

THE MEDIA IS THE WEAPON: THE ENDURING POWER OF BALKAN WAR
(MIS)COVERAGE

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation carries out a multi-level analysis of how media reports establish durable narratives of war in both journalism and scholarship, illustrating a multi-dimensional process of the *weaponization of media*. It draws on a case study of NATO's attack on Yugoslavia in 1999, examining both news coverage and scholarly accounts, and with reference to relevant historical, institutional, economic and political contexts. The author conducts a grounded theory analysis of 1058 news articles appearing in the *Associated Press*, *New York Times*, and *The Times* (of London) surrounding the pivotal events of NATO's military intervention in Kosovo. The ways in which these selected media represent the events and the relationship between their dominant narrative themes and the contexts in which the events occurred, is further examined, comparatively, by means of grounded theory analysis of how 4 major scholarly treatises craft an understanding of NATO intervention in Kosovo. Based on these analyses, this research argues that (a) media content foregrounds (and in various ways privileges) the frames, sources and narratives that correspond with the interests of NATO that drive military intervention and (b) these media narratives exercise a lingering influence on long-term conceptualizations of conflict and have the capacity to shape the contours of cultural memory for years to come. Emerging from this inquiry – which situates the interrelationships between media, power and military conflict within the context of political and economic environment – is the theory of a *weaponization of media* that moves beyond the scope of existing propaganda theories (and, in the context of propaganda, agenda-setting and framing theories) that explains to what end propaganda works and the ways in which the media system capacitates and enhances processes of propaganda.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

With the need for rapid acquisition of information, the world has become dependent upon mass communication systems and the news information they disseminate. The role this information plays in shaping society has become so significant that control over it has become central to military, political, and economic power. A systematic and comprehensively-directed dissemination of information, accompanied by covert or open use of kinetic military force, can profoundly influence geopolitical order and economic realities. Media superiority and informational domination have become paramount in the waging of war. Military action is now supported by (or supports) a potent arsenal of news media, public relations, psychological operations, and public diplomacy ordinances. Because information campaigns can be defined in the context of a free flow of democratic discourse, they can be difficult to counter with effective challenges and objections. Indeed, no international laws exist to define informational aggression or provide provisions to limit its use. This problematizes the idea of “responsible” journalism and highlights the need to promote media literacy. Political and economic interests recognize the power and potential of information wielded as a weapon, and as such, significant attention has been paid to the development and application of a *weaponized media*.

Today, we live in a global economy that is defined, maintained, reproduced, and contested using information. McMurtry (2003) asserts that modern economic capitalism has resulted in an increasingly globalized financial system controlled by multinational corporations cannibalizing society to serve stockholder interests in an increasingly

speculative economy. Central to this economy are the media conglomerates that produce the narratives through which people come to understand their world. These transnational corporations are heavily invested in promoting the global economy and manage the world's dominant sources of information. They filter information production and dissemination; train the public how to view ideological, cultural, social, and economic possibilities; and represent what Pilger (2002) calls *a new order* situated in a global neoliberal economic system. This system is a co-production of borderless, transnational economic interests and Western capitalist governments. This global dominance defines any resistance as an international security concern, instability and a threat to “democracy” (a word whose definition has changed to coincide with and be inseparable from free market capital systems).

After World War II, the banner of U.S. hegemony was carried by Western transnational corporations and supplemented as needed by U.S. military might (Johnstone, 2002). In this environment, these interests began driving policy decisions while populations became disenfranchised from political decisions because “markets” dictated the policy agenda. As the importance of citizenship declined, regulatory functions passed to bureaucracies outside the democratic process. For these non-democratic bureaucracies, the concept of sovereignty went against the grain of the new globalization paradigm.

The 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia debuted the introduction of the new global economic order's designated tool for advancing the agenda of opening markets, silencing dissent, and establishing “stable” political and economic environments for transnational expansion. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance gained new

significance within the global geopolitical environment and the interactions between structures of power at the policy and action levels. Had the Yugoslav crisis not occurred, “the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would be bidding farewell to the last U.S. troops as they finally went home from Europe” (Dyer, 1999, p. A17). Complex interconnected flows of technology, economics, ethnicity, ideology, and mediated messages provide a dynamic and often disjunctive stage on which Western globalization plays out and upon which NATO’s strategic agenda is set by corporate industry and political interests behind closed doors at meetings such as the Ambrosetti Forum – an annual gathering since 1975 where political and corporate leaders forecast the economic and geopolitical outlooks for the world and analyze scientific as well as technological developments that impact private business and governmental institutions.

The conflicts in the former Yugoslav states marked a turning point in the expansion of military intervention. In the words of Noam Chomsky (1999), it was “a defining moment in world affairs” (p.14). War reporting became the primary weapon system through which narratives proved more decisive than military actions on the ground, and international laws that had been the foundation of foreign policy were tossed aside with the excuse that a higher moral imperative existed (Brock, 2006; Hammond, 2004). James Bissett (2003), Canadian ambassador to Yugoslavia from 1990 to 1992, contended that NATO’s bombing of Yugoslavia during the Kosovo intervention violated the organization’s rules of engagement by using force before diplomatic negotiations were exhausted, and as such, this represents a fundamental change in the nature and purpose of the alliance. This event marked the global expansion of the post-Cold War hegemony. NATO set aside its defensive mandate and aggressively extended its

members' geopolitical interests using claims of "humanitarian intervention" to bolster militaristic exercises, despite uncertain realities on the ground and traditional values of sovereignty that had been the foundation of global stability throughout the last half century. Humanitarianism came in the form of bombs, the arming and training of violent criminal organizations, and inevitable economic domination. Mandel (2003) and Bissett (2003) argue that NATO's disregard of international law, national sovereignty, and the UN charter lead directly to the destruction of civil society and cultural diversity, thus threatening national sovereignty and international peace.

International law, of which Chapter VII of the UN Charter provides the political standard needed to justify intervention, holds that intervention with a sovereign state is justified in cases where there is a threat to international peace and security. International law is often selectively applied, lacking any general doctrine to serve as a framework, and authorized by multi-lateral interest groups that serve regional interests rather than being authorized at the General Assembly level (Pieterse, 1997). Circumventing the UN necessitates the building of a public case for military action in the arena of public opinion, which takes the legal and political implications out of the equation. The power to veto a UN Security Council resolution makes accountability irrelevant. Herein lays the seductive potential of a weaponized media.

In the dominant media narrative of events surrounding NATO's military capture of Kosovo, the organization was depicted as a neutral guardian of international stability able and determined to intervene on behalf of human rights when the UN was either unable or unwilling. Ubiquitous images of suffering and war in the former Yugoslavia garnered support from the public in Western countries for an illegal foreign military

violation of another state's sovereignty – without ever declaring war – in the name of humanitarian intervention (Jovanovic, 2003). While Bissett (2003) asserts that Europe's alleged inability to solve the Balkan problem was because the U.S. orchestrated and supported the conflict, the thorough and systematic mass media attack allowed for little skepticism and no significant dissent in news reports. Few questioned which political and economic interests were guiding NATO involvement or where the organization's authority originated. NATO's successful deployment of the media in support of military action in Yugoslavia was total. It is because of this absolute victory that Yugoslavia was chosen as the central context of this dissertation.

Purpose of the Study

This dissertation proposes a multi-level analysis on the longevity of power demonstrated by the *weaponization* of media in support of NATO's attack on Yugoslavia by examining news coverage and scholarship regarding the event within the institutional, economic, and political contexts wherein it is authored.

This study conducts a grounded theory analysis of media narratives used in U.S. and British media coverage of events that played prominent roles in building the case for the 1999 humanitarian intervention in Yugoslavia. The media discourse analysis in this study examines the *Associated Press*, the *New York Times*, and the *Times* (of London) coverage of the reported massacre at Račak on January 15, 1999; the Rambouillet Agreement of February 19, 1999; the Rambouillet Accord of March 18, 1999 through the NATO bombardment which began on March 24, 1999; and the end of NATO airstrikes on June 10, 1999. Of interest is the way in which the selected media represented the events and the relationship between dominant narrative themes and the context

surrounding the stories. The study focuses on these media due to their prominence in the news market at the time. These newspapers ranked as the top three elite English language daily newspapers in 1999 (Merrill, 2000), and the news agency is a prominent and prolific source of foreign news in newspapers and Internet news providers throughout the U.S. and U.K.

This study also conducts a grounded theory analysis of how scholarly treatises craft an understanding of NATO intervention in Kosovo. This study proposes to engage principle scholarly works on the topic by prominent academics in the field to examine the discursive texts within their political and economic contexts in order to explore the crafting of cultural references representing the military conflict meant to endure and inform subsequent research and retelling. This study also examines the discursive devices used to represent the NATO intervention in the Kosovo conflict. The themes and relationships emerging from this analysis were then examined in relation to the themes and relationships emerging in the scholarship discourse analysis.

A significant body of communication research has explored the relationships between media organizations, journalists, and governments during times of war. Many scholars have pointed out that media are often complicit with national military interests. Strong cases have been made that this complicity is rooted in institutional dependencies on official sources for information, while other scholars have noted that the media will provide more nuanced reporting if divisions between policy elites exist. More recent theories on the role of media in war revolve around the media representing a contested battleground for public perceptions that then influences public support of conflicts. In this study, I argue that the battle for control over mainstream media is a forgone conclusion

and that the most appropriate way to view the media is as a weapon, with far-reaching power to shape geopolitical realities, activated in order to achieve political and economic domination. This study examines the longitudinal impact of a weaponized media in the construction of perceptions and cultural memories of the conflicts in which it is wielded.

I approach this research project with the benefit of being descended from Yugoslav immigrants on my father's side, imparting an awareness of competing and discordant representations of events taking place in the former Yugoslavia dating from the Cold War through the break-up of the country beginning in the 1990s. This awareness and familiarity with the region and differing perspectives of ideology, ethnicity and politics allows me to interrogate discourses that are marginalized or not present in the dominant media narratives analyzed, and to weigh the nuance and explanatory power of these narratives in association with the representations presented by members of the Serbian and Kosovo Albanian diasporic communities, and makes me a better instrument for research than someone who has no previous experience of the highly contested perspectives existing amongst peoples in the former Yugoslav republics. My status as a member of that diaspora motivated me to pursue this research in light of media explanations of 'ancient hatreds' that I know to contrast with demographic data on heterogamy in the region. I am also able to incorporate my previous experiences analyzing Yugoslav press coverage of the events into the grounded theory process.

Significance of the Study

This dissertation research contributes significantly to the understanding of media's relationship to conflict because it offers an opportunity to explore and build theory from the endurance of news reports and their impact on the formation of the

historical record, within the context of the political economy of both their authorship and the events that they report. As Jovanovic (2003) notes, the ability of academic inquiries to explain and understand the ways in which public opinion is manipulated through the application of media messages in support of extra-democratic action is undermined in traditional discourse analysis studies because the news media evidence cannot be considered at face value. The pool of evidence must be expanded to include data not traditionally covered by scholars conducting textual analysis. It has become necessary to examine discourses of events in more ways that move beyond the textual to consider the circumstances surrounding the discourse, and this study is situated within a contextualized understanding of the politics and economics forming the foundation upon which media institutions and the discourses they produce are constructed.

When choosing a methodological framework for inquiry, the variety of interconnected and dissonant theories existing for understanding the media/war relationship played an important factor. Each framework and paradigm of inquiry has its merits and drawbacks, influencing my choice of grounded theory analysis in this study to allow the data to speak for itself and the emerging themes and relationships to guide theory creation rather than the other way around. In this way, this study proposes to explore discourses as they are situated, rather than from a vacuum of analysis.

The contribution that this research offers to the body of scholarly literature examining media coverage of war is an alternative way of approaching the topic better suited to understanding the complexities of the inherent interconnections and an underexplored insight into the longevity of media narratives defining military events in the scholarly and historical records. It is also important to note that the significance of

this research reaches beyond implications relating to humanitarian intervention, the NATO bombardment of Yugoslavia or the discourses providing meaning to this event. This study offers an opportunity to holistically understand the perniciousness of propaganda disseminated in “democracies” and the reach of its power. The role and influence of a weaponized media reaches to the very heart of the cooption of the mainstream press for the advancement of economic plunder and the erosion of democratic and humanitarian values.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation is organized into 5 chapters, covering the rationale for this study, the context in which this research is conducted, the methodology of the investigation, the results of the analysis, and a discussion of the implications.

Chapter 1 introduces the purpose of the study, the significance of this research project, and the manner in which this dissertation is organized. It provides a brief explanation of the contribution of this project to the field of communication studies, the reflexive position from which it should be read, and the organization of this work.

Chapter 2 establishes context in a series of sections which introduce important dimensions and conceptualizations to build a coherent and refined understanding of how and why the media becomes *weaponized*. The first section, “A History of Scholarly Investigations,” examines theoretical paradigms in media and communication research that inform the critical understanding of relationships between media and war by scholars in the field. Each is interrogated and appraised to enable the building of a more nuanced and holistic theoretical understanding, and significant studies using these perspectives to explore media – as it contributes to military conflict – are examined. This assessment of

relevant research in the field provides a starting point from which this dissertation elaborates on the interconnected mechanisms and relationships linking mass media and military conflict.

The next section, “The Relationship between Media and Power,” investigates the seemingly inexorable and manifest imperative of the military industrial complex driving society toward conflict in a highly developed and multifaceted relationship between economics and politics. The discussion situates the Orwellian scope of the military industrial complex within the relationship between media, economics, politics and society, making the case for mapping the connections that tie these institutions to the production and sustenance of war.

The third section, “Getting a Handle on the Spin,” revisits the long history of military interest in the shaping and control of public opinion during times of conflict. The discussion situates the relationship between media and war as being envisioned by the military mechanistically, with possibilities for exercising control at the forefront of communication scholarship. Through a study of military-funded research and rare glimpses into overt efforts at control reported in the news, this dissertation argues that research into the relationship of media and war must be situated within the context of the military’s demonstrated efforts to justify, conduct, reconstruct, and historicize war.

The fourth section, titled “Power, Profit and Public Opinion,” explores the highly developed and complex web of profit motives for military conflict and presents a conceptual framework for understanding the incentives driving war which the media rarely (and then only in part) explains to audiences. A common framework for visualizing

war profiteering is addressed, and recent examples are situated within this conceptual structure.

Section five, “The Elephant in the News Room,” considers how media has addressed the coverage of economic motives for war. The discussion examines the lack of investigation conducted by the media into deep-level causations for war or motivations that deliberately challenge the traditional explanations of military conflicts provided by privileged elites.

Section six, *The Business of War (Reporting)*, briefly examines the origins of war coverage commoditization and the sale of footage, narratives, reports and analysis for commercial consumption. Death and destruction are profitable enterprises. This examination expands upon the conceptual framework of war profiteering offered in section four to explore those areas where mainstream media directly profits from militarized conflict in the form of (a) ratings bonanzas facilitating advertising revenue increases and competitive industry placement, (b) the economic disincentives for critical war coverage that may alienate advertising clients with varying degrees of association with the military industrial complex, and (c) indirect profiteering by following the intersections of corporate media ownership interests with defense or military stakes and strong associations with political parties that support various war efforts.

Section seven, “Bombing for Peace,” considers the specific context of NATO intervention in the Balkans which forms the case study informing this dissertation’s analysis of how mainstream media enabled an understanding of conflict, and how powerful and enduring those narratives are. The discussion establishes the legal,

economic and geopolitical context of NATO intervention in the former Yugoslavia and explores the extent to which mediatization saturated the conflict.

The final section of Chapter 2 introduces the research questions directing this dissertation and grounds these questions in the existing scholarship on this topic. Beginning with what existing literature allows us to understand, the discussion identifies spaces left unexplained and where existing frameworks fail to offer adequate or compelling means of sense-making. The examination narrows down these spaces and identifies the way in which this research project contributes to filling those gaps.

Chapter 3, “Methodology,” systematically charts the method through which the author explores how the enduring power of a media so weaponized dominates public understanding of military conflict. The chapter begins with a rationale for the appropriateness of grounded theory analysis in discovering emerging themes of discourse in media and scholarly texts discussing NATO involvement in the former Yugoslavia, which in turn enables the development of theory from embedded discourses. The discussion then turns to the philosophical foundations and principles guiding grounded theory analysis, recent examples of scholarly inquiry using grounded theory research, and the methodological tools the perspective provides as well as the epistemological potential of such an analysis. The chapter closes with a systematic discussion of the grounded theory process used in this dissertation and the conceptual choices made in this study.

Chapter 4, “Results,” presents a grounded theory analysis of the emerging themes of discourse in the selected media and scholarly texts. Noting the emergent media narratives surrounding the massacre at Račak, the start of the first Rambouillet peace talks, the failure of the second Rambouillet talks, the first week of NATO bombing, and

the end of NATO airstrikes, the chapter closes with an analysis of scholarship and the relationship between media and scholarly narratives.

Chapter 5, "Discussion," examines the significance of the findings in this dissertation and the contributions this study makes to the existing literature, examines the theoretical implications of the research, and acknowledges the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT

A History of Scholarly Investigations

Inquiry into the interrelationships between media, power and military conflict is guided by diverse traditions of scholarship with contesting claims and assumptions that direct the discussion toward various conceptualizations of these interrelationships and their importance. There are, however, certain dominant directions in research that guide the understanding of media and military conflict. These viewpoints each provide compelling and relevant views of sense-making. Nonetheless, I argue that each of these guides to inquiry have inherent limitations that impede our ability to engage the complex interrelationships involved. The following survey of these dominant perspectives is followed by a critical review of the distinctive views conceptualized in the different approaches. Each lends something relevant and useful to understanding how a supposedly independent media became or appears to have become complicit in military power, though none of these perspectives are independently sufficient for understanding the phenomenon in a comprehensive manner.

Wilbur Schramm (1964) noted the important role of journalism in building national identity and communicating ideas and purpose in support of centrally defined goals. This idea spearheaded national efforts for developing powerful systems of communication and control over those systems (Rogers, 1994). Unequal relationships of production and exchange became entrenched in the developing systems, and emerging dependency theories (Amin, 1976; Frank, 1969) were in turn elaborated upon with critical perspectives of *media/cultural imperialism* (Boyd-Barrett, 1977; Schiller, 1976;),

a critique still informing understandings of global communication flows (Golding & Harris, 1997; Thussu, 2000a). Despite challenges (see Sreberny, 2000; Tomlinson, 1999), the principle concerns of media imperialism remain relevant and offer insight into the asymmetrical relationships impacting the power to produce and distribute narratives and perspectives. Nowhere is this uneven relationship more glaring than during times of war. While this perspective offers genuine insights into dominance in global information systems, it leaves the explanation of tactics for controlling public understanding to propaganda theorists and the study of discourses open to a variety of approaches.

Legitimizing the violence, destruction and the enormous costs of war requires gaining public support, which in turn requires controlling the way the public understands the issues at stake. As Bernays (1928) notes, the systematic deployment of propaganda across the full range of modern media in 1915 to rouse the public into fanatical assent was an extraordinary state accomplishment. Bernays explains, “The Anglo-American drive to demonize ‘the Hun,’ and to cast the war as a transcendent clash between Atlantic ‘civilization’ and Prussian ‘Barbarism,’ made so powerful an impression on so many that the worlds of government and business were forever changed” (p. 11). Achieving such fanatical assent requires the support and/or control of media to pull off the first (and most important) victory on the battlefield of public opinion. The connection between news reporting and political authority has been described as “the exercise of power over the interpretation of reality” (Schlesinger, 1972, p. 4). These interpretations of reality are often referred to as *frames*, and they focus and filter the audience’s attention while simultaneously supplying the context within which discourse is to be understood. Robert Entman (1993) called news media frames the “imprint of power” (p. 55), the study of

which can locate the identity of the interests dominating the discourse. Boyd-Barrett (personal communication, May 28, 2011) notes that it is impossible to overestimate the importance of media and information to power. Control of media frames is control of *truth*.

The study of these frames has occupied an extensive body of research with a resulting variety of interpretations of how to define framing (see Entman, 1993; Iyengar, 1991), but Gamson and Modigliani's (1989) conceptualization of a frame being the central organizing idea for sense-making is perhaps the most succinct and useful. Frames allow audiences to understand and encapsulate a given event quickly by organizing issues in ways that convey meanings in relation to the audience's experiences and understandings (Entman, 1993; Iyengar, 1991). News reports on events can be presented from multiple perspectives, or frames, with the dominant ones being presented to audiences for consideration. These dominant frames are referred to by Entman as "media frames," and are further classified by Iyengar (1991) as "episodic" news frames reported in the form of specific events and "thematic" news frames that place political events and concepts in a general context.

Frames are vulnerable to influence and manipulation, from sources such as the reporter's own perspective to the institutional behaviors and processes of news reporting, prevailing public opinion, political power and the interests of corporate advertisers. Government institutions are also a dominant force in determining acceptable frames due to their prominence. These institutions influence the way events and perspectives are defined in the public's mind (Sigal, 1973). In the U.S., no government force is more powerful in this regard than the Office of the President (Israel, 2008), which can put

enormous pressure on reporters and media institutions (for recent examples see Meek, Bazinet & DeFrank, 2005). Through these filtering influences, understanding is shaped, leaving only a handful of potential ways of understanding an event present in mainstream media. Frames that deviate from these narratives are stigmatized by those in power and relegated to the sidelines of public consciousness (Shur, 1980).

The concept of *framing* allows, as Entman (1993) claims, the investigation of *imprints of power*. It also lends itself well to identifying the reach of propaganda and the suppression of competing discourses. Entman also theorizes that “cascading activation” can occur where frames are transmitted from political powers to elite media, cascading down to less powerful media organizations (Entman 2004). What it fails to adequately consider – what is left under-examined with an analysis of framing – are which frames are suppressed and absent from the media. Additionally, traditional framing studies don’t examine interconnections and relationships between emerging and suppressed frames studied. Framing also stops just when critical questions regarding the *hows* and *whys* of information control arise. The process of establishing which frames are deviant and which constitute the officially articulated perspective for understanding is influenced through propaganda. From the birth of the American propaganda machine manufactured by George Creel during World War I to U.S./NATO media management of events in Iraq, the Balkans and Libya, propaganda has made a profound imprint on American policy and the creation of consent through propaganda has posed, as Lippman noted almost a century earlier (1920; 1922), an equally profound threat to every political endeavor.

The most significant and influential scholarship on propaganda centers around the manufacturing of consent paradigm which developed during the WWI and WWII research efforts of American scholars, the U.S. military and industry. Lasswell (1927) defines propaganda as “the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols” (p. 627), while Jowett and O’Donnell (1986) define it more specifically as a “deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist” (p. 16). When viewed from the position of power differential, Qualter (1985) defines it best as “the deliberate attempt by the few to influence the attitudes and behavior of the many by the manipulation of symbolic communication” (p. 124). It is this idea of propaganda as a tool of the few to manipulate the many that makes it of such value to both political and corporate hegemony. Likewise, it is the interconnections between these hegemonies that color how we should understand the relationship between propaganda and mainstream media representations.

Emerging from Adorno and Horkheimer’s “culture industry” (1944/1997) is the idea that the media is an ideological state apparatus (Althusser, 1971; Marcuse, 1972) that advances capitalist enterprise and cultural commodities. This use of media by power in legitimizing capitalist systems and labeling dissent as deviant has been supported empirically (Cottle, 2006) and shown to be interconnected with market structures, institutional processes and economic motivators (particularly by scholars such as Oliver Boyd-Barrett, Robert McChesney, Herbert Schiller and Dallas Smyth, whose works are of great relevance to this dissertation). The political economy context has an incredible influence on media and propaganda because media institutions are profit-driven

enterprises embedded in capitalist systems that have a lot at stake in supporting dominant political and economic powers. Indeed, Boyd-Barrett (conference panel response, May 28, 2011) notes that the fragility of media reliance on capital in a struggle for survival marks a fundamental weakness in the news system wherein it becomes vulnerable to corruption. For this reason, understanding the ways in which capital and power filter news narratives and silence dissent to advance governmental and corporate policies ought to be the foundation for understanding how propaganda works.

Perhaps the most prominent perspective for understanding propaganda is Herman and Chomsky's 1988 propaganda model grounding the manufacturing of consent through propaganda in a critical analysis of the political economy of mass media. Herman and Chomsky assert that the systematic use of propaganda is necessary to inculcate the values, beliefs and codes of behavior necessary for maintaining and integrating individuals within a society rife with class conflicts and disproportionately concentrated wealth. The operational processes of propaganda differ depending on systems of state power, but Herman and Chomsky argue that either way their propaganda model highlights the ways in which inequities of power and wealth influence mass-media. In countries with strong state bureaucracies and monopolistic control of media, it is easy to see the hand of state censorship reinforcing economic control to ensure the media remains a tool serving the interests of the dominant elite. Herman and Chomsky go further, however, to describe how propaganda works in a privatized, competitive and formally uncensored media system. They identify the self-imposed limitations on corporate and government critiques, disproportionate allocation of media resources and

access, and the inherent effect this has on legitimizing and supporting the dominant interests of the hegemony.

Herman and Chomsky's (1988) propaganda model identifies five interrelated media filters explaining how propaganda thrives in liberal Western democracies: 1.) *Concentrated and consolidated ownership*. As profit-oriented organizations, media industries in capitalist societies seek to consolidate and dominate the market in an effort to reduce costs and competition. Mergers and consolidations enable significant power in the media landscape as smaller and emerging competition is put at a disadvantage with larger start-up costs, effectively resulting in media monopolies that edge out divergent voices with market forces (McChesney, 2003; Thussu, 2000a). In the marketplace of increasingly consolidated ownership the media corporations hold enormous political and economic power. 2.) *Advertising-based revenue platform*. To say the power of advertisers to influence media is considerable is an understatement. The degree to which media rely on advertising revenue in relation to sales leaves the media open to editorial influence where corporate advertisers select media outlets that favor their interests. Additionally, corporate patronage influences the corporate media cultures that tailor media products which will appeal to business and elite interests (and more generally lead the media to create content environments that are congenial to the promotion and sale of goods and services). This connection was very clearly noted by James Curran's (1978) research which showed that growing hunger for advertising revenue stimulated mass circulation newspapers at the expense of smaller newspapers, many with labor sympathies, that depended only or mainly on copy sales. 3.) *Reliance on elites for information*. As Schlesinger (1978) pointed out in his study of newsroom practices, elites are accorded an

unjustified status of prestige and objective credibility that assumes no political or economic agenda. Herman and Chomsky (1988) also assert that these unobjective sources are presented as authoritative and used by journalists to preserve the perception of their own objectivity in reporting. The power of these sources is difficult to challenge due to the enormous resources available to corporate and military sectors to invest in propaganda/public affairs campaigns. 4.) *Flak attacks*. These are the negative pressures aroused in response to media content that challenges the vested interests of politicians or corporate interests, and that seek to silence journalists (and their editors and publishers), discouraging them from speaking out until long after the initial criticism has died down. This was seen in the British media during the Balkan wars (as documented in Knightly, 2004) as well as the American media blitz in support of the war in Iraq (for examples see Couldry & Downey (2004); Knightly, 2004; Reese, 2004) when both direct and indirect pressure was targeted toward any media deviating from the privileged narrative. 5.) *Anticommunism as a mechanism for control*. At the time of writing their work *Manufacturing Consent*, Herman and Chomsky (1988) noted the deep-seated fear of communism prevalent in American society and political culture. A product of the Cold War, the leveraging of communist ideology as one that is antithetical to capitalism and the sanctity of ruling class wealth works to mobilize fear in support of undeclared wars (also noted by Zelizer & Allen, 2002). Herman and Chomsky's (1988) filters explain the process employed to help shape what is "newsworthy" and how reporting of events that serves the interests of propagandists are presented as objective. This campaign is not the ham-fisted censorship of authoritarianism, but it is just as effective due to the institutional self-control it fosters and the screen of professional integrity it maintains despite the very

real and (often) brutal effects of unquestioned and media-supported policies at home and abroad.

Herman and Chomsky's (1988) propaganda model combines state, corporate and media institution interests in a synergistic relationship. However, the model does not adequately explain contradictions and conflicts between centers of power wherein it explains the processes of propaganda. Criticism of the authors' assumption of power as monolithic has been leveled (Cottle, 2006), but the political distinctions assumed to be overlooked do not depart significantly in political and economic interests to require a highly layered propaganda analysis instrument. Bennett (2007) agrees that the press has grown too close to sources of power – becoming a communication mechanism for the government, but he argues that “occasional outbursts of reportorial independence” are still alive (p. 1) during times when “the political system is . . . debating and giving public scrutiny to policies that affect the general welfare and security of its electorate” (p. 39). Bennett's assertion is that when government opponents clash over issues, the press will pick up on it and report what they and their advocacy group supporters say about the issues, providing more media frames to the public. This is an extension of Gramsci's (1982) theory that factions within ruling classes will expand their influence over their rivals through public persuasion. It is notable, however, that the available frames are still firmly rooted in the dominant narratives of governmental power sources and their associated lobbying groups. Boyd-Barrett (2009) asserts more emphatically that media is complicit in supporting corporate, political and plutocratic agendas providing cover for war fought on false pretenses, and that the ‘press cavalry... invariably and unashamedly arrives too late to make the difference’ (pg. 298).

I argue that Western political and economic hegemonies should still be viewed as monochromatic in their overall interests and agendas. Even while there exists an actual diversity of coverage, that diversity exists on the fringes in alternative and foreign news reports. Mainstream media continues to fail in speaking truth to power. Bennett (2007) identified conditions that increasingly define the U.S. public communication system as power serving, citing the rise of professional spin doctors and handlers, the decline of the role and responsibility of media in democracy within the public debate, and a downward spiral of public disconnection and lack of confidence with both politicians and the press. That is not to say that situations do not arise when the media does critique dominant sources. Indeed, public crises often give rise to infighting within elite circles, and those vying for dominance will focus critical press attention on other privileged elites (Cottle, 2006; Robinson, 2002; Thompson, 1995). Critical media coverage, when it does occur, rarely represents a clash with entrenched interests or alters the overall trajectory of capitalist agendas. Instead, critical coverage occurs after the damage has been done and still operates within the elite frame of the issue.

It is important to understand these events and how they correspond to the power and effectiveness of a weaponized media. The larger issues of entrenched capital interests and military agendas, however, are rarely diverted by these occasional critical media exchanges. Elite sources and news media typically work in a complementary relationship sustaining mutual interests and becoming mutually dependent (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1981). As Chomsky (May 30, 2011) continues to assert, “Focusing on choices of the sovereign power is the norm, considered unbiased and objective....Media keeps to the

sovereign and silences alternative positions” (keynote address at the International Communication Association).

The same corporate driven military campaigns that resulted in propagandized reports on the so-called Banana Wars early in the 20th century continue to be presented uncritically by the press in the Balkan conflicts at the close of the century and the Iraq occupation at the start of the 21st century. Research into wartime journalism offers empirical support for Herman and Chomsky’s *manufacturing of consent* propaganda model (Knightly, 2003; Herman & Chomsky, 1988), but Herman and Chomsky’s model fails to focus on the tactical and strategic deployment of propaganda. They explain to what end propaganda works and the ways in which the media system enables the use of propaganda, but a robust and thorough understanding of how media is used in conflict must also explore the questions of exactly how propaganda is deployed, and by whom, the effectiveness of the propaganda and the longevity of weaponized media narratives within the public understanding of events.

As media scholarship has come to address over the past thirty years, there is a distinct sociology of news reporting emerging from organizational structures and professional practices influencing which narratives and sources are privileged in the news products in mainstream media. Gans (1979) noted the influences of convenience on source selection including power, incentives, and usefulness, as well as social and geographic proximity. Schlesinger (1990) noted that power inequities exist between sources based on material and symbolic advantages that they leverage in information providing activities in a competitive environment. Hall et al. (1978) noted that routines of news production and professional efforts to support journalists’ claims of objectivity have

led to the reliance on authority as primary sources. Lance Bennett's *Indexing Theory* (1990) expands this premise and offers a model for understanding news media that asserts mass media news professionals will *index* voices and perspectives based on how they measure against mainstream government discourses. In times when power elites concur, the press will support government policy and use sources that represent the same viewpoint. When official policy is contested among power elites, the press feels more empowered to access a variety of voices that challenge policies. Bennett's assertions are supported in scholarship examining war reporting (Bennett, 1990; Bennett & Paletz, 1994; Butler, 1995; Hallin, 1986, 1994). The indexing theory helps explain the way in which interrelationships between sources, journalists and news products are influenced by the activities involved in the professional practices of information gathering. This sociological approach does not explain the power of news media as a cultural institution and transmitter of social symbols.

News media play a significant role in the production and dissemination of cultural narratives, with far reaching implications for how society derives cultural understanding of events. Cultural scholars assert that these narratives are of central importance to professional reporting (Barkin & Gurevitch, 1987; Bird, 1990; Bird & Dardenne, 1988; Campbell, 1987; Jacobs, 1996; Langer, 1998). These scholars argue that news products produce meanings, "truths" and plotlines to facilitate public understanding. In this way, the storytelling narratives produced by news media structure public understanding and render cultural myths as absolute. News narratives, while structured in ways that are peculiar to the Anglo-American model of reporting, pull from time-honored cultural myths and memes that influence how stories are told and decoded. Oliver Boyd-Barrett

(2004a) noted that “Classic warfare is the epitome of a ‘good story,’ high in tension and drama, with complex main plots and sub-plots played out within traditional binary oppositions of aggressor and victim, winner and loser” (p. 26).

Any argument that cultural studies and political economy are incommensurable and antagonistic paths of thinking is a debate that neglects the philosophical origins and branching of both approaches, and entrenches itself in the struggle to position cultural studies as a mature field independent of the transdisciplinary influences that traditionally defined it. The analysis of media texts is increasingly influenced by post-modernist approaches (Boyd-Barrett, 2002a), emphasizing interrelationships between given texts and their representation and an implicit/explicit borrowing from existing societal discourses. The discourses available to social groups are, in turn, influenced by wider structural features of society that influence the distribution of skills and resources needed by group members to generate and appropriate meanings. The complexity of media texts demands a deeper and closer post-modernist analysis because they are multi-layered and co-exist within echoes of previous texts and broader social discourses upon which those (and previous) texts are drawn. As an integral part of a larger holistic inquiry, the cultural analysis of mediated texts as representations, contestations and interpretations of culture requires intellectual grounding to provide a case for its commensurability with political economy inquiry.

The effort has been made to examine war reporting from a perspective that takes all of these important facets into account through the work of Simon Cottle (2004, 2006) and that of Andrew Hoskins and Ben O’Loughlin (2010). In his work *Mediatized Conflict*, Cottle (2006) introduces a paradigm in which the complex ways in which the

role of media in conflict are assessed from a perspective of *mediatization*, wherein he engages the involvement of media in conflict. This involvement is described by Cottle (2004; 2006) as performative, complex and active, and represents a constitutive role within conflicts. Mediatized conflict, according to Cottle (2006), is “how the media do things with conflicts” (p.9), and as such, it is a significant effort toward a more holistic understanding of the relationship. Hoskins and O’Loughlin (2009) assert that everything is mediated, echoing Livingstone’s argument that every influential institution has been “transformed, reconstituted, by contemporary processes of mediation” (p. 2). They argue that this reconstruction and translation is accomplished by way of the planning, waging and consequences of warfare, all inhabiting the same media ecology (2010). The authors assert that perceptions are vital objectives in war, whether objectives of public support, government justifications or military understandings.

Cottle (2006) centers the concept of *mediatized conflict* on actions that work to define, frame, narrate, evaluate, contest, promote and perform conflict. It insists on a media with agency throughout all of the complexities, mechanisms and influences that can support or undermine democratic processes. Building on arguments for a deeper examination of the media’s role in conflict as part of concerns with social democracy (see Castells, 1997; Giddens, 1994), Cottle’s (2006) perspective builds on his earlier writings and explores operational considerations with those of voice, interests and identities. This bridging of the cultural and political economy divide asserts the multiple loci instrumental to understanding media and war. He argues that conflicts are ontologically based in the social world, but are understood, contested, and represented through media. For this reason, Cottle explores questions of how, why, and with what impact conflicts

occur in the media. Besides the social, performative and political realms, media also reside in wider contexts and within multidimensional situations. Thus, when *mediatized conflict* is studied, it should also include an analysis of political power, censorship, commercial synergies and cultural semiotics as well as the cultural insights located in the discourses.

Importantly, the theory of mediatized conflict contends that war is produced and immersed in a new ecology of media and diffused through a complex and interconnected web of everyday media (Cottle, 2006; Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010). Hoskins and O'Loughlin proceed from the perspective that the "culture of warfare (and the relationship between war and media) pivots around changing fields of perception" (p. 7), but their approach expands Cottle's (2006) mediatized conflict in some notable ways. The authors explain that conceptualizing the *mediatization* of waging war refers to the ways in which media are fundamental to those practices where both coercive and aggressive force are used, including such tasks as "the guiding of troops and vehicles, the use of drones, the symbolic acts of violence central to terrorism, insurgency and, indeed, major military operations" (p. 5). This definition of *mediatization* is expanded beyond the propaganda campaigns of earlier perspectives.

As Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2010) argue, media enables a constant connectivity key to modulating security and insecurity, amplifying awareness of conflicts and containing them in comforting packages. This connectivity provides the principle mechanism through which media is weaponized. Such a connectivity enables a world of "effects without causes" (Hoskins and O'Loughlin, 2010, p. 2) that makes security more difficult to achieve, and the authors argue this new media ecology challenges established

theories and assumptions about audiences, propaganda and warfare (Der Derian, 2009; Hoskins & O’Laughlin, 2010). The authors developed the theory of diffused war to understand the justification, conduct, reconstruction and remembrance of war that is changing with the continued mediatization of war.

Hoskins and O’Loughlin (2010) argue that conflicts with clear actors and causal behaviors are remnants of the past, but this idea seems to rest on an assumption that the lack of deep-level media analysis of conflict equates to an inability of media institutions to attain and communicate such an understanding. This assumption seems to privilege the idea that the current model of war reporting is the only viable option, an assumption challenged by the more thorough perspective alternative news media have and continue to supply to global audiences (such as non-aligned news reports during the Cold War and recent alternative upstarts such as Al Jazeera that are currently redefining the way contemporary Arab revolutions and war conflicts are reported in mainstream media). The authors also cite diffused causal relationships between action and effect in a media ecology of rapidly changing new media technologies, noting the difficulty of predicting social and political relations in mediatized conflict. These arguments for diffusion mark the thesis of their treatise on how to make sense of war and media. Assessing the impact of communicative technologies is indeed relevant in a media analysis, although their claims of new paradigms of information flows should be tempered by the continued dominance of mainstream media in the new ecology. Also, as reductionist as it may seem, resource acquisition may still predict social and political relations as much now as it ever has. The complex ways in which information interact with war systems explored by the authors have been directed in recent years toward resources likely to stimulate

conflict, as noted by Norton-Taylor (2006) and his report that the CIA is directing intelligence gathering activities toward identifying and predicting resource shortages with the potential to lead to instability and U.S. dependency.

The diffused war argument (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010) champions the idea that the mediatization of war has transformed the media ecology into struggles between established mainstream media's traditional order and an unpredictable system of new media that upsets the linear flow of propaganda. Scholars such as Merrin (2008), Weinberger (2007) and McNair (2006) seem to support this notion that the endless chaotic possibilities of perceptions challenge the dominance of mainstream media in building narratives, but these scholars seem to ignore the prime attribute of audience. Aggregate audience still matters. The idea that audiences have the time or inclination to seek and process counter viewpoints in a plethora of diffused new media seems contrary to the continued disparities of reach between traditional mainstream media and the new media ecology. The point of analysis is also still important, and it will be those that can provide the most insightful and compelling analyses that will dominate the perception-building processes of war reporting. Control is still vested in the hands of the mainstream hegemony and, despite the unpredictable disruptions that may come with unforeseen factors in the communication process, media content is still overwhelmingly driven by political and economic interests. To date, the dominant channels still determine the dominant narratives and do little to upset the traditional flow of propaganda and/or news content. As Cushion (2012) notes, television continues to be the dominant news source for audiences worldwide and retains a surprisingly high level of public support. This idea of chaos and unpredictability is not limited to media scholars who have become bored

with traditional hegemonies of media and enamored with the presumed possibilities of globalized new media. Security and Intelligence Officer Sir David Omand described that the speed and penetration of global communications can transmit economic shocks worldwide and endanger the critical interests of national markets (in Dillon, 2007, p. 14).

Both Cottle's (2006) and Hoskins and O'Loughlin's (2010) arguments make critical connections between previously distinct perspectives as an effort to holistically examine media and war. Where this dissertation departs from their astute assertion is in the assumption at the foundation of *mediatized conflict* that media is the battleground, of sorts, where conflict takes place. I argue in this work that a more appropriate way to view the relationship between war and media is that media is instead the weapon wielded on a battlefield of public opinion, perspective and memory.

The Relationship between Media and Power

The relationship between the military industrial complex and society poses more of a danger today than ever before. The historical alliance between the military establishment (including politicians and top policymakers in charge of defense policy) and the military defense industry (makers and traders in weaponry and military equipment, as well as those who lobby the politicians and policymakers on their behalf) is a highly developed and complex interrelationship between economics and politics exerting influence on social policy – largely outside the arena of public discourse – seeking to fulfill what historian E.P. Thompson (1982) calls a technological imperative driving Western powers toward testing new military systems through war.

When the term "military industrial complex" entered into public awareness with President Eisenhower's famed 1960 address, it was described as an institution which was

acquiring undue power in the U.S. and posed a risk of misplaced influence on the politics, economics and even spiritual influence of society. Since Eisenhower's address, the military industrial complex has come to dominate economic and political institutions throughout Western societies. There is no question about the importance of the military industrial complex in global geopolitics. By 1990, over 30,000 U.S. companies employed approximately 3,275,000 people in defense industry jobs, and 70 percent of all money spent on research and development in the U.S. was defense related (Drucker, 1993). Since 1990, the defense industry has spent over \$178 million in political campaign contributions to politicians in the United States (Opensecrets, 2012), and by 2010 the top ten defense companies alone employed 1,185,210 people and accounted for \$248.21 billion in arms sales (SIPRI, 2012a). The U.S. defense budget in 2011 was \$711 billion, almost 5 times the expenditure of the second largest defense budget of China (SIPRI, 2012b), maintaining 4,999 military bases worldwide (USDOD, 2010). Without the Cold War to justify continued spending on products that supported the military industrial complex, the U.S. (often including other Western countries) began a prolific campaign to find new enemies (Hammond and Herman, 2000; Keeble, 1997) with military actions against Panama in 1989, Iraq in 1991, Somalia in 1992, Iraq again in 1993 and 1998, Haiti in 1994 and 1995, Yugoslavia in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001, Iraq yet again in 2003 (Keeble, 2004), and Libya in 2011, not to mention less public attempts to overthrow Venezuela's Chavez in 2002 (Al Jazeera, 2009), involvement in the Georgia-Russian conflict in 2008, military support to Israel against Lebanon and Gaza, cyber-attacks on Iran in 2012, U.S. involvement in the "color revolutions" (Cohen, 2000; Dobbs, 2000) and ongoing operations in Columbia from 1964 to the present. The U.K. also has an

astounding amount of interest invested in the institution of war, contributing to 20 percent of global weapon sales (Leigh, 2003), with a defense budget of \$62.7 billion in 2010 (SIPRI, 2012b). Given the stakes, it is easy to see why the military industrial complex would acquire media companies to extend their control into the popular discourses that influence policy in democratic societies, creating a *media military industrial complex* of astounding influence (Keeble, 1997; McChesney, 2002).

The political economy of media research is in a unique position to understand the complex ways in which the military industrial complex has come to infiltrate popular discourse (Ottosen, 2009) by way of permeating the ownership of media institutions. As media corporations have become transnational institutions under the umbrella of companies tied to the defense industry, the technologies and content of mediated discourse have been mobilized in support of military-industrial interests in the form of video games (Ottosen), movies (Miller, 1998), news reporting (Anderson, 2005), DARPA's development of the Internet, satellite technology, and computer technology. A newly engaged body of research has begun mapping this phenomenon, but the decline in the importance of nation-state sovereignty and the increasingly supranational nature of the media-military-industrial-complex necessitates the re-conceptualization of how society and social discourse are defined by the political economy of media.

The role of media in promoting war has begun to see renewed attention in the wake of the NATO bombing of the former Yugoslavia and the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, with scholars scrutinizing the ways in which media has played a role in limiting discourse to that which supports official frameworks in support of war (for examples see Boyd-Barrett, 2004a; Hammond, 2004; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Ivie,

2007; Keeble, 2004; Ottosen, 2009; Robinson, 2004; Solomon, 2007;). Many of these examinations have yielded insights into the Orwellian scope of the military industrial complex by examining the relationship between media, economics, politics and society.

Piers Robinson's (2002) *CNN Effect* posits that media attention to international instances of military conflict has led to state intervention. This model is limited to considerations of media on state intervention and treats such influence as one-sided rather than co-constitutive. Atanasoski (2007) argues that empathy-framed coverage of the conflict by Western media justified Western military involvement in non-Western regions. Skoco and Woodger (2000) have identified a strategic shift by the U.S. military since the end of the Cold War of sharing operational details with the media to feed the 24-hour news cycle with propaganda in a reliance on the media to sell military policies as "compelling stories of human values" (p. 81). Paul Virilio (1989) contends that the history of battle is foremost that of radically changing fields of how things are visualized and perceived. War then becomes a battle of symbols and representations constructing such perceptions that forms the fulcrum for the relationship between war and media, and the culture of war (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010).

Getting a Handle on the Spin

Journalists cover war and distribute their reports to the public through mass communication media. These media are manipulated by governmental authorities to support war efforts, and media discourses are produced and disseminated in order to inform, persuade and define the narratives relating to the conflict. Ironically, these same manipulated discourses disseminated by the military and State Department to media in support of foreign policy aims can blow back and influence the policy support of

Legislative Branch members that look to the media as independent confirmation of information given to them by the Executive Branch (Cohen, 1963). The relationship between media and war is so close that the field of communication studies in the U.S. academy has been intimately involved with every war the country has been involved in since World War I (Rogers, 1994). Communication and war have a symbiotic relationship, and the understanding of that relationship is fundamental to understanding war itself (Haridakis et al., 2009). This mechanistic view of the possibilities for control historically held (and exercised) by military institutions implies a systematic and applied effort by the military to wield media as a weapon when waging war.

Maintaining control over discourses on war has led to a long history of research and policy toward ensuring that the preferred propaganda is privileged and the contrary messages sidelined or silenced. Following World War I, the U.S. had a very real fear of propaganda resulting in a significant research interest in mass communication studies (Cmiel, 1996; Haridakis et al., 2009; Rogers, 1994). As Qualter noted (1962), the effective role of propaganda in demoralizing the enemy at the end of World War I made it a significant part of every U.S. military conflict from then on. During the war, the Creel Committee conducted an intense propaganda campaign with 75 million copies of booklets distributed and a cadre of over 70,000 speakers presenting patriotic speeches both nationally and internationally (Creel, 1920). Scholars have suggested that Creel was too successful in his propaganda efforts and have noted significant post-war backlash against propaganda as a result (Jowett, 1987; Winkler, 1978). Creel's success marked the beginning in a long line of propaganda research and campaigns conducted in collaboration with the U.S. military.

Military, intelligence and propaganda agencies provided the primary funding for large social science research projects among United States academics from World War II until the Vietnam era (Simpson, 1994). Harold Lasswell's (1948) propaganda analysis research is credited as virtually creating the *content analysis* approach (Rogers, 1994), encapsulated in his most famous line "who says what in which channel to whom with what effects?" (Lasswell, 1948, p. 37). His doctoral dissertation work centered on an analysis of World War I propaganda, which proved to be a little-explored area of academic research poised for a dramatic increase in interest over the next few decades (Rogers, 1994). His treatise *Psychopathology and Politics* (Lasswell, 1930) was also instrumental in initiating the exploration of psychology and political science. During World War II, he analyzed Allied and Axis propaganda for the US government (Lasswell & Leites, 1949) and used funding from the Rockefeller Foundation to develop methodologies for further propaganda analysis (Rogers, 1994). Lasswell's work helped launch propaganda and media research in support of World War II, the Korean War and the Cold War era.

Giants in the field of communication scholarship, such as Wilbur Schramm, Walter Lippman, Paul Lazarsfeld, Kurt Lewin, Claude Shannon and Carl Hovland, joined Lasswell in the war effort, conducting applied communication research that set the agenda in communication studies for the better part of the last half of the 20th century. Lippman's (1922; 1925) work on propaganda and public opinion as a leaflet writer in the U.S. Army Expeditionary Force's propaganda unit fed into landmark research on agenda setting and effects research in mass media, and Carl Hovland's studies of persuasion research and assessments of Army training films (Hovland et al., 1949; Rogers, 1994;

Haridakis et al, 2009) made similar impacts on the field. Likewise, Wilbur Schramm worked for the Office of War information before founding the world's first PhD program for studying mass communication (Rogers, 1994; Simpson, 1994). Lazarsfeld analyzed how interpersonal influences impact the dissemination of media messages (Haridakis et al, 2009), further developing propaganda research along with Lewin's work studying group discussions in war time decision making and the concept of *gatekeeping* (Rogers, 1994). These seminal works, applied in their orientation and conducted in support of American war efforts, continue to shape theoretical and practical communication scholarship in the U.S. academy.

The ideological contests of the Cold War era were reflected in the evolution of propaganda research by the U.S. government. The spread of communism led to a climate of fear and the establishment of the House Un-American Activities Committee, McCarthyism and government efforts to foster loyalty at home and support capitalist-friendly nations abroad (Cmiel, 1996; Haridakis et al, 2009). Research into consensus building (Smith, Lasswell & Casey, 1946) and understanding communist communication systems (Schramm & Riley, 1951) were accompanied by U.S. State Department funded international radio broadcasts directly targeted at communist nations, as well as efforts to dominate information flows through agencies such as the United States Information Agency and the United States Aid for International Development (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2006). As Rogers (1994) noted, the U.S. government is keenly interested in working with mass communication scholars to thwart anti-capitalist propaganda. Counter-acting persuasion became an area of study, building off of Hovland's WWII research such as *social judgment theory* (Sherif & Hovland, 1961), the *elaboration likelihood model* (Petty

& Cacioppo, 1986) and fear appeals (Witte, 1994). This historical collaboration between the military and scholars highlights the importance of communication in war efforts. Indeed, mass media scholarship on propaganda and media effects has traditionally been treated as a tool to be applied toward dominating news narratives and deploying a *weaponized* media that enables decisive victories in the battle for public opinion.

During President Eisenhower's farewell address he noted the increasing threat of political subordination by the "military-industrial complex" (Eisenhower, 1960) and the growing influence it exercised on government and scholarly institutions. It was in this climate of increasing military dominance in both politics and academics that the Camelot Program, a military-sponsored study of the processes of revolutions and the largest social science project in U.S. history, was conceived. It was controversial enough that it was canceled in 1965 after coming to light in congressional hearings despite the government's six million dollar investment (Beals, 1969; BSNS, 1965; Solovey, 2001).

The Camelot Program was a response to a 1964 directive to study existing research programs "relating to ethnic and other motivational factors involved in the causation and conduct of small wars" (BSNS, 1965). Planned by the Special Operations Research Office, Camelot was tasked with developing procedures to assess the potential for internal war within national societies, identify actions through which a government could relieve conditions giving rise to a potential civil war, and assess the feasibility of establishing a research project to obtain information necessary for predicting and controlling revolutions (Hopper, 1950; Horowitz, 1967). Field work and data collection were slated to occur throughout the non-aligned and developing nations (Horowitz, 1967). This collaboration between academics and the military for the development of

counterinsurgency and social engineering research represented a watershed moment in the role of academic participation in military agendas. The study was described by the Army's Chief of Research and Development, William Dick Jr., as developing a single model which could be used to estimate the internal war potential of a developing nation (BSNS, 1965). The goals of this program coincide with the practice of fighting proxy wars that took place throughout the Cold War era and seem particularly relevant to U.S. involvement in the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia.

The Vietnam War and the social events surrounding it proved a poignant reminder of the importance of mass media research to the military industrial complex. The withholding of information by the government regarding U.S. involvement in Vietnam (Hammond, 1988) was accompanied by press support of U.S. policy, suggesting a smooth campaign for securing public support. The backlash of McCarthyism had fostered an environment where media was fairly unrestricted (Barber & Weir, 2002), however, and as coverage grew, so did criticism (Gitlin, 1980; Patterson, 1984). Unrest against both the war and social rights issues gathered steam as the nation became outraged by the violent suppression of protests. Public pressure against the war grew until the U.S. withdrew and the war ended in 1975. In subsequent conflicts, media coverage would be limited due to lessons learned in Vietnam. Military actions in Grenada, Lebanon, Panama, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq featured complete media bans and blackouts or control of reporters through press pools and embedding in units (Middleton & Lee, 2006; Reese, 2004).

The pool system is a particularly interesting approach to reigning in dissent in the press, and represented a throwback to WWII war reporting practices (Porch, 2002). It is a

less overtly authoritarian censorship than the total press blackout during the Bay of Pigs invasion and the American invasions of Grenada and Panama. Western reporters in Bosnia freely submitted to the pool system (Gowing, 1994, p. 15) put in place by the UN, offering a stark contrast to complaints (if late coming) by journalists regarding such a system in the Gulf War (Gottschalk, 1992; Gowing, 1994; Kellner, 1992; Kumar, 2006; MacArthur, 2004). The refining of efforts by the military to utilize professional structures as a means to direct media narrative production shows a sophisticated understanding on the part of the Pentagon of the mechanics of media institutions that can be operationalized to reign-in, direct and discipline media.

The 'War on Terror' has revisited the usefulness of fear appeals from the Cold War era in the establishment of a nebulous and ever-present threat. *Diffusion of information* research (Kanihan & Gale, 2003) and *cultivation theory* (Rubin et al., 2003) have been reapplied by post-9/11 scholars, and *media framing analysis* continues to guide studies of media coverage and protest activities (Dardis, 2006; Norris, Kern & Just, 2003; Vasi, 2006). The War on Terror has also prompted new ways of examining media research, such as studies on media dependence with *infrastructure theory* (Kim et al., 2004) and studies on policy support using *third-person effect hypothesis* (Haridakis & Rubin, 2005).

Modern wars are increasingly outsourcing jobs to paid professionals. This isn't just evident in the mercenary corporations euphemistically called "security contractors" which moved from discreet roles in Latin America, Africa and the Balkans to public roles in Iraq and Afghanistan with a series of infamous reports of civilian casualties and fraud. Outsourcing also applies to propaganda. A BBC broadcast in 1992 reported Serbian

snipers in Bosnia were targeting Muslim children for paid bounties. It was a fabricated story found to have originated from the offices of a public relations firm named Ruder-Finn in Washington D.C. (Waldron, 1992). Ruder-Finn claimed to be working directly for the Republic of Croatia, the Bosnian Muslim government and the Albanian ‘opposition’ in Kosovo at the time (Merlino, 1993). This involvement of private PR firms echoes similar events in the first Gulf War when the PR firm Hill & Knowlton disseminated fictitious stories of Iraqi troops murdering babies in Kuwaiti hospitals (Brock, 2006; Carlisle, 1993). Trento (1992) notes that PR firms are utilized by the CIA to avoid direct relationships with the media, and PR practitioners are recruited by the CIA to act as middlemen for information the government wants distributed. News media are conditioned to promulgate reports from PR firms, making this a savvy manipulation of the news/PR information distribution system. Studies have found as much as 40% of news content in U.S. newspapers comes from PR press releases (Lee & Soloman, 1990).

While the strength of public relations driven news content is that it preserves the image of the news media’s third party credibility while propagating favorable key messages, sometimes a more direct hand is used to ensure story placement and favorable coverage while still maintaining the assumed objectivity of media reports. The Senate Pike and Church committees revealed reporters on the payroll of the CIA (Horrock, 1976; US Senate, 1975), and further investigations revealed more than 400 US journalists employed by the CIA over the course of almost three decades (Bernstein, 1977). The undermining of media objectivity was also noted in the British press in a story appearing in *The Guardian* exposing 90 journalists (many senior and prominent) paid by the CIA through the Bank of Commerce and Credit International (Norton-Taylor, 1991; Pilger

1998), but journalists on the intelligence payroll conspiring with the state is something that has deep roots in Britain's most well-regarded newspapers and broadcast media (Milne, 1994; Rogers, 1997; Keeble, 2005).

News media collaborated (usually in cooperation with ownership or top management) with the CIA gathered intelligence as well as acted as go-betweens with spies (Boyd-Barrett, 2004b, 2010) with the CIA admitting to nurturing media relationships to influence the postponement, change, holding and scrapping of stories that did not support national security interests (Cockburn & St. Clair, 1999). These sources included freelance writers and deep cover operatives as well as editors, publishers and prominent journalists, who infiltrated nearly every major US news organization including the Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, the *New York Times*, the *Miami Herald*, Hearst Newspapers, *Newsweek*, Time/Life, the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, Scripps-Howard, the Mutual Broadcasting System, ABC, CBS, and NBC (Boyd-Barrett, 2004b, 2010; Crewdson & Treaster, 1977; Kempster, 1977; Trento and Roman, 1977). Following the Church Committee report calling to stop using journalists, the CIA reduced their involvement in these activities for a time, but ramped up their media penetration efforts again during the Reagan administration with illegal domestic propaganda campaigns supporting covert actions in Central America as well as during President George W. Bush's push to gain public support through the media for an invasion of Iraq based on fabricated and suspect evidence of WMDs (Boyd-Barrett, 2004b; Houghton, 1996). As Boyd-Barrett (2004b) notes, this application of direct and covert control of news media, "not simply as cover for intelligence activity, but for the purposes of state manipulation of public opinion and propaganda," (p. 427) represents a

collaboration between military/intelligence interests and news reporting that significantly alters the dynamics of the everyday political economy. As Boyd-Barrett (2010) warns, this “posits a more profound relationship than scholars generally acknowledge between the press and the plutocratic, corporate and security forces whose influences shape, if not determine, the functioning of modern democracies” (p. 43).

Power, Profit and Public Opinion

The concept of industry realizing substantial profits through publically-subsidized violence and mass misery is nothing new, as noted so eloquently in the words of Maj. Gen. Smedley Darlington Butler (as cited in Schmidt, 1998), the most decorated soldier in American history:

I spent 33 years and four months in active military service and during that period I spent most of my time as a high class thug for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. I helped purify Nicaragua for the International Banking House of Brown Brothers in 1902–1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for the American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras right for the American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went on its way unmolested. Looking back on it, I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents. (p. 231).

War for profit has a long history even when only considering conflicts in which the U.S. military has engaged. These conflicts are normally not explicitly identified by the protagonists as such and, as the history of propaganda research can attest, spinning conflicts as ideological or humanitarian has been a goal to which considerable attention has been paid. The thought of going to war for plunder is not popularly embraced in democratic societies and contrasts notably with the patriotic narratives dominating our societal perceptions of military service. In the case of President George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq, many military commanders either advised against the war in Iraq or resigned because of it (West, 2006). However, war is a highly profitable enterprise for a number of corporate and governmental elites. As Maj. Gen. Butler (1935) can attest, "War is a racket. It always has been.... It is the only one in which profits are reckoned in dollars and losses in lives" (p.1).

Banks are the first to profit from war. They do so by way of extending interest-bearing credit for the purchase of arms and the loans for the financing of infrastructure repair, but the easiest money comes from economic sanctions. At the start of every major military campaign in which the U.S. has been involved from World War I onward (Elliott et al., 2008), sanctions have provided easy money. When freezing a targeted country's foreign assets, such as bank accounts held in the sender country, there remains the question of interest earned on those assets. In the recent case of sanctions accompanying NATO's 2011 military campaign in Libya, the target assets amounted to hundreds of billions of dollars, with \$30 billion frozen by the U.S. Treasury and another \$18 billion by U.S. banks (Mamdani, 2011). This interest-free loan continues to accumulate profit until/if the sanctions are removed and the principle balance is released (presuming it is

not seized altogether), and in the case of Libya it appears to be released only slowly to the new regime upon fulfillment of certain conditions (EUbusiness, 2011).

The global arms industry is a multi-billion dollar industry that reaps enormous profits from the production and sale of new weapon systems, the disposal of aging ordinances and equipment, and the testing of new weapon technologies. The U.S. defense industry makes up 47 of the top 100 companies worldwide, with combined 2010 earnings \$275.91 billion and with 8 companies in the top 10 list earning a combined \$184.54 billion, from which U.S.-based Lockheed Martin tops the list at \$35.73 billion (SIPRI, 2012a). The NATO alliance itself spends \$979.538 billion in 2010, for an average per capita cost of \$1,082 across the NATO alliance and \$2,250 in the U.S. (which spent 4.77% of GDP on defense that year (Hackett, 2012). A review of arms industry related stories in 1999 reveals a world at war as a profitable environment for weapon-producing corporations. The U.S. government alone supports two dozen international arms sales events around the world. Their 1999 Defentech arms bazaar in Brazil helped push the sale of arms in Latin America, with Brazil spending \$59.7 million on high-speed torpedoes (Silverstein, 1999). Raytheon – the maker of Tomahawk and Patriot missiles used extensively in the gulf wars, the Balkans, Sudan and Afghanistan – was one of the largest political campaign donors, donating over \$1 million between 1995 and 2000 while filling military contracts worth billions (Hin, 1999).

Each Tomahawk cruise missile sells for \$750,000, making the price tag on the U.S. strike on Sudan with 79 cruise missiles over \$100 million in one night (Hin, 1999). The cost of the missiles and bombs used by NATO in Yugoslavia is staggering. One of Raytheon's cruise missiles fired from a submarine costs approximately \$1 million and

twice that amount when air-launched from a B-52 bomber (Rezun, 2001). Laser-guided 2,000-pound bombs dropped from an F-117 stealth bomber cost \$26,000 each, while traditional unguided bombs dropped from B-1 and B-2 bombers are \$600 each. An F-117, one of which was shot down over Serbia, cost \$45 million. HARM anti-air defense missiles are \$340,000 with every shot. Each Hellfire missile launched from an Apache attack helicopter runs around \$42,700, and the cost of transporting 24 of those helicopters from Germany to Albania cost \$700 million (a drop in the bucket of the up to \$10 billion Congress was willing to approve for spending (Milbank, 1999; Rezun, 2001). Military hardware is becoming ever more advanced and more expensive. Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2010) note that as of 2009, over 40 countries now manufacture, sell or use battlefield robots and/or drones as well.

The most prolific war profiteering activity revolves around the awarding of contracts during and following a conflict for rebuilding infrastructure, maintaining security and providing services and supplies. Chossudovsky (2000) predicted that reconstruction of the Balkans under the “stabilization program” would entail multi-billion dollar contracts given to multinational firms to rebuild roads, airports and bridges destroyed by military attacks on infrastructure, with loans benefitting the European Development Bank, private creditors, Western mining, as well as oil and construction companies while fueling the region’s external debt. The European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) in Kosovo distributed €726.5 million in contracts between 1998 and 2001. Before the war started, EAR’s contract awards in Kosovo were budgeted at €7 million, increasing from €124 million in 1999, to €262 million in 2000, and €329.5 in

2001. By 2008, following the disintegration of Yugoslavia, EAR contracts for the Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia region totaled €2.86 billion (EAR, 2008).

Private security is another lucrative market in war profiteering. While no reliable numbers exist regarding the money made by mercenary companies in the NATO air campaign against Yugoslavia, numbers from the infamously expensive Iraq war indicate a large industry has developed. At least 310 private security companies from around the world have received contracts from United States agencies to protect American and Iraqi officials, installations, convoys and other entities in Iraq since 2003, sharing nearly \$6 billion in contracts in a 2008 federal report (Glanz, 2008).

War has traditionally impacted market access in the aftermath of destruction. Much of the American economic growth following World Wars I and II was based on the need in Europe and Asia for manufactured products and the U.S. was the only player with its manufacturing facilities still intact. Opening markets can also be more sinister, as CIA sponsored coups in Iran (1953) and Chile (1973) brought about free market economic reform favoring U.S. industries. This was repeated in Yugoslavia, where free market capitalism was specifically mentioned in the Rambouillet agreement and Serbian industrial capabilities laid low during the NATO bombing campaign. Targeting manufacturing infrastructure degrades an enemy's capability of production during wartime, but it has the added effect of eliminating domestic competition for import goods, establishing a client state, and creating additional infrastructure rebuilding projects.

During and immediately following war, there exists decreased oversight of gray market and overtly criminal activities. Before systems of good governance can once

again take root, regions under occupation and torn by conflict provide opportunities for black market industry profits. Profits from the drug trade have flourished with heroin production in Afghanistan and cocaine production in South America. Likewise, the sale of surplus arms and military equipment thrives, as seen in Kosovo, Africa, and the Middle East, as well as Central and South America. Human trafficking of sex slaves and slave labor has established lucrative markets worldwide, and the illegal organ trade is garnering significant media attention. Carla del Ponte (chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia) fingered senior Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) leaders turned Kosovo politicians in the kidnapping and murder of Serbian civilians who were transported to Albania from Kosovo and carved up to have their organs sold in the black market organ trade to wealthy clients abroad (de Quetteville, 2008). This organ trade has recently made headlines with the launch of a high profile investigation by the Council of Europe that implicates Kosovo's prime minister Hashim Thaci and other prominent figures (Al Jazeera, 2011)

Not all black market profiteering is conducted by local criminal underground elements. A former DynCorp employee working as a police contractor in Bosnia blew the whistle on the participation of UN employees and DynCorp employees in the human trafficking of sex slaves in Bosnia (Bolkavac, 2011), and the *London Telegraph* reported more than 20 cases of child sex slavery involving UN staff in southern Sudan, Mozambique, East Timor and the Balkans. *The Guardian* reported that "peacekeepers have come to be seen as part of the problem in trafficking rather than the solution" in Kosovo (Traynor, 2004), and the *Christian Science Monitor* revealed NATO troops patronizing forced sex-slave brothels in Kosovo as well (Jordan, 2004).

To the victor go the spoils. Control of resources after a war has formed a primary motivation for conflicts throughout history. In the economic chaos following war, industrial as well as agricultural infrastructure is often available at bottom dollar prices. Petroleum and mineral resources can reimburse costs of waging war and secure strategic resources. More specifically, petroleum wealth is flowing from the American occupation in Iraq. It is similar in the former Yugoslavia, where the U.S. has now established a base in Tuzla, Bosnia and the mammoth Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo.

In the case of Kosovo, NATO gained access to a resource bonanza that included mineral wealth estimated at over \$5 billion held by the Serbian state-owned Trepca mining complex. Reserves of gold, lead, zinc, silver, cadmium, coal and lignite – with significant prospects for oil and gas refining, as well as futures trading – represented the largest piece of wealth not already in the hands of U.S. and European mining corporations (Chossudovsky, 2000; Flounders, 1999; Hedges, 1998). Principle interests in these mines are now in NATO control (Flounders, 2000).

NATO control over the Balkans also controls proposed natural gas pipeline routes to move Caspian Sea oil to the West and avoid shipping oil across the Black Sea, thus circumventing Russian and Iranian routes (Chatterjee, 1999; Johnstone, 1999). Various experts have estimated the Caspian fields as holding approximately \$5 trillion of oil wealth (Chatterjee, 2000). With trillions of dollars on the line, perhaps President Nixon (1983) was right when he wrote “[T]he only way to achieve a practical, livable peace in a world of competing nations is to take the profit out of war” (p.xx).

The Elephant in the News Room

War correspondents retain a commitment to national identity and/or patriotism that influences their journalistic work. As Allan and Zelizer (2004) note, this commitment can take the form of using vague word choices, omitting the broader perspective, holding back the explicit images or wearing flag pins. War reporting reconstitutes the notions of “good journalism” based on differing criteria. The new criteria are based in truth hegemonies and cultural loyalties, as well as political, technical, military and economic limitations (Allan and Zelizer). Pressure to self-censure and to produce unquestioning reports develops from criticisms by high ranking politicians, cheerleading news outlets and the demands of finding content for 24-hour live reporting (Allan & Zelizer, 2004; Kurtz, 2003; Simpson, 2003; Wells, 2003). Boyd-Barrett (2004a) notes that the genre of war reporting plays into the hands of power in its failure to identify metanarratives and grand strategies linking different wars over time, as well as its complicity with intelligence services, making it easily exploitable as a propaganda tool.

Stout (2009) examined how business media outlets reported business revenue and economic forecasts in explicit relation to US foreign policy and military action. This is elementary, as Stout explains, because the business of providing the military with goods and services can be profitable even while war holds risks for revenue and investments. In her ground-breaking study, Stout found that business media presented a clear relationship between war and profitability. Furthermore, the study found that businesses that did not benefit from war were portrayed as having been poorly managed rather than critiquing how the war negatively influenced certain industries while benefiting others. Also, stories of large corporations gaining huge contracts and profits as well as those detailing rampant

corruption and inflated war costs were obscured or ignored in favor of coverage extolling the opportunities for small and growing businesses to profit. Stout's analysis found that the reports equated war with business plans and production schedules while ignoring moral and humanitarian issues. Stout also found that the articles were dismissive of any outcome other than one that was quick and decisive. Such articles also obscured the very real threat of negative economic interests resulting for much of the economy if the outcome failed to live up to that expectation.

This dissertation expands on Stout's study within the conflict of NATO's campaign in Kosovo to widen the inquiry and examine how economic issues are treated and the importance they are given in the mainstream media. The implications of a possible profit-turn in conflict reporting might reveal interesting relationships between Wall Street, Main Street, media institutions and the military industrial complex.

The Business of War (Reporting): Death and Destruction as Profitable Enterprise

Keller (2001) identifies the Crimean War of 1853-1856 as the first war in history in which media played an integral role. This claim is based on the war as the first historical instance when modern institutions such as picture journalism, lithographic presses and metropolitan show business combined to make war a product for commercial consumption. Keller argues that "reality conforms to the pictures, not the other way around" (ix). With the advent of reporting from the battlefield rather than relying upon government reports, media staked out a highly profitable role as purveyors of narratives and the public source of information.

Media outlets are, above all, commercial interests influenced by war in the form of ratings which are the basis of advertising dollars. These advertising revenues are often

provided by corporations that are, to varying degrees, part of the military industrial complex, and the owners of media outlets often have personal stakes in the defense industry or military – as visible in the military hardware focus of GE-owned NBC’s coverage in Iraq – and may be active proponents of a political party (Klinenbert, 2005; NewsMeat, 2008; Stout, 2009).

Advertising interests are not the only financial pressures media face in covering war. Núria Almiron (2010) has produced an insightful examination of the links between banks and media conglomerates which offers a disturbing look at the enormous debt held by media conglomerates and the industry drive for consolidation, leverage and growth that makes access to and support from banks critical to daily survival. Scholars have warned of the hyper-commercialization of the media industry for years, scrutinizing the influence of structural economic forms on the production and distribution of communication (Mosco, 2006), and have noted that moves toward commercially-focused media have built-in systems of bias in professional journalism involving the selection and sources of stories, avoidance of contextualization and curtailed investigative reporting resulting in corporate news media having “a vested interest in the corporate system” (McChesney, 2008, p. 52). It should be noted that the very financial institutions controlling corporate media debt and access to credit are also invested in significant national and international projects as well as the military industrial complex.

Almiron (2010) systematically analyzed financial data and measured the financialization of media companies, finding that media corporations have over-leveraged and taken on incredible levels of debt when business plans evolved from being based on advertising revenue to profitability built on financing corporate holdings. She cites the

inclination of corporate media to privilege economic aspects over social responsibilities of journalism as silencing stories that would negatively impact commercial interests of the company and adds to the list of commercial pressures the consequences of increasing financialization of corporate media. These risks include increasing concentration, deviation from journalistic activities, distancing from social responsibilities, defense of the economic systems that are enabling growth and profits through financialization, the privileging of technological financial information, journalistic self-censorship, and the increasing influence of stock (Almiron, 2010).

“Bombing for Peace”

There is nothing humane about humanitarian intervention that arrives on the wings of bombers and cruise missiles. Former State Department Yugoslavia officer George Kenney pointed out the hypocrisy, saying “I think it's very clear by now that the US-led NATO bombing of Yugoslavia is immoral and completely unconnected to the crisis of the Kosovar Albanians. Dropping cluster bombs on highly populated urban areas doesn't result in accidental fatalities. It's purposeful terror bombing” (Pickman, June 28, 1999). Both the conflict and the intervention, in all their inhumanity, are rooted in decades of policies and ideological contests.

The Yugoslav domestic crisis involving Kosovo is rooted in a wave of ethno-nationalism that swept across the country following the death of Yugoslav president Josip Broz Tito. Following WWII, the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia operated under a combination of authoritarian control and regional collaboration in line with Tito's communist philosophy of governance. In the two decades prior to 1980, Yugoslavia's annual GDP growth averaged 6.1 percent, medical care was free, and the literacy rate was

approximately 91 percent (Chossudovsky, 1997). Ethno-nationalism was viewed as contrary to the ideology Tito promoted to unify the country, with heavy-handed prosecution of those caught promoting ethnic or religious hatred, and a national narrative of a harmonious co-existence propagandized that ignored the legacy of Croatian Nazi/Ustase, Serbian Chetnik and Albanian Ballistat brutality committed in the name of ethno-nationalism during WWII (Ćircović, 2004; Shoup, 1963). Equal ethnic representation was maintained in major federal government appointments and senior military command positions (Gibbs, 2009). Counter intuitively, Tito allowed the Albanian population in Kosovo to maintain linguistic and cultural ties with Albania and openly engage in cultural and religious practices suppressed by Albania's Hoxha regime while similar expressions were strongly discouraged elsewhere in the country. These policies were expanded following ethnic Albanian demonstrations in Kosovo during 1968, after which it was also permitted to openly display the Albanian flag within Kosovo (Judah, 2000).

Under the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, the Serbian regions of Kosovo and Vojvodina were reestablished as autonomous provinces within the republic of Serbia with almost all the rights held by the larger constituent republics, although lacking notably the power to declare secession from the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (Judah, 2000; Sreckovic, 2010). The 1974 constitution mandated that governmental posts within the various republics of Yugoslavia be ethnically proportionate to their populations. In Kosovo, the Albanian majority held a proportionate number of public sector jobs which increased as the population of Serbs decreased from over 50 percent in 1966 to just 22.5 percent by 1985 (Gibbs, 2009).

During the 1980s, uneven economic development produced socio-economic and political divisions which fostered wide disparity in regional incomes and social services (Dubrovic, 1993). Northern and central Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia's strong industrialized economies produced higher employment compared to the largely labor-oriented economies of southern Serbia, Macedonia and Kosovo. The federal government's Long-term Economic Stabilization Program of 1983 failed to address these issues with the regional cross-subsidies and economic wealth transfers implemented, and served mainly to ostracize the demographic within Croatia and Slovenia as inflation increased to 90% by 1986 (Ćircović, 2004; Sreckovic, 2010; Weller, 2008). At the same time, International Monetary Fund (IMF) mandates to reduce government subsidies resulted in significant increases in the price of goods (Weller). Yugoslavia sought financial assistance from the IMF in 1979 to bolster an economy plagued by socialist inefficiencies and the economic energy crisis of the 1970s, and the IMF imposed austerity measures in the import of consumer goods and domestic spending that had disastrous effects (Gervasi, 1996). Significant increases in unemployment accompanied by declines in the standard of living continued throughout the 1980s, with a fall of 40% in the standard of living between 1982 and 1989 plunging the economy back two decades (Gibbs, 2009). In January of 1990, the IMF ordered wage freezes at mid-November 1989 levels while prices continued to rise and real wages collapsed by 41 percent in the first six months of 1990 (Chossudovsky, 1999). The Yugoslav Central Bank, now under IMF control, directed state revenues that previously were used as transfer payments to the republics and provinces to instead pay off the national debt held by foreign lenders. This forced redirection of capital cut off the constitutive republics from the federal funds they

needed and threw gasoline on the smoldering secessionist movements emerging from the economic dissatisfaction and ethnic divisions to feed the firestorm of secession and war for more than a decade.

These IMF policies for debtor nation states were fully consistent with and supported by the neo-liberal structural adjustment economic reform policies of the United States Treasury Department under the Administration of President Ronald Reagan. These policies, with grave domestic sociopolitical effects in former Yugoslavia, were the result of a U.S. national security directive which articulated the U.S. goal of promoting revolutions to overthrow communist governments in order to transform Eastern Europe into a market-oriented economy (Chossudovsky, 1999; NSDD-133, 1984).

As the decade came to a close, huge discrepancies in economic output between northern and southern republics (Gibbs, 2009) showed Yugoslavia's economic reforms to be unable to increase employment levels in Kosovo and to be fuel to the fires of nationalism in Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia (Gibbs, 2009; Weller, 2008). Meanwhile, the Kosovo Albanian population, with the highest birthrate in Europe, was becoming a demographic time bomb in both Serbian and federal Yugoslav politics. The U.S. Army's Handbook on Yugoslavia noted that the Kosovo Albanian population had the lowest literacy rate in Yugoslavia and that, by 1981, only 178,000 of 1.5 million Albanians living there were employed (with a quarter of those employed holding nominal bureaucratic positions) (Curtis, 1992). These pressures on Kosovo's economy and low standard of living led to high levels of dissatisfaction, unrest and violence.

The economic crisis in Yugoslavia was especially severe in Kosovo and unemployment levels combined with low standards of living accompanied an increase in

ethnic harassments by Kosovo Albanians against Kosovo's Serbian inhabitants (Gibbs, 2009; Sreckovic, 2010). Demographic shifts over the previous two decades made the region less multi-ethnic and more ethnically volatile. In 1981 Kosovo's Albanian population was 77.5% of the province's total, with Serbs making up 13.3% of the remaining population, but both economic hardship and ethnic intimidation prompted many Serbs to resettle within Serbia proper throughout the '80s (Gibbs, 2009).

In March 1981, Albanian student demonstrations at the university in Pristina gave voice to explicit separatist calls that would have been unheard of when Tito was alive, using slogans which referred to Kosovo as a republic (it was constitutionally designated a province of Serbia, one of Yugoslavia's six republics), denounced Yugoslavia and called for unification with Albania. As Judah (2002) notes, the federal Yugoslav authorities reacted with force against the protests using Yugoslav National Army (JNA) troops and harsh policing policies to crack down on separatism and restore order in Kosovo. Reactions to the events included increased nationalism among both Serbian and Albanian populations that echoed the trend of nationalism already at work in other republics.

In 1987, Slobodan Milosevic rose to leadership in the Serbian Communist Party, riding in on the Serbian reaction to Albanian separatism in Kosovo. Using calls for unity regardless of nationality or religion, he declared at the famous battlefield of Kosovo Polje (where the Serbian army fought to the last to defeat the Turkish army) that Kosovo is a symbol for equality, tolerance and unity. The reception to his speech in Serbia won Milosevic the national presidency the next month. Many felt threatened by Milosevic's populist statements, particularly separatists in the neighboring republics. While the speech made a call for the diverse ethnicities to come together, opponents labeled it as a

call for Serbian ultranationalism (an accusation echoed by scholars who seem to have not actually read the transcript of the speech itself (see Judah, 2000; Weller, 2008).

The Yugoslav constitution necessitated collaboration between the various republics to make any effective federal response to the unrest in Kosovo. With separatist movements gaining momentum in Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia, there was little political will in those republics to support anything that would strengthen the federal government of Yugoslavia. Still, in February of 1989 Milosevic managed to gain support for measures that enabled the direct governing of Kosovo by the central government. This was in a large part necessary because fundamental structures of policing, court cases, media, politics and health services had ground to a halt with the development of a 'shadow government' by Kosovo's Albanian separatists to replace Yugoslav institutions (Sreckovic, 2010). Martial law was established and severe policing tactics were introduced in response to ambushes of police units on patrol (Gibbs, 2009; Judah, 2000). The federal response also dismantled the Albanian language education system and imposed educational curriculum that taught the national language of Serbo-Croatian. These moves further galvanized separatist feelings and contributed to the establishment of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) lead by Ibrahim Rugova in December 1989, a professor of Albanian literature at the University of Pristina. As Sreckovic (2010) notes, Rugova's LDK, which originally pursued a non-violent separatist agenda, represented the intellectual elite of Kosovo's Albanian society.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall and unilateral declarations of independence by the Yugoslav republics of Slovenia and Croatia (and their recognition by Germany and other European states), Kosovo's Albanian separatist movement saw an opportunity for

pushing their agenda. American support for regional disintegration was luke-warm under the administration of George Bush Sr. (Gibbs, 2009), but there was political support for the redrawing of Balkan maps in Europe and Bush's successor proved far more receptive. The "Albanian lobby" in the United States Congress – lead by Senator Bob Dole, with the help of professional PR and lobbying firms in Washington and financed by an Albanian expat diaspora – had a profound effect on U.S. policy regarding Kosovo.

Much of the funding for Kosovo's independence originated in the lucrative heroin trade that flourished due to Kosovo Albanian criminal organizations' control of drug transit routes through the Balkans to Eastern and Western Europe (Gibbs, 2009), which Interpol (2010) cites as still being the primary route of heroin into much of Europe today. The *San Francisco Chronicle* quoted Interpol stating that "Kosovo Albanians hold the largest share of the heroin market in Switzerland, in Austria, in Belgium, in Germany, in Hungary, in the Czech Republic, in Norway and in Sweden." (Viviano, 1999). *The Times* quoted Sweden's drug enforcement tsar, Walter Kege, saying "We have intelligence leading us to believe that there could be a connection between drug money and the Kosovo Liberation Army" (Boyes & Wright, 1999).

The armed conflicts shattering Yugoslavia in Croatia and Bosnia resonated with separatist Albanians in Kosovo, who quickly realized that 'independence' for Kosovo was attainable through violence. While Ibrahim Rugova continued to advance a non-violent approach to the separatist movement, more militant elements in Kosovo and throughout the expatriate community were arming for war. NATO cited intelligence findings of "the wholesale transfer of weapons to Kosovo" in 1997 (Viviano, 2009), the source of which was cited by a U.N. study which found that at least 200,000

Kalashnikovs were ‘stolen’ from Albanian military armories and found their way into the hands of the KLA. These weapons flooded the KLA’s armories because the financial collapse of the government in Albania during the spring of 1997 led to the widespread looting and black-market sales of Albanian army depots packed weapons and ordinances (Spolar, 2000). This rapid armament quickly destabilized the already tenuous relationship between ethnic Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo and soon sidelined Rugova’s non-violent position in negotiations with Belgrade (Sreckovic, 2010). Soon, questions were raised regarding the nature of outside support the movement was receiving.

From 1990 to 1992, while Rugova was still agitating for non-violent action in gaining recognition for a separate Kosovo, other players identified by Yugoslav police as criminal organizations quickly focused on violent armed secession in the interest of creating a ‘greater Albania’ including all of Kosovo and Albania, and parts of “Serbia (Preševo, Bujanovac, Medvedja), Montenegro (Dukagjin, Plav, Rozaj), the Republic of Macedonia (Tetovo, Gostivar), and Greece (Chamuria)” (Nation, 2003, p. 226). While the arming and funding had garnered some coverage in the press, the training of Albanian paramilitaries in Kosovo was not significantly explored in the U.S. and British mainstream press. It is notable that the subject was addressed by journalists in the foreign and alternative press reporting that Albanian paramilitary fighters had been attending military training camps in Albania, Bosnia and elsewhere with the financial support of drug money and expatriates overseas, as well as training from Western governments (Chossudovsky, 1999; Judah, 2000; Madsen, 1999). This raises the question of the role of the CIA in the crisis and to what end. These fighters didn’t simply ‘emerge from the hills,’ as prevailing narratives seem to imply; they were trained and supported by German

and U.S. intelligence organizations who recruited mercenaries such as the Saudi-financed Mujahedin and the U.S. contractor Military Professional Resources, Inc. (MPRI) at secret bases in Albania (Chossudovsky, 1999; Madsen, 1999). These units were soon bolstered by Kosovo Albanians deserting the JNA and developed into the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) by the end of 1993 (Sreckovic, 2010).

U.S. policy in the Balkans took a much harder line when President Clinton took office in 1993. NATO, a useful and profitable military alliance, was due for a new definition after the end of the Cold War signaled the end of its original charter. NATO air attacks against Bosnian Serb forces in Bosnia Herzegovina had proved instrumental in establishing the 1995 Dayton Accords (Nation, 2003). The Dayton Accords, however, did not address the status of Kosovo. Furthermore, the subsequent EU formal recognition of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) left Kosovo with its pre-Dayton status as part of Serbia in the re-drawn Yugoslavia. As Judah (2002) notes, this diplomatic slight further motivated the KLA to fight it out and further sidelined the significance of Rugova's LDK non-violent movement. While attacks had been ongoing throughout the late 1980s and 1990s, the first organized KLA attacks came in February of 1996 when bombings and shootings targeted police, military facilities, governmental institutions and both Serb and Kosovar Albanian civilians (Nation, 2003). Civilian Albanians who either did not support succession from Yugoslavia nor the armed violence were targeted in a campaign of intimidation while Serbian civilians who lived as refugees from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in refugee camps were also attacked in an effort to drive them out of the region (Gibbs, 2009).

As the KLA was fighting a dirty secessionist campaign against the FRY in Kosovo and FRY security and military forces were brutally repressing the insurgency, Western policies regarding Kosovo were contradictory and the U.S. Department of State was still classifying the KLA as a terrorist organization that had contacts with Al Qaeda (connected to the region through its role as a major source of heroin being trafficked by the KLA as well as Mujahedin mercenaries that fought in Bosnia) (Gibbs, 2009). Simultaneously, the United States was sending messages of strong disapproval of Yugoslavia's heavy-handed counter-guerilla tactics in Kosovo while indicating that the U.S. viewed Kosovo as an internal problem for Milosevic to address (Nation, 2003). This lack of clarity in U.S. foreign policy may have contributed to the hardening Serbia's attitudes in Kosovo (Gibbs, 2009; Nation, 2003; Sreckovic, 2010).

On February 28, 1998, fighting between Yugoslav police and KLA guerillas erupted into open counter-guerilla operations by Yugoslav domestic security forces in central Kosovo, during which long-sought KLA members, Serb policemen, and a number of Kosovo Albanian non-combatants were killed (Judah, 2000; Weller, 2008). Western media began to focus on the allegations of Serb atrocities, and Western foreign policy began to take a keener interest in what was once viewed as an internal problem. Politicians in the UK called for both sides to show restraint (Weller, 2008) and the U.S. State Department appointed Richard Holbrooke to work with General Wesley Clark, the NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, to redefine the issue in Kosovo within an interventionist framework with the stated aim of protecting the human rights of Kosovo's Albanian ethnic majority. This plan had some significant legal complications because Yugoslavia's campaign against guerilla separatists was considered legitimate and fully

compatible with international law at the time, although it had been characterized by Western officials and the press as being of “genocidal intent ... against the Kosovar Albanian population as a whole” (Nation, 2003, p. 231). It is interesting to note that Yugoslavia’s ability to carry out such a campaign would have been in serious question as the FRY police and military units in Kosovo lacked the manpower to guard their own lines of communications, making a systematic “genocide” against the majority Kosovo Albanians a stretch by any means (Judah, 2000). None of these realities entered into the decision making of United States foreign policy planners (Sreckovic, 2010). By April of 1998, Rugova’s LDK party was further sidelined with waning support for passive resistance and the embracing of violence. Albania was calling for NATO troops to deploy in Albania to contain the conflict at its border with Kosovo, and the UN Human Rights Commission condemned Serbian repression in Kosovo due to the increasing amount of civilian casualties accompanying KLA and FRY battles (Weller, 2008).

The summer of 1998 was marked with military setbacks for the KLA when efforts to take over the small town of Orahovac met heavy resistance from federal police and Army units, eliminating the KLA positions and forcing a withdrawal of KLA forces to Albania proper (Judah, 2000; Sreckovic, 2010; Weller, 2008). The fighting throughout the summer displaced Albanians and Serbians alike, and by August 200,000 persons – ironically many of them ethnic Serb civilians – indicated a humanitarian crisis that fueled international outrage against Yugoslavia (Judah 2000). In August, KLA strongholds in Likovac, Junik and Glodjane had fallen to federal police and military forces, the KLA issued a statement reaffirming their resolve to fight, and Rugova’s August 13 negotiating team featured a notable absence of KLA representatives (Weller, 2008). NATO began

operations in neighboring Albania days later and the UN Security council issued a call for a ceasefire that went unheeded by both the FRY and the KLA (UN, 1998).

By October of 1998, the Clinton administration directed Richard Holbrooke and General Clark to issue an ultimatum to Milosevic demanding a stop to all counter-guerilla operations in Kosovo and a withdrawal of all security forces from parts of Kosovo or face aerial bombardment (Judah, 2000). The U.S. made no such demand of the KLA to stop its violence, a move that indicated an intention to ally itself with a U.S. designated 'terrorist organization.' Yugoslavia's initial acquiescence to withdraw troops became untenable due to continued KLA offensive operations against Serb civilians. The KLA's increased attacks were noted by UN monitors in Kosovo, and U.S. intelligence assessments which attributed the actions as intended to encourage NATO support of secession in Kosovo (Judah, 2000; Sreckovic, 2010). The legality of such a move was questionable at the time, as Russia had announced its intention to veto any UN resolutions authorizing use of force in Yugoslavia. The pressure was still on for action, however, as the number of displaced persons and civilian casualties in Kosovo continued to increase with the ongoing fighting.

One of the many firefights between Yugoslav security forces and KLA rebels proved a turning point for the role of NATO in Kosovo in January of 1999. Allegations of a Serbian massacre of 45 civilians in a small village named Račak was described by U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright as the event that galvanized NATO military action (Bissett, 2003) and was used by NATO to justify bombing. The KLA and U.S. Diplomat William Walker allege that the Serbian police unit entered the village unopposed and indiscriminately massacred unarmed civilians. This version of events

contrasted with images from an Associated Press crew that was covering the Serbian police engaged in a firefight with KLA rebels (Bissett, 2003; Cook, 1999). The story of the massacre, stoking outrage throughout the U.S., was immediately challenged by *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*. That France's two largest and most respected newspapers publically challenged Walker's report was completely ignored in the mainstream U.S. press. German reporters working for *Zeitung* wrote that the autopsy reports showed no evidence of execution and that the victims appeared to have been killed in combat. Finnish and Belarusian forensic experts were unable to verify that a massacre took place at all in Račak. Retired German Brigadier General Heinz Loquai (2000) accuses the German Defense Ministry with manufacturing the evidence to support the war effort. Wolfgram (2008) lays down a very convincing argument raising doubts as to the legitimacy of evidence linking the massacre to an alleged planned Serbian offensive, pointing out the fabricated nature of 'authentic' maps used as proof that Račak was part of a planned Serbian policy of ethnic cleansing, the total lack of any of any evidence related to Operation Horseshoe being admitted for Milosevic's trial despite the use of it as a basis for intervention, and a British House of Commons report (2000) stating explicitly that no such plan existed BEFORE the NATO offensive (debunking NATO claims to be acting in reaction to ethnic cleansing). The challenges and revelations were irrelevant. The headline is what matters. NATO had its Gulf of Tonkin incident, and war was inevitable.

Sreckovic (2010) argues that the United States made preserving its 'gains' in Bosnia - and a response to the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo - an issue of "credibility" for the U.S. and NATO, prompting policy decisions that contributed to the ongoing crisis

in Kosovo and the debacle of the Rambouillet conference near Paris in February 1999 (see also Nation, 2003; Der Derian, 2009). Others have argued that Rambouillet was a failed attempt by the ‘international community’ to do the right thing and stop a potential genocide in Europe (Hentea, 2006; Weller, 2008). Still others point to the results of the conference as self-evident, one where Rambouillet was successful at legitimizing military intervention, paving the way for secession and gaining a foot in the door for the eastern expansion of NATO (Gervasi, 1996; Johnstone, 2002). Regardless of the motivations and ramifications, Rambouillet was set to fail before it even began. As Pilger (July 12, 1999) notes, “Few now doubt that the Rambouillet talks were a set-up, used to ‘deliberately set the bar higher than the Serbs could accept.’ The terms that the Serbs accepted in June were virtually the same as those they themselves offered before the bombings began.”

Chapter 7, Appendix B of the Rambouillet accords, titled "Status of Multi-National Military Implementation Force," granted NATO absolute and unaccountable power throughout not only Kosovo, but the entire Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Clauses written into the agreement stipulated that NATO personnel (including “military, civilian, and contractor personnel assigned or attached to or employed by NATO, including the military, civilian, and contractor personnel from non-NATO states participating in the Operation”) could travel unrestricted throughout the FRY, “[a]t all entry and exit points to/from the FRY,” enjoy “free and unrestricted access throughout the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia” and be immune from “jurisdiction in respect of any civil, administrative, criminal, or disciplinary offenses which may be committed by them in the FRY.” The terms also stipulated that FRY would be held accountable for providing “free of cost, such public facilities as NATO shall require to prepare for and execute the

Operation” and that NATO “personnel shall be immune from claims of any sort which arise out of activities in pursuance of the operation” (USDOS, 2001). This ultimatum of occupation ironically mirrored the 1914 Austro-Hungarian demands, which were the justification used for declaring war on Serbia despite its concession to the demands apart from a few minor addendum clauses. There was no room for negotiation in any case, and war was already a forgone conclusion.

It is noteworthy that the Rambouillet accords also announced the presence of two themes which would come to represent the truth at the heart of the conflict much more honestly than the headlines and speeches proffered: the importance of propaganda to the war effort and the role of economics in motivating the military intervention. The demands factored in the importance of control over representation of the conflict and insisted that the FRY “shall, upon simple request, grant all telecommunications services, including broadcast services, needed for [the occupation], as determined by NATO.” These would be provided free of cost by Yugoslavia. Chapter 4a, Article I of the agreement, titled “Economic Issues” also outlined the ideological environment wherein the occupation would occur, stipulating that “[t]he economy of Kosovo shall function in accordance with free market principles” (USDOS, 2001).

The mixed KLA-LDK delegation is noteworthy at Rambouillet because it clearly indicated who was now calling the shots in the Kosovo secessionist movement. The KLA’s Hashim Thaci (now Kosovo’s Prime Minister) dictated the shots rather than Rugova’s LDK, and the delegation initially rejected the proposed agreement at Rambouillet because it did not immediately create an independent republic of Kosovo. The delegation eventually signed-on after Holbrooke threatened to postpone NATO air

strikes. The conference was a success for NATO and for the KLA. Although the agreement lacked any sense of impartiality – violating Yugoslavia’s sovereignty and unilaterally taking territory from a sovereign state in a manner contrary to international law, as well as reclassifying the KLA from a ‘terrorist organization’ to the status of ‘freedom fighters’ – the Rambouillet process set a new benchmark for American coercive diplomacy by using the NATO alliance for illegal political and economic gain, and without the support of the United Nations (Gibbs, 2009; Nation, 2003). While the resulting military campaign significantly contributed to long-term instability in the Balkans, supported an armed and criminal secessionist movement with little regard for human rights and attacked a sovereign nation, it represented nothing novel in the long history of American foreign policy (demonstrated by overt and covert actions in Central America and Southeast Asia). It was, however, a significant redefinition and redirection of the NATO alliance representing a more aggressive Western expansion in the geopolitical arena.

Reaction in the press to Rambouillet was marked by extremes. A vocal majority of journalists, editorials and military policy advocates decried Yugoslav intransigence and intent on brutality. Others noted the letter of the agreement as completely unworkable after a copy of it was printed in *Le Monde Diplomatique*. John Pilger’s reaction is reflective of those who bothered to read the agreement:

Nothing like this ultimatum has been put to a modern, sovereign European state. Of all the Hitler and Nazi analogies that have peppered the west's propaganda, one is never mentioned - Hitler's proposal in 1938 to the British prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, that Germany occupy Czechoslovakia because ethnic

Germans there had been “tortured”, “forced to flee the country” and “prevented from realising the right of nations to self-determination.” As a cover for German expansion, Hitler was laying the basis for a “humanitarian intervention”, whose fraudulence was no greater than Nato's cover for its own worldwide expansion. (Pilger, May 17, 1999)

NATO’s air war against Yugoslavia, as noted, was unsanctioned by international law and received limited support outside of the U.S., Germany and the U.K. *The Economist* reported that “under existing international law, Yugoslav crimes do not make the bombing legal. According to the UN’s charter, the use of force is allowed in only two circumstances: self-defense against a direct attack and in carrying out a specific mandate by the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security” (1999). This precedent is significant and suggests that international consensus and the United Nations are less relevant than ever in a geopolitical order that asserts the age-old might-makes-right. The UN Security Council did not specifically authorize the use of force against Yugoslavia (any such resolution being under serious threat of veto by Russia and China). The flagrant violation of the UN charter as well as NATO’s 1949 founding treaty, binding the organization to acting within the UN charter except in the case of an armed attack against a NATO member state, went largely unchallenged in the U.S. legislature and British parliament.

Yugoslavia played a role in its own downfall in Kosovo. Politically, Milosevic’s lack of long-term perspective, misunderstanding of the importance of international public opinion and his focus on staying in power all became part of the trap he walked into at Rambouillet. Yugoslav military leaders overestimated their air-defense capabilities and

placed too much confidence on their ability to defend against a NATO ground invasion that never came (Gibbs, 2009). On March 24, 1999, NATO initiated air strikes against Yugoslav military targets in Kosovo and around Belgrade before expanding their campaign to the entire country and civilian infrastructure targets over the course of 78 days of bombing. The bombings failed to produce any tangible result on Yugoslavia's military capability despite the widening of acceptable targets from military to dual use, to civilian targets (Sreckovic, 2010). However, the attacks carved out a *de facto* republic for Kosovo's Albanians under NATO control and heightened anti-Milosevic political sentiment leading to the fall of Milosevic from Serbia's political scene following elections in September 2000 and a popular uprising that upheld the results of that election. Milosevic was arrested by the Serb authorities in 2001 and extradited to the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague, where he died in March 2006 while standing trial.

NATO commended its success at destroying the military capability of the enemy. According to *The Guardian*, NATO claimed to have destroyed more than a quarter of the country's 300 tanks operating in Kosovo and a third of its 500 heavy guns, but when the war was over, NATO increased their hit list to 93 tanks and 400 guns (Knightley, 2006). *Jane's Defense Weekly*, however, said that the number was likely much lower (as quoted in Knightley).

Unfortunately, the Kosovo crisis did not end with the NATO bombardment, the withdrawal of Yugoslav military and police forces or the autonomy and soon-to-be independence of Kosovo. The humanitarian crisis continued even as NATO's KFOR troops moved into Kosovo with KLA criminal activities and revenge killings against the

ethnic Serbian population (ICJ, 2008). Serb and Roma civilians were killed, wounded, and forcibly expelled into Serbia as refugees while many others simply disappeared. The only notable ethnic Serb enclave remaining after the NATO action remains Mitrovica, which neighbors Serbia and still requires protection by KFOR troops. Serb and Roma homes and properties were systematically looted and burned, and the Serbian government reports that over 200,000 non-Albanian people (the majority Serbs) fled Kosovo after June 10, 1999 (ICJ). The International Court of Justice report also notes that in “1999 alone more than 70 churches and monasteries were plundered, desecrated or completely destroyed” and that presently “the most important medieval monasteries, such as Patriarchate of Pec, Visoki Decani and Gracanica depend upon continuous KFOR protection.” (ICJ, 2008, 131-132). Neighboring countries had difficulty grappling with the influx of refugees from the Kosovo area, and the NATO bombing of transportation infrastructure severely degraded economic activities in a number of Balkan countries (Dempsey, 2000). The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) failed to substantially improve the human rights situation of minority ethnic Serbs, and the conflict continued to spread through KLA-sponsored low-intensity guerilla fighting by ethnic Albanians in the Serbian province of Presevo (Gall, 2000). At times, KFOR troops tasked with interdicting the flow of arms and fighters from Kosovo to Presevo were openly attacked by KLA members and Serb civilian deaths continued in Serbia (Gibbs, 2009; Gordon, 2001a). Unable to stop the movement of KLA fighters into Serbia, NATO allowed Serbian regular army units to operate in the Presevo buffer zone (BBC, 2001a). At that time the KLA was also operating within the Republic of Macedonia, launching an offensive for Albanian separatism in the mountains surrounding

Tetovo in March 2001 (Erlanger, 2001a; Erlanger, 2001b). The U.S. and EU negotiated an end to the fighting with the Ochrid Accords in August of that year, stationing peacekeeping forces in Macedonia to supervise a “partial” disarmament of the KLA (BBC, 2001b). A *New York Times* report noted that the KLA were treated with kid gloves by the U.S. military forces on the ground, in one instance evacuating rebels from the village of Aracinovo in July while it was under siege by Macedonian forces (Gordon, 2001b). The international community was increasingly realizing the extent of Kosovo’s role in the heroin, weapons and human trafficking operated by extended Albanian family crime organizations operating under UNMIK’s nose (Priest, 2004).

The NATO campaign in Kosovo demonstrated the extent to which ‘mediatization’ saturates modern conflict. To shamelessly adulterate Marshall McLuhan: for NATO *the medium is the weapon*. Propaganda played an integral role in how NATO forces sold military engagement in the Balkans. The sheer scale of propaganda efforts in the conflict prompted John Pilger to note that, in his more than three decades of experience, he had never seen anything that compared with “the sheer intensity of this propaganda dressed as journalism” (July 12, 1999). Maintaining control of the what Ignatieff (2002) calls the *moral vocabulary* proved instrumental in efforts to frame NATO airstrikes using explicit Holocaust themes, such as Clinton’s (1999) statement that “Sarajevo, the capital of neighboring Bosnia, is where World War I began. World War II and the Holocaust engulfed this region.” He went on to make closer connections saying, “This was genocide in the heart of Europe, not in 1945 but in 1995, not in some grainy newsreel from our parents’ and grandparents’ time, but in our own time, testing our humanity and resolve” (Clinton, 1999). The discourse was powerful and ubiquitous. As Colonel P.J. Crowley,

U.S. National Security Council spokesman stated at the time, “[y]ou have to plan your media strategy with as much attention as you plan your military strategy” (as cited in Knightley, 2004).

The Holocaust discourse got the job done, even if news reports were emerging casting significant doubt on claims that genocide was occurring in Kosovo. *The Progressive Review* reported that internal documents written in the months before the bombing at Germany’s Foreign Office noted that “No cases of chronic malnutrition or insufficient medical treatment among refugees are known and significant homelessness has not been observed... Even in Kosovo an explicit political persecution linked to ethnicity is not verifiable” and the unequivocal “Ethnic Albanians in Kosovo have neither been, nor are now, exposed to regional or countrywide group persecution in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia” (1999). *El Pais* reported that Spanish forensic investigators in Kosovo were told they were in the worst hit area and to expect to perform thousands of autopsies, but only 187 bodies were found buried in individual (not mass) graves and showed no signs of torture (Ordaz, 1999). Whether the rhetoric proves a complete fabrication or is ultimately proven true, the accusations were ubiquitous in their distribution. Scholars have noted that throughout the Balkan wars Western labels of ‘the Serbs’ became symbolic of a racism without race, situated in the progressive language of human rights and labeling the enemy as residing in a Balkan geography that has become an ‘Other’ Europe, thereby justifying U.S. imperial sovereignty through racializing discourse about the Balkans (Atanasoski, 2007; Longinović, 2002; Todorova, 1997). Imperialism, as noted by Ignatieff (2003), has become a necessary state for the spread of democracy under the guide of humanitarianism.

The weaponized media did not just fire constant volleys of genocide and democratic rhetoric, it also was used to legitimize the physical destruction of deviant narratives emerging from Yugoslav media showing civilian targets in Serbia hit by NATO bombs and “invisible” stealth aircraft shot down by Serb air defense. Atanasoski (2007) contends that NATO’s establishment of Western journalism as an ideal branded Yugoslav media as a propaganda tool and anything it reported as suspect. On April 23, 1999, NATO bombed RTS. This action coincided with NATO’s agenda of forcing a ‘free and independent press’ in Yugoslavia by way of claiming that Radio Televizija Srbije (RTS) was “spreading hatred and creating this political environment of repression” (CNN, 1999) and targeting it with air attacks. NATO military spokesman Col. Konrad Freytag reiterated in the same press briefing that “Radio Television Serbia, despite the appearance, is an instrument of war. It has nothing to do with journalism as you or I would recognize that” (CNN).

By no means was Serbian media the only target in NATO’s response to unfavorable media reports. NATO also attacked the Chinese embassy housing Chinese national journalists whose reports were highly critical of NATO actions as well as the Indian embassy, which had complained that the campaign violated international law (Knightley, 2006). Both bombings were explained as accidental, but the Chinese embassy was always well marked on maps, the only building in the area and never occupied for any other purpose (completely discrediting NATO claims of old maps and collateral damage). The Indian embassy was also a hard case to explain, as the ambassador had provided the address to NATO after the first “accidental” attack on the Chinese embassy.

Media was also weaponized in a more direct and deadly way by NATO in Yugoslavia. When NATO bombed the RTS building in Belgrade, it had already tipped off the CNN team operating in Belgrade two days prior that the station was a target (Knightley, 2006). The next day, Serbian information minister Aleksander Vucic was contacted to appear on CNN's *Larry King* show, and Vucic was told to arrive at the make-up room at RTS at 2 a.m. for the telelink at 2:30. At six minutes past the hour, NATO missiles hit the make-up room and killed the make-up woman. Vucic, who was running late, was driving up as he watched the missiles hit (Knightley). The extent to which CNN was operationalized for an assassination remains unknown.

President Bill Clinton said, during his last night in office, that "We achieve our aims by defending our values and leading the forces of freedom and peace..." (2001). In NATO's air campaign against Yugoslavia, those aims are estimated at costing NATO £31.6 billion and zero casualties, but it made Yugoslavia into the poorest country in Europe, resulting in 600 Serbian military and 2,600 civilians killed, as well as a reported 33 hospitals and 340 schools hit by NATO bombs (Knightley, 2006).

Research Questions

Making sense of the power residing in mainstream media's complex interconnection with military conflict requires a broader understanding than what current theoretical models consider. Prevailing frameworks in communication scholarship constrain critical perspectives to traditional ideas of media control and effects models. These ideas, while worthy and insightful on their own, do not adequately take into account media as a weapon. Media is not just a battleground on which discursive battles are fought, but it is a tool possessing substantial power to impact military conflict when

weaponized and as such, it has far reaching ramifications. How far reaching these implications are remains a significant question. Are the mainstream media's reports on military conflict the first and last draft of history? Scholarship purports to offer context and perspective on these events far beyond that available in initial media reports. Does scholarship fulfill this promise or does it merely build upon assumptions grounded in journalistic coverage of war? How much are the deep-level causes of war investigated and critiqued in both the media reports on military conflict and the cultural record produced by scholarship, and to what degree do these historical records identify the calculated economic motivations for war?

These fundamental questions direct this dissertation project. They help us move beyond the assumptions held regarding the relative influence media representations have on public willingness to endorse conflict, and identify the power and endurance of media to sculpt mainstream representations of war in the public consciousness. In this dissertation, I use a grounded theory approach to compare military intervention discourses in a three-part study, examining media and scholarship discourse to identify emerging themes and relationships within the various discourses studied.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This dissertation examines the news coverage and scholarship regarding the 1999 NATO military intervention in the former Yugoslavia within the institutional, economic and political context wherein it is authored. Grounded theory provides multiple approaches to understanding media discourses which allow for elasticity in formulating a research project that enables an adequate understanding of the themes and relationships influencing those discourses. The phrase, "grounded theory," refers to theory developed inductively from a body of data rather than deductively from a previously selected theory. Grounded theory is explicitly emergent, and the aim of grounded theory analysis is to discover the theory implicit in the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The idea is that a thorough grounded theory analysis will result in a theory fitting at least one dataset perfectly, finding a theory that accounts for the research situation as it is. The rigor of grounded theory analysis rests in the method's responsiveness to the research situation, the continuous search for disconfirming evidence of emerging theory, and the final form of the theory which fits the situation and enables a better sense-making of that situation.

The grounded theory approach used in this study takes a qualitative sensitivity to meaning but offers a more rigorous level of transparency in mapping the results of a qualitative analysis. Grounded theory research should help the reader assess the components of the research process (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Questions that are appropriate for guiding the analysis process include: On what grounds was the original sample selected?; What major categories emerged?; What were some of the events, incidents, etc... that indicated some of these major categories?; On the basis of what

categories did theoretical sampling proceed?; How did theoretical formulation guide data collection?; After theoretical sampling, how representative did these categories prove to be?; On what grounds were relations among categories formulated and tested?; How were discrepancies accounted for?; How/why was a core category selected?; And on what grounds were the final analytic decisions made? Transparency is designed into the grounded theory process and constitutes a core strength in assessing the adequacy of this approach.

This grounded theory analysis shares some similarities with a constructivist approach to media framing analysis, but these similarities can be misleading because grounded theory operates from different assumptions and takes a more expansive scope in data analysis. This grounded theory analysis of media and scholarly texts assumes that a comparison of texts can identify emerging issues emphasized and omitted by the various narratives examined, with the critical choices made in framing the choices emerging as well as revealing ideologies within the texts. A constructionist framing approach considers journalists as creators of interpretative story constructions, contributing to the creation of media frames potentially biased toward the views of sources (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989), an assumption particularly relevant to an analysis of war reporting in the media (as well as scholarly texts covering wars) considering the disproportionate reliance by reporters on military sources in constructing their reports (for an example, see Reese & Buckalew, 1994). The examination of news media texts as socially constructed held by the constructionist framing approach, and the concern with how frames are embedded in media content as well as to what end, also represent themes of interest to this grounded theory analysis. However, this analysis moves beyond the

constructionist approach by also examining the role of dominant source hegemony influencing the privileging and selection of sources, as ‘preferred readings’ are inscribed within texts (Hall, 1980) which establish boundaries of interpretation through the influences of systemic, institutional, economic, and political pressures.

This chapter begins by asserting the appropriateness of grounded theory analysis in discovering emerging themes of discourse in media and scholarly texts discussing NATO involvement in the former Yugoslavia, which in turn enables the development of theory from embedded discourses. The chapter then charts the design of this study as well as the process by which themes and relationships are identified, defined and analyzed.

Analyzing Data Using Grounded Theory

The purpose of using a grounded theory approach is to develop (or discover - depending upon a researcher’s ontological assumptions) a theory that endures, remains relevant to the research area, is understandable to those studied and useful to them in guiding action, fits the social context, and effectively takes into account the relationships between concepts that emerge (Boychuk-Duchscher & Morgan, 2004). The Grounded Theory Method is a qualitative approach to inquiry that constructs theory systematically, inductively and comparatively (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Developed by Glaser and Strauss, the method is used to construct theory from a qualitative analysis of data (1967, 1978, 1999, 2005) in which data collection and analyses occur simultaneously and inform each other. This process is accomplished analyzing emergent themes and comparative methods. By moving back and forth between increasingly more focused data and successively more abstract categorizations, abstract conceptualizations emerge and

relationships between them can be described in a project of theory building. The approach makes the process of qualitative inquiry observable and (arguably) replicable.

The primary principles of grounded theory revolve around the relationship between theory and data. Grounded theory inductively develops theory from data, moving the analysis from the specific to the abstract in order to present the processes of conceptual inquiry (Glaser, 1999, 2005), “unseed[ing] the quantitative paradigm as the only legitimate approach to research” (Cheseboro & Borisoff, 2007, p. 10). The method is based on conceptualizations, categorizations and propositions/hypotheses, with concepts being the central element of analysis (developing theory from the conceptualization of data). Scholarship using grounded theory bases analytic decisions on the data itself, developing categories of codes which link to successively more abstract concepts toward the development of theory supported by empirical data analysis. In short, grounded theory builds from the ground up rather than testing a theory deductively (Charmaz, 2006).

Clarke (2005) situates the philosophical lineage of grounded theory in the constructivist paradigm moving toward post-modernism, labeling scholars who continue to apply a post-positivist bent as archaic holdovers (for an example of such an approach to grounded theory see Dutta-Bergman, 2005). It is important to note, however, that Glaser argued the method applies to quantitative research just as easily as qualitative research (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007) and applications of post-positivist cannons to grounded theory are not uncommon in the field. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) describe the academic environment where grounded theory emerged as a period of change in communication research, and situate Glaser and Strauss’ combination of open-ended

interviews with participant observation as occurring during the initial flowering of qualitative research. Seaman (2008) notes that Strauss and Corbin (1998) departed from Glaser's positivist perspective by stating that grounded theory was constructed rather than discovered, marking an explicit turn from objectivism toward constructivism. Critics site this range of perspectives as indicative of ontological ambivalence (Mills, Bonner & Francis, 2006). This historical contextualization may help explain the multiplicity of paradigms within which elements of grounded theory research are attempted.

Charmaz (2000) echoes Clarke's assertion that the most recent grounded theory perspective has been constructivist, a reflection of scholarly arguments that such an approach is better suited due to its increased appreciation of context in which the subjects of research are situated (Mills et al., 2006). Despite the debate over which philosophical paradigm is best suited for grounded theory, Charmaz (2000) points out that the traditional objectivist perspective as well as that of emerging interpretive both share key characteristics. These characteristics include: establishing close relationships between observed behaviors and how characterizations of them are understood by subjects; interpreting behaviors in relation to their locality; inductively identifying commonalities present in behaviors; choosing a procedure for inquiry best suited to the nature of the research environment; continued adjusting of method as analysis progresses; and linking behaviors to thick description.

The constructivist awareness of context is of pressing concern to scholars of critical and/or cultural inquiry (Seaman, 2008). However, despite this commensurability, grounded theory is lacking in specific procedures for adequately integrating them in the methodology. While Charmaz (2000) might suggest that grounded theory can be used as

“flexible, heuristic strategies” (p. 510) to guide research, she offers little in the way of advice for addressing culture or issues of hegemony. Hence this inquiry explores these complications and develops procedures which expand the analysis of context by using a wider range of data types to take advantage of the strengths of grounded theory analysis.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) offer that theory is always evolving and necessitates concurrent collection, coding, and analysis for the generation of theory. Using a grounded theory approach, I examine political economy data and mediated discourse to allow the generation of theory to be guided by emerging themes. Grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is utilized in order to build theory based on interconnections between data and allow multiple filtered examinations of various data connections to facilitate the understanding of complex interconnections guiding the study. For this reason, it is important to implement an appropriate method of analysis that can adequately enable an intensive process of conceptualizing and re-conceptualizing data, categories and themes.

Preparation for this grounded theory dissertation study involves a significant amount of planning before the collection of data begins. Glaser (1998) clarifies the first step in grounded theory as entering “the substantive field for research without knowing the problem” (p. 122), putting aside (for a while) personal experiences and the literature on the subject to enable an approach that privileges no preconceived interest. This does not mean that a researcher should not familiarize himself/herself with existing literature. Indeed, by reading the existing literature, which is summarized in the second chapter, I have identified significant gaps in the existing body of knowledge related to this study. However, it is important that a grounded theory researcher not privilege an existing

theoretical lens because the data analyzed may suggest a superior theory for understanding a communication event. Preconceived interests could restrict the sensitivity of the researcher and render useless the openness to communication problems in their entirety, one of the defining characteristics of grounded theory. The imposition of researcher preconceptions is a danger throughout the research process, and thus, it needs to be taken into account when phrasing the qualitative research parameters.

The next step is one of joint data collection and analysis, and it is part of a recurring dynamic process throughout the grounded theory approach. Giske and Artinian (2007) assert that the credibility of a grounded theory study is dependent upon the ways in which data are collected, analyzed and developed. The transparent reporting of this part of the research is necessary for making the process of qualitative inquiry observable and allows readers to more fully understand the author's position in their methodological approach. Primary data is collected qualitatively by casting a wide net in order to catch the contextualized data as it relates to the environment wherein it is found, the situation where it is taking place and the positionality of the subjects involved in the communication being analyzed. Corbin and Strauss (2008) explain that the performance of data analysis at this juncture involves breaking apart the substance of the data into its various component categories, and then identifying the properties and dimensions existing within those components. The awareness acquired of these components and their properties/dimensions allows inferences to be made regarding the meaning of the data.

The continual interplay between the collection and analysis of data is conducted with the aim of generating preliminary theories from the themes emerging during analysis. To this end, Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparative method is used to

classify data and compare the data to other instances to determine if they are conceptually similar and may be further developed together. Through this method, the researcher is able to differentiate one theme from another and ascertain whether properties and dimension identified are specific to a theme. Conceptual saturation results once data is compared and developed so that no new concepts or relationships emerge and variations in dimensions/properties are fully accounted for (Glaser, 2001). Continued collection of data is guided by emergent theory using Glaser and Strauss' (1967) process of theoretical sampling to ensure the saturation of categories and the relationships between them. The process is dynamic, however, and the constant comparison and theoretical sampling repeat throughout the data collection and analysis to ensure that the developing theory is driven by the emerging themes.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) assert the importance of theoretical sensitivity in conceptualizing theory from data. By “going sensitive” (Glaser 1998, p. 123), the researcher remains open to emerging themes from the data while still being stimulated by his/her knowledge of the literature on the subject (Glaser, 1978; 2005). This sensitivity both guides and is guided by the process of coding. Coding is the processes of extracting concepts from raw data and developing them by virtue of their dimensions and properties (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Coding is simultaneously done openly (delineating concepts into blocks of raw data) and axially (relating concepts and categories to each other) (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Selective coding follows, in which coding is limited to those variables related to core categories (Glaser, 1978). Morse and Field (1995) describe data analysis as a process of conjecture, verification, correction, modification, suggestion and defense. This especially holds true in grounded theory analysis. Once saturation of data

occurs and coding identifies an emergent theme that suggests a substantive theory, a review of literature should be used to compare and contrast findings with other studies in the field in order to identify opportunities to further extend theory.

Grounded theory research provides the most appropriate method for examining data from discursive texts within the complex interconnected contexts of the political economy of media and scholarly texts, allowing for additional understandings of interrelatedness toward the generation of theory. In this way, it is unique. The intense immersion in context and data enables a distinctive epistemological understanding that allows formal theory to emerge from the complexities of the communication event studied. Grounded theory is distinct in that it is a holistic *experiencing* of inductive inquiry that goes well beyond other methods of research in the participation of the researcher as an accessory involved in a creative generation of theory from emergent themes in situated data.

While grounded theory is useful in understanding discourses and changing communication contexts, the field of communication studies has often neglected or has appeared ill-equipped to grasp the necessity of such a holistic approach to research. An informal observation of conference presentations and published communication research in recent years has led me to conclude that too much effort in the academy is spent researching ever-narrowing niche topics of little interest beyond sub-divisions in the academy. Specifically, there is a disturbing lack of communication research seeking to help society understand and come to grips with massive changes in political, economic, technological and social structures impacting social well-being. The interconnected nature of media institutions, popular discourse and lived experiences presents a tangled

web of influences that more traditional methods of analysis are ill-equipped to make sense of. Grounded theory offers a crucial ability to develop relevant and enduring new theories – revising antiquated understandings of communication events and holistically contextualizing narratives – using frameworks of understanding that emerge from the data itself.

Recent related grounded theory research

Grounded theory research has proven useful in recent studies that seek answers to similarly complex intersections of culture, hegemony, political economy and discourse. Zdravkovic (2006) used ethnographic methods in combination with grounded theory and narrative analysis to explore how and why victim identities are produced in a community of Bosnian Serb refugees in Salt Lake City, Utah. Her grounded theory study explored how articulations of the refugee experience contested and countered the internationally accepted version of their ethnic group being the victimizer and constructed a counter-identity of a marginalized community. My study takes Zdravkovic's application of grounded theory analysis and applies it to a spectrum of media and scholarship discourses to answer broader questions of politics, hegemony, perception and historicity.

Recent use of grounded theory in the study of media coverage has highlighted the usefulness of the perspective for identifying framing themes. Dutta-Bergman (2005) used a grounded theory analysis of the coverage of Operation Iraqi Freedom to explore how frames presented in U.S. war coverage acted as justifications of the war. The grounded theory analysis is followed by a quantitative content analysis to document the frequencies of occurrence of the frames, but this additional inquiry seems a gratuitous capitulation to positivist critics. This use of grounded theory provides a procedural starting point from

which studies of media texts could be developed, although the objectivist philosophical approach is awkward and incommensurable with my own.

Yehya and Dutta (2010) have recently used in-depth interviews and informal conversations to develop an understanding of the intersections of religion and health meanings and to identify themes of competing tensions found therein. They used these themes as the backdrop for playing out competing tensions between the local and the global in the interpretation of meaning. My own study can utilize this application of grounded theory to inform an analysis of similarities and differences in meanings produced in news representations and scholarly treatments of the 1999 NATO intervention in (the former) Yugoslavia.

McNamee, Peterson and Pena (2010) provide a grounded theory analysis with the explicit goal of advancing theory building. The study that analyzes messages on hate group websites identifies prominent themes that allow the researchers to advance a substantive grounded theory of online hate group communication and explore the potential of these themes to reinforce identity. The procedural steps help guide analytical movement toward the building of theory, but the analysis seems a bit light in categorizations for a convincing claim of saturation. My own research considers various ways of conceptualizing analytical mapping to achieve a more satisfying degree of saturation.

Study Design and Procedures

To understand the power of a weaponized media, it is important to ascertain the endurance of official frames of understanding propagandized through the mainstream press. With this goal in mind, it is important to note official and contradictory discourses

within mainstream media texts leading to and during the March 24 – June 10, 1999, NATO military intervention, thus establishing the relationship between mainstream media and officialdom in co-presenting the intervention scenario. The media discourse facet examines how three newspapers (the *New York Times* and the *The Times* (of London)) and one wire service (Associated Press) covered the NATO military intervention in the former Yugoslavia. Additionally, this study follows up on the concepts, themes and relationships emerging from media coverage and examines contemporary scholarly discourse in the communication and political science disciplines to learn how high profile works in these disciplines treat the same events. This study also brings these two bodies of discourse together, examining the relationships between initial media coverage and subsequent scholarship related to NATO military action in the former Yugoslavia.

Media has been attributed as producing the “first draft” of history and, as we’ve seen in many of the studies noted earlier in the literature review, this has been an issue noted by a number of media researchers in our field. However, the longevity of that power to define public perception is the central focus of this study. How enduring that first draft is – whether or not the first draft is the final draft – is where this dissertation offers significant new knowledge to the understanding of media discourses and war. For this reason, we turn to academic treatises on the subject because scholarship continues to assert itself as the official chronicler of history despite the popular culture narratives manufactured by mass media. To this end, this study also examines high profile scholarship describing/explaining the intervention in the communication, historical and political science disciplines.

News media analysis

Two newspapers and one news agency have been selected for analysis in the media portion of this dissertation research. The newspapers – the *New York Times* and *The Times* (of London) – are used due to their similarities in prominence and respective reputations in both the U.S. and U.K. newspaper markets. The Associated Press is also used due to the extensive and increasing influence of agencies in the global wholesale news market at a time of increasing media concentration. News agencies set the agenda, filtering which international news stories many news outlets have to choose from (Boyd-Barrett, 1980; Boyd-Barrett & Tantanen, 1998; Boyd-Barrett and Thusssu, 1992; and Paterson, 2006). Global news agencies have become crucial to the dissemination of international news due to their agenda-setting influence on other media, but also because they dominated the online news market during the NATO war in Kosovo.

The initial portion of this study focuses on newspaper coverage (as opposed to the ubiquitous cable television news format) because daily print news media enables a wider and more rigorous examination into how the story of NATO intervention in Kosovo was presented to the public, and because many policy makers and media commentators utilized newspapers for understanding international events at a time when television coverage was limited by largely repetitive “parachute journalism” – well-briefed by policy makers – that made up the majority of 24-hour television news reports. While scholars have asserted that the rise of 24-hour cable television news, multinational media conglomerates and the so-called “CNN effect” have had a significant influence on upsetting the traditional media-to-power relationship (Annis, 1991; Brown, 2003; Herrera, 2002; Nye, 1999; Rothkopf, 1999; Shapiro, 1999; Volkmer, 1999), the

broadcast media has proven just as dependent (or more so) on press briefings to fill the constant deadline hunger for updates and provide policy makers near *verbatim* and highly repetitive reproductions of the official line (Carruthers, 2000; Robinson, 2004; Thussu, 2000b, 2003). In the media marketplace, news print media continues to be the dominant force in influencing the public, as a 2009 PEW study showcases in findings that the public considers newspapers a primary source for national and international news. With this in mind, this study focuses on newspaper and news agency reports when examining media reports related to the subject of this study.

This study uses the text of the news stories included in each article examined as a focus of analysis. Van Dijk (1988) has argued that the headline and lead function to express major topics of a text and, while a study limited to news headlines and the lead paragraph of a text might allow for an increased breadth of analysis, this study focuses on a deeper level of analysis of texts by investigating their entirety. Additionally, the articles are examined within the overall political and economic context in which they are situated to add scope and depth to our understanding of the meaning created by the news reports. While many reports were accompanied by photographic images, this study does not attempt a visual analysis due to the complications of contradictions between imagery and content often encountered as well as the controversy surrounding the ‘iconic pornography’ noted in many of the most iconic images of the conflict (Handke, 2000) and the politics of accompanying maps (Vujakovic, 1999). A thorough examination of images and cartographical representations deserves a separate scholarly analysis. By focusing on a contextualized textual analysis of news reports, this study seeks to explore the crafting of news representations of military conflict influencing how the public

perceives and interprets events. This study examines discursive devices used to represent the use of NATO as a military intervention in the Kosovo conflict. As Iyengar (1991) asserts, media has the power to establish judgments of guilt or innocence in the eyes of the public which makes the analysis of media discourse a study in the power of words to define destiny.

The newspaper and news agency coverage being analyzed is limited specifically to NATO intervention in Kosovo for reasons of feasibility and the combination of media and scholarship analysis in this study, despite a continuation of representations and policy positions dating as far back as Croatia's Operation Storm in coordination with U.S. security contractors in August of 1991. The media discourse analysis in this study examines three separate events which played significant and controversial roles in the justification of military intervention: the reported massacre at Račak on January 15, 1999; the two-part Rambouillet Agreement of February 19, 1999 and Rambouillet Accord of March 18, 1999; and the NATO bombardment which began on March 24, 1999 and lasted until June 10, 1999. News reports of these events are analyzed in each of the selected media sources over a period of time beginning the day before each event to one week after the event. The decision to analyze eight days of coverage for each event is to enable a suitably in-depth analysis of the nature of the stories without drowning in the subsequent repetition of coverage. The time frame for each article is based on the date each event took place and the assumption that the first week of reporting will establish the mainstream position on the subject. The dates selected for this analysis are important because they encompass events that were officially used as benchmarks for establishing justification for military policy in public statements.

Articles for analysis have been collected through a guided search using the New York Times Historical database, news agency archives, the News Link database and the Lexis Nexis Academic database. Articles were located from the appropriate period using the key search criteria: “Kosovo or NATO and intervention or Yugoslavia or Yugoslav or Serbia or KLA.” Both news and op-ed articles related to the subject were initially included in the analysis, but repeated news agency wire articles and dubiously related articles were eliminated after careful reading (such as articles making mention of NATO or the Kosovo crisis in passing relation to other policy or social issues). Short news stories are also included due to the power of headlines and briefs to influence audiences as much or more than lengthy reports.

As part of a contextualized study, this study analyzes emerging concepts, themes and relationships between news coverage within the political economy environment wherein the reports are situated. The purpose of this perspective is to ground the understanding of the discourse present within the relationships between economics, institutional practices and policy. Also, such an analysis moves this understanding of media discourses beyond the text and allow for charting emerging relationships between structures and production appearing in the analysis. Finally, the analysis helped establish the categories for inclusion on the coding instrument as well as the description and explanation of these categories.

Scholarship analysis

The second portion of this study focuses on how scholarly treatises craft an understanding of NATO intervention in Kosovo (as opposed to the myriad of conference papers and journal articles) because scholarly books, by their very nature, take a deeper

and more rigorous examination of the events surrounding NATO intervention in Kosovo, and because these texts play an important role in shaping cultural memory (Anderson, 1991; Butler, 1989; Connerton, 1981; Hamlish, 2000), and operate with memory processes within institutional constraints of legitimacy influenced by contemporary social and structural concerns (Fentress & Wickham, 1992; Zerubavel, 1994). Scholars shape cultural memories that emerge as shared narratives from the available pool of historical interpretations to become benchmarks of societal memory and identity (Lowenthal, 1998; Osborne, 2002).

Four academic treatises have been selected for analysis in the scholarship portion of this dissertation research. The authors –Bruno Coppieters, Michael Ignatieff, Christine Gray, as well as Albrecht Schnabel and Ramesh Thakur – are all prominent scholars in their respective fields and the treatises stand as principle academic works according to the selection criteria explained later in this chapter. This study proposes to use the text of each scholarly treatise, examined within its political and economic context, as the second focus of analysis to explore the crafting of cultural references representing the military conflict meant to endure and inform subsequent research and retelling. This facet of the study also examines the discursive devices used to represent NATO intervention in the Kosovo conflict.

The scholarship analyzed is limited specifically to books focusing on NATO intervention in Kosovo because books covering the Balkan wars in their entirety would not match the focus of the news articles being analyzed in the earlier facet of this study. This scholarship is compared to the previous news articles. It is also important to note that the event marked the last overt military action in the Balkans and represents the

culmination of how the conflict in the Balkans has come to be understood in the historical record. The scholarly discourse analysis in this study examines books dealing with the three events examined in the media representations. The decision to analyze prominent works is made in order to provide an in-depth analysis of scholarship in the disciplines of communication and political science/historical research. The size of these works poses a challenge to this analysis, which I propose to mitigate by way of analyzing the themes and categories emerging in the chapter conclusions. While a complete grounded theory analysis of each book in its entirety would be ideal, time and project constraints dictate a more reasonable approach that still allows for the comparisons and textual analysis of multiple treatises.

Two books in each discipline have been selected based on a combination of factors, including: the seniority and reputation of the author, institutional prestige, recency of publication and the frequency with which the texts are cited in other research. To create a list of books on the topic, I accessed the WorldCat database and searched for books on NATO and intervention between the years 1999 and 2012, limiting the subtype to “not juvenile.” From the resulting list, I further limited by author to show you a list of authors with the most relevant publications on top. I further cross-referenced titles in Google Scholar, did a web search for institutional and professional background on the author and searched book reviews on EBSCO.

As stated earlier, the emerging concepts, themes and relationships observed in these works are examined in relation with the news coverage analysis to ground the understanding of the discourse within the relationships emerging between the initial news reports and the political economy of the scholarship, and mapping any relationships

between structures, sources and production in the holistic analysis. The intra-source comparisons made in this analysis are aimed at accessing what is not being included in the various narratives produced in the texts. While framing studies fail to adequately consider which frames are suppressed and absent from the media, this grounded theory analysis allows for a more comprehensive examination of this absence. Further accessing these absent themes or frames is a significant area for expanding this analysis in future research which is currently beyond the scope of what is possible within the limitations of this dissertation project. The examination of extra-media sources in comparison with these texts has been notably underexplored in the literature reviewed for this project. Additionally, and more significantly, comparison of the media and scholarly texts analyzed within this study should be compared with Serbian media texts in future research to examine narratives within those texts that are not present in the texts analyzed in this study.

Data coding

Once the news reports and scholarship texts were acquired, they were coded and analyzed according to a systematic process of data coding in order to allow a fuller emersion in the data. Coding involves the extracting of concepts from raw discursive data and developing them in terms of their properties and dimensions (which will be defined in the following process). I conduct this analysis with the generation and ongoing revision of categories based on initial coding observations, further sensitizing myself to the data and developing analytic categories of concepts, context and themes. Throughout this analysis, coding was refined with the identification of integrated categories. In this study, I analyze the texts through the process of open coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to

determine the organization and interconnections of concepts and categories, and I use axial coding to define those interconnections found between categories and concepts emerging from the data. The resulting themes are data-driven and representative of the ways in which the discourse analyzed articulates the context, perceptions and narratives of the 1999 NATO military intervention. Grounded theory analysis is a sustained and rigorous enterprise. Therefore, I measure the effectiveness of this analysis by following Glaser and Strauss' (2008) criteria of credibility and applicability. A rigorous research process will yield findings that hold up to critical analysis.

The data coding process in this study is conducted in five parts. The initial step is to read all materials from beginning to end to get a feel for the narrative the discourse is communicating. After this initial reading, I begin open coding, where the media reports are examined for common themes. Initial themes emerging in the open coding are noted using the language in which they emerge. During the open coding stage, the data is deconstructed and concepts are delineated to represent blocks of raw discourse data while simultaneously qualifying those concepts (words that stand for ideas contained in data) in terms of their properties and dimensions. Properties are the characteristics that define and describe concepts and dimensions are the variations within properties that specify and give range to those concepts. Once identified, these concepts, properties and dimensions are labeled and categorized. Initial themes that can be combined are merged to identify subject trends. Once the data has been exhaustively open-coded, I began the third step of axial coding, where the data was reexamined to note the interconnections and relationships present. Axial coding involves crosscutting and relating concepts to each other. Context influences categorization, so that themes relating to one category in initial

coverage may be categorized differently in later coverage. An example of this is ‘NATO strike capability,’ which is discussed in terms of the alliance’s ability to degrade Yugoslav military power initially, but later is discussed in relation to the ability/inability of NATO to avoid civilian casualties before once again being discussed in relation to the failure of NATO to hit Serbian heavy armor units as had been previously claimed. Once I reached a point where no new data emerged and the development of categories in terms of properties and dimensions was complete, I reached saturation and then began the process of selective coding. Selective coding involves the choosing of core categories, seeing how they fit together and validating the relationships identified while continuing to explore categories in need of further development (Dey, 1999). Finally, I conducted a comparative analysis of the data, looking for similarities and differences. During this process, similarities between coded incidents were labeled using the same concept codes, adding to the properties and dimensions of that code.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In the introductory chapter and literature review, I argue the need for additional research on the relationship between propaganda narratives in the mainstream press and long-term social understandings of military events. In Chapter 3, I have explained the methodological assumptions of this study, data collection procedures, and the processes of analysis. In the following chapter, I identify the core concepts and relationships emerging in the examined media and scholarly texts.

The following is a multi-level analysis on the longevity of media narratives supporting NATO's attack on Yugoslavia examining news coverage surrounding key events in NATO's military action in Yugoslavia and scholarship examining the conflict as a whole. The first part of this analysis examines the media themes emerging in *the Associated Press*, *New York Times* and *The Times (London)* news coverage regarding the 1999 NATO military intervention in the former Yugoslavia. Using a grounded theory approach, this dissertation describes themes and relationships emerging within those discourses. Emerging themes and their categorizations are also represented in word cloud tables, that assign each theme a font size in accordance with its frequency and a color coding based on the thematic category to which it belongs, in order to facilitate the visualization of abstract information in a manner that conveys the narrative themes as they emerge in the grounded theory analysis.

Račak

The incident that took place in the village of Račak in January of 1999 provided a major turning point in NATO's approach to Yugoslavia. U.S. Secretary of State Madeline

Albright described this as the event that galvanized NATO military action (Bissett, 2003) and was used by NATO to justify bombing. Coverage of the event returned again and again to certain themes throughout media reports. These themes are discussed in the following analysis in regards to each individual source, followed by a summary of analysis that examines similarities and differences between themes, sources, and perspectives.

The Associated Press.

The Associated Press (AP) distributed 53 articles covering Račak between January 14 and January 22, 1999. The initial open coding discovered a number of emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include three central thematic categories reoccurring in Associated Press narratives of the Račak event: humanitarian crisis, political crisis, and military conflict.

Humanitarian crisis. There are a number of emerging themes relating to the news coverage of Račak that can be combined under the categorization of humanitarian crisis. Early on in the *AP* coverage, themes include (a) *refugees* and their *humanitarian concerns* as they encountered difficult living situations in the mountains without adequate shelter or supplies and at borders between Kosovo and its neighboring republics where they feared bandits, rebels, and/or police. (b) *Cease-fire violations* also emerged regularly as a reminder of the humanitarian crisis underway in Kosovo. These themes would attribute the violations to both Serb police and KLA rebels, but it is noteworthy that much of the mention of KLA actions was buried toward the end of articles while reports of Serb actions were mentioned earlier and were more likely to be accompanied by quotes from U.S. and U.K. officials condemning these acts than reports of Kosovo Albanian

violations. (c) *Repression* by the Serbian government was also a major theme throughout the coverage, although there was very little in the way of depth and background. In fact, the repression was often attributed to (d) *ethnic violence* linked poignantly to the disturbing events surrounding the alleged massacre at Račak and the specter of (e) *war crimes* in general (which composed the bulk of narrative themes). These war crime themes were sometimes linked to instances of violence and atrocities in the (f) *Bosnian and Croatian conflicts*, though with little in the way of background or direct comparison.

Political crisis. The events taking place at Račak occurred during a time of rapidly evolving political turmoil in both Kosovo and within the NATO alliance. A number of themes emerged in the reports that reflected these new situations, showing an effort to ground what happened at Račak politically as the coverage developed. From the beginning of the coverage, the theme of (a) *Albanian independence* in Kosovo emerged with frequency in the reports. Independence had been a movement that emerged from initial agitations for more autonomy; thus, it is not surprising that the reports repeatedly mentioned this. However, there was no mention made of why autonomy was initially revoked for Kosovo, nor was there any clear mention of the disagreement between Albanian separatists and NATO on the ultimate status of Kosovo. “Autonomy” and “independence” were often interchanged terms in *AP* reports at this time. (b) *Security* was also mentioned in these reports, but with much less regularity. Security themes emerge in regards to the regional spread of violence (with specific mention of the tense situation between Albanians in Macedonia, but no mention of similar tense situations with Albanian populations in Greece and Montenegro). *AP* reports surrounding Račak mentioned political crisis within NATO as well, most notably (c) *NATO disunity* and

Russian opposition to NATO strikes/peacekeepers. It is interesting to note that (d) *NATO credibility*, a significant theme in later Kosovo coverage pushing for the bombing of Yugoslavia, appears in *AP* coverage as early as Račak.

Military conflict. Military conflict would seem a natural theme to emerge from coverage of the conflict in Kosovo, and it occurred with frequency in *AP* coverage during the time of Račak. Themes of military conflict emerging in *AP* reports during this time period most often occur in relation to a deal being brokered by NATO to implement a prisoner exchange between the KLA and Yugoslav authorities. Reports frequently mentioned (a) *Serb offensives* and mobilization connected to the cease-fire violations by both sides of the conflict as well as Serb troop deployment and police operations with accompanying responses from NATO officials. Far less frequently, and usually much later in the article, the reports mentioned these operations as a response to (b) *KLA ambushes and kidnappings* of Yugoslav soldiers, police, and Serbian civilians. These military themes frequently accompanied humanitarian crisis themes of refugees and Račak, often with detailed descriptions of burning or shelled houses and checkpoints, but with few quotations from those not affiliated with the KLA (i.e. anti-secession Albanian and Serb civilians directly impacted by the military actions.) Another major theme emerging in *AP* reports is that of (c) *NATO mobilization* in connection to the region. This is an interesting theme due to its timing; it pre-dates the Rambouillet peace talks and shows the U.S. and U.K. moving aircraft and support into the region long before any agreement had been reached by NATO member states or attempts at diplomatic resolution had been formally made between Yugoslav and Kosovo Albanian representatives.

Predictably, the events surrounding Račak spawned the largest number of themes in relation to war crimes and the Račak massacre (emerging 62 different times in the 53 reports examined), followed closely by NATO airstrikes (38), Serb/Milosevic defiance (35), cease-fire violations (34), humanitarian concerns (26), Serb repression of Albanians (20), and the Serbian expulsion of U.S. cease-fire observer William Walker (18). The majority of articles identified authors in the bylines, with more articles by Melissa Eddy (14 articles) than any other correspondent. It is noteworthy that some of the quotes used in Eddy's articles on Račak resurface verbatim in other *AP* articles as well as the *New York Times*, all of which were attributed to the same source (a KLA fighter named Raim who alleged to have witnessed the massacre from hiding in the hills) describing what transpired at Račak. The single quotation gained significant coverage and helped define the event in the narratives of both *the Associated Press* and *the New York Times*. I also noted an additional trend in *AP* reports associated with bylines: Namely those articles from the *AP* with authors tended to contain more themes and nuances than those with no attributed author.

Table 1. AP Račak Themes



Key: **Humanitarian Crisis**
Political Crisis
 Military Crisis

The New York Times.

The New York Times (NYT) distributed 19 articles covering Račak between January 14 and January 22, 1999. The initial open coding discovered a number of emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include three categories emerging from NYT narratives of the Račak event: Serbian aggression, NATO credibility, and Albanian secessionists.

Serbian aggression. The majority of themes emerging in the *NYT* Račak report narratives can be categorized under Serbian aggression. Themes of (a) *Serb war crimes* and the massacre at *Račak* frequently emerge in reports during this time, quickly eclipsing breaking news about prisoner exchanges that had dominated the headlines. *NYT* reports repeatedly included the opinion of William Walker - head of the Kosovo Verification Mission (formerly in charge of repatriating Serb-majority areas of Slavonia into Croatia in the 1990s and former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador from 1988-1992) - that Serbs committed war crimes in the village of Račak despite the incomplete investigation and counter-reports from French journalists who observed fierce firefights between KLA and Serb police. Reports on Račak also often prominently featured verbatim quotes from the same KLA fighter used in Associated Press articles during the same period (detailed in the *AP* analysis previously). Accompanying these themes are narratives related to (b) Serb *cease-fire violations*, (c) the *repression* of Albanians in the province, (d) threats of *revenge attacks* from Serbian police, and (e) *Serb troop deployments*. Cease-fire themes primarily attribute the violations to Serb police, but at times also referred to KLA rebel actions toward the end of articles. Serb repression emerged in the use of verbs such as “crackdown,” “repression,” and “unleashed,” in

contrast to descriptions of KLA forces that were “fighting back” and “organized.” Serb troop deployments were also frequently cited as threats to the failing cease-fire in the region. Narratives of Račak, as well as themes of troop deployments and war crimes, were linked to (f) *Serbian/Milosevic defiance*, though with a notable dearth of background relating these events to both the conflict and diplomatic nuances at large or direct comparison with reported KLA attacks on pro-Yugoslavia Albanian and Serb civilians. Additionally, comparisons of Serbs and Nazis were introduced on multiple occasions.

NATO credibility. At the time of the Račak events, the threat of NATO action was mentioned through official channels as well as unofficial editorial pieces and interviews with former policy-makers and analysts. A number of themes emerged in the reports that reflected doubts about the (a) *credibility* of NATO’s threats and ability to see such action through. Within the category of NATO credibility, themes of threatened (b) *NATO airstrikes* emerged most often as the dominant narrative of conflict resolution. The *NYT* also focused on the status and opinions of (c) *William Walker*, with references to his work negotiating a prisoner exchange between Serb police and KLA rebels, assertions that there can be no doubt of a criminal massacre at Račak, and his being labeled as *persona non grata* by Belgrade authorities and ordered expulsion from Kosovo. NATO credibility also emerged in a more negative light in relation to doubts held by French authorities and reports that there were (d) *concerns regarding the representation of the massacre at Račak* by Walker and the KLA, the (e) *shooting of peace monitors* by unconfirmed assailants, as well as (f) *Russian objections* to NATO involvement and *disunity among NATO members*. While reporting on the Kosovo conflict, themes

touching upon NATO's credibility seem to be taking on both a prodding and frustrated tone.

Albanian secessionists. It makes sense that in establishing the identity of one side of a conflict, the opposing side is consubstantially identified as well. A number of emergent themes from the *NYT's* coverage fit this category. Themes relating to the role and identity of Albanian secessionists were most often articulated using narratives of (a) *KLA separatism* and their role in events surrounding the conflict. These representations were not as positive as I initially assumed they would be, with the willingness of the KLA to exchange prisoners highlighted in early articles and Yugoslav forces being negatively portrayed as being uncooperative. Indeed, with few exceptions, the KLA was also portrayed negatively. As mentioned earlier, these themes tend to appear toward the middle and end of the articles, but they paint the picture of a group contributing to its own problems and increasingly relying on the hope of NATO airstrikes to give the KLA an advantage. Reports discussed the KLA's role in cease-fire violations, but the most frequent themes emerging are related to the (b) *killing of Serbian police and ethnic Albanian loyalists*. Additionally, themes of (c) *kidnapping*, (d) *arms smuggling*, and (e) *Albanian disunity* also coalesce in this category. It is notable that narratives describing the KLA and Albanian secessionist movement are still not clearly defined in the themes emerging from the *NYT* coverage at this stage in the Kosovo conflict, and this lack of clarity changes dramatically in reports from the newspaper surrounding future events and with the addition of more reporters covering the conflict.

Overall, the *NYT* introduced the largest number of themes in relation to war crimes and the Račak massacre (emerging 29 different times in the 19 reports examined),

followed closely by cease-fire violations (14), NATO airstrikes (13), Serb/Milosevic defiance (10), U.S. cease-fire observer William Walker (12), as well as KLA separatist killings of Serb police and loyalist-Albanians. Just under half (8) of the articles had no identifiable authors in the bylines, and the vast majority of author-identified articles were written by Jane Perlez (7 separate articles). It is noteworthy that some of the quotes used in *AP* journalist Melissa Eddy's articles on Račak resurface verbatim in some of the *NYT* reports. During this analysis, I also noted that *NYT* reports without author bylines frequently reflected press briefing release style rather than more analytical or nuanced reporting.

Table 2. NYT Račak Themes



Key: **Albanian Secessionists**
Serbian Aggression
 NATO Credibility

***The Times* (of London).**

The Times (*Times*) distributed 22 articles covering issues surrounding Račak between January 14 and January 22, 1999. The initial open coding discovered emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include three categories emerging

from the *Times* narratives of the Račak event: humanitarian crisis, Serb/NATO stand-off, and KLA problems.

Humanitarian crisis. There are a number of emerging themes in the *Times* reports that can be combined under the categorization of humanitarian crisis. Throughout the period studied, themes of (a) *war crimes* and the alleged *massacre at Račak* surfaced as a point of perspective for making sense of what was happening with the Kosovo crisis at that time. This is the most frequent theme emerging from the *Times* reports. Other themes present that can be included in the category of humanitarian crisis are (b) *cease-fire violations*, emerging regularly as a reminder of the volatile situation in Kosovo, as well as (c) *refugees* and related *humanitarian concerns*, and comparisons to previous humanitarian crises in (d) *Bosnia*. The *Times* was fairly consistent in portraying cease-fire violations as a responsibility of both the Serb authorities and KLA rebels, differentiating itself in this way from *AP* and *NYT* coverage. Both the refugee crisis and incident at Račak served more generally in *Times*' reports as a backdrop for the clash of wills between Milosevic and NATO leaders. Narratives citing Bosnia used it as historical reinforcement for not easing up on Belgrade.

Serb/NATO stand-off. The majority of themes emerging in the *Times*' Račak report narratives can be combined under the categorization of Serb/NATO stand-off. Themes of (a) *Serbian and Milosevic's defiance* frequently emerge in reports during this time, becoming the common thread throughout much of the coverage. *Times*' reports repeatedly mentioned that Serbian refusal to accommodate negotiations and an independent investigation into the allegation of war crimes in the village of Račak surfaced frequently, condemning the decision by Yugoslav authorities to conduct

autopsies on the bodies of the dead and the refusal of the Serbian forensic investigator to enter Račak without an armed police escort. These themes also emerge in relation to Milosevic's refusal to capitulate to foreign soldiers on sovereign Yugoslav territory. Accompanying these themes are narratives related to (b) *NATO airstrikes*, (c) the *credibility of NATO's will* regarding the Kosovo crisis, and Belgrade's decision to expel (d) *William Walker* from the country. Narratives connecting (e) *Serbs to Nazis* and (f) *Milosevic to Saddam Hussein* also emerge in *Times*' articles surrounding this event.

KLA problems. The KLA did not garner much coverage in reports from the *Times* surrounding Račak, which raises some questions as to how the publication intended to frame the events in Kosovo. A small number of emergent themes from the *Times*' coverage fit this category. These themes tended toward a more negative view, using narratives of (a) *KLA separatism* and their role in cease-fire violations. Reports also mentioned KLA's role in the (b) *ambushing and killing of Serbian police* and (c) the *kidnapping of Yugoslav soldiers*. It is notable that narratives describing the KLA and Albanian secessionist movement suffer from the same lack of deep analysis and nuanced description that marked newspapers' narratives of Serbs.

Overall, the *Times* introduced the largest number of themes in relation to war crimes and the Račak massacre (emerging 23 different times in the 22 reports examined), followed closely by Serb/Milosevic defiance (20), NATO airstrikes (14), cease-fire violations (9), NATO credibility (8), as well as the refugee situation (6). Of the 22 articles appearing around the events at Račak, the *Times* differs from the *NYT* and *AP* by having only one article that failed to identify an author in the byline, with the majority of author-identified articles written by Tom Walker (7) and Michael Evans (5). Between the

two most prolific authors, Tom Walker contributed stories that focused on humanitarian crisis, investigation, and justice while Michael Evans contributed stories about NATO airstrikes and questioned NATO's credibility for not responding more forcefully.

Table 3. Times Račak Themes



Key: **Serb/NATO Stand-off**
Humanitarian Crisis
 KLA Problems

Across all three media outlets, specific themes seemed largely homogenous despite differences in how those themes were categorized and packaged. Certain narratives were largely absent from the reports, such as Serbian and pro-Yugoslav Albanian perspectives on the events being reported. The notable exceptions to the lack of Serb voices are the diplomatic responses to U.S./U.K. pressures that are part of emerging themes of Serbian/Milosevic's defiance. Another theme that is largely ignored in most reports is that of national sovereignty. Chinese and Russian objections within the UN Security Council were predicated upon this concern as well as the right of a nation to defend the integrity of its borders against both external forces and internal rebellions. The legality of NATO intervention, another issue hotly debated in subsequent scholarship and diplomatic exchanges, also went without any mention or analysis from the *AP*, *NYT*, and *Times*. The use of stories without author citations in the bylines raises interesting

questions. These stories may have originated with outside parties as either press briefings/releases or wire stories, but the lack of any notation indicating the source makes any attempt to identify the source speculative. Likewise, the use of verbatim quotations from the KLA source at Račak in both the *AP* and *NYT* could be related to either a press event specifically featuring the source or a *NYT* reprint of an *AP* wire story, but in either case, the narrative received considerable attention. The same holds true for a high profile editorial by Roger Cohen (1999) titled “NATO Warning to Yugoslav: Another Hollow Threat?,” which was featured in both the *Times* and *NYT*.

Rambouillet I

The peace talks taking place between Yugoslav, NATO, and ethnic Kosovo Albanian representatives at Rambouillet during February of 1999 set the stage for diplomacy that proved one source of frustration after another for all three groups. The talks were covered heavily by the media, and a number of themes emerge in media reports to shape public understanding of a chaotic and complicated series of negotiations. The themes are discussed in the following analysis in regards to each individual source, followed by a summary of analysis that examines similarities and differences between themes, sources, and perspectives.

The Associated Press.

The Associated Press (AP) distributed 89 articles covering Rambouillet between February 18 and February 25, 1999. The initial open coding discovered a number of emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include two central thematic categories repeating throughout Associated Press narratives of the Rambouillet event: military solutions and peace negotiations.

Military solutions. By far, *AP* reports surrounding the first Rambouillet peace talks focused more on narratives of military solutions to the Kosovo crisis than on narratives highlighting a peaceful settlement. This is notable because the purpose of the Rambouillet talks was presumably to negotiate a peaceful solution to the Kosovo crisis. As such, it raises questions about the preferred outcome of the talks for the various parties involved. The categorization of certain military themes is complicated by the ways in which the threat or application of force was used to influence diplomacy. As Clausewitz famously noted, “War is the continuation of Politik by other means” (1832/1984, p. 87). During this analysis, themes relating to military solutions initially appeared to be motivating negotiations at Rambouillet, but shortly thereafter I became aware that they emerged in tandem with narrative themes that suggested the futile nature of the peace talks as well as quotes communicating the frustrations of Secretary of State Albright suggesting Albanian negotiating decisions were delaying the implementation of airstrikes. These connections motivated my decision to categorize the military solution themes in a manner that separated them from a negotiated peaceful settlement of the Kosovo crisis. Early on in the *AP* coverage (and throughout the time period of the reports in the analysis), themes emerged arguing for or against the positioning of (a) *NATO ground troops* in Kosovo to perform peacekeeping missions and/or eliminate Yugoslavia’s ability to press an offensive on the KLA militants operating in the province. Additionally, (b) *NATO airstrikes* provided the dominate theme through which most narratives manifested, thereby engaging the question of (c) *NATO credibility* (which dramatically eclipsed the more traditional theme of containing the (d) *spread of violence* in the region which occurred during earlier Yugoslav conflicts). It is also noteworthy that

the use of ground troops was presented in *AP* reports as a non-negotiable inevitability that Yugoslav authorities were stubborn about accepting, with little in the way of a critique except for the cited positions of Belgrade diplomats located toward the middle or bottom of the reports. With airstrikes as an almost foregone conclusion, themes relating to the actual (e) *deployment of NATO forces* and equipment emerged to illustrate the immediacy of pressure motivating Yugoslavia to make concessions. When the subject of (f) *NATO aggression* emerged in some of the reports, these themes occurred in questions posed to diplomats at press briefings or statements of opposition from Serbian and Russian envoys. Overall, narrative themes of military solutions were presented in terms of forcing capitulation from a defiant leadership in Belgrade or in support of an increasingly important KLA underdog that deserved NATO assistance.

Peace negotiations. There is far more variety in the emerging themes related to peace negotiations taking place at Rambouillet than in the military solution themes noted above. The most prominent themes reflected situations posing an impasse between negotiating parties to be resolved through Serbian and Albanian concessions, as well as the willingness of those parties to make those concessions. Early on in the coverage, the theme of (a) *Serbian defiance* emerges with such frequency in the reports that it became the central theme of *AP* narratives on the negotiations. While (b) *Albanian defiance* also emerges in narratives, it does not appear nearly as often and is attributed to (c) the *rising power of KLA representatives* and the (d) *sidelining of Rugova* in the negotiations causing (e) *Albanian disunity* impeding a negotiated agreement. The other dominant theme is the contested point of Kosovo's (f) *independence* (appearing almost as often as Serbian defiance) and NATO's offer of (g) *autonomy* as a concession to Yugoslav

sovereignty. It is interesting that there is little in the way of analysis in the reports differentiating between these concepts or grounding them historically in the political crisis. “Autonomy” and “independence” were often interchanged in *AP* reports, just as they were in the context of *AP*'s Račak reports, but with some differentiation in regards to the KLA's last-minute decision to refuse to sign an agreement without a guarantee of Kosovo independence.

Notably, the events surrounding the peace talks at Rambouillet spawned the largest number of themes in relation to the necessity of NATO airstrikes (emerging 63 different times in the 89 reports examined), followed closely by the inevitability of NATO troops on the ground in Kosovo (61), Serbian defiance (50), NATO's credibility (41), Kosovo independence (33), the ongoing deployment of NATO troops and bombers (23), the failure of the diplomatic approach (19) (which surprisingly began within the first couple days of coverage), and the various cease-fire violations (19) attributed to both the KLA and Serbian police units. Once again, the majority of articles produced by the *AP* identified authors in the bylines. The 15 articles without bylined authors were very specific in the themes that they contained and read more like press briefings than reports due to their key-message orientation. These articles most often contained narratives about NATO's readiness, legal and moral authority, and desire to bomb Yugoslavia.

Table 4. AP Rambouillet I Themes

Key: **Military Solutions**
Peace Negotiations

The New York Times.

The New York Times (NYT) distributed 29 articles covering Rambouillet between February 18 and February 26, 1999. The initial open coding discovered a number of emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include three categories surrounding Rambouillet: NATO responsibility, KLA importance, and Serbian aggression.

NATO responsibility. The largest number of themes emerging from *NYT* reports on Rambouillet can be combined under the categorization of NATO responsibility. Themes of (a) *NATO airstrikes* emerge more often than any other theme in reports during this time, far out-numbering narratives discussing issues under diplomatic negotiation. *NYT* reports also repeatedly mentioned (b) *NATO ground troops*, the need for (c) *NATO intervention*, and the (d) *deployment of NATO forces*. Reports on Rambouillet also often prominently featured themes related to (e) *NATO credibility* being on the line throughout the coverage period. Accompanying these themes were narratives related to (f) *cease-fire violations* by both the Serb and KLA forces, and (g) the *failure of diplomacy*. This last narrative was noteworthy because it emerged early in the reports establishing a narrative

of the talks as pointless and NATO intervention as inevitable. NATO intervention themes (including specific mentions of airstrikes, ground troops, and force deployment) emerged in the context of Serb punishment and KLA support. Also emerging from the NYT narratives are themes of (h) *war crimes and ethnic cleansing*, providing a backdrop wherein intervention was presented with a sense of urgency. The frequency of these themes is a remarkable contrast to the singular occurrence of a narrative theme emerging which presents the peace talks as an (i) *opportunity for peace*.

KLA importance. At the time of events taking place at Rambouillet, the Kosovo Albanian representatives and their role began to undergo rapid changes. A number of themes emerged in the reports that reflected a move that sidelined Rugova and raised the influence and importance of the KLA in talks with NATO. These themes focused on the increasingly professional (a) *KLA offensives* which included successful ambushes and kidnappings and the increasingly (b) *central role of the KLA* in negotiations. These themes emerged together with frequent narratives regarding (c) *Albanian defiance* with NATO's Rambouillet agenda, (d) *Albanian disunity* impacting the success of the peace talks, as well as the (d) *sidelining of Rugova*, whose non-violent approach would soon be replaced in the months to come. The *NYT* also focused on (e) *Albanian autonomy*, the official point of negotiation according to NATO, half as much as it discussed (f) *Albanian independence* in Kosovo during the week surrounding the first Rambouillet talks. While reporting on the Kosovo conflict during this time, themes touching upon NATO's shifting focus from Rugova to the KLA created a new narrative regarding the possible outcome of the talks.

Serbian aggression. Narratives with Yugoslav or Serbian themes were largely unchanged, yet reported in far fewer numbers than in other categories or in previous Račak-period reports. The emergent themes from NYT's coverage fitting this category related to the (a) *Serbian defiance* on the diplomatic front during the peace talks, often citing Milosevic's stubborn refusal to move as a reason for disunity among Albanian representatives and their similar refusals to accept NATO's agenda. Other themes emerging in the category include (b) *Serbian repression* in Kosovo, the continued (b) *deployment of Serb units* to the region, and (c) *Serbian reprisals* in response to KLA ambushes and kidnappings. With the exception of the common theme of Serbian defiance, these other themes relating to Serbian aggression are notable for their scarcity in *NYT* coverage of the talks at Rambouillet.

Overall, the *NYT* introduced the largest number of themes in relation to Serbian defiance (emerging 26 different times in the 29 reports examined), followed closely by the threat or necessity of NATO airstrikes (21), diplomatic failure (17), war crimes and ethnic cleansing (15), NATO ground troops (12), and NATO credibility (12). While the themes that dominate the narratives are of interest, the themes that are largely absent are more noteworthy. The themes of an opportunity for peace, the fears of creating a Greater Albania, and the hope of achieving peace after bombing were each only mentioned once throughout all the reports on Rambouillet during this period by the *NYT*. Likewise, themes discussing the appropriateness of NATO, instead of the UN in peacekeeping or intervention, were absent during this time.

on (c) *human rights violations and war crimes* or (d) *NATO/U.S. aggression and sovereignty violations*. The existence of themes critical of NATO intervention contrasts with the narrative themes emerging in the *NYT* and *AP* reports surrounding this event. The theme of (e) *NATO credibility* is also introduced in relation to its failure or inability to act. The *Times* was notably inconsistent in portraying the role of NATO, in this way differentiating itself from the *AP* and *NYT* coverage.

Serbian and Albanian defiance. Against the backdrop of narrative themes critiquing or asserting NATO's credibility are themes emerging in *Times*' articles that are best categorized as presenting a lack of will by both the Albanian and Serbian negotiating teams to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis in Kosovo. Narrative themes describing (a) *diplomatic failure* most frequently emerged in this way, accompanying similar themes related to (b) *Serbian defiance*, (c) *Albanian defiance*, (d) *cease-fire violations* from both sides, the increasing political and military (e) *power of the KLA*, and (f) *KLA violence*. The narratives also mentioned (g) *Serb deployment* and (h) *Albanian radicalism* in a manner that did not emerge in reports from the *NYT* or *AP*.

Overall, the *Times* introduced the largest number of themes relating to NATO airstrikes (emerging 19 different times in the 17 reports examined), followed closely by NATO ground troops (12), diplomatic failure (11), human rights/war crimes (10), NATO aggression (8), and the increasing power of the KLA (7). Of the 17 articles appearing around the events at Rambouillet during this week, the *Times* offered a remarkably different narrative spectrum than reported from the *NYT* and *AP* through their critical presentation of all three sides in the negotiation. The *Times* also contained author bylines for all of their reports during this period, with the majority of author-identified articles

written again by Tom Walker (6) and Anthony Loyd (5). Between the two most prolific authors, Tom Walker contributed stories with themes that were critical of all sides for aggression, while Anthony Loyd consistently contributed stories with themes supporting NATO intervention and depicting Serbs and Albanians as unwilling to find a peaceful solution.

Table 6. Times Rambouillet I Themes



Key: **Serbian/Albanian Defiance**
NATO Credibility

Across each media outlet, specific themes are treated differently through their packaging with other emergent themes. Narratives that are notably absent from the reports, such as the apparent U.S./NATO preference for negotiating with the violent KLA over the popular pacifist Rugova, raise poignant questions about the distance between Albright's stated goals for the peace talks and her rush to declare diplomacy options exhausted (that appear to coincide with this change of focus regarding Albanian negotiating partners). Another theme that is largely ignored in most reports is that of national sovereignty. Yugoslav diplomatic positions reflect this concern, which emerges twice in the form of negotiation concerns, but neither the legality of NATO intervention

nor the willingness of Milosevic to discuss a non-NATO peacekeeping force received any credible discussion.

Rambouillet II and the Start of Bombardment

The failure of the peace talks between Yugoslav, NATO, and ethnic Kosovo Albanian representatives at Rambouillet during March of 1999 and the commencement of NATO airstrikes against Serbia established a foreign policy precedent that continues to redefine concepts of state sovereignty and international law. The talks were largely treated as a side issue by the media being analyzed, and themes emerging in media reports revolve around the debate shaping public understanding of the credibility of U.S. policy and NATO intervention in Kosovo. The themes are discussed in the following analysis in regards to each individual source, as well as by a summary of analysis that examines similarities and differences between themes, sources, and perspectives.

The Associated Press.

The Associated Press (AP) distributed 351 articles covering the failure of the resumed Rambouillet talks and the commencement of NATO airstrikes between March 17 and March 31, 1999. The initial open coding discovered a number of emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include these central thematic categories repeated throughout Associated Press' narratives of the Rambouillet event: ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and NATO responsibility.

Ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. The violence in Kosovo remains a central theme in narratives covering the Kosovo crisis. The rhetoric used in describing this violence has become a cornucopia of frightening terminology describing the situation in the gravest terms and painting an ever more desperate picture of a humanitarian disaster. The lexicon

of violence has moved from ethnic violence and repression to Holocaust imagery and genocidal intent. Emerging in the narratives studied during this period, the *AP* embraced the theme of “ethnic cleansing” used in an all-encompassing categorization for the violence wracking the province. Because of this broad usage, the themes describing the situation in Kosovo in *AP* reports can be categorized under the heading of “ethnic cleansing.” During this analysis, themes relating to ethnic cleansing appeared as narratives bringing the immediate and desperate need for some sort of intervention and “crossing of a threshold.” Early on and throughout the *AP* coverage, themes emerge relating the humanitarian situation as a dire state of (a) *ethnic cleansing* directed by the Yugoslav state authorities against the ethnic Albanian majority in Kosovo. Punctuating these narratives are themes of (b) *Milosevic’s “killing machine”* targeting (c) *Albanian victims*, (d) *summary executions* (by Serbs against Albanians), a mounting (e) *refugee crisis*, (f) *genocide*, (g) *concentration camps*, (h) *Nazi atrocities*, and (i) *the Holocaust*. Reports appear to have taken their cue from U.S. and U.K. leaders using these analogies. It is also ironic that the recent history of ethnic cleansing in (j) *Bosnia* was evoked, as well as (k) *World War II* history in the region, without mentioning the role of victim imposed on Serbian civilians in both of these conflicts. It is also noteworthy that the *AP* spent a far greater amount of space discussing (l) *Serb propaganda* and control of the media in light of NATO’s intentional targeting of journalists and media infrastructure soon after.

NATO responsibility. Themes emerging that explore the extent of NATO’s responsibility are the most common themes in *AP* narratives surrounding the failure of the Rambouillet talks and the beginning of NATO airstrikes on Yugoslavia. Combined

with the ethnic cleansing narratives noted above, the themes of responsibility ultimately superseded concerns of international law and collateral damage. The most prominent themes focused on (a) *NATO's credibility* in terms of the member-states' will and moral courage to intervene. These narratives worked in tandem with the theme of (b) *NATO's capability* to coerce Yugoslavia into making concessions through the use of force – citing the strike capabilities of NATO aircraft and missiles – as well as the inevitability (initially) and success (later) of (c) *NATO airstrikes* targeting Serbian military resources and infrastructure. These themes were contrasted with growing (d) *international opposition* to NATO's bombing campaign, assessments of (e) *NATO acting as the aggressor*, and the need to follow-through on (f) *NATO's ultimatum*. Russia's criticism was also dismissed in *AP* reports using themes relating to a (g) *Russian alliance with Serbia*. The *AP* departed from both the *NYT* and *Times* in that it largely ignored the issue of (h) *sovereignty violations* in its narratives. It is interesting that there continued to be a lack of deep-level analysis this far into the conflict, but that may be due in part to the expulsion of NATO country journalists from Yugoslavia as soon as the bombing commenced. Themes relating to the original issues of (j) *Kosovo autonomy* and independence were almost completely forgotten in these *AP* reports, despite the official diplomatic aim at bringing Milosevic back to the table to accept these issues.

The credibility of NATO in responding to Serbian defiance dominates the themes in relation to Serbian defiance to NATO's ultimatum (emerging 135 different times in the 351 reports examined), followed by the capability of NATO hardware to destroy the Serb military (117), NATO's credibility in following through with its ultimatum (117), international opposition (102), and the commencement of NATO airstrikes (102). Other

themes frequently emerging in *AP* coverage of these events are ethnic cleansing (75), NATO aggression (72), Albanians victimized (72), Albanian refugees (63), and the Russian/Serb alliance (54). *AP* coverage after the start of the bombing focused on themes relating to NATO strikes, military capability, and diplomatic tensions. This may be attributable to Yugoslavia expelling NATO country journalists, but these reports still managed to provide narratives relating to the deterioration of human rights in Kosovo. This is notable because the journalists authoring most of these pieces were no longer in a position to observe what they were reporting. It is also interesting that narrative themes received little coverage regarding diasporic financial support for the KLA (3), NATO propaganda complaints by Western media (3), killings by ethnic Albanians (6), Albanian intellectuals pushing for peaceful autonomy (6) or even the failure of the peace agreement at Rambouillet (6).

Table 7. AP Rambouillet II/Beginning of Bombing Themes



Key: **Ethnic Cleansing in Kosovo**
 NATO Responsibility

The New York Times.

The New York Times (NYT) distributed 94 articles covering the failure of the Rambouillet peace talks and the commencement of NATO's bombardment of Yugoslavia

between March 17 and March 31, 1999. The initial open coding discovered a number of emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include two central themes surrounding the Rambouillet failure and start of NATO airstrikes: NATO authority and military capabilities.

NATO authority. The largest number of themes emerging from *NYT*'s reports during this period can be combined under the categorization of NATO credibility. Themes of (a) *NATO credibility* emerge more often than any other theme in reports. They appear in editorials both supporting and questioning this credibility. Likewise, they also include administration representatives defending their moral imperative and coverage of foreign diplomats condemning the appropriateness and legality of NATO airstrikes. *NYT* narratives discussing issues related to NATO's authority frequently emerge in combination with themes related to (b) *NATO airstrikes*, the need to respond to (c) *Milosevic's defiance*, the rumors of (d) *Serb war crimes*, and (e) *Serb repression* in the form of military and police operations in Kosovo against the ethnic Albanian insurgency. Reports on Rambouillet also often focused on themes related to Serbian defiance calling into question U.S. and NATO credibility following repeated threats of air strikes and the threat of (f) *Serbian troop deployments* and opposition to (g) *Kosovo independence* (a theme that gained more traction in *NYT*'s reports than the negotiations on (h) *Kosovo autonomy*). Accompanying these themes are narratives related to (i) *KLA resistance* to Serb repression, the (j) *refugee crisis*, (k) *Serbian propaganda*, and (l) the legitimate need for (m) *regime change* in Belgrade. This last narrative is worth mentioning because it was couched in the language of previous U.S. conflicts in Iraq and used terms such as "warlords" that were evocative of humanitarian intervention in

Somalia. Also emerging from the *NYT* narratives related to war crimes is language that amplified the urgency of the humanitarian crisis with terms such as “ethnic cleansing” and “genocide.” The references to ethnic cleansing had been rather muted in previous reports, but these reports exploded with Holocaust imagery and allegations of the mass murder of an entire ethnic population. Direct associations with the Nazis were also tossed about in reports, with both NATO and the Serbs labeled in that way.

Military capability. At the time of events taking place in these reports, the stand-off between NATO’s credibility and Milosevic’s defiance was set against the military capabilities of NATO, Yugoslav, and KLA forces. A number of themes emerged in the reports that reflected an upcoming conflict. These themes focused mainly on (a) *NATO strike capabilities* which included superior air control and precision guided ordinances, (b) *Yugoslav air defense deployment*, and the (c) *strength of the KLA* to hold out against Serb offensives. Once the bombardment began, the narrative themes overwhelmingly related to the dominant backdrop of (d) *NATO airstrikes* taking place against military targets in Serbia. It is noteworthy that (e) *NATO ground troops*, which were such an important theme during the Rambouillet talks, were hardly mentioned in these *NYT*’s reports and markedly absent from U.S. administration comments on the military conflict.

Overall, the *NYT* introduced the largest number of themes in relation to the credibility of NATO intervention (emerging 99 different times in the 94 reports examined), followed closely by the NATO airstrikes (80), Serb/Milosevic defiance (55), war crimes and ethnic cleansing (50), Serb repression (40), and NATO strike capability (35). Themes that are largely absent include critiques of the U.S./NATO propaganda campaign (appearing only once), the fears of Macedonia (with a large Albanian minority)

that NATO action might support the push for a Greater Albania throughout the region (also appearing once), and intimidation and ethnic cleansing by the KLA (which is absent in these *NYT* narratives). The reports published in the *NYT* during this period are remarkable for their focus on statements by those in positions of authority rather than perspectives from the civilians living in the areas impacted. In many ways, the reports became advertisements for policy positions with little in the way of analysis or critique. One interesting exception to this trend is in relation to reports authored by Carlotta Gall, who made considerable use of pathos in stories that focused on the dire situation of Albanians living in constant fear of “bloodletting,” “atrocities,” and “ethnic cleansing” at the hands of Serb neighbors and paramilitary forces, as well as the immediate need for NATO airstrikes on Yugoslavia. Gall’s reports are also notable for the absence of perspective from fearful Serbian minority in the region and the reports of KLA kidnappings and killings that had been previously reported by other *NYT*’s authors.

Table 8. NYT Rambouillet II/Beginning of Bombing Themes



Key: **Military Capability**
NATO Authority

The Times (of London).

The Times distributed 147 articles from March 17 to March 31, 1999 covering issues surrounding the second Rambouillet talks and the commencement of NATO airstrikes. The initial open coding discovered emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include three categories emerging from *Times*' narratives of the time period: NATO credibility, Serbian defiance, and the humanitarian crisis.

NATO credibility. There are a number of emerging themes in *Times*' reports that can be combined under the categorization of NATO credibility. Throughout the period studied, narratives set against the theme of (a) *NATO airstrikes* emerged to present a test of the authority and sincerity of NATO powers that included (b) *NATO capabilities* (technological and logistical) for coercing Milosevic to the Rambouillet agenda, as well as the will of NATO members to follow through in themes relating to (c) *NATO credibility* in a legal and moral sense. These questioning themes are the most frequently emerging in relation to (d) *international opposition* and the violation of a country's (e) *sovereignty*. Also emerging frequently with these themes are narratives focusing on the decision not to deploy (f) *NATO ground troops*, the (g) *reluctance of NATO members* to support airstrikes, and accusations of (h) *NATO/U.S. aggression*. The existence of themes critical of NATO credibility, such as (i) *NATO/U.S. hypocrisy* and media frustration with (j) *NATO propaganda*, also contribute to narratives in this category.

Serbian defiance. Against this trend of critiquing NATO's credibility emerged themes contrasting the will and military capabilities of the Serbian leadership and military. Narrative themes describing (a) *Serbian defiance* and Milosevic's refusal to back down continue from earlier dominant *Times*' reports, portraying the conflict as a

clash of egos between Milosevic and the U.S./U.K. NATO leadership. Themes of (b) *Serb aggression* emerge as calling NATO's bluff, frequently (c) *comparing Milosevic and Serb forces with Nazis and the Khmer Rouge*.

Humanitarian crisis. The backdrop against which the narrative categories of NATO credibility and Serbian defiance clashed is comprised of narrative themes describing the deplorable humanitarian crisis existing in Kosovo during the time of the *Times*' reports. Prominent among these themes are (a) *war crimes*, the (b) *refugee crisis*, and the potential (c) *spread of violence* in the region. Emerging themes of war crimes are mostly in reference to Serb actions, with KLA violence against civilians largely unreported. Notably, comparisons of alleged and reported Serb war crimes with Nazis and the Khmer Rouge preceded a change in terminology from "war crimes" and "crackdowns" to (d) *"ethnic cleansing" and "genocide."*

Overall, the *Times* introduced the largest number of themes in relation to NATO capabilities (emerging 58 different times in the 147 reports examined), followed closely by NATO credibility (57), NATO airstrikes (53), ethnic cleansing and genocide (39), Serb defiance (37), as well as Serb aggression and international opposition (both emerging 30 times). The *Times* provided a notably more nuanced series of narrative themes than the *NYT* and *AP* reports, but a perceptible drop in themes critical of the KLA was apparent despite the appearance of a report tracing the group's funding to the movement and sale of heroin throughout Europe (once). *Times*' journalist Anthony Loyd revealed his concerns about safety as a reporter in Kosovo because of his ethnic Albanian background. Subsequent reports dealt almost exclusively with his attempts to flee the country before being detained by Serb police. Despite the potential to view this

previously undisclosed information as a professional conflict, Loyd's articles remained far more nuanced and balanced than the work of other staff reporters at the *NYT* and *AP*.

Table 9. Times Rambouillet II/Beginning of Bombing Themes



Key: **Serb Defiance**
NATO Credibility
 Humanitarian Crisis

Throughout the time period when the Rambouillet talks failed and the NATO bombardment began, similar individual themes emerge in very different presentations through associations and relationship, as well as language choices and perspectives heard in the narratives. Notably absent themes, such as the lack of further mention of Ibrahim Rugova or the details of the Rambouillet agreement to which Yugoslavia objected (readily available after being published in *Le Monde Diplomatique*), seem to indicate a perspective that no longer considered diplomatic negotiations for peace as important as the hows and whys of military conflict.

End of NATO Bombardment

The NATO bombardment of Yugoslavia ended on June 10, 1999, after 78 days of airstrikes targeting Yugoslav military installations, dual use infrastructure, production capacity, and civilian targets. The campaign played a role in further deteriorating the

humanitarian crisis on the ground and set a precedent for humanitarian intervention that redefined the mission of NATO and rewrote international norms of sovereignty. The end of the bombing was treated as a clear victory in the reports analyzed, and themes emerging in media reports support this optimistic perspective. Themes hinting at the ongoing humanitarian crisis that defined Kosovo for years to come emerge from the reports as well in the following analysis.

The Associated Press.

The Associated Press (AP) distributed 77 articles between June 9 and June 16, 1999, covering the end of NATO airstrikes. The initial open coding discovered emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include three thematic categories repeating throughout *AP* narratives at the time: NATO triumph, Milosevic's consequences, and ongoing humanitarian concerns.

NATO triumph. The majority of themes emerging in *AP* reports surrounding the end of NATO airstrikes on Yugoslavia related to narratives on NATO's victory. The dominant theme itself is one of (a) *NATO victory* that includes stories of Milosevic's capitulation, the arrival of NATO ground troops to the celebrations of thankful ethnic Albanians, and the opportunity for NATO to preside over the reconstruction of the province as well as the shaping of a new free-market economy. These claims of NATO's triumph were darkened by the themes discussing the surprise and displeasure of NATO forces at arriving second to (b) *Russian troops*, who insisted upon being separate from the NATO mission and safeguarding the rights of Serbs living in their area. This was a theme of considerable importance given the number of times it emerged in the report narratives, casting doubt on (c) *NATO credibility* in a way that was largely replaced by NATO

victory narratives. Themes regarding (d) *NATO's military capabilities* also emerged in these reports in terms of celebrating the superior reach of NATO armaments, as well as concerns of civilian targets hit by NATO bombs and missiles. Related themes mentioned (e) *NATO propaganda*, with inflated successes of their airstrikes revealed when retreating Serb forces returned home driving a largely untouched heavy armor column out of Kosovo.

Milosevic's consequences. It is not surprising that there were a number of emergent themes relating to the struggles and defeat of the long-defiant Serb leader (Slobodan Milosevic), particularly in light of his incongruous claims of victory over NATO. Dominant themes emerging in this category include reports on (a) *Serb losses* in geography and parliamentary seats, as well as influence and unity with Montenegro. Political threats within Serbia calling for Milosevic's removal emerged in themes calling for (b) regime change, and narratives commenting on (c) *Serb propaganda* claims of victory in the Kosovo crisis expressed disbelief and wonder. It is noteworthy that the themes portrayed the conflict as being largely between Milosevic and NATO, with little discussion on the implications for the people of Serbia or the ethnic Serbs living in Kosovo. Milosevic's loss was often presented as the flip side to a NATO victory, and the reports took on the tone of a very personal conflict between the defeated leader and the NATO alliance he dared to defy for so long.

Ongoing humanitarian concerns. Various themes materialize in *AP* reports during this time that hint at the long road to closure and humanitarian concerns that have plagued Kosovo since the end of the bombing. The most notable narrative theme relates to (a) *Serb war crimes* that may go unpunished and unresolved with the negotiated retreat

of Yugoslav troops from Kosovo. These specters of violence appeared both as a backdrop against which NATO's victory prevailed as well as the frustrations of Albanians who desired either justice or revenge. The crisis of (b) *refugees* also emerged as retreating troops were followed by displaced Serb families and the sudden return of Albanian refugees following the arrival of NATO troops. Discussions of refugees focused on returning Albanians and their humanitarian needs, with fewer than half the narratives mentioning Serb refugees. Those mentions of Serb refugees were frequently accompanied by reports of (c) *KLA war crimes* against those Serb civilians who remained, as well as the difficulty NATO was having in (d) *disarming the KLA* as promised. The reports also discussed the changing prospects for both ethnicities with the (e) *KLA taking positions of power* in the government and communities. The prospect of (f) *multiculturalism* in Kosovo only emerged once in *AP* reports during this period.

Overall, the *AP* introduced the largest number of themes in relation to NATO victory (emerging 124 times in the 77 reports examined), followed closely by the theme of Serbian war crimes (88), Russian troop deployment (46), the refugee crisis (38), the disarming of the KLA (24), as well as Serb losses and KLA power gains (both appearing 19 times). Of the 77 articles examined, the *AP* offered a largely celebratory perspective on the events with little in the way of deep-level analysis. It is also noteworthy that the amount of articles produced in relation to the event are far fewer than those produced by the *AP* regarding events leading up to the bombing. I expected the same amount of interest in an event of this importance, but that did not play out with the importance the *AP* assigned to the ending of the airstrikes and deployment of troops to Kosovo.

Table 10. AP End of Bombing Themes



Key: **Ongoing Humanitarian Concern**
NATO Triumph
 Milosevic's Consequences

New York Times

The New York Times (NYT) distributed 91 articles between June 9 and June 16, 1999, covering the end of NATO airstrikes. The initial open coding discovered emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include five thematic categories repeating throughout *NYT* narratives: victory, NATO representations, Serb representations, Albanian representations, and ongoing concerns.

Victory. The majority of themes emerging in *NYT* reports at the end of NATO airstrikes related to victory in some way. The dominant theme relates to the arrival of 50,000 (a) *NATO peacekeepers* to enforce the peace agreement. This theme worked in tandem with narratives celebrating the (b) *return of refugees* and (c) *withdrawal of Serb forces* from Kosovo following the (d) *end of NATO airstrikes*. Victory was a loosely interpreted concept claimed by all sides of the conflict, and themes of (e) *NATO victory*, (f) *Albanian victory*, (g) *Clinton's victory*, (h) *American victory*, and even (i) *Milosevic's victory* emerged in the coverage. Notably, the (j) *UN resolution* agreed to by all sides appeared only once in any explicit way.

NATO representations. With the credibility of NATO as a central theme, it is not surprising that permutations of that theme emerge frequently in the *NYT*'s coverage at the end of airstrikes. Narrative themes both supporting and questioning (a) *NATO credibility* emerge most frequently in this categorization, and themes relating to (b) *NATO strike capabilities* also frequently emerge. Other prominent themes relating to NATO's reputation are (c) *NATO's authority in Kosovo*, (d) *U.S./NATO's relationship with China* following the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, and (e) *NATO as savior* to the ethnic Albanian population. While the tension between NATO and China frequently appeared in reports, there was a curious absence of themes relating to the fact that NATO also bombed the Indian embassy during the airstrikes. Themes relating to NATO's violation of national sovereignty rarely appeared, and it is interesting that a report of the KLA's former designation as a terrorist organization by the U.S. never emerged again in reports by the *NYT* during this period. Themes related to the sketchy reputation of the KLA eventually emerged in news reports over a decade later in relation to Eulex investigations into the KLA connection to kidnappings for black market organ harvesting during and shortly after the NATO bombing campaign concluded.

Serb representations. The majority of themes emerging in this categorization represent Serbs in relation to (a) *Serb aggression*, the discovery of (b) *mass graves*, (c) *defiance of NATO authority*, (d) "*barbarians*," and (e) *ethnic cleansing*. A number of counter themes also emerge portraying (f) *Serbs as victims* of ethnic reprisal killings, reflecting the changing status of ethnic Serbs in Kosovo with the withdrawal of Yugoslav troops.

Albanian representations. Themes materializing in *NYT*'s reports representing Albanians tend to be more limited than those relating to NATO and Serbs. The dominant theme emerging in this categorization relates to (a) *Albanians refugees* followed by references to the (b) *Albanians as victims*, the (c) *Albanian refugee exodus* during the conflict, as well as the infrequent emergence of themes relating to (d) *Albanian defiance of NATO authority* and (e) *Albanian killings of Serbs and Roma*.

Ongoing concerns. As is evident in previous emergent categories and themes, *NYT* reports do not paint a rosy picture of the situation in Kosovo despite the claims of winning being made by all sides of the conflict. The ongoing concerns in Kosovo are represented most frequently through emerging themes of (a) *NATO/Russian tensions* relating to the surprise deployment of Russian troops ahead of NATO peacekeepers. This theme emerges more often than any other theme in any categorization and represents a defining narrative in these reports at this time. Other themes emerging referred to the difficult recovery ahead as a result of (b) *bombing damage*, the doubts about being able to enforce (c) *KLA disarmament* as mandated in the UN resolution, (d) *revenge attacks*, (e) *declining U.S. citizen support* and interest in the Kosovo crisis, and the implications of the (f) *KLA taking over* positions of control in Kosovo. It is notable that themes relating to the (g) *ethnic Serbian exodus* rarely emerge. Themes relating to the implications for (h) *Kosovo independence* are also limited in these reports. Both of these themes later become matters of much importance during Serbia's efforts to enter the European Union.

Overall, the *NYT* introduced the largest number of themes in relation to Russian troop deployment (emerging 41 times in the 91 reports examined), followed closely by the theme of NATO peacekeepers (40), Serb aggression (29), NATO credibility (26),

mass graves (25), Serb troop withdrawal (20), return of Albanian refugees (20), Albanians as victims (19), and NATO's strike capabilities showcased in the intervention (19). The lack of themes that question NATO's legal and moral legitimacy is notable in *NYT* reports, as well as the absence of themes related to the precedent set by NATO's humanitarian intervention.

Table 11. NYT End of Bombing Themes



Key: **Victory**

Serbian Representations

NATO Representations

Albanian Representations

Ongoing Concerns

The Times (London).

The Times distributed 69 articles between June 9 and June 16, 1999, covering the end of NATO airstrikes. The initial open coding discovered emerging themes that were categorized during axial coding to include three thematic categories repeating throughout narratives at the time: Serb departure, NATO control, and KLA victory.

Serb departure. The majority of themes emerging in *Times*' reports surrounding the end of NATO airstrikes on Yugoslavia related to narratives on the departure of Serb

troops and civilians from Kosovo. The dominant theme itself is one of (a) *Serbian aggression* that included stories of Serb soldiers and paramilitary units aggressively refusing to leave until mandated by the withdrawal agreement, often to the anger of ethnic Albanians and NATO peacekeepers whose mandate had not yet begun. Narratives of soon-to-depart Serbs burning checkpoints and civil records were included. Other themes emerging in relation to the departure of Serbs from Kosovo include (b) *Serbs as victims* of Albanian reprisals, (c) *Serbs as compliant* with NATO conditions, the (d) *Serbian exodus* from Kosovo, and (e) *Serbs as thieves* looting while there is no authority to stop them. The Serbian exodus was noteworthy because the theme communicates the long line of refugees fleeing their homes and trailing in convoys behind the departing soldiers who were leaving Kosovo for good. It is the only theme emerging that speaks to the reprisals against Serb neighbors that were part of a missing narrative of ethnic cleansing happening (and the end of any hope for a multicultural community in Kosovo). It is surprising that the hypocrisy of the human rights crisis does not emerge from *Times*' reports, as the publication has consistently highlighted similar incongruences in previous coverage.

NATO control. Themes relating to NATO taking control of the province proved less celebratory in *Times* reports than in *AP* reports during this period of analysis. There were narratives of mixed blessings, praising the (a) *arrival of international aid* with the NATO peacekeepers and promise of (b) *security* that NATO hoped to bring to a lawless conflict zone, but also reports reflecting on the very real challenges of a tenuously cooperative (c) *Russian troop deployment*, uninvestigated (d) *Serb war crimes*

allegations, and (e) *defiant KLA* refusing to disarm. These challenges accompanied themes that questioned (f) *NATO credibility* in Kosovo.

KLA victory. The departure of Yugoslav forces from the province and *de-facto* autonomy as a NATO protectorate resulted in a victory for the KLA, communicated through themes emerging out of reports from *Times*' journalists in Kosovo. The dominant theme emerging here is one of (a) *Albanians as victims* in Kosovo, forced to dodge vindictive Serb paramilitary units until the withdrawal was complete and NATO assumed enforcement duties. Thefts and shake-downs, beatings, and disappearances marked these narratives. Another prominent theme in this category is the return of (b) *Albanian refugees*. These reports focused on the hope and excitement of the refugees' return tempered with their immediate humanitarian needs as they descended from the mountains. Also emerging from these reports are themes relating to the vacuum of power after the (c) *KLA victory*, resulting in (d) *KLA disunity* among various factions, as well as (e) *KLA infighting* and violence.

The last acts of Serbian aggression emerged most often in the *Times*' coverage (44 times in 69 articles), followed by the surprise deployment of Russian troops (20), the arrival of international aid (18), Serb war crimes (14), Albanians as victims (12), Serbs as victims (10), and Serb compliance with the NATO agreement (8). With the exceptions of Tom Walker and Michael Evans, who had been reporting from Kosovo on the conflict since the beginning, the journalists filing reports for the *Times* during this period were relatively new to the conflict. This is evident in the disparity in nuance between Walker's and Evans' reports and those of their peers. The articles without authors identified in bylines are interesting in this analysis, as articles without author bylines are usually light

on analysis and read more like a press briefing, but such articles appearing in the *Times* during this period are heavy on analysis, thus breaking with this stereotype.

Table 12. Times End of Bombing Themes



Key: **KLA Victory**
Serb Departure
 NATO Control

Throughout news reports surrounding the cessation of NATO airstrikes on Yugoslavia, all of the media outlets analyzed focused on themes relating to Serbian war crimes being investigated following the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces, the credibility of NATO intervention in Kosovo being confirmed through victory and control, the uncertainties of Russia's deployment of ground troops in Kosovo ahead of NATO peacekeepers, and the refugee crisis as Albanian refugees flooded the province and Serbian refugees fled in the other direction. Themes relating to whether or not regional stability had been assured or further compromised were suspiciously absent from the news narratives. Another theme that was notably underreported in the news narratives was the failure of NATO airstrikes in degrading Milosevic's military capabilities.

Scholarship analysis

Four academic treatises are analyzed below for emergent themes relating to the NATO's military action in Kosovo. This analysis examines the discursive devices used to represent NATO intervention in the Kosovo conflict from an adapted grounded theory approach. Each treatise is then compared to cultural references of the Kosovo crisis initially crafted in media reports to explore how those themes have endured and informed subsequent research and retelling.

Coppieters.

Coppieters (2008) interrogated the NATO military intervention in Kosovo from an analytical perspective that weighed the success and long-range implications of NATO's Humanitarian Intervention doctrine against on principles of ethical war. Throughout the chapters relating to the Kosovo case, various familiar themes emerge that both modify some initial media narrative themes and represent longevity of others in our cultural memory of the event. After initial open coding, certain categories emerged in relation to textual themes. These categories are NATO legitimacy, moral imperative, and Humanitarian Intervention credibility.

NATO legitimacy. Themes emerging from Coppieters' (2008) treatise that coalesce into this category focus on the legitimacy of the NATO alliance intervention in the former Yugoslavia. Narrative themes are grounded in the principle of (a) *legitimate authority*, the long-term (b) *damage done* by NATO intervention, (c) *increased international instability* resulting from the precedent of violating international law, the strong regard in which (d) *sovereignty* should be maintained, and the (e) *dubious chances for success* with the unilateral declaration of independence. While the debate over the

legitimacy of NATO intervention carried over from initial media reports, this scholarship disregarded the presumption that legitimate authority was something that ought to be circumvented in a violation of the principle of national sovereignty. Unlike initial media narratives that did not examine the implications of the independence goal NATO promoted in Kosovo, Coppieters questioned the precedent of such policies in light of the subsequent countries that argued they too were a “special case” just like Kosovo and therefore needed to be beholden to international law.

Moral imperative. Various themes related to the principle of a moral imperative emerge in Coppieters’ (2008) work, undermining the integrity of the entire argument in the case of NATO intervention over Kosovo even while continuing to conceptualize the event through the dominant themes established in initial media accounts. While themes in support of NATO having (a) *just cause* emerge from the text, the imperative is countered with narratives casting doubt on the extent of (b) *pre-bombing human rights violations*; NATO’s (c) *bombing of dual-use targets* and related human death and misery, as well as the loss of (d) *moral authority* resulting from NATO actions.

Humanitarian Intervention credibility. The doctrine of Humanitarian Intervention (HI) adopted by NATO for the bombing of Yugoslavia represents a conceptual category emerging from the themes of Coppieters’ interrogation of how humanitarian “humanitarian intervention” actually is. While the continued discussion of the merits of HI represents a long shelf-life for the doctrine, the themes emerging in the text reject the credibility of HI. These themes include the (a) *dangerous precedent of the Kosovo model of unilateral independence*, the (b) *violation of legitimate authority* principles inherent in such a declaration, the (c) *humanitarian catastrophe* resulting from

NATO's humanitarian intervention, and the realization that the resulting ongoing catastrophe has (d) *removed all credibility for the HI doctrine*.

Gray.

Gray (2004) interrogated the NATO military intervention in Kosovo from a perspective of existing international law and the establishment of new legal precedents. Throughout the chapters relating to the Kosovo intervention, various familiar themes emerge that were discussed to a limited degree in media narratives leading up to NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia, but which had not been significantly explored for their legal and ethical merits at the time. After initial open coding, two categories emerged in which narrative themes in the text can be understood. These categories are NATO justifications and Humanitarian Intervention flaws.

NATO justifications. Themes emerging from Gray's work that echo NATO arguments in support of military intervention in Kosovo present the legal and moral justification through a variety of supporting narratives. Narrative themes justifying the action are grounded in the existence of the (a) *repression of Albanians* in Kosovo, which provided NATO with the (b) *moral and political authority* to intervene as necessary per the established United Nations value of human rights underwriting the (c) *humanitarian intervention doctrine* through both the threat and application of force. NATO argued that (d) *unilateral action followed naturally* from the failure of diplomacy related to the UN negotiation agenda. NATO also assumed that the situation posed a (e) *threat to European stability*, which was within the new role of (f) *NATO as a more offensive alliance*. A third separate theme emerging from NATO justifications revolves around the narratives of (g) *implied UN authorization* lending legality to the action for humanitarian reasons despite

the fact that HI was not clearly and expressly evoked by NATO prior to the strikes. NATO also argued the legality of its intervention by stating that the (h) *political independence of Kosovo was never questioned by NATO*, dodging any accusations of violating principles of sovereignty, which did not apply because Kosovo was an (i) *exceptional case* that did not set any precedent outside the moral authority to stop a long list of atrocities. Themes of justification culminate in the claim that the UN Security Council's rejection of Russia's submitted condemnation provided (j) *tacit approval* after the fact. While these themes are more deliberate and detailed than the initial press briefing assertions of legitimacy emerging in media reports, the themes continue to shape the conversation about NATO's credibility in a post-hoc scramble that maintains the same narrative script drafted in the weeks preceding the bombing. This continuation of themes suggests a long shelf-life of key messages presented to the media that continue to define and limit the scope of understanding how NATO came to intervene in Kosovo, to dictate the status of the province through coercive threats, and to bomb Yugoslavia until it acquiesced.

Humanitarian Intervention flaws. Gray's (2004) conceptualizations of NATO action in Kosovo may continue to be shaped by the justifications NATO initially used to respond to criticisms over the violation of international law and the principle of national sovereignty, but themes emerge in her work that undermine the justifications of NATO intervention and introduce counter narratives of a flawed reasoning and reckless military intervention. Dominant themes emerge that undermine NATO's assertions such as the moral failure of a humanitarian intervention doctrine that (a) *increased the persecution and displacement* of the people it claimed to protect, resulted in a disproportionate (b)

bombing campaign that was inherently not humane, and the ultimate (c) failure of the action to provide the stable, peaceful and multiethnic Kosovo KFOR aimed to achieve.

Other counter themes emerge from the text related to the (d) *failure to exhaust diplomatic options*, (e) *absence of any attempt by NATO to obtain security council authorization for the intervention*, the fact that HI in Kosovo was a policy (f) *outside the UN charter scheme*, the (g) *pre-eminence of international laws governing the use of force* over the principle of human rights due grounded in the absence of any UN General Assembly agreement on the matter, and NATO's (h) *unilateral use of force* violated the UN Charter and did not fit the criteria of legitimate collective action. A final notable theme emerging in Gray's treatise that runs contrary to NATO's claims of tacit UN justification revolves around the UN Secretary General's final report (1999) stating that the (i) *Humanitarian Intervention doctrine "threatens the very core of the international security system of the United Nations."*

Ignatieff.

Ignatieff (2000) authored the first major treatise on the NATO military intervention in Kosovo, examining the moral implications of a critical turning point in international relations and military policy. Throughout the book, themes emerge that revisit concepts spawned by media narratives and interrogate these concepts on a deeper and more critical level. After open and axial coding, categories encapsulating these themes developed to include two overarching concepts: moral credibility and limited success.

Moral credibility. It is hard to argue that NATO's military campaign against Yugoslavia was not sold on the basis of moral justification. Ignatieff's (2000) treatise

yields emergent themes on the morality of waging war that are conceptualized through a series of moral hazards and missteps casting a lasting pall over NATO's intervention.

Themes relating to the action are grounded in the moral problem of the (a) *chaos unleashed by Milosevic* in Kosovo that resulted in war crimes, such as the (b) *massacre of civilians at Račak*. These themes emerge in Ignatieff's work to describe the setting where NATO felt justified and compelled to issue a (c) *diplomatic ultimatum under threat of airstrikes* against Yugoslavia. The ethical questions of an agreement emerging from the (d) *coercive setting* at Rambouillet segue to themes exploring the legitimacy of (e) *circumventing UN approval* based on anticipated vetoes from Russia and China. In Ignatieff's analysis of the bombing campaign, themes emerge questioning the morality of targeting decisions that moved from ineffective hits against military installations to more ambiguous attacks (f) *aiming at dual-use* and (g) *civilian targets* that undermined the legitimacy of NATO's moral mandate as the aftermath became public knowledge.

Related narrative themes emerged in relation to NATO's (h) *targeting of journalists and media installations* in Serbia to (i) *maintain public support* and (j) *demonstrate NATO resolve*. These are themes that were largely absent from media themes in the previous analysis and indicate a significant departure from the dominant conceptualization of the conflict. Themes also emerge discussing (k) NATO's strike against the national power grid, ironically the alliance's most effective targeting decision, that had grave moral implications for critical infrastructure such as hospitals that created significant civilian suffering and loss. Aside from the moral credibility of NATO's tactical decisions, themes also emerge in the text that provide new narratives on the morality of such an uneven display of force, particularly in relation to the unjust nature of a (l) *"turkey shoot"* where

one side can attack with impunity that (m) *transforms the expectations governing war* and self-defense, thus aggravating a situation where NATO lives became more important than Albanian lives through the decision to wage a (n) *risk-free war* that did not involve putting troops on the ground to defend the people NATO claimed to support. Finally, themes emerged in the text interrogating the (o) *inability to indict* NATO for violating laws of war due to Security Council veto powers, rendering the laws of war moot.

Limited success. Ignatieff (2000) situated questions of moral credibility against an accounting of NATO's successes achieved during the bombing of Yugoslavia. During the bombing campaign, media narratives dutifully reported NATO's successful degradation of Milosevic's forces and the surprise at finding those accountings grossly overstated during the Serbian withdrawal after the bombing. Ignatieff expanded on these narratives in an assessment of NATO's successful achievement of objectives in the air campaign. Dominant themes emerging in this treatise contrast with the optimistic themes reported in media narratives after Milosevic's capitulation. Many of these themes are skeptical and include the (a) *inability of NATO to destroy Yugoslav heavy armor and artillery*, the largely (b) *untouched Serbian air defense system*, the (c) *ambiguous victory* that left issues of justice and political resolution unresolved, and the (d) *indefinite responsibility to maintain Kosovo as a NATO protectorate*. Other themes emerging from the text relate to NATO achievements such as the crucial (e) *diplomatic success in leveraging political and economic capital against Russia* to prevent military assistance to Serbia and the (f) *effective change in airstrike targets to civilian infrastructure* which proved instrumental in NATO's success. Themes relating to the (g) *drop in NATO's legitimacy* in public opinion emerge that focus on the price paid for that success.

Schnabel and Thakur

Schnabel and Thakur's (2000) treatise on the NATO military intervention in Kosovo provided a nuanced and reflective review of the debate surrounding the bombing of Serbia, surveying relevant concerns on statements regarding the appropriate implications to draw from the event. Throughout the chapters, themes emerge that restate dominant media narratives and help map the author's narrative. After open and axial coding, categories encapsulating these themes developed to include two major conceptualizations of the topic. These categories are the focus precedent that Kosovo sets and the lasting impact left by NATO.

NATO impact. NATO's air war against Yugoslavia left a lasting imprint on both the region and the world of foreign policy. Throughout the Schnabel & Thakur's text, positive and negative impacts emerged to present the importance of NATO's action. These themes include the (a) *inevitability of Kosovo's independence* resulting from the intervention due to the establishment of an autonomous government, the forced withdrawal of Serbian police, and the flight of almost all of the ethnic Serbian population from the province. NATO's success also meant the (b) *end of Serbian suppression* of the Albanian secessionist movement, an end to the ethnic cleansing of Albanians, and (c) *the preservation of NATO's credibility* in the face of Milosevic's defiance. There is a notable absence of themes emerging that speak to the beginning of ethnic cleansing against the Serbs following the withdrawal of Yugoslav military and police units, but there are a number of emergent themes speaking to the (d) apparent failure of NATO's Kosovo policy one year later, (e) *the ineffectiveness of the airstrikes* in degrading Serbian military capability, as well as the (f) *increase in refugees* accompanying the NATO action and the

(g) *rapid disintegration of security* on the ground that accompanied the NATO airstrikes.

Themes also emerged that depict (h) *NATO as a tool of the KLA* and (i) *encouragement of their incitement of Serb forces*.

Kosovo precedent. Schnabel and Thakur's (2000) treatise was a case study of NATO's intervention in Kosovo, informing and influencing foreign policy and international law. This is a major facet of the work, and a number of themes emerge that assess the scope and nature of this precedent. Narratives discuss themes relating to the (a) *restraining nature of UN authorization* in the face of humanitarian crisis, the (b) *necessity of the development of a United Nations intervention agreement* with guidelines for this type of action, and (c) a *moral mandate* that (d) *trumped issues of sovereignty* in the case of humanitarian intervention. Themes also emerge identifying the creation of a (e) *credibility gap for the UN* when issues of humanitarianism conflicted with issues of sovereignty, (f) *legitimacy connected to collective action only*, and growing (g) *worries of NATO unilateralism* in the international community. Like Ignatieff (2000), themes emerge from Schnabel and Thakur's (2000) text that (h) *problematize the principle of no-risk bombing* on critical civilian infrastructure.

There are familiar themes from earlier media narratives that resonate with enough force to continue shaping public perception of NATO intervention for in Kosovo. These themes are expanded or critiqued in the scholarship analyzed, but they continue to shape the conversation as they delineate the scope of concern and assessment. Uncomfortable realizations about the nature of the KLA were largely ignored, along with the motivations for NATO turning its back on Ibrahim Rugova in favor of a group that had just previously been listed as a terrorist organization by the U.S. Another relevant and

important theme these scholarly narratives continue to overlook (with the notable exception of Ignatieff) is the inherent flaw in a system of international law that fails to hold some nations accountable for violations if they have the power to veto any move toward indictment while acting aggressively toward other countries.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this study, I have argued the importance of researching the power and longevity of *weaponized* media narratives in cultural understandings of military conflict. I introduced the dimensions and conceptualizations to build a coherent and refined understanding of how and why the media becomes *weaponized*, discussed the rationale for the appropriateness of grounded theory analysis in discovering emerging themes of discourse in media and scholarly texts discussing NATO involvement in the former Yugoslavia, provided an in-depth explanation of methodology and method, and reported the themes emerging from my analysis. I now deliver the results of that analysis, identify the implications of the study, and discuss the contributions this research makes to building a more nuanced and holistic theoretical understanding of the relationship between media and military conflict.

Discussion of Results

In the previous chapter, I have conducted a multi-level analysis of the media narratives supporting NATO's attack on Yugoslavia that examines three separate events that played significant and controversial roles in the justification of military intervention: the reported massacre at Račak on January 15, 1999; the two-part Rambouillet Agreement of February 19, 1999 and Rambouillet Accord of March 18, 1999; and the NATO bombardment which began on March 24, 1999 and continued until June 10, 1999. The first part of this analysis uses a grounded theory approach to describe themes and relationships emerging within in *Associated Press*, *New York Times* and *The Times* (London) news coverage discourses.

Račak. The event that took place in the village of Račak in January of 1999 provided a major turning point in NATO's approach to Yugoslavia and was used by NATO to justify bombing. Coverage of the event returned again and again to certain themes throughout media reports.

Themes that emerge in the coverage of Račak unsurprisingly focus on the tragedy of the killings and represent central narratives for understanding the state of the conflict in Kosovo through emerging themes of mass murder, atrocities, and ethnic killings. Concerns over the increasingly hard repression of ethnic Albanian agitations for Kosovo's autonomy or independence had previously dominated media narratives of the Kosovo conflict, but the events at Račak represented a brutal and illustrative punctuation that reinforced the relationship between the reader, the suffering in Kosovo, and the idea of NATO intervention. This central narrative provided the galvanizing theme from which the conversation about NATO airstrikes and Milosevic's audacious defiance could proceed.

This mediated understanding of the conflict does not include perspectives from Albanians opposed to the idea of Kosovo's secession or Serbians faced with ethnic violence. While the official police claims of heavy fighting with KLA forces in the village have been duly noted in the narratives, the voices emerging from Serbian civilians in Račak media narratives are absent and give the impression that the ethnic Serbian population and the paramilitary units are one and the same. The dominant Albanian voices emerging in media narratives to explain what happened at Račak are those of the KLA, amplified by the incredible mileage that a single *AP* quote received when reprinted numerous times in both *AP* and *NYT* news reports. Also, the only official explanation of

the event is made by U.S. cease-fire monitor William Walker, who passed judgment before the international forensic team was able to investigate.

Just as the theme of NATO airstrikes gained momentum in the conversation surrounding the events at Račak, international concerns with the legality of such a move received no consideration whatsoever. UN Security Council members China and Russia continued to express opposition to what they saw as a possible intervention that violated international laws of national sovereignty and state aggression, yet the only themes informing the media narrative on intervention in reports during this time are based on highly-charged emotional accounts from a KLA rebel hiding in the mountains during the massacre and a diplomat from a country leading the drive for intervention. This perspective mirrors official U.S. support for intervention, where no effort was made to justify a legal authority beyond the existence of atrocities taking place in Kosovo (Ignatieff, 2000; Gray, 2008).

Rambouillet I. The peace talks in February of 1999 between Yugoslav, NATO, and ethnic Albanian Kosovo representatives became a major event in the decision to move toward NATO attacks against Yugoslavia, but not without a frustrating series of surprise agreements and refusals from Yugoslav and Kosovo Albanian negotiating teams. Notable trends that emerge in the coverage of Rambouillet focus on the impending nature of NATO airstrikes, the possible deployment of ground troops, and the ongoing failure of diplomacy to end this human rights crisis. These themes dominate the narratives of all three media outlets analyzed, and deviate only in how the themes are packaged for consumption. The homogeneity of the emerging themes raises questions about the

professional practices and limitations impacting the reporting that privileges certain sources, perspectives, events, and memes.

A subtle theme emerging in *AP* coverage revolves around the distribution of unbylined articles with specific and limited themes, reading much like a list of key messages that might be produced by a public affairs team or marketing department. These themes focused solely on NATO's military equipment capabilities, legal and/or moral authority to act, and will to follow through with the tasks. As discussed in Chapter 2, the use of hired public relations firms and professional public affairs campaigns by the U.S., U.K., and opposition in Kosovo helped to make the NATO intervention in Kosovo one of the most mediated conflicts ever fought. This raises interesting questions regarding the role the *AP* plays as an instrument in distributing public relation materials in U.S. military campaigns and whether the themes dominating *AP* narratives emerged from the reporters' journalistic investigations or were simply driven by information management needs. Other notable absences in the reporting narratives are themes interrogating the appropriateness of unilateral NATO action and force deployment instead of a collective UN peacekeeping operation and the implications of a foreign policy that disregards long-standing norms of national sovereignty. While the pressure was being put on Yugoslav and Albanian delegates to agree to NATO's draft agreement, the media analyzed in this study failed to report on why NATO had the authority to take on that coercive role in the first place and how that might change the geopolitical landscape beyond Kosovo.

Rambouillet II and Bombing. The failure of the March 1999 peace talks at Rambouillet and the commencement of NATO airstrikes against Yugoslavia established a foreign policy precedent largely ignored in favor of media narratives that packaged the

conflict simply as a contest of wills between NATO's credibility and a slippery villain. The talks are largely treated as a side issue by the media being analyzed, and themes emerging in media reports revolve around the debate shaping public understanding of the credibility of NATO's ability to follow through with intervention in Kosovo. While reports from the *Times* differ from *AP* and *NYT* narratives by way of the nuance and emerging themes with a more critical perspective, there is a notable drop in themes critical of the KLA despite earlier narratives casting doubt on the organization's legitimacy. Additionally, there is a notable absence of any mention of the Albanian delegation leader, Ibrahim Rugova, who had pushed for the nonviolent settlement of Kosovo in reports preceding and following the failure of the Rambouillet talks. All attention seems to have been on KLA leadership, as narrative themes emerge that focus on the role of the KLA exclusively in relation to Albanian acceptance of the Rambouillet provisions. It is also notable that not a single narrative theme emerges in regards to the provisions of the agreement to which the Yugoslav negotiators based their objections, despite the existence of a copy of the provisions being published in *Le Monde Diplomatique* and its discussion in foreign media outlets.

The majority of media narratives surrounding the end of the Rambouillet talks centered on whether or not Milosevic would attempt to call NATO's bluff and herald in the implementation of airstrikes that had become ubiquitous in NATO statements over the previous two months. This focus shifted with the commencement of the bombing campaign to center on the undeniable power of NATO weaponry and success of military strikes. It is impossible to know why media narratives, after the start of airstrikes, focused so narrowly on these themes, but the expulsion of journalists with citizenship from

NATO alliance countries no doubt played a role in limiting the pool of angles available to the reporters. Regardless of the reason, reports during this period mainly relay statements from NATO authorities and sideline perspectives of civilians in the war zone. Narratives questioning the humaneness of humanitarian intervention do not emerge as a significant theme in media reports.

End of NATO Bombardment. By the end of the NATO airstrikes on Yugoslavia on June 10, 1999, questions of NATO's legitimacy and will to intervene were moot. Media narratives predominantly approach the end of the bombing through themes relating to victory. However, themes suggesting that the humanitarian crisis was not yet over also emerged as Albanian refugees poured back into the province and Serbian refugees fled in the other direction. Despite the long-delayed vindication for NATO and the reversal of fortunes for ethnic populations in Kosovo, there is a noteworthy drop in coverage from the AP for which there is no explanation. Themes of NATO credibility passing the test of Milosevic's defiance dominated the *NYT* narratives, unfolding alongside emerging themes of now-futile Serbian aggression. *AP* narratives were particularly celebratory of victory and skeptical of the possibilities of prosecuting departing Serbian war criminals, and *Times* narratives focused on the lasting legacy of Serbian war crimes and aggressive scorched earth retreat.

Throughout news reports surrounding the cessation of NATO airstrikes on Yugoslavia, all of the media outlets produced themes relating to Serbian war crimes, the credibility of NATO intervention in Kosovo being confirmed through victory and control, the uncertainties of Russia's deployment of ground troops in Kosovo ahead of NATO peacekeepers, and the refugee crisis. The continued focus on Serbian war crimes provides

a reminder of the moral imperative driving NATO airstrikes and the return of Albanian refugees serves as a vindicating justification for declaring the end a victory for NATO. The emerging themes relating to Russia's surprise entry into Kosovo seem to run contrary to an overall optimistic picture of resolution, and the frequency of the narratives suggests that this was an unexpected development adding a new twist to a carefully choreographed narrative. NATO statements in reaction to this development appear haphazard, claiming that the Russian troops were there in cooperation while scrambling to ensure that NATO peacekeepers remained in control of the area.

From Račak to the end of NATO airstrikes, the media reports analyzed in this research all convey a similar set of themes that generally support the preferred narrative of NATO's policy of military intervention in Yugoslavia. While these narratives might differ in how they are packaged together from one outlet to another, the limitations of how the Kosovo crisis should be communicated remain more or less in line with the scenario presented by official government sources. At times, there were unanticipated events that result in a new twist on the narrative – such as the refusal of the Albanian negotiators to sign at Rambouillet and the resulting unexpected delay of NATO's bombing campaign, or the blitz of Russian troops taking the airport in Kosovo and forcing NATO's hand. Nevertheless, the recipe for making sense of the Kosovo crisis can be read through the narrative themes emerging in this study. Weaponized media narratives consistently paint a picture of NATO's intervention in a supportive and inevitable light, proving a potent and crucial weapon in the alliance's arsenal. With the withdrawal of Yugoslav troops and the exodus of Serbs from Kosovo, the need to maintain this press offensive subsided. However, the themes through which the media

narratives communicated the war have a shelf-life that extends beyond the conflict in which they are deployed.

Scholarship. The second phase of this study focuses on subsequent scholarly understandings of NATO intervention in Kosovo, as well as if and how they are influenced by media narratives emerging during the conflict. The analysis in Chapter 4 examines how closely these scholarly texts conform to the themes presented by the mainstream media messages.

Coppieters' (2008) book examining the moral constraints of war continued to approach the NATO intervention in Kosovo from the perspective of the legitimacy debate theme first emerging in press reports at the time of the Rambouillet talks. Coppieters' debate is grounded within the conceptualizations created in media narratives such as the moral authority for intervention, credibility of humanitarian intervention, and the sanctity of sovereignty. Within the framework provided by the themes first established in media reports, Coppieters rejects that NATO's intervention was justified in acting without legitimate authority. The presumption of NATO's moral mandate emerged as an unquestioned theme in media reports during the conflict. By questioning the precedent set by NATO's intervention policy, Coppieters breaks from the preferred NATO narrative. However, he continues to make his case within the thematic borders carried over from media themes, suggesting that those themes emerging years prior continue to influence the ways in which Coppieters constructs cultural memory of the event through his text.

Gray's (2008) treatise also features familiar themes of legal and moral justification for intervention and the realities on the ground that prompted the action, but she interrogates them in a more deliberate and detailed manner that exposes the holes in

assertions that media narratives never questioned. Despite Gray's rejection of NATO arguments, she maintains the same thematic map to conceptualize the debate (without taking into account subsequent reports and investigations that alter the historical record of the Kosovo insurgency). This maintenance of similar themes reproduces the dominant framing of the debate, even if her conclusions disagree completely. This continuity also suggests that the narrative script produced in media reports maintains a perspective that excludes new concepts (such as the weighing of end results against the initial justifications). However, a notable theme emerges in Gray's treatise that is not canon and runs contrary to media presumptions of NATO's tacit UN approval. This theme, emerging in narratives citing the UN's explicit rejection of the humanitarian intervention doctrine as a threat to core values of international security, suggests that perspectives can evolve to reject dominant themes established in the collective memory through weaponized media reports even while they continue to define the discussion.

Ignatieff's (2000) treatise on NATO military intervention in Kosovo breaks new ground with narrative themes, examining the event from an innovative perspective of morality. This new moral argument transforms the conversation on the morality of asymmetric war, the risk-free assault NATO unleashed on Kosovo, and the moral hazard of placing not only Serbian populations in a "turkey shoot," but putting Albanian lives at risk in Kosovo without support in order to protect the lives of NATO personnel who act from 50,000 feet. Considering that Ignatieff's text came so shortly after the NATO intervention in Kosovo, the ability to conceptualize the events without limitations of a concentrated deployment of weaponized media narratives is impressive.

Schnabel and Thakur's (2000) scholarship examining NATO intervention in Kosovo adds more nuance and reflection to the understanding of NATO's bombardment of Yugoslavia, but throughout their chapters emerge themes restating dominant media narratives. Familiar mediated themes such as the one-sided nature of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, UN authorization as circumventable, the preservation of NATO credibility through action, and the moral mandate of NATO continue to resonate in this treatise. While Schnabel and Thakur expand upon these themes, they continue to shape the debate without the addition of new themes for conceptualizing the conflict.

Longevity of Media Narratives

This study examines the longitudinal impact of a weaponized media in the construction of perceptions and cultural memories of the conflicts in which it is wielded. The central ideas that materialize from this research are that a weaponized media's relationship with military conflict has far reaching ramifications. Beyond their role as being the first draft of history, these media narratives exercise a lingering influence on long-term conceptualizations of conflict and have the capacity to shape the terms of cultural memory for years to come. This is not to argue that the scholarly narratives are doomed to regurgitate the same strategically crafted propaganda and undermine scholarship's ability to offer context and perspective on these events. Academic texts can indeed critique popular assumptions and even revolutionize the way we conceive of events that are largely understood through media reports. We see this in the work of Michael Ignatieff, who flipped the moral argument on its head and put forward a very different perspective on the conflict in Kosovo. Time, investigation, and critical analysis can better explore the deep-level causes of war from a perspective that has more

resources than a military press briefing or choreographed interview opportunity. Ignatieff conducts his own primary investigation, in essence building new narratives through his interactions in the field. Conversely, a dependence on secondary data may lead to an overreliance on media reports for an understanding of events. Scholars exist within the ongoing cultural narrative, and those relying on data grounded in war coverage may be vulnerable to accepting the inherent assumptions without considering alternative themes and concepts absent from those media texts. As Gray, Coppieters, and Schnabel and Thakur demonstrate, scholars can produce critical and insightful contributions to cultural understanding of a conflict and poignant condemnations of established fallacies while still limiting the potential expansion of the conversation to new angles free from manufactured media perspectives.

The development of nuanced scholarly understandings of conflict is critical to establishing a useful collective history that contributes to both understanding and critical analysis. Likewise, avoiding a scenario where our own propaganda comes to limit our understanding of a military conflict to only those perspectives deemed useful and supportive at the time of their manufacture can inhibit our ability to self-assess and avoid repetitive thinking, demagoguery, and intellectual stagnation.

The Weaponization of Media

In this study, I argue that in the context of media and war the most appropriate way to view the battle for control over media is as a battle for their weaponization, with far-reaching power to shape geopolitical realities, and activated in order to achieve political and economic domination. In this way, media content foregrounds and in various ways privilege the frames, sources, and narrative accounts that accord with and directly

correspond with the stated positions and interests of one party to a military conflict. The mechanics of this activation can be identified through the presence of one or more of the following indicators of a weaponized media: (a) *The deployment of PR agencies to disseminate stories* intended to support one or more sides to military conflict through the shaping of public understanding and awareness obfuscates both the sources of conflict information and its motivations from the public. It accomplishes this through the strategic targeting of press vulnerabilities related to overstretched newsrooms rushing to meet 24-hour news cycle deadlines with limited staff, through the provision of pre-crafted narratives from “third party” sources that cannot easily be traced back to the military or government. (b) *The penetration of newsrooms and editorial offices with staff on the payroll of military and intelligence agencies* facilitates the subversion of media representations of war throughout the news reporting process, taking advantage of internal industry gatekeeping and control mechanisms governing the production and dissemination of news. This co-option of the process, through the infiltration of media with *information agents* to influence content, weaponizes media narratives from the field to the printing press. (c) *Actions by the military to utilize professional structures as a means to direct media narrative production* – through embedding and pool systems – showcase sophisticated efforts to manipulate the perspectives of journalists in a manner that reigns in, directs, and disciplines media portrayals of war. The achieved or attempted control and limitation of press movement in the field constitutes another way in which media is weaponized in support of war. The weaponization of media also occurs with (d) *the exercising of control over the print and broadcast media of opposing interests*. The capture, control, or destruction of unfriendly media infrastructure and/or personnel

suppresses counter-narratives and privileges those representations already cultivated to support the conflict agenda. (e) *The use of media to acquire military intelligence and/or facilitate military action* is an explicit and kinetic use of the press to support military conflict. It moves media personnel from the role of *information agents* to that of reconnaissance or participants, weaponizing media in a manner that complicates the traditional rules of warfare and places journalists across the board at risk of being treated as combatants.

This study identifies direct actions taken by the military and/or intelligence agencies to activate the media as a weapon. When any of the above indicators are present in a conflict, it constitutes a form of weaponization. This list is by no means intended to be exhaustive, and the relationship between the media and military action is dynamic and evolving. The extent of weaponization may range in strength and scope. The overall scope of weaponization in a conflict will depend on how many different indicators of weaponized media are present. Each mode of weaponization identified above will vary upon a continuum of strength depending on the frequency and duration of the indicators, as well as the gravity of implications for the overall conduct of the war.

Conclusion

A robust and thorough understanding of how media is used in conflict must also explore how propaganda is deployed, and by whom, as well as the effectiveness of the propaganda and the longevity of weaponized media narratives within the public's understanding of events.

In this research I put forward a comprehensive theory of the *weaponization of media* that moves beyond the scope of existing propaganda theories (and, in the context

of propaganda, agenda-setting, and framing theories) that explain to what end propaganda works and the ways in which the media system enables the use of propaganda. I situate this inquiry into the interrelationships between media, power, and military conflict within the context of political and economic environment. I identify the emerging themes in media coverage of key events influencing NATO's military campaign against Yugoslavia and discuss how those themes support the legitimacy and necessity for war. Additionally, I identify the longevity of those media narratives on important scholarly treatises on the NATO intervention in Kosovo and discuss the influence they exert on the historical record and cultural conceptualization of the military conflict. In this way, I demonstrate that the implications of media narratives are far reaching and often limit the context and perspective of scholarship when this builds on assumptions that are grounded in journalistic coverage of war. Furthermore, this study identifies a paucity of investigations into and critique of the deep-level causes of war in both the media reports on military conflict and the cultural record produced by scholarship. These historical records fail to identify the calculated economic motivations for war or the alternatives for a peaceful and mutually-acceptable negotiated outcome.

The significance of this dissertation lies in the more nuanced consideration it provides regarding the production, reach, and implications of media narratives of war. This research offers a better understanding of the study of propaganda, extends the conversation on the influence of propaganda narratives on war and conflict scholarship, and contributes to the literature that examines how the military strives for media and informational dominance, showing how this can better be understood as the deployment of *weaponized* media on a battlefield of public opinion, perspective, and memory. The

power of this weapon stems, in part, from the impact that war reporting has on our academic understandings of conflict. Recognizing the lingering influence of weaponized media narratives on scholarly inquiry can help us better appreciate the enormity of influence that media representations can have on public willingness to endorse conflict, and recognize the power and endurance of media to sculpt mainstream representations of war in the public consciousness.

War reporting and conflict scholarship are intrinsically interconnected and conceptually dependent, with socio-political consequences requiring a reflexive awareness of the academy's vulnerability to rigid propaganda narratives. Because of the value placed on existing literature in the production of knowledge, scholarship is vulnerable to the managed representations of events it seeks to explain. When scholarship reproduces propaganda, it becomes complicit and reifies those messages into the canons of history. To assume that the academy is somehow insulated from those perspectives is self-deceiving. Recognition of the longevity of weaponized media narratives highlights the potential for public policy decisions to be influenced by scholarship reflecting a government's own politically expedient propaganda back at itself, reinforcing incomplete or inaccurate representations of military conflict instead of creative thinking and critical perspectives.

Limitations and Future Research

The conclusions of qualitative research often rest in the perceptions of one researcher, and it is important that we demand more collaborative qualitative inquiry in the field. As such, this grounded theory study could benefit from the addition of team

coding and analysis to provide collaborative judgment in interpreting qualitative evidence.

The two newspapers and one news agency selected for analysis in this study should not be considered as representative of all media reporting on the NATO intervention in Kosovo. Time and methodological constraints limit the number of newspapers and reports that this study can examine. Additionally, this dissertation is limited to print media only, and an expanded analysis of broadcast or online reports was not possible within the time frame of this project. Comparing narrative themes in this study to those used in Yugoslav newspapers and the Tanjug news agency would provide a more nuanced level of understanding that was not possible in the time frame of this study. Additionally, an examination of whether the themes emerging in media reports studied here share any similarities to those used in the 2011 NATO humanitarian intervention campaign in Libya might shed some further light on the mechanics of deploying a weaponized media and could prove an interesting extension of this study. Likewise, expanding the grounded theory analysis of scholarly texts to include the entire text and/or a greater number of treatises would provide a more thorough understanding of the narrative theme longevity noted in this dissertation and represent another possible extension of this analysis. Finally, because story headlines are often written by editors and not the author of the story and the two often represent a story in different ways, a comparative analysis of the two might yield additional insight into the relationship between editors and headline narratives.

The evidence of propagandized media representations and its longevity explored in this dissertation are better explained through the lens of *weaponization* than through a

media-centric system-type explanation such as Herman and Chomsky's (1988) or the more limited considerations inherent in *framing*. This work is part of a larger endeavor seeking to further explore the ways in which the media is deployed in support of military conflict. While this study noted the tangible steps that NATO took to coerce the media into supporting its aims through the weaponization of media, future studies should continue the exploration in order to identify additional indicators of the use of media in support of military conflict.

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