qualified attribution would tend to free the audience to consider other dialogic alternatives.

However, Miklaszewski chooses an interesting verb (\textit{comes from}) to represent the detainee’s speech process. Normally, \textit{comes from} is a material process (e.g. the plate comes from France), not a verbal process. In a sense, the “terrorist link” is represented rather like a stable, material thing that has arrived from some location, as opposed to ephemeral verbiage that has been uttered by a person. Moreover, Miklaszewski foregrounds the “terrorist link” in the Thematic portion of the clause, and \textit{backgrounds} the attribution and evidential in the Rhematic portion of the clause.\textsuperscript{88} This only heightens the sense that \textit{the most direct terrorist link} is a taken-for-granted point of departure, a given.

\textbf{Deleting Details & Adding Visual Evidence: Disambiguating and Substantiating Powell’s Claims}

In any case, a moment later in Excerpt 5.12, Miklaszewski elaborates on the nature of this “most direct terrorist link,” recontextualizing one of Powell’s more specific assertions:

\textbf{Excerpt 5.12. (NBC/2.5/JM/305-13)}

\begin{tabular}{lll}
\textbf{Time} & \textbf{Frame} & \textbf{Soundtrack} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{87} Of course, Miklaszewski also adds the video image of Osama bin Laden. This image undoubtedly endows bin Laden with added visual presence, and enhances his role as the terrorist leader with an allegedly direct link to Iraq.

\textsuperscript{88} Here, I am using the words “Thematic” and “Rhematic” in the Hallidayan sense. The Thematic portion of any clause comes at the beginning and serves as a “point of departure” that is “given” in the message. The remainder of the clause, called the Rheme, typically presents new information (see Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: 64-105).
According to Powell, the detainee says that bin Laden turned in December 2000.
to Iraq

for help in

developing chemical

and biological
Before analyzing Miklaszewski’s report, it is worthwhile to reproduce a transcript of the prior assertion from which this report was drawn. Originally, Powell said:

[The detainee] says bin Laden and his top deputy, deceased al Qaeda leader Mohammed Atef, did not believe that al Qaeda labs in Afghanistan were capable enough to manufacture these chemical or biological agents. They needed to go somewhere else. They had to look outside of Afghanistan for help. Where did they go? Where did they look? They went to Iraq. The support this detainee describes included Iraq offering chemical or biological weapons training for two al Qaeda associates beginning in December 2000. He says that a militant known as Abu Abdula Al-Iraqi had been sent to Iraq several times between 1997 and 2000 for help in acquiring poisons and gases. Abdula Al-Iraqi characterized the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials as successful.

(UN/2.5/CP/771-80)

Comparing Miklaszewski’s recontextualization to Powell’s original assertion, one can find some very significant deletions and relexicalizations. First, in Powell’s address, bin
Laden and his top deputy are represented as the actors who looked to Iraq for help in weapons training. However, in Miklaszewski’s report, bin Laden is represented as the sole actor. Second, in Powell’s speech, bin Laden and his top deputy seek help in manufacturing chemical “or” biological agents. But, in Miklaszewski’s report, bin Laden is represented as seeking help in developing chemical “and” biological weapons—a slightly more frightening prospect. Third, in Powell’s assertion, bin Laden and his top deputy “went to Iraq” for help. In Miklaszewski’s recontextualization, though, this material process is relexicalized such that bin Laden “turned to Iraq for help.” These are not synonymous constructions. Going to a place and looking for help is not the same as turning to a place for help. One goes and looks for help as a stranger; but one turns to someone for help when a relationship of trust has already been established. Thus, by relexicalizing the material process in Powell’s assertion, Miklaszewski essentially enhances the sense that there is a “direct link” between bin Laden and Iraq.

Furthermore, in looking at Miklaszewski’s report, one might get the impression that, in December 2000, bin Laden traveled to Iraq himself to acquire help in developing weapons of mass destruction. To be fair, Powell does say at one point that “they [i.e. bin Laden and his top deputy] went to Iraq.” However, upon close inspection of Powell’s argument, it seems apparent that, in December 2000, bin Laden never personally went to Iraq or interacted with any Iraqis. Instead, Powell attributes to the detainee the assertion that “Iraq” (a rather generic and opaque Actor) offered “chemical or biological weapons training for two al Qaeda associates beginning in December 2000.” These unnamed “al Qaeda associates” represent a rather ambiguous category of Beneficiary. And one might
question the exact nature of their affiliation with the al Qaeda terrorist network. (After all, is an al Qaeda “associate” the same thing as an al Qaeda “member”?) Yet, Miklaszewski fails to even represent these al Qaeda associates in his report. Instead, he represents bin Laden—whose affiliation with the al Qaeda terrorist network is beyond doubt—as the sole actor who sought help from Iraq.  

Moreover, contrary to Miklaszewski’s report, Powell does not necessarily say that bin Laden “got” the help he was looking for. For instance, Powell never says if, according to the detainee, the two al Qaeda associates actually accepted Iraq’s alleged offer of help in chemical “or” biological weapons training. In fact, Powell’s only suggestion that al Qaeda received help from Iraq comes from an additional source. Indeed, it’s worth noting here that Miklaszewski is representing (or, rather, failing to represent) three layers of hearsay reporting: 1) Powell reports what 2) an unnamed detainee reportedly said 3) about what a “militant” named Abu Abdula al-Iraqi reportedly said. (That Miklaszewski earlier positioned his audience to regard this chain of hearsay as the “most direct terrorist link” in Powell’s presentation is laughable—and infuriating.)

In any case, according to Powell, the detainee said that al-Iraqi was sent to Iraq “for help in acquiring poisons and gases,” and that al-Iraqi “characterized the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials as successful.” In Table 5.8, I compare, at a fine level of detail, Powell’s original representation with Miklaszewski’s recontextualization:

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89 Of course, it’s difficult to see how an alleged relationship between unnamed “al Qaeda associates” and unnamed people somewhere in the nation of Iraq could be called a “direct terrorist link.” More on this below.
### Table 5.8. Transitivity Analysis of Powell’s Original Assertion & Miklaszewski’s Recontextualization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Powell’s Assertion</th>
<th>Al-Iraqi</th>
<th>characterized</th>
<th>the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials</th>
<th>as</th>
<th>successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miklaszewski’s Report</td>
<td>[bin Laden]</td>
<td>got</td>
<td>it [help in developing chemical and biological weapons]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>Pr: Material</td>
<td>Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Powell’s address, a Sayer (al-Iraqi) uses a positive, but indistinct attribute (successful) to characterize his relationship with unnamed Iraqi officials. Powell doesn’t say if bin Laden sent al-Iraqi to Iraq, or even if this “militant” is associated with al Qaeda. Perhaps more importantly, Powell doesn’t say what it means that al-Iraqi reportedly characterized his relationship as “successful.” (Did he actually acquire the alleged poisons and gases?) In short, there is a lot of ambiguity in Powell’s assertion. In addition, the attribution to al-Iraqi (via the detainee, and via Powell) is dialogically expansive, leaving plenty of space for audiences to consider alternative viewpoints. But in Miklaszewski’s discourse the attribution is omitted and the ambiguity is essentially cleared up. The Sayer (al-Iraqi) is deleted, and the indistinct attribute (successful) is transformed into a completed material process “starring” Osama bin Laden as the lead actor. In a sense, Al Iraqi says he forged a successful relationship becomes bin Laden got help in developing chemical and biological weapons.

Even more important than these linguistic transformations, however, are the visual enhancements—not originally present in Powell’s presentation—which NBC co-deploys with Miklaszewski’s spoken relexicalization of Powell’s argument. First, in frames 305-309, a high-angle shot of flat surface appears in the visual track. As Miklaszewski reports that “according to Powell, the detainee says in December 2000 bin Laden turned to Iraq,” the camera pans across the surface to show a number of handwritten documents, which have apparently been strewn about haphazardly. At this point, though the viewer is unable to read these documents, s/he is nevertheless positioned to regard them as somehow related to Miklaszewski’s spoken discourse. That is, the viewer
is to understand that these documents have something to do with bin Laden turning to Iraq.

In frame 310, just as Miklaszewski begins to finish his verbal report, asserting that bin Laden turned to Iraq “for help in developing chemical and biological weapons—and got it,” a new, close-up shot of a single document appears on screen. One hand-written word, in particular, stands out: “ricin.” Ricin is, of course, a biological weapon. In fact, earlier in his report, Miklaszewski identified ricin as the “deadly toxin” being produced at Zarqawi’s terrorist training camp. So, this hand-written word “ricin” has been defined for the viewer, who can relate “ricin” (via hyponymy) to Miklaszewski’s spoken nominal, “biological weapon.” In other words, the viewer is positioned to understand that ricin is a kind of biological weapon, and, thus, exactly the kind of thing Osama bin Laden was allegedly interested in obtaining from Iraq. Importantly, in the document displayed on screen “ricin” is the only recognizable English word. In fact, all other words in the document appear to be written in Arabic.

Thus, the viewer is left to interpret why the word “ricin” would appear in Arabic documents, and is further left to make the connection between these documents and Miklaszewski’s spoken report. Given Miklaszewski’s co-text, the most plausible explanation for the documents available to the viewer is that they are “evidence” of al Qaeda’s alleged effort to secure help from Iraq in developing chemical and biological weapons. Perhaps these documents were written by members of al Qaeda based on information they received from Iraqi officials. Or, maybe they were written by Iraqi weapons specialists and shared with al Qaeda operatives. The viewer may not be able to
piece together all the details, but s/he understands well enough that these documents 1) were obtained by authorities, and 2) have something to do with the help bin Laden reportedly got from Iraq. Indeed, following Toulmin (1958), one could say that NBC positions the viewer to regard these documents as real, tangible data in support of Powell’s recontextualized claim (see Figure 5.2).

The argument laid out here is certainly not bullet-proof, but it doesn’t have to be. It is enough that in Miklaszewki’s report there is a quasi-logical relationship (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969: 193) between the “evidence” in the visual track and Powell’s recontextualized claims in the soundtrack. Indeed, the viewer has already been primed to believe in “strong terrorist links” between Iraq and al Qaeda. In the context of the spoken report, then, the “ricin” document stands as proof of impropriety, and—whatever questions the viewer may have about it—it seems to confirm that such terrorist links exist.90

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90 Isikoff & Corn (2006) report that the al Qaeda detainee referred to in Powell’s presentation was actually a man named Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi. What Powell did not report (and appears not to have known) is that a number of intelligence officials doubted the credibility of al-Libi’s testimony (p. 122). Moreover, several members of the FBI were convinced that al-Libi had invented this story while being tortured in the CIA’s extraordinary rendition program (p. 122). Indeed, according to Isikoff & Corn (2006), al-Libi recanted his entire testimony, explaining that he had made up the tale only because his interrogators had been “killing” him (p. 124). What this means in terms of my project is that the visual shot of the “ricin” document could not have been related to this detainee’s fictional story about pursuing weapons from Iraq—and NBC knew it. In other words, NBC displayed this misleading visual—apparently for effect—knowing that it was unrelated to the detainee’s (and Powell’s) testimony.
The detainee says, in December 2000, bin Laden turned to Iraq for help in developing chemical and biological weapons—and got it.

**WARRANT**

Documents written in Arabic that contain the word “ricin” can be taken as evidence of a biological weapons plot by a terrorist from bin Laden’s network or an Iraqi official.

**BACKING**

1. Both Iraqis and members of al Qaeda are of Arabic descent and write in Arabic script.
2. Members of al Qaeda have been shown by authorities to be developing ricin in Northern Iraq (according to Miklaszewski’s report).

**FIGURE 5.2. Toulmin Diagram showing NBC’s Provision of Evidence for Powell’s Claim**
Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced a delicate analytic method for charting the rhetorical transformations that occur as aspects of one multimodal text are recontextualized in another. Using this method of intertextual analysis, I explored how Colin Powell’s presentation was recontextualized in the NBC 2.5 news narrative. My analysis revealed that, as they recontextualized Powell’s speech, the NBC journalists transformed his meanings in myriad ways. However, in general, the journalists strengthened Powell’s arguments—legitimizing Powell and his case with positive evaluative discourse, and enhancing Powell’s claims with supportive “evidence” not originally present in his address.

Perhaps the most important contribution of this chapter is the methodological framework offered for analyzing intertextual transformations and the concomitant repositioning of rhetorical audiences. It is my contention that only a highly exacting and meticulous analytic framework, such as the one outlined in this chapter, would be capable of tracing the transformations that occur during the process of recontextualization. In fact, this methodology not only allows for a close examination of the minute lexicogrammatical changes that occur as one person’s speech is reported in a new context, but also for an investigation of small changes in the “visual grammar” of texts. Furthermore, this methodology provides a principled way of accounting for the rhetorical impact of these transformations. More specifically, it allows one to draw on theories of rhetoric, argumentation, and systemic-functional grammar in order to address how
rhetorical audiences are repositioned as elements of one text are re-represented and transformed in another.

Ultimately, such a precise methodology is necessary because, as this analysis has shown, the transformations that accompany recontextualization are often quite microscopic. In fact, this is a central finding of this chapter: transformations in intertextual meaning relations are frequently tiny, but observable through careful analysis. Of course, just because the transformations are often small does not mean that they are insignificant. A powerful implication of this study is that these micro-transformations ultimately have a cumulative effect. When numerous arguments from an original speech event are adjusted and modified as they are re-represented in a new context, what eventually emerges is a globally different re-presentation of the original speech. In other words, an audience that interacts only with the recontextualized version of a speech may get an entirely different picture of what was actually said and displayed. In the present study this is particularly critical, since, as I have suggested elsewhere, most Americans did not view Powell’s original speech. Instead, they were confronted with an accumulation of micro-transformations in the press that likely positioned them to regard Powell’s speech as more persuasive than it actually was.

Clearly, it is a myth that journalists can “accurately” and “literally” recontextualize prior discourse. Perhaps, journalists cannot help but transform multimodal discourse as they recontextualize it in their news narratives. Still, we may question whose interests journalists serve as they report about call-to-arms rhetoric. It doesn’t take a genius to understand that when journalists describe a political actor’s call-
to-arms speech as “masterful” and “compelling” it serves the interests of that political actor. Likewise, it’s obvious that, when journalists re-purpose an image of an alleged terrorist so that it spins toward the viewer, this positions audiences to be afraid of this character. I don’t expect journalists to be impartial. I don’t even think it’s possible to be impartial. But, at the very least, I believe mainstream journalists could refrain from making overtly evaluative comments, and could avoid using camera tricks typical of tabloid programs like TMZ or A Current Affair.

What’s more troubling, however, are the more microscopic transformations that occur when journalists recontextualize others’ discourse—the deletion of a temporal circumstance or modal auxiliary; the addition of a token of counterexpectancy; the slight paraphrase that, nevertheless, significantly alters meanings. Again, these transformations are so minute that they are almost imperceptible—and yet, in aggregate, they reposition audiences in profound ways.

In this study, I was fortunate. I had the resources and the time to examine the potential rhetorical impact of these tiny transformations. But most consumers of the news aren’t so fortunate. Most consumers of the news cannot “check” the journalists to see how they have recontextualized others’ discourse. In fact, there is often no record of the original text, and, thus, no way of checking the journalists in the first place. So, on the one hand, the public cannot trust journalists (or anyone else) to be “faithful” in their recontextualizations of others’ speech. On the other hand, for logistical reasons, the public cannot check for themselves what “original” speakers may have said.
If we accept that transformations inevitably occur during recontextualization, then we also give up the illusion of “accurate reporting.” This makes good theoretical sense, but it brings little comfort to those of us who would still like to believe that an informed citizenry is indispensable to a democratic society. If there is no such thing as “accurate reporting,” then how can any of us truly be informed?

Perhaps we can’t be—at least not in any total sense. But, if this study is any indication, we may rest assured that in times of war, journalistic “information” will serve the interests of the state.
CHAPTER 6

BRACE YOURSELF FOR SOME BAD NEWS: CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

A journalist is basically a chronicler, not an interpreter of events. ~ Bill Moyers (1979)

It is hard to imagine how intertextual chains could avoid involving discrimination (in a general sense); not everything said can be carried along or should survive in the flow of communication ending up on record. An important issue, however, is when and how such discrimination amounts to misuse (and misuse from whose viewpoint?). ~ Per Linell (1998, p. 151-152)

This dissertation has examined 24 hours in the extended rhetorical life of Colin Powell’s UN address. Specifically, I have investigated how Powell’s multimodal presentation was transformed as it was pre- and recontextualized in various mainstream news narratives. At the same time, I have studied how, as a consequence of these journalistic transformations, public audiences were pre- and repositioned to respond to Powell’s argument. In this concluding chapter, I will discuss the contributions of this study, identify directions for future research, and consider the implications of my project both for scholars of rhetoric and the general public.

I begin by reviewing the multi-methodological approach I adopted in this study. I discuss the value of my integrated analytic framework, and point out some of its limitations. Second, I review the major claims from each of the analysis chapters, and suggest how these claims complicate existing approaches to the study of rhetoric. Third,
I recommend additional lines of research, which might expand upon and amend the present study. Finally, I offer some reflections on contemporary call-to-arms journalism.

**Methodological Advantages & Limitations**

A major claim of this study has been that rhetorical scholars can benefit from adopting a micro-discursive, intertextual and multimodal analytic framework:

- **Micro-discursive** because textual semantics—including rhetorical semantics—are realized in and through more microscopic features of the functional grammar.
- **Intertextual** because, in forming their own discourse, rhetors necessarily draw upon and transform other discourse for persuasive ends.
- **Multimodal** because texts are never comprised of exclusively print-linguistic resources, and, thus, rhetoric is a multi-semiotic phenomenon.

With these assumptions in mind, throughout this dissertation, I have attempted to integrate a number of methodological procedures—and invent new ones—in order to systematically answer research questions of importance to rhetorical study. In Chapter 3, I coupled a close analysis of multimodal evaluative discourse with an analysis of various “voices” operating in texts in order to investigate how ethos is constituted intertextually. In Chapter 4, I explored how interpersonal linguistic resources (e.g. evaluation, modality, attribution, etc.) were co-deployed with visual representations of reality to predict and legitimate a future rhetorical event. Finally, in Chapter 5, I combined systemic-functional and multimodal text analyses, and generated new procedures for intertextual
comparison, in order to chart rhetorical transformations—and the concurrent repositioning of audiences—across texts.

I believe that the combination of procedures introduced in this study is innovative, but, more importantly, replicable and rewarding. In other words, the multi-methodological program that I advocate can be reproduced in other studies to yield relevant (and interesting) findings about intertextual rhetoric. Admittedly, the methodology is complex. But, then again, the rhetoric of multimodal intertextuality is complex—and demands a sophisticated approach.

That said, I have no illusions that my methodological procedures are without limitations. First, and most glaringly, my analysis is confined to texts. I do not examine the practices of textual production (i.e. the material, technical, and social processes by which real actors create texts in real situations); nor do I examine reception and consumption (i.e. the divergent ways that texts are interpreted and used by heterogeneous audiences). In a sense, a textual analysis examines the residue of textual production and the prelude to audience response. As such, it can reveal something about the choices that rhetors make when assembling texts, and the ways audiences are positioned and constrained by texts. Nonetheless, to obtain a more comprehensive view of the motivations for and influence of texts, one would need to combine textual analysis with qualitative research exploring the social practices by which texts are constructed and interpreted.

Second, although the multifaceted approach to (inter)textual analysis outlined in this dissertation is sophisticated, it is by no means completely fixed or comprehensive.
Importantly, several of the methodological procedures introduced in this study are still being developed. For example, Martin and White’s (2005) scheme for analyzing evaluative discourse has stabilized over the years; however, they acknowledge that there is still “a need to develop social semiotic principles for classifying lexis”—possibly through corpus studies (p. 58). Likewise, Baldry and Thibault (2005) suggest that approaches to multimodal text analysis also need to be further elaborated, particularly approaches to coding intersemiotic relations within texts (p. 248). Obviously, the same can be said for the tentative coding schemes I have produced to analyze visual evaluations, intertextual transformations, and rhetorical repositioning. While I believe the various coding categories I have generated represent important methodological starting points, additional research is needed to further develop and modify my schemes.

The principal advantage of my methodology is that its detail-oriented focus reveals how minute verbal-visual meaning relations “add up” within and across particular texts to significantly (re)position rhetorical audiences. The main disadvantage is that the analysis is so exacting and complicated that it is impractical to apply it to a large body of texts, and, thus, to make general claims based on a larger corpus of data. In short, micro-analytic approaches make it difficult to formulate macro-level claims. Nevertheless, the systematic procedures I have used in this study allow me to “ground statements about textual meaning in a principled and replicable way” (Baldry & Thibault, 2005: xvi). Furthermore, some general claims about rhetoric are made possible through close textual analyses. I enumerate the key claims of this study in the following section.
Major Claims

A Person’s Ethos May Be Constructed Across Texts—either Explicitly or through Transitive Chains of Authority

In popular culture, and sometimes in rhetorical study, ethos (character, credibility, and authority) is conceived of as a kind of internal trait—a disposition that a rhetor brings to a discursive encounter. Meanwhile, scholars following Aristotle (2007) have conceived of ethos as a textual construction—something a rhetor creates for him- or herself. A major contention in Chapter 3 is that ethos is also an intertextual construction—that is, one person’s ethos may be constituted across texts by a variety of competing voices. Intertextual ethos is initially constructed via authorial inscriptions of attitude—i.e. the author of one text characterizes another person. Inscribed authorial attitudes explicitly enact ethos for a given external character.

However, these inscribed attitudes also act as “signposts” by which audiences can retroactively and prospectively interpret the ethos of other intra-textual voices. In fact, I argue that a rhetor need only express an attitude about a person once to set off a transitive chain of authority that colors an entire text. For instance, a journalist’s expression of a single positive attitude about Colin Powell’s speech 1) implicitly authorizes (and legitimates) Powell’s negative characterizations of Iraqi ethos, and 2) implicitly discredits Iraqis’ negative characterizations of Powell’s ethos. In fact, journalists often overpopulated texts with the voices of those who were ideologically “on their side,” and, in a sense, used these “surrogate” voices to repeatedly express attitudes which they were (arguably) precluded from expressing on their own (since they must appear “impartial”).
Ultimately, the complex interaction of various evaluations sprinkled throughout an intertextual set of texts by various competing voices may be more significant in constructing a person’s character than that person’s own interventions to create ethos for him- or herself.

**Precontextualization is a Noteworthy Type of Deliberative Rhetoric**

In Chapter 4, I argued that intertextuality is not just past-oriented, but future-oriented. Thus, I defined *precontextualization* as a kind of intertextuality, but also as a *rhetorical strategy* whereby rhetors depict and contextualize an unrealized future in ways that position audiences to regard it as (il)legitimate. I found that rhetors, specifically NBC journalists, whose primary rhetorical objective is presumably forensic—i.e. to claim *what happened*—are equally as likely to deal in deliberative affairs—i.e. to claim *what ought to happen*. In fact, not only did these journalists *speculate* about the future, but they actually used a variety of multimodal resources to represent certain future scenarios as desirable, inevitable, or, indeed, “already here.” For instance, Powell’s speech—a future semiotic event—was represented as *presently* “powerful” enough to instigate a preemptive response from Saddam Hussein. Furthermore, Powell’s future speech was legitimated not only through positive evaluations, but also through implicit intertextual arguments. Indeed, in a Toulminian (1958) sense, the NBC journalists themselves *supplied* “factual” premises that served to warrant Powell’s future claims.

In the end, journalists have remarkable freedom to precontextualize future speech events in ways that comport with their own rhetorical and ideological objectives. Unlike
recontextualization, which draws on prior discourse and at least purports to remain faithful to what was actually said, precontextualization has no past referent. In a sense, there is nothing to draw on—leaving rhetors free to imagine and project those future scenarios that they find most desirable.

**Intertextual Micro-Transformations Have a Cumulative Rhetorical Impact**

In Chapter 5, I showed how a rhetorical event is transformed as it is recontextualized in new discursive contexts. I argued that there are four general kinds of intertextual transformation: deletion, addition, relexicalization, and reordering. Any combination of these transformations may be involved when a given claim is recontextualized. The question, however, is not what types of transformations occur, but what role they play in repositioning rhetorical audiences. In my study of an NBC news narrative, various transformations usually repositioned audiences to regard Powell’s claims as more certain, more salient, more warrantable, and more legitimate.

The transformations were very often relatively microscopic—a deleted auxiliary verb, an added coordinating conjunction. However, I suggest that these micro-transformations ultimately have a cumulative effect. When claim after claim is “tweaked” as it is recontextualized, rhetorical audiences eventually get a very different picture of an original speech event. And, given that rhetorical audiences often do not interface with original speech events, these micro-transformations in the press are enormously influential in terms of creating “shared or ‘common sense’ knowledge” for public audiences (Hodges, 2008a: 501). Of course, tracing these transformations across
texts can only be accomplished through a micro-discursive intertextual analysis. This suggests that the analytic framework that I have adopted may be an invaluable tool for studying the rhetoric of recontextualization.

**Directions for Future Research**

This dissertation studied how Powell’s presentation was pre- and recontextualized in a few mainstream, American journalistic texts—texts which tended to “improve the lie”91 of the Bush administration’s argument for war. However, as Hodges (2008b) suggests, recontextualization need not be a method for enhancing the claims of the state. It may also be a site for parody, subversion, and resistance. If this study is any indication, oppositional re-representations of call-to-arms rhetoric are unlikely to be found in mainstream sources—but they may be accessible through other media. Future research might explore the ways that call-to-arms rhetoric is recontextualized in alternative news media—magazines, blogs, and other online news sources. Or, research could examine how American pro-war speeches are covered by the international press—*Al Jazeera*, the *BBC*, *Le Monde*, *The Guardian*, etc. Or, indeed, researchers could investigate how such speeches are pre- and recontextualized by “fake news” sources—*The Onion*, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, etc. Ultimately, the data explored in this project represents a drop in the ocean of press coverage surrounding an important call-to-arms address. Additional research should attempt to account for the full scope of media interventions.

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91 Pun intended.
Future research might also consider how anti-war rhetoric is pre- and recontextualized in the press. Powell’s speech, of course, drew enormous attention—both before and after it was delivered. The justification for this coverage seems to be that Powell’s was a speech that “could move the world closer to war” (NBC/2.5/TB/9-10). It occurs to me that there was also a good deal of rhetoric that could move the world away from war. As noted, there was a massive world-wide protest days after Powell’s address. And, in early March—before the war was launched—the NSA’s efforts to spy on UN Security Council members (presumably to blackmail them into a favorable vote) were made public by a British spy (Mitchell & Mitchell, 2008). Either one of these would seem to be newsworthy. And it is worth investigating how—and, indeed, if—the press (re)represented these events in their news narratives.

Finally, future research should investigate the historical relationship between journalistic discourse and call-to-arms discourse. As Carvalho (2008) has suggested, diachronic studies of media discourse are currently lacking:

Most studies of media discourse are like snapshots examining some news items in detail but covering a short time span (often only a day or a few days). While this may be relevant for some events, most public issues have a significantly long “life”, which is tied to representations in the media. Understanding the evolution of matters such as war, terrorism or climate change, and the ways they are interdependent in relation to the media, is one of the most important contributions to be made by social researchers.
The present study has sought to examine a day in the rhetorical life of Colin Powell’s address. However, there were other days in the journalistic life of Powell’s speech. Indeed, a year after Powell’s address—when there were clearly no weapons of mass destruction in extra-linguistic reality—the press re-represented Powell’s discourse again—but not so glowingly. It would be interesting to examine how Powell’s speech has been re-purposed in the press in the years since it was first delivered.

Moreover, it is clear that Powell’s address was just one “critical discourse moment” (Chilton, 1987) in the intertextual history of “war-on-terror” rhetoric. It would also be useful to compare journalistic reports of Powell’s speech with journalistic reports of other post-9/11 call-to-arms speeches in order to locate continuities and transformations in the discourse across time. Beyond this, additional research is needed to examine how call-to-arms rhetoric has been pre- and recontextualized over longer swaths of history. How, for example, was FDR’s call-to-arms rhetoric represented in the press, and how might this compare to contemporary representations of call-to-arms discourse? I hope to be answering questions like this for the next few years.

**Contemporary Call-to-Arms Journalism & the Public**

In keeping with critical discourse analysis, I would like to close this dissertation by reflecting on the social and ethical implications of my research. Please note that my arguments in this final section will be overtly political. However, before I get to these arguments, I would like to briefly examine what journalists themselves have said about the reporting that paved the way for the Iraq War.
As you might expect, in the aftermath of the war, a number of journalists reassessed their pre-invasion coverage. I already discussed, in Chapter 1, a *mea culpa* of sorts presented by the *New York Times* editors (“The Times”). The *Times* (2004) never apologizes for its coverage (that would be asking too much), and often qualifies its role in misinforming the public (the paper was “*perhaps* too intent on rushing scoops into the paper”; critical stories buried on page A10 “*might well have* belonged on Page A1”). Still, at least the *Times* voluntarily offered an acknowledgment that their pre-war coverage was “not as rigorous as it should have been.”

Other news institutions were far more reluctant to admit any wrongdoing. In this regard, NBC news deserves special criticism. NBC journalists were by far the worst offenders, in my study, when it came to legitimating and enhancing Colin Powell’s claims. Other, more longitudinal studies of NBC’s pre-war coverage confirm that NBC tended to promote the war and represent it as inevitable (e.g. Lule, 2004). It is also worth noting that, unlike the *Times* which was delivered to roughly 700,000 homes in 2003 (New York Times Company, 2011), NBC “Nightly News” reached, on average, 10.9 million viewers each newscast (McClintock, 2003). Arguably, then, NBC played a huge role in advancing and enhancing erroneous government claims. However it wasn’t until former White House Press Secretary, Scott McClellan (2008), charged the media with being “complicit enablers” during the run-up to war, that NBC reflected on its coverage (p. 125).92

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92 Wrote McClellan: “The collapse of the administration’s rationales for war, which became apparent months after our invasion, should have never come as such a surprise. The public should have been made much more aware, before the fact, of the uncertainties, doubts, and caveats that underlay the intelligence about the regime of Saddam Hussein. The administration did little to convey those nuances to the people;
NBC anchor Brian Williams interviewed former anchor Tom Brokaw:

**Williams:** Are you confident, taking the coverage in toto—that the right questions were asked, the right tone was employed—and should it be viewed in the context to that time?

**Brokaw:** It needs to be viewed in the context of that time. [...] This president was determined to go to war. It was more theology than it was anything else. That’s pretty hard to deal with. Look, I think all of us would like to go back and ask questions with the benefit of hindsight, but a lot of what was going on then was unknowable. The CIA insisted that he had weapons of mass destruction. (qtd. in Mitchell, 2008)

Brokaw is surely correct that Bush was unwavering in his crusade for war. Still, Brokaw’s response reflects some of the deep, systemic problems with contemporary journalism. Notice Brokaw’s assumption that “official” sources, such as the CIA, need to be consulted and trusted in the absence of evidence, and the assumption that nothing can be done when a president is determined to go to war.

But what troubles me even more—in both William’s question and Brokaw’s response—is the assumption that the main problem with pre-war coverage was that the “right questions” were not asked. As I see it, this was not the most important failure of the press. The problem was not even that journalists served as “stenographers,” essentially taking dictation for the Bush administration. They didn’t just repeat

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the press should have picked up the slack but largely failed to do so because their focus was elsewhere—on covering the march to war, instead of the necessity of war” (p. 156-157). While I largely agree with McClellan’s assessment, I must say that it takes a lot of audacity for an administration official like McClellan to repeatedly advance administration propaganda during the run-up to war, and then, years later, criticize the press for not catching the administration’s exaggerated claims.
administration claims. The problem was that journalists, in re-representing claims, labored to make those claims more persuasive. They transformed bad arguments for war into better ones.

Personally, I’m not interested in whether NBC asked the right questions. But I would like to know why they treated a public address by a government official as if it were a movie premiere. I want to know why they explicitly endorsed an argument for war as “compelling,” “masterful,” and “powerful.” I want to know why the words “TARGET: IRAQ” were displayed on screen. I want to know why NBC believed that they could assess Powell’s evidence before his speech. I want to know why NBC believed they could offer a judicious analysis of Powell’s evidence ten seconds after he stopped talking. I want to know why hedges and qualifications from Powell’s argument were omitted in the NBC reports. I want to know why seeming visual evidence of Iraqi wrongdoing was added by NBC journalists. The occasional “tough question” would have been nice, too. But it would not have remedied these catastrophic failures of journalism.

If this sounds harsh, consider NBC’s reporting in light of the following principles excerpted from the Society of Professional Journalists’ (1996) own “Code of Ethics”:

- Make certain that headlines, news teases and promotional material, photos, video, audio, graphics, sound bites and quotations do not misrepresent.
  They should not oversimplify or highlight incidents out of context.
- Never distort the content of news photos or video.
• Give voice to the voiceless; official and unofficial sources of information can be equally valid.

• Distinguish between advocacy and news reporting. Analysis and commentary should be labeled and not misrepresent fact or context.

• Admit mistakes and correct them promptly.

NBC’s breach of the principle in the last bullet is perhaps most troubling. For Brokaw’s response suggests that he believes that nothing, aside from a few more questions, could have been done differently by his journalistic institution during the run-up to the Iraq War. This makes it rather likely that the next time an administration tries to take the country to war, NBC will provide similar coverage. After all, as Brokaw underscores, pre-war news coverage inevitably responds to the pre-war context, and “there’s always a drumbeat at that time.”

This leaves the public in a rather difficult position—faced frequently with specious political arguments for war and journalists who are willing to make these arguments seem more attractive. What can be done? Well, countless scholars (e.g. Fairclough, 1995) have called for the development of a critical media literacy, and I suppose I will, too. In particular, this research suggests that citizens need to be critically aware of what Hodges (2008a) refers to as the “politics of recontextualization” (p. 501)—the ways that journalists recontextualize and transform other discourse for political ends. Beyond this, members of the public should examine the content and structure of news narratives and investigate the practices by which such narratives are constructed. Likewise, they should scrutinize corporate ownership of news media, and actively seek
out alternative news sources that are less beholden to profit-making. Finally, citizens would also benefit from a critical historical literacy—particularly one that examines why wars are fought and how they are sold to the public via journalists. As Tom Brokaw said in his interview with Williams, “all wars are based on propaganda.” What he didn’t say—and doesn’t seem to recognize—is that the propaganda comes from political leaders and the press.

In any case, the public ultimately needs to ask why it is necessary in the first place that they should have to “watch out” not only for illegitimate call-to-arms rhetoric produced by politicians, but also for illegitimate call-to-arms rhetoric produced by journalists. It’s truly an unfair burden. And while I’d love to see citizens critically examine the government and the media, they must eventually demand a better government and a better media. This is the real project that must begin if unnecessary wars are to be prevented.
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