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News Media in War Culture

The Stranglehold of Fear

D-thesis

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ABSTRACT

Fear has found its latest instrument in the news media. The discourse of fear in news presentations produces gasping meanings, which we can compellingly indulge in. Fear not just being entertaining, but one of the ways in which we relate to reality, is used as a protection mechanism of our status quo. The purpose of this thesis is to examine the extent to which Fox News tends to use, and further reproduce, the fear discourse to form identities and meaning. The method utilized in this thesis is frame analysis, which is a form of discourse analysis. The primary results indicate that Fox News undeniably uses the fear discourse, for entertainment and the proliferation of the status quo - meaning system. In addition, Fox News applies fear blatantly in the news presentations, as acts of courage and virtuous loyalty to reporting.

Key words: Fear, Frame analysis, Meaning, News media, Infotainment.
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1 Introduction

“People are most dangerous when they believe totally in one narrowly stated idea – the “sound-bite”, the slogan, the flag, and close their eyes and ears to all else about them. They refuse dialogue; refuse ever to admit to another. Cut the tiny rug out from under their one idea, their one sacred “object”, and you leave them no meaning whatsoever to fall back on. Their identity, their “self”, disappears.” Clark (2002, p270)

In modern times, the news media has become our great storyteller in society, and at the same time the conveyor of our current ideas about what the world is about. The news media functions as a persuader of ideas, where people conform to the most persuasive ones promoted. The news media aims to tell us what we want to know, based on the meanings we share. News is consequently a frame on the world (Tuchman, 1978). Through it, people learn about themselves and the ‘others’.

The news influences the meanings people have. In the context of meaning, the stories presented by the news, is a specific activity. The topics most presented by the news media are likely to be the topics that the audiences identify as the most pressing issue (Tuchman, 1978). The identity is involved in some sort of action, when it participates in observing the news presentations. This action is a discourse action, linking emotions (the observer) and meanings (the news presentations). If the identification with the news content does not exist, then neither will there be any feelings involved. This discursive action/activity only takes place when the media work in accordance with the meanings people share. This sharing of meaning is our culture, and it structures our perception, knowledge and understandings of the world.

Besides influencing our meanings, the news itself is a construction based on our preceded meanings of the world. Our journalists bring the most important features of ‘reality’ to our attention. That which is most important is mostly structured on our preconceived meanings. Therefore our news is never actually ‘new’, the news media bring the same features to our attention repetitively. To understand this idea of news not being ‘new’, we have to understand how our cultural meanings structure our news; the same cultural meanings that structure our identities.

This thesis spotlights the news media’s work on the dualistic meanings, the chauvinistic ‘we’ and ‘them’ projection and its propagations through using and propagating fear, as their safety-
Fear has its own meanings. By means of superimposing fearful meanings on foreign relations, the news media make the news more pleasurable and enthralling.

This thesis was initially intended to be about media and peace processes. But while I was reading about peace and its relations to the media, the interest shifted to how fear and its abstractions is a strong force in the constructions of our news. I also came across the perception of ‘War Culture’ in the book, ‘The War Puzzle’ by John Vasquez’, which will provide the overall cultural context in this thesis. So this thesis is exploring the force of fear within a ‘war culture’, in the situation of media news presentations of cultural meanings.

1.1 The discourse of fear
Fear is as old as human culture, and its expression in the news has many appearances. The word fear is used blatantly in the news presentations, but this only hides the duality that it is based on, and the complex constructions it maintains through other forms of discourses. The feelings of fear are not the only aspects constructing the context of fear; fear has many functions and dualities. And some is blurred in the perceived and assumed context of the word fear. In this thesis there are two contextual distinctions of the force behind the fear discourse in the news media, the usage of fear and its propagations. Yet they are not separated, the separation here is for clarification and understanding of different aspects that are involved.
Each aspect here in the propagations and usages of fear will be clarified as the context for this thesis. I must emphasize again, that ‘the discourse is its own action’, for the reason that the discourse of fear is a procedural construction, which depends on a range of contributors. These contributors are those I have written in the graphic above. These aspects are all involved, for the force of fear to have an impact and continuity in the news presentations. By understanding each one separately and their relation to each other, it gets much clearer how the fear discourse is a force in the construction of news presentations.

The theory of ‘war culture’ is based on the notion that we learn war, and my emphasis is on the learning. These aspects I am presenting here are all learned and relearned, in an ongoing ‘war culture’.

1.2 Intention of thesis
This thesis focuses on the discourse of news presentations. I am going to investigate the construction of the discourse of fear in foreign relations. In the analysis I will emphasize the cultural scenery of fear and how it is used. The aim of this thesis is not only to study how fear is presented in the news, but also how fear is distributing meaning and emotions. The thesis is also relating the discourse of fear to the socio-cultural context.

The channel of choice for this study is Fox News; yet there are much worse channels out there, in the sense of sensationalism and the propagation of fear. The Fox News Channel is an American news medium, created by Rupert Murdoch and owned by the Fox Entertainment Group. It is shown worldwide and in the US 85 million households are provided. I have conducted a frame analysis based upon Fox News reporting of US foreign relations, during November and December of 2007. The news propagations I have analyzed here include 8 different presentations from Fox, which reports US relations, to different countries and events that are happening, in the world outside. The 8 video presentations is the material stated here, which is derived from news presentations from the Fox on-line news database:

1. Kitty Hawk snub! 2007-11-25
2. Security expert on Slovak police report that radioactive material ..., 2007-11-29
4. Iran halted nuclear weapons program, 2007-12-3
5. Al Qaida tries to sneak in to the US, 2007-12-3
The purpose of the study, through a discourse/frame analysis, is to investigate how the Fox News use and propagate fear, in their foreign relations presentations. With this investigation I am providing ideas on how we live in, in the sense of constructing fear, a ‘war culture’. The theory of ‘war culture’ and the other segments which I provide on fear is there to form the context for the analysis involved in this thesis on how news is being constructed in a certain way.

1.3 Research Question
How is Fox-news making use of and propagating fear in their foreign relations news presentations?

1.4 Using and Propagating Fear
One of the discourses of interest in the news, are the ones that proclaim future threats from the ‘others’. Our news channels seem to promote that they can tell us what the future will be like. Mediating uncertain ‘facts’, makes us crave more information and images from the media, for some kind of certainty. Here is an example from Moeller’s (1999, p162) *Compassion fatigue*:

“...when the media seek to label a crisis, they often choose that label which holds the greatest news value. ‘For the most part we do not first see, and then define,’ wrote Walter Lippman in *Public Opinion*, ‘we define first and then see.’ ‘Terrorism’ is a word that seizes the attention of an audience. Acts of terror are lethal and there is a presumption of future risk. Political assassinations, as narrowly defined, while lethal, do not typically pose a continued risk. *Terrorism* implies an ongoing threat to innocent people whose only fault lies in being in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

This is not from Fox, but it shows how hypothesizing news, besides being sensational, motivate panic and uncertainty. On top of this, the news gives continuity to possible risks which forms a need to follow the news presentations in the future. Not saying whether we want the sensation of fear or not, it is clear that fear is productive. And wanting to be free
from fear is its own battle. Therefore it has its own market. To further explain my bewilderment I am choosing one of Chomsky’s interesting statements (Edgley, 2000, p132):

“Throughout history, the standard device to mobilize a reluctant population has been the fear of an evil enemy”

And as Edgley points to, “Chomsky notes the problem America has had, since the Soviet fall, is in finding a satisfactory cause to stimulate the ‘primitive hatred,’” (Edgley, 2000, p132)

This manufactured future of threats is the news media’s need for uncertainty, to retain the status quo. And it communicates in culture through ‘factual claims’ - through ‘objective journalism’ - and through the idea of a ‘watchdog role of the news media’. This is a perpetual motivation, for sustaining the status quo, in constructing the need to know what is happening outside. Factuality, neutrality and objectivity are the news media’s way of maintaining the status quo reality and their meanings in a rightful way. (Chomsky, 1989) I will clarify what I mean by the status quo and authority in the theory of ‘war culture’.

The news media is also using fear in specific ways. The usage of fear through security is sometimes unclear to our perception. The enthrallment we get out of the more sensational and dramatic news is not always perceived in the right context. To observe fearful events is a sense of safety in itself, which we get out of the comparison from our position (our living room) - to the dramatic happenings in the news about the outside world. With that, there is a knowledge based protection that knowing what is happening gives its own security, and being aware of the most dangerous crisis in the world - while being safe, by design gives us a sanctuary. This usage of fear as an entertainment or so called infotainment becomes a great force for propaganda and the creation of our perceived reality. We are not only interested in the news; we are propagating our conventions through them. This propagation is described in Ginneken (1997) by Goffman (1986), who says, “the design of a reported event is fully responsive to our demand – which are not for facts but for typifications. Their telling demonstrates the power of our conventional understandings to cope with bizarre potentials of social life, the furthest reaches of experience. What appears, then, to be a threat to our making sense of the world turns out to be an ingeniously selected defense of it.”
Besides creating uncertainty, the news media provide safety in knowing, and safety in comparison to the horrific events presented. These will be further explained in the theory section.

1.5 Limitations
I have chosen a single channel, ‘The Fox News’ for the reason of time limit and work boundary. Therefore the thesis cannot proclaim its validity to all news channels. This thesis only investigates Fox News discourse of fear in foreign relations, it is a frame analysis of how fear is being used and propagated; no political or ideological discourses will be analyzed. Fear has many different characters, this thesis is only focusing on the construction of fear discourses in foreign relations, the ‘we’ and ‘them’ separation.
2 War Culture

To understand the context behind the process of what the news media is constructing, and that the news medium itself is a construction of the same cultural context, I am going to describe the connections between identity, meaning and fear. These ideas are forming the theory of ‘war culture’, which also is the overall context for this thesis. Fairclough (1997) argues that in discourse analysis some degree of context is relevant to investigation of discourse practices. Many analysts focus upon the direct situation of the event (the ‘context of situation’), and may be referring to some institutional context, but they say little about the wider social and cultural context. Fairclough’s view is that the wider contextual matrix must be appreciated (Fairclough, 1997, s50, s51). My investigation is on Fox News, yet Fox News is not separated from the ‘war culture’, that I am in.

2.1 Status quo and Learning

Language and common knowledge of the world forms our perception and beliefs of our identity, meanings and values in life. In (Matheson, 2005, p3), Michael Billig (2001) argues, “It is no coincidence that the only species which possesses the ability of language, is a species which engages in organized warfare. Utterance is necessary to kill and die for the honour of the group” (Billig 2001: 217).

Matheson says that almost all discourse analysts agree that there is no war without talk about war. Warfare depends on language to create it at every level, from conceiving of state-sanctioned violence to planning to orders, and it is language that justifies it through philosophical values and heroic stories. In this context the constructions of meaning, emotions and the so called enemy are all products of language. The language we inhibit has formed a duel that is based on domination with and through our own esteemed meaning. The most dominating value system/structure is what we call: authority or the status quo - which is our perceived meaning of the world. The struggle over ideological values and ideas of the perceived world is the quest for domination in social life; this domination is accepted by those
who seek cultural power. (Matheson, 2005, p5) Therefore language and other symbolic images are the fundamentals of power. In (Matheson, 2005, p6), Fiske (1991: 347) puts it; “the textual struggle for meaning is the precise equivalent of the social struggle for power”.

People through the need to understand - want power, therefore we make sense of things which are shared, and by that we have some force within the community in which we live. We conform to the dominant structures of meaning in society, whether they be spiritual, Marxist or capitalistic, often it is with those which have become so firmly established in our community that they are natural to us. This feeling of naturalness makes us misplace the obviousness of our power struggle and we take on ideological/political or moral positions, in relation to how to change the other deviant meanings. (Matheson, 2005, p6) The protection of one’s meanings is therefore a constant battle, and when this is ongoing the status quo is sustained.

Jacobsen and Galtung presents results, from examination of the massive “Correlates of (post-Napoleonic) War” project, which the conclusion is that, the “Western worlds predominant security parameters throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been and remain those of a quintessential ‘War Culture’. This is a culture whose realpolitik security prescriptions, though generally perceived as designed to deter threats, have in fact been conflict-stimulating and precipitating rather than conflict-avoiding or transcending.” (Jacobsen, 2000, p 26) So in the meaning of, providing safety and deterring fearful threats, we are actually forcing struggle.

In Vasquez (1993) theory of war, he describes how war is learned. There are two ways of learning:

- People learn to make war as a general practice that is available to them.
- War becomes and is an appropriate response to a particular situation.

This learning goes from generation to generation through the re-experiences of ‘new’ wars. War is invented and re-invented; the reinvention happens as an identification of situations that are best dealt with - by going to war, this breeding is a cultural behavior that we organize. (Vasquez, 1993, p41) Learning has a crucial role in war. War grows out of a sequence of learned interactions. We are trained to go to war from the failure of ‘normal politics and diplomacy’ to produce acceptable results, these results are our cultural ideals. The
propagation of war happens through our interactions within culture, and it is not a result or an effect of some natural conditions. The ideal, for our society, that we pursue, follows us into a perceived sequential evolvement in war. Vasquez therefore thinks that studying war is not looking for its causes, rather the interactions that take place within the already existing structure, show how we generate political causes, to go to war. We are looking for the cause/conflict through our perceived search, which in itself is conflict based. Vasquez explains how this produces the kind of relationship between two (or more) countries in a conflict spiral; the intractability leads to more conflictual actions. (Vasquez, 1993, p44 - p46)

This spiral of conflict and its propagations, through power politics assertion of peace, are what form the theory of ‘war culture’. A culture that doesn’t know how to get out of its own creation, and by using the discourses and meanings of peace and security, the struggle can continue until some future, were security and peace is accomplished. I am forced to give this thin explanation of Vasquez theory, as of the structure of my thesis is not allotted to this. My interest from here is to see and understand how we propagate the discourse of fear, by learning our conflict based meanings in culture through the news media, and what its attractions are.

Fear and the duel for safety is a significant element of the existence of conflict between nations, this might not be that hard to understand. But we are at the same time, so fascinated with fear - the one thing that we do not want to deal with. Robin (2004. p 40) gives an idea on the learning of fear through rightfully trained teachers, which would teach that political fear is useful, that it secures some essential happiness. Once we understand the moral meanings of fear, we join forces in its cultivation. Those who were not committed, in mediating these fearful meanings, and those who challenged the political order, would become punished, disciplined, kicked out of the society or even exterminated. “People thus would help to bring into being the very object of fear that kept them in thrall.” (Robin, 2004. p 40)

To understand that we are forced, through fear, to continue on the same path, it is important to understand how our perception of the world is formed through different cultural meanings that are taught from childhood. We have to understand that we are not free to think about whatever we want, everything we want is culturally taught. Ginneken (1997, p15) asks, “what is the most striking thing about our world views? And answers: that we deny that we have any.”
The ideal of objectivity and the outside observer, has distorted the subjective act of constructing reality. We believe that the news provides a picture of reality, when it actually is constructing it. (Tuchman 1978)

In the situation of objectivity we often use the word fact, which comes from the Latin word *facare*, which means making. In this sense all facts are artifacts. (Ginneken, 1997) Therefore our search for so called facts is formed through ideological beliefs, in the search for righteousness and power. The righteousness that says that: I am being objective or I know the truth. Then the claiming of some meaningful truth is consequently forced, through the fear that the meaning is based on.

I am going to further describe fear and its relation to the formation of identity, meaning, emotions, and finally its expression in journalism. This will give a context for my thesis, an understanding in how the identity and its perceptions are a foundation of ideas inherited from ‘war culture’.

2.2 The History of Fear

“It is seldom noted, but fear is the first emotion experienced by a character in the Bible. Not desire, not shame, but fear. Adam eats from the tree, discovers he is naked, and hides from God, confessing. “I was afraid, because I was naked.” (Robin, 2004. p1)

This is from the introduction of Robin’s book on Fear: The History of a Political Idea. In this book he describes fear as having its own government that we often misunderstand, which makes it hard to understand how and why we fear. At the same time we appreciate the fear when it’s there, for its force which makes us come-together better than any moral meaning ever can. The force of fear makes us unite, whether it is in the name of nationalism or peace. An example given by Edgley, when fear of an enemy is very useful in promoting national unity, was when images of a hostile world beyond Nazi Germany’s borders, were evoked to create support at home for the nationalist cause; publicizing political tensions on other countries, amplified national loyalty (Edgley, 2000, p141).

Our political fear grounds our contemporary public life, yet we refuse to see the conflicts and misery it exhales. We look through fearful eyes and use its force as an instrument for political
advancement. Robin thinks that perhaps we seek: to be in thrall, perpetually, to fear. That fear with its force should free us, of our conflicts in the world, if we continue to obey its demand. Robin also says that we should probably look for freedom elsewhere, and approach fear for what it is: “The hunger for conflict and paranoia.” (Robin, 2004, p3) We are passive without fear, but with it, we are in the strongest emotion which a person can feel. With these heightened energy we bring about most of our success. Robin (2004, p4) describes how the realm of politics must be the same as fear and somehow we separate them apart:

“This without danger and consequent fear, we not only lack passionate conviction about political values, we lack all conviction. We feel dead. Only in the face of fear will we be roused to action and believe that there is something in the world justifying our efforts to stay in it.”

This sense of justification is the construction of identity in its most forceful way, the feeling of fear is the force that keeps the identity to move from one uncertainty to the other. Fear is how we are propagating our politics, with the mask of changing the name on the surface. A similarity Robins mentions is the religious text Genesis which was the face of fear, as an artifact of our moral beliefs. For the philosophers Aristotle and Augustine, the dualism of god and evil, the sacred and profane, was what made fear logical since we couldn’t fulfill the god. (Robin, 2004, p7) This fear of god and evil has had its different faces through history, our culture is the teacher of fear and it shows us why to fear, who and what to fear, and when and where to fear. These, what and when to fear, is, in contemporary society, forcefully propagated by the news media and this propagation of dualistic myths, is, what I mean by propaganda. The cultivation of fear is an interconnected relationship between the construction of our identities and its need to fit society’s meaning system, which we have baptized as culture. This meaning system is a teaching of what is good and bad, and the political structures only work when these values are accepted for reality. Fear is the feeling when the meaning system is not met, or when it is perceived meaningless, without some taught fear there wouldn’t be any search for security or meaningfulness. Thinking that something has a lot of meaning makes it significant, and an important force within the identity, as righteousness and justification. Yet fear is the foundation of this vigor. (Robin, 2004)
2.3 Immunity

To be immune means to be protected, and in relation to the news media, it means getting protection through the knowledge, facts and reality presented. Feeling safe in knowing what is happening or what might happen in the future. The identity not only feels safe with more knowledge, but also at the same time strengthens the foundation of meaning systems that the identity already is based on. The identity, through awareness of presented events, by the news media, strengthens and fortifies its sense of rectitude, safely behind the screen. This explanation might seem ambiguous, but fear has its own duality. The discourse of fear is not only shaping paranoia and horror; it also accomplishes to provide the struggle for safety. This struggle for safety is performed through seeking knowledge and awareness about fearful events happening outside.

The proliferation of cultural awareness now taking place in our societies is the result of mediated images in global-media, which has formed the idea of a revolutionary transformation of our culture. We have great expectations that the ‘new’ and advanced culture will enhance our knowledge and awareness. That people will be more secure and free in all of our endeavors; this is a ‘new’ utopian outlook that Robins (1996) trashes. A technological enlightenment should by now be boring and viewed as a compulsion to thrive on the projected fantasy, of some meaningful transcendence. By forming fear in to an entertainment viewed in a safe position, constructing our identities and meanings become even more fantastic. The protective power of the images we have, the images and knowledge provided by the news media accomplishes a separation and a distance to the fear-provoking elements in the world. We can see the disasters in the world and at the same time be safe in our living-room, enjoying a sandwich, and not worry about the consequences concerning what we are seeing. Robins (1996) thinks that this, being free from fear or being in control of it, is crucial to understanding the technological expansion of the global media and its misapprehension of safety, and man’s sensation of being sovereign. “The rationalization that should liberate man from fear is something like: Man imagines himself free from fear when there is no longer anything unknown. Nothing at all may remain outside, because the mere idea of outsideness is the very source of fear.” (Robins, 1996, s12)

Robins (1996) thinks that technologically mediated images are the modern way of separating ourselves from the aspect we find frightening and cruel. To understand this proliferated
disengagement of the world and the primitive flight response to our fear of the unknown is to understand the provoking and sensational news in our contemporary society. By engaging ourselves with what the news proclaims as real threats, disasters and crises, giving us the facts on reality as it occurs; we feel a safety in knowing the distant harsh unknown. The news producers and journalists knowing this aspect of human struggle for safety, and their own struggle for it, which might be less known, can only inflame and perpetuate the sensationalism of fear in their representations of the events. It is not that they are living by a conspiracy plan, to engage the public for their own benefit. Rather the public as the journalists, perceive the news as something that should be about raising the awareness of the unknown. So the news obtains some meaning. At the same time events are only newsworthy when they represent our perceived ‘meaningfulness’. This construction of events into forced meaning, in essence, is that journalists represent unusual, unknown and unexpected events in the constructions of meaning, which we already have. (Matheson, 2005. p 18)

2.4 Meaning

In our search for safety, we need to be unsafe so the propagation of our meanings and stories can continue. Our culture demands this, it needs it for survival. Thus, the news is not telling us something new, the news are only propagating and reminding us of already known structures of knowledge. (Matheson, 2005. p 18) Clark (2002, p158) describes meaning in relation to stories, saying that we need meaning to live by. We need stories to feel meaning and feel that we belong to something important, and therefore we seek them out. Once we find a foundation that explains who we are and how we should live, we cling to it ferociously. (Carter, 2002, p158) Carter continues to describe that human beings protect the meaningfulness of the story that structures their lives, these stories give its own safety. We defend it from threats weather they come from within the group or without. We resist changing our meanings; changing meaning would be giving up safety. We feel that meaning and meaningfulness in life are fundamental to our existence. Carter (2002) emphasizes that not understanding this is not to understand the most profound aspect of human nature. (Carter, 2002, p159)

“People voluntarily give up food, sex companionship, even life itself in search of and in defense of what they value – what means something to them. The Holy Grail, the Trance
State, the Vision Quest, the search for Shangri-La, Nirvana, or Paradise: all embody the same need for transcendent understanding.” (Carter, 2002, p50)

These stories that have meaning for us, whether it is spiritual or nationalistic, are loaded with emotions. The meaning-systems have even genetic-encouragements that make us cling to and defend old meanings (Carter, 2002, p60). To understand this further one have to see how there is no actual separation between thoughts and feelings, they are actually located in exactly the same parts of the human brain. (Carter, 2002 p156) The thought is a feeling, and when we call a feeling fear; we are actually describing a thought, which means that the words thoughts and feelings are two descriptions of the same thing. So the meanings we have inherited from culture, is at same time the feelings we feel about ourselves.

Our constant interaction with culture and its providing identity is the foundation of emotions. To explain further, our experiences are always based on the knowledge we have, whether we call it a feeling our thought, they are all knowledge based experiences. And to regulate this knowledge, our discourses, is to regulate our emotions. (Altheide, 2002, p183) That the discourse is its own action, in this context, means that the identity is reactive to its perceived meanings. Then stories that one’s identity is formed by will, as much as the existence of the identity, automatically experience what is presented. The providing fearful stories will automatically put the identity in to a defensive position of striving for security and certainty. The position is never static, it’s reactive and the reaction can express itself in thoughts, feelings, and actions. The identity always adheres to cultural structures and meanings; this positionality of adherence to culture is the positionality of fear. (Carter, 2002)

2.5 Identity

Raymond Williams (1983, p10) says that the term culture began as a noun of process, the cultivation of crops or rearing of animals, and by extension the culture (active cultivation) of the human mind – as the whole way of life of a distinct people. Through this thinking of, how one should participate in social life, our identity emerges.

Our identity is a socio-cultural self-image; it is a collection of images. Some of these images are our parents, our neighborhood, and our nationality. (Clark, 2002, p233) This process of
accumulating images is the formation of identity, we are only socio-cultural beings in midst of a specific process, we don’t encompass or possess an identity; rather the identity emerges through our perceived knowledge based experiences that we have when we interact with our culture. It is therefore in the coincidence of placements and announcements that identity becomes a meaning of the self. (Altheide, 2002) Yet the self and the identity is not separated, one wouldn’t know any self, without a specific identity. When one feels that one has identity, the person is situated in the shape of a social object by the acknowledgement of his participation or membership in social relations. The subject is created by the cultural-objects of our conventional society. Steinar Kvale expresses this image/identity connection this way: “The Self doesn’t use the language; it is the language speaking through the person. The self becomes a medium of the culture.” (Kvale 1992:36)

Foucault says that the western-acceptance of the subject as an autonomous entity is actually substance-less, it is decentralized. (Winther, 2000, p21) This means that the subject is the culture, in a personal form based on its idiosyncrasies. It is these peculiarities that form the subject; the subject is created by the objects of perception. In (Matheson, 2005) the sociologist Karl Mannheim (1936) describes it, “strictly speaking, it is incorrect to say that the single individual thinks. Rather it is more correct to insist that the individual participates in thinking further what others have thought before”.

Not taking that at face value, these ideas on how the identity is constructed explain further how the discourse is its own action. The identity is always constructed in the reactivity with the cultural knowledge. Without this discourse interaction, there is no identity. Jansson (2002) describes that a person’s identity is based on the experience that there is some meaningful relationship between the social-milieu and the self. He also explains how the self gets created through a dual process, integration and separation. And this movement between the two is a movement always intact as the identity. The meaning a person feels is when the movement exists, if we are too separated or to conformed, meaninglessness will prevail. This struggle for the perfect identity, comparison with other identity’s, is our sense of meaning that we follow. Since the meanings we have inside a culture are what are dominating the society’s pragmatic side, understanding meaning is therefore crucial. (Clark, 2002, p264) The movement that Jansson describes between integration and separation has obviously a force behind it; this quote of Robin is important and makes this relationship clearer and more intrinsic:
“We may not know who we are, we may not know what is truly good or just, but we do know what it is to be afraid. That simple, almost instinctive knowledge can structure our public life and animates its exertions. It is the dissonant energy of our civic faith, the necessary irritant of common purpose.” (Robin, 2004. p 10)

Different authors give different ideas on the self and the identity, choosing for example Manheim’s idea over another’s is always unnatural. The discourse analysis argues that discourses persuades and argues over what is real, in a so called discourse battle. The most persuasive answer usually wins and therefore proclaims reality as we perceive it. For, me - this particular identity or the self, are not separated from language yet it doesn’t mean that the self doesn’t exist. Reality is a language based construction, saying that there is no self or that there is a self is the same. The Self is still a construction. The self, the I will never be outside the language as Foucault says. (Winther, 2000. p 21) Without the construction of an identity there wouldn’t be any talk of a Self. This is important for the reason of ‘the discourse action’. The self/identity is always coming in to existence when it reacts, and the more meaningful the discourse the more emotion is connected.

Affirming my position, in this context, the identity /self is a forced structure, in a continuous cultural propagation through the force of fear and pursuit of metaphors of righteousness. The pursuit of meaningfulness and certainty/safety is hiding the infringing feelings of fear, which works as motivation, in struggling for safety. In the context of ‘war culture’ I must emphasize here that the identity is a learned discourse, such as fear and war. Fear and war are both meaningful. And the learning continues in the pursuit of the perceived meaningfulness in the culture. This meaningfulness is an abstraction, an ideal that the society has as a natural goal. And that ideal, that meaning, sustains the status quo.

2.6 Infotainment and continuous struggle

Simply put, it is a hell of a lot easier to promote conflict to the media than peace.

Gadi Wolfsfeld (2004. p 2)

The propagations of media news are a collective process, involving journalists, producers, and various categories of editorial staff, as well as technical staff. (Fairclough, 1997, p4) This implies that our news is carefully constructed stories, which can be manipulated and
demonstrated in favor of someone or some group. Not arguing with this account, I am more interested in how the struggles to find safety, acts in journalistic work.

2.6.1 The enemy:
To reaffirm our meaningful national position, we have through the media found a new expression that daily remembers our enemies. This we/we against them/the-others, this opposition, have now a force, the media, which makes war more effective. Speaking pro a nation as a journalist, is not a regarding on telling what is happening to the world, rather it is a formation and a proliferation of an existing image/identity that is against and opposed others - the enemy. In (Allan, 2004, p157) Billig (1995) reminds us, that there can be no ‘national we’ without a ‘foreign other’, a dynamic which is widely diffused as simply a matter of common sense. This banality of the perceived and apparent, we against them are a natural and meaningful reality that is now more effective and more persuasive. Racism is not its own goal for the journalist, rather the dehumanization that takes place when an ‘other/enemy’ is projected, racism and hatred becomes its expression. The loyalty to one’s own position as a journalist becomes more important, for the reason that it’s a matter of virtue, everything else outside the patriotic value is unsighted. In this often the question of objectivity arises, and that our journalists are not doing what they should do. (Allan, 2004, p158, p159)

2.6.2 Hunt for drama
Journalists provide persuasive images and stories of drama and conflict, with heroes, terrorists and innocent victims. This making of our beloved story’s form our reality in the name of ‘news’, Ginneken (1997) talks about the inevitability of this proliferation of old fantastic meanings, “they help us simplify the world, build and manage internal models of reality.”

Journalists often go from observing the culture to evaluating it. And journalists are not only socialized by their culture, but also by the conventions, rules and regulations in their profession. Journalists are pressured and forced to write their stories, rather than the presumed image that the journalists observes and thinks on how to be objective. The forces behind journalism are many and different depending on the institution and its location, commercial orientations, time and access. Much of the news, which we see, as instant reality, are often planned and routinized. (Ginneken, 1997, p207)
Journalists are constantly describing the world according to their own preconceived patterns of meanings, and through this process overlook other ideas, but that doesn’t mean that they are not describing reality outside some objective reality, that they should describe instead. As Ginneken (1997) puts it, “we already live in a virtual reality which looks and feels as if it is real – but it is not. The problems and solutions, our fears and hopes concerning a better world, are continually being constructed in a very peculiar way.”

The reality’s we have are results of our expressive communication, and not some reflection of eternal and objective truth. So what we have for the journalists are our own conflict based expressions. Blaming the journalists for not being objective, must be based on some other meaning that opposes the meanings presented. Although journalist’s obsessive search for drama contributes to the proliferation of a mythical conflict between villains and victims, we have to understand that not much choice are there to be made on their position.

I am not trying to locate some hopeless position, on what the news and the journalists are on, rather to see and understand that our sense of righteousness about how the journalists should be acting is the very base of our ‘war culture’. In Ginneken (1997, p210), Edelman says: “Genocide, racial and religious persecution, and the rest of the long catalogue of political acts that have sustained human history can only come from people who are sure they are right. Only in bad novels and comic books do characters knowingly do evil and boast of it. In life, people rationalize their actions in moral terms.”

Our search for drama and sensationalism is how our culture is expressing itself to us. Journalists are forced to provide that, which we want, Wolfsfeld (2004. p 20) talks of sensationalism in news and its relationship to peace processes in the world, “this need for excitement can have a devastating impact on the course of a peace process. Every act of violence, every crisis, and every sign of conflict is considered news. Areas of calm and cooperation, on the other hand, will be ignored because they are not considered interesting. Extremism is exciting while moderation is dull. Reports of imminent dangers are considered breaking news, but opportunities made possible by peace are not. Drama is the quintessential element of any ‘good’ news story.”
Journalists have equally ideological and cultural frames as ordinary people, not that they choose it, rather that they are forced in it. On top of this they also have a professional frame to follow, the frame that makes them a journalist.

Yet the reporters and journalists we see in the news are projected as figures of authority, someone who has ‘the facts’ and someone who has the right to tell. The identification is automatic, we are only watching the news for the reason that we think that they have the facts and they are the ones who know. Sense knowledge is our perceived power in this culture; the journalists automatically are projected as authority. This I have explained more in the theory of ‘war culture’. The authoritativeness of the language works together with the authoritativeness of the image. The audience is projected as receptive, waiting to be told, wanting to know. (Fairclough, 1997, p4) Since nobody wants to move out their safe position, the identity becomes re-constructed as a spectator of events rather than a participating citizen. This, not only makes the audience position static, but even the journalist who is forced to propagate the same structure of knowledge. This also forms the perceptions that assume journalistic actions as non-routinized, and provides the role and status of the journalist as self-evident.

My emphasis here is on two things; the workings of infotainment in relation to the ‘others’ and how we construct the ideals of journalists as an excuse. The sensationalism of fear cannot be proliferated or even accepted, without the meaningful based perception of an autonomous journalist, with some high degree. And the struggle between the ‘us’ and ‘them’ are not only propagating fear, but sustaining it through the pursuing identity’s need for certainty and safety.
3 Method

3.1 Discourse Analyses

I have used a qualitative method for this work; a qualitative method is used in the paradigm of meaning and interpretations. The qualitative approach is trying to understand, how the culture and the texts we have in culture, are affecting humanity. (Stokes, 2003. p3) This thesis is a discourse and frame analysis, which involves an analysis of how the news media are propagating meaning within specific frames of knowledge. The theory section has explained how the identity and its perception, is based on the meanings that are highly valued in culture. We therefore always perceive through a constructed framework, built through a specific meaning-system.

The ordering thought in discourse theory is that social phenomenon never is complete and total. No assumption or theory can ever fixate itself as infinite reality, this theorizing itself creates an endless social battle, around definitions on society and identity; it’s a discourse battle which has its consequences for society. Discourse analysts consequently challenges and studies the accepted belief-systems that create our perceived reality. (Winther, 2000, p31) Our perceived reality is an interconnected relationship between our identity and culture. And our reality is based on the assumptions of themselves; therefore any change in any belief changes our reality and our identity. (Winther, 2000, p 7) Our identity, culture and reality are fragmented representations of the same thing; it is the culture referring to itself by itself; and to understand this by using the discourse analysis structure, one have to contextualize the phenomenon of investigation rather than generalizing it through theories. (Börjesson, 2003, p18) The discourse analysis is not a single specific method; rather it’s a foundation of ideas on how we create our reality. Researchers use discourse analysis differently, and one realizes that there isn’t any specific coherence on what discourses are and how to analyze them. (Winther, 2000, p 7) Winther says that if one wants to do a discourse analysis, one can create and shape one’s own formation of theories for deconstruction. Depending on what it is that one is going to analyze.
3.2 Ideas on discourses

The discourse analysis is based on social-constructionist ideas; I am presenting some of the more well-known authors and their ideas here, which explains more the perception, I have, for this study.

Structuralism perceives the truth/reality behind or within the text and language; they say that with language we create representations. And these representations are the creators of the reality we believe in, outside the actual. But Post-structuralism perceives that meaning is created through the interconnected relationship between the reader and the text. Which implies that all our perceived reality’s are self-generated meanings in relation to our own outlook which is based on the principles of causality, our identity and our subjective belief in how and what truth is. (Winther, 2000, p15)

Saussure introduced the idea that the relationship between language and reality is arbitrary; the world itself never says how it should be expressed or mentioned. (Winther, 2000, p16) (Börjesson, 2003, p73) The post-structuralists have taken this notion further by introducing the idea that the description doesn’t get its meaning out of the “real” world, rather the meaning is provided through comparison with other descriptions. This is the idea of a structural network. (Winther, 2000, p17) Ideologies as I am mentioning in ‘war culture’ as our structure that forms our search for power, Althusser discusses as a representation system which hides our true relationship to each other. Ideology is therefore manipulated knowledge about the real. Althusser’s idea of ideology declares that there is a reality to find outside our own ideological conventions. And if we deconstruct our ideology we will find the truth. (Winther, 2000, p22) Foucault has persuasively disagreed with Althusser and found this belief to be naiveté, the so called truth and reality is created through our discourses and being outside these ideas to find something which we call truth is impossible for Foucault. I am not really looking for something outside the ideological structure that we inhabit, so I am with Foucault on this one. And therefore, as Foucault, I have no use for the ideological term. (Winther, 2000, p24) Foucault thinks that we should not study texts as documents that are about something else, out there, rather as discourse that is part of a network of relations of power and identity. There is no hidden meaning to find and therefore we need to see how people are involved in prejudice and conflict to gain power in their engagement with knowledge. (Matheson, 2005. p 9) Foucault proclaims that it is impossible to reach any
objective truth, because one can never speak outside the discourse, which is always subjective. Our subjective reality is never standing in some objective position; the subject itself has no center. The subjective experience is a reflection upon itself, a cultural self. (Winther, 2000. p 21) Foucault’s ideas on power/knowledge are based on understanding our history so we can see the present. By tracing historical ruptures and changes we can understand how the present has been propagated. This way of understanding history is the core of the critical discourse analysis and Foucault’s concept of genealogy. Genealogy denies any essences underlying laws and logic. The world, the institutions and the subjects are temporary products of power/knowledge practices characterized by discontinuity and arbitrariness. People don’t have inner essences; the sole is culturally understood. Even the sole is a part of the identity and this identity is a separation from the other, in the world. (Börjesson, 2003, p34 – p36)

These ideas on discourses show the difference between some authors and isms, this thesis is mostly based on the ideas of Foucault. Yet it is not an investigation of power structures that might exist behind the discourse. The emphasis here is that all discourses are constructions, and they indulge in a discursive battle for continuity. In the relation to the news media and the discourse of fear, this clarifies how feelings of fear can be propagated and made real to people. The belief that our descriptions are describing reality is what makes our perception of the world, real. Durkheim thinks that the individual and the social reality are formed by the societies given classification system. The individual is born in a society, and therefore, internalizing the culture is automatic, through growing up. So we are not thinking about our culture or our society, our culture is thinking through us. (Börjesson, 2003, p40)

Consequently we are fed these meanings about the world from birth, but since this is not really about the world, we can construct any perception of so called reality and be rightfully obeyed to it. This internalization of culture and the formation of our perceptions and experiences are described further by Heidegger, and other famous philosophers as Kant, they declare that the phenomenon of perception is based on language, language isn’t the describer of experience: it is its own experience. Matheson (2005, p8) chooses Martin Heidegger’s own terms:

“…we take shape as people living in a particular world when we use language: ‘it is language that first brings man about, brings him into existence’. When we speak, language speaks, and when it speaks us, we become who we are.”
This in relation to what I referred in ‘war culture’, on language and warfare, clarifies how easy it is to have an identity that is forced in to war. And with it, the firm beliefs that the feelings we experience, are totally natural.

### 3.3 Form

This thesis is not about news media and its connectedness to hegemony, politics or moralistic ideas. To understand this, the idea that Börjesson (2003) calls “Passive-form” is important:

The linear outlook in perception makes us believe that the principles of causality can be applied to every investigation. But when journalists use language to provide a cause and effect relationship to actions and events, they proclaim reality and that reality is always based on the journalists own preconceived ideas. As Börjesson (2003, p98) puts it, “ascribing intentions is the pest of language.” How an action or an intention is being proclaimed to a specific unit by a journalist; doesn’t describe reality, it rather creates our perceived history. So by thinking in a passive form one leaves out the *agent* to a specific intention or action.

So for this thesis, there is no search for any moral or political answers or causes to the situations of the study. Knowing that the discourse analysis stand on critical positions against the text that is being analyzed - at the same time looking for power structures, this is not something that this thesis has covered. This is not a critical thesis of political power; rather it is an attempt to understand what the news media actually accomplishes with its content. In news channels presentations there is a political/ideological and moral positionality that describes the presented events. This is inevitable. But since the discourse is its own action, I am not dealing with some alleged agent that might have political or economic power. This isn’t interesting to me, what is interesting is the expression a journalists work takes, when they are forced to propagate the cultural meanings and values, more seductively and fearfully in our socio-cultural structure. Therefore, looking at what is taken for granted is not a moral truism, which proclaims if something should be, or should not be, or how it actually is. This thesis is an understanding of my own preconceived ideas, not a choice or a condemnation of other ideas.

The form that I have chosen for analyzing the discourses of fear that are being presented in the Fox News Channel, is based on Fairclough’s inter-textual analysis of media texts.
Fairclough (1997) thinks that texts are chosen depending on the producers and journalists own position, and from there then representing them as so called facts. This means that the choice is subjective, and based on the particular pursuit of meaning that the journalist is involved in.

Fairclough (1997, p5) has three sets of questions about media output:
1. How is the world (events, relationships, etc.) represented?
2. What identities are set up for those involved in the programme or story (reporters, audiences, ‘third parties’ referred to or interviewed)?
3. What relationships are set up between those involved (e.g. reporter-audience, expert-audience or politician-audience relationships)?

This thesis is resting on Fairclough’s first question, which is how discourse representations appear in Fox News’ description of world news, and specifically the ‘others’ that they proclaim as threats. This does not mean that the concepts of identities and relationships is ignored; a media discourse will be simultaneously representing, setting up identities, and setting up relations.

Fig.1:

Figure 1 is Fairclough’s model for describing discourse analysis as the analysis of relationships between three dimensions of an event, which Fairclough calls text, discourse practice, and socio-cultural practice. Texts may be written or oral, and oral texts may be just spoken (radio) and visual (television). Text is, what is apparent to our perception. By discourse practice Fairclough means the process of text propagation and text consumption. And by socio-cultural practice Fairclough means the social and cultural goings-on which the communicative events are part of. (Fairclough, 1997, p57 – p59) My focus on the discourse
practice is on the propagation aspects of the discourses of fear. In Fairclough’s words, I will
not be investigating audience consumptions of the discourses that people react to in the news.
Fairclough’s goal for this theoretical structure is to find a connection between language and
social practice and to see its coherence.

3.4 Frame Analysis

Media frames construct contextual propositions, ordering and superimposing meaning on to
events, for recognition and identification. Erving Goffman introduced frame analysis, he
declared, that one’s perception and projections is one’s frame. The frame organizes the
activity of a person, and the involvement in an activity is automatic, the knowledge a person
has doesn’t ask if it should be enthralled. (Goffman, 1987) Our cultures produce frames,
which tell us what is meaningful and what is meaningless, in comparison to our specific
position, which is to us self-evident. Winther (2000, p58) says that all thoughts and
representations are empty signs; they have no meaning in themselves. When they get
connected to other descriptions the meaning is created through the propagated context.
Winthers (2000, p40) describes how we think, that the reality around us are rightfully
portrayed with our static representations and that all our beliefs are objectively known. This
belief is our preoccupation with our proclaimed meanings we have of life and the world.
Given that all thoughts and representations are empty signs, frame analysis becomes now a
more significant tool that allows one to see how thoughts and ideas get meaning within
different constructed frames.

The most important effect of the media is “its ability to mentally organize the world for us”.
In Nohrstedt(2005, p104), El Bendary presents that scholars have proved that the news media
construct frames for conflicts, by trying to fit the events in culturally familiar structures. The
frames provide contextual implications that give meanings to the events that are being
presented. El Bendary signifies that the frame-constructions are first subject to the journalists
own idiosyncrasies as ideology, professional norms, organizational routines and other value
systems within the culture. (Nohrstedt, 2005, p104) The principle is that we create meanings
in our lives through stories, and the specific stories that we identify with are those that we
perceive meaningful. This meaningfulness is based on frames (discourse structures) – which
are taken for granted, perceived natural. (Ensink, 2003) That which is meaningful is also
emotional and essential; the identity is the meaning it leans on to. This is a culturally inherited
sensibility that people feel as reality. If the news media were not persistent in propagating the existing frames of knowledge, then people wouldn’t be interested in the news (Goffman, 1987).

### 3.5 Validity and Reliability

Our moral and political hypotheses on how the world should be are based on our own personal ideological positions, which are often outside the context of investigation. Therefore one have to understand how we give meaning to words, that stands alone, and how we are propagating our own preconceived ideas of the world by believing in isolated statements. As a researcher, one needs then to focus on how discourses is propagating and convincing our framed reality.

Since all discourses are in a battle for determination of so called reality, the concept of validity gets blurred in the logic of claiming some certain truth. This thesis is not claiming the reality of the news media; rather it’s a subjective perception of what the news media is presenting as rightness. The ideas that I have and use, for analyzing the news contents are inherited from the culture that I am in. Books, authors, family, society and experiences have molded my perception, to what it is now. From this position, there won’t be any neutral or objective thoughts taking place on the contents of investigation. Therefore my analysis will automatically be present in a discursive battle, and criticizing this thesis position is inevitable. In the theory section, meaning is explained as the most forceful aspect of society’s pragmatic sides. Understanding meaning, without giving any position about what it should be, helps us recognize why people continue to indulge in fear, as their way of safety. Fear is not just a shallow and private feeling; it has influence on the entire society. In addition, fear has its own meaning, which protects the identity from the taught threats in our socio-culture. Looking at the uses and propagations of fearful meanings is the so called operationalization of this thesis.

The reliability of this thesis stands on the understanding of the context of fear and its relation to the propagation of meaning. How the identities pursuit of meaning is based on cultural forces, feelings of fear, which are taught from childhood. Through this context, the news media discourses on foreign relations, which use and propagate fear, is understandable, and deconstruction is then straightforward.
This frame analysis is based upon Fox News reporting of US foreign relations, during November and December of 2007. These are the stories investigated:

1. Kitty Hawk snub! 2007-11-25
2. Security expert on Slovak police report that radioactive material ..., 2007-11-29
4. Iran halted nuclear weapons program, 2007-12-3
5. Al Qaida tries to sneak in to the US, 2007-12-3
8. Al Qaeda using Internet to spread hate at alarming rate, 2007-12-07

The frame analysis is used here, to investigate how the Fox News use and propagate the fear discourse to broadcast their meanings. All frames I have concluded relate to fear in presentations of US foreign relations. After watching the presentations, and typing the statements of the reporters and correspondents down for further studies, these frames were identified. Each frame here marks significance in the formation of the presentations. Fox News utilizes seven frames of fear discourse, in presentations of US foreign relations. The frames are:

- The Orientation frame points out that Fox is adjusting their presentations to evoke feelings of fear, and then from there, assert what is sought after. Such as suspicions, pressures, and terror that might be the ‘real’ cause of the presented events. Fox supplements events with ideas, which proclaim that danger could be near. From the feelings of fear, one is being oriented through worries - hatred - moral disgust – and back to fear and uncertainty.

- The Facts and Alerts frame states that Fox is reporting reality and it is up to the spectator to decide. Through the belief in ‘Facts’, and the notion of the spectator’s free choice in deciding, the frames hint that the news are proved and objective. This frame shows how facts and ‘alerts’ get intermingled in the construction of the fear discourse.
• The **Focusing** frame is used to give different expressions and fearful presentations of reality through the memory of the terror of 9/11. Reminding the viewers of 9/11, and all its fears and agonies, Fox is affirming the discourse of fear vitally.

• The **What if?** Frame: Fox intensifies fear through hypothesizing their projections of threats and hazards in to a ‘possible’ future. Putting open-ended questions and discussions on what can go wrong, as presentations, is an effortless way of commencing fear and worry. This frame is a useful foundation for the **orientation** frame.

• The **Be afraid!** Frame: emphasizing how dangerous and threatening some events are, heightens panic deliberately. The directness of the fear discourses presented, appear rational and motivated rightfully. This frame is often put together with the **Facts and Alerts** frame, designed for paramount impact.

• The **Savior** frame is constructing the image of a provider of safety. Not giving certainty so the discourse of fear can continue, Fox is providing a US/patriotic position that always aspires to solve the threatening problems presented. This leaves a satisfying feeling of the sensational struggle between fear and confidence. And comforting thoughts that Fox/US is always there to rely on.

• The **Romanticizing conflict** frame goes off when the sensationalism of the savior and the terrors becomes intensified. This frame flowers into glorification of fear and struggling, either through words or through images of war.
4.1 Results

The seven frames have been studied in every news presentation. This first chart here shows how many times a particular frame is used in a specific news event. The focusing frame (on 9/11) is non-existent when the presented events are on US relations with China. And the number of orientations is based on how many times we get back to a new set of fear discourses, to start over a new orientation. The second chart is a summation of the total frames occurring in the 8 presentations.

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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>7</td>
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The summation of the occurring frames

![The summation of the occurring frames in the 8 News presentations](image)
4.2 Orientation

Fox is orienting us through a fear discourse in all presentations investigated. This fear orientation is formed in the news when presented events start to evoke fright, and the discourse does it through some specific experience that foretells risk. Fox News does this kind of orientation when they describe other countries, worrisome, relationship to the US, and they also orient how one should be thinking about the strange others. One example on US relations with China, were the presentation starts with “China snubs US carrier”. The story is that China did not allow the US Kitty Hawk to enter the Hong Kong port. This projected snub is now the theme for the entire worrisome event of a possible war with China:

“The USS Kitty Hawk and its carrier battle group had to mark the Thanksgiving holiday and at sea when suddenly China and unexpectedly said: NO / They were not allowed, the Kitty Hawk, were denied entry to Hong Kong for a port call that had been planned months in advance. “

“This is apparently one of the issues dealing with China, with its military buildup, with its technology, and some say spying on the United States. ARE WE TO WORRY?!!!??”

Here Fox are emphasizing the military strength and that they (china) are the same time building plans on top of the US. The military advance is therefore a knock against the USA. Are we to worry means in that sense as ‘are we losing?’ Fox is therefore orienting us in to a battle, and a battle not only provide fearful thoughts of paranoia it also creates anger and resentment. The text basically says that ‘we should be offended’ that China is advancing. To boost this notion pictures of Chinese Military are presented, which has nothing to do with the actual story that were provided.

Having no actual reason and information about what happened, the fox news journalist and American policy foreign counsel senior fellow - Stephen Yates, discuss instead how dangerous China could be, and why they are so obviously condescending.
So we are oriented from loosing face, to worry, fear and paranoia and then to anger revenge. And then keeping the fear intact, by saying that this is definitely something we should be concerned about, and that Fox is going to provide further information on this important event. This way of constructing the fear discourse happens in all the presentations, Fox is starting the events from suspicion and worry. From here any orientation can take place, depending on what the particular agenda is on the foreign relation. In the orientation frame, the discourse of fear is always constructed to add stories that do not have any veracity on their own. Different ideas get intermingled in the context of fear and suspicion, so Fox can provide new ideas which are outside the initial context of the event.

The orientation frame is also used to end stories with uncertainty, so the next forthcoming presentation, on the similar events, is anticipated. Here are some examples on how Fox ends presentations:

“Well that sounds definitely like something we should be very concerned about and we will be following here in the Fox News.”

Here the reporter is emphasizing, and summarizing - the threats of nuclear chemicals that have disappeared:

“And as you point out, there is about 252 cases out now, in eastern Europe that we know of missing, stolen or lost radioactive material out there so a big concern.”

The conclusion on, Muslim extremist plans to attack the US:

“A July national intelligence report says this: the US will face a persistent and evolving terrorist threat over the next three years. The main threat comes from Islamic terrorist groups and cells, especially al Qaida. Other groups should be considered as a concern as well, as Hamas and Hizbouallah!!

So al Qaida has now declared war against us.”

Ending stories with threats, war, and concerns proliferate the discourse of fear and at the same time construct anticipation to further knowledge about the presented events. This way Fox is not only orienting the audience in the particular presentations, but they also orient what to think about between presentations. The discourse of fear links different events to fit the schema of constructed meanings. We are oriented in the continuity of fear discourse, and the orientation frame is, in addition, through this action circulated.
4.3 Fox Facts and Alerts

These frames help Fox in constructing their overall context of reality. These appear as specific statements, as pop-ups, throughout the presentations and discussions they have under a report. We often get Fox Reports, Alerts, Threats and Facts; these get intermingled throughout the presentations and they often point at some hazard. Some ‘Facts’ are not even factual information, rather they propose ideas. This one pops up in foreign relations with China:

“FOX FACT: US VULNERABILITIES TO CHINISE MILITARY CAPABILITIES”

This one gets intermingled with these:

“CHINA THREAT: Is the US ready for the growing military threat?”
“FOX FACTS: ARRAY OF WEAPONS COULD DESTROY ADVERSARYS SATTELITES”

These facts and alerts are actually outside the context of the event presented, except they adjust the audience to a constructed frame of menace and fear. So the new context of the presentation is now a fearful and worrisome event, which might lead to further problems for the US. Another way of mixing these facts and alerts, are when Fox construct pop-ups that are questions:

“Al Qaida Threat: are the Muslim extremists planning attacks on the US”

This one is not a fact; it’s not even a threat. Putting questions like these are just blatantly constructing fear discourse and venting horror to presentations. Another way, which is not that blatant, is giving suggestions on what is likely to happen:

“Dept of homeland security: Al Qaida likely to place operatives in the US”

So these are more Fox questions about what could be dangerous, and not giving any answers people can probably come up of a lot of problematic scenarios. The common structure here is that the facts are about the dangerous ‘other’ or being the victim, these are projections of fear on top of, some strange other. That fear is more compelling than reason, is clearly showing itself hear, when everything you could possible think of going wrong, is presented as facts.

Robins (1996) gives an explanation to this, “not reasoning about ones feelings, is a way of handling inner feelings by projecting them on to another, in the form of eviction.” Something that people find more appealing is this avoidance, in the sense that one blames others for ones frustrations and fears. The goal of giving facts and threats is constructing the observing
identity as passive and dependent. Being the victim of some factual danger, constructs an identity that needs assertion in opposition to the threat. These facts have a tremendous role, in solidifying the meanings already based in the identity. With facts righteousness can prevail. Through providing reason in the form of facts as news presentations, Fox consequently accomplishes to dissolve the observers need for a moral inquiry in to one’s own righteousness. Here blaming the perpetrator, or being the victim is a reasonable fact and even normal or natural. Therefore the act is perpetual.

4.4 Focusing
To further enhance the sense of reality besides giving facts, Fox is still focusing on the terrorist attacks of 9/11. The presentations of events, can from the terrors of 9/11, dive into another story and actualize the discourse of fear. By reminding the viewers of 9/11, and all its fears and agonies, every time Fox talks about possible terrorist threats, they affirm the reality of their presentations. Fox is in this way inducing a state of hysteria, and this is indistinguishable via the new threats and horrors presented. The significance is on the new events, but the focus on 9/11 is what makes the news real and significant. Besides reminding of 9/11 in speech and reports of events, Fox is screening pictures or videos on the 9/11 terrors:

With pictures like these, Fox offers alarms or threats that fit the ‘new’ news stories. In this particular presentation, Images of the twin towers and terrorist training is mingled together, while the reporter talks about how one should worry about further attacks like these. The whole scenario is played in a very dramatic and fast passed way, more like a Hollywood action picture. Here the discourse of fear happens to be very persuasive.
4.5 What if?

Expressed in this frame are the questions of some future. Something like - why haven’t we been attacked again? Fuels fear in many ways, and constructs abstractions to further the fear discourse. In the presentation on Muslim extremists planning attacks on the US, these questions are thrown by the reporter:

- So who is out there?
- And what do they try next?
- Why hasn’t a car bomb blown up in the middle of time square?

After presenting images of 9/11 and other terrorist attacks in Europe, these questions become more persuasive and alluring, in trying to find answers for them. These questions are not really actual and factual questions; they are affirming statements taking the form of questions. The statements say, be afraid through not knowing who is out there, not knowing what they will do next, and not knowing were the next terror will take place. Giving ideas on what we do not know, since it is about the future, is a snap in heightening fear. This is a very simple and direct way of providing the discourse of fear. Which propagates the meaning of the ‘us – the victim’ in comparison to the ‘them – the enemy’, in forming and repropagating the vulnerable identity. The identity is in this state of danger, when the questions are open ended. And the real answers can only come in the form of actual terror events, that only contribute reality to the victim identity.

Fox heightens fear in the course of projected risks, alerts, threats, enemies, crisis dangers, terrorists, and other hazards in to the future. In a presentation of lost radioactive materials in Slovakia we get oriented back to the US. And a video animation gets played on what if these radioactive materials were combined and formed in to a bomb, and put to use in the city of Chicago:

- What this shows, let’s say that September 11 was a dirty bomb, a nuclear instead of two airplanes going in to the twin towers, what you would have immediately is a fireball that would have vaporized the twin towers and several square blocks around it. And then it would thrown around ash and more importantly it would have radiated the whole area and people would have to evacuate, anybody who had
First Fox gives an example of what would happen to Chicago if somebody would drop a nuke bomb, and we get to see, the IF scenario through an animation twice, and from different angles. Then the discussion goes on what the people would have to do after the explosion of the bomb. This is also intermingled with 9/11 were they compare that happening to this fantasy about a bomb that yet hasn’t been used. This magical way of creating future threats are a Fox darling, they often use specific descriptions of how, as in this example, something can be destructive for two or three more years in to the future. When it comes to fear, the future is the ultimate evil, and we have no explanation to help us cope with these ‘facts’ that are being provided as news. This helplessness is offered by all -what if questions, that is set freely in these presentations.

Robin (2004, p43) notes that, “since the future is ‘but a fiction of the mind,’ whoever defines the objects of our fear necessarily traffics in the realm of imagination. This makes the fear of unknowable harm a kind of rational fiction, a hypothetical speculation about the future, based upon experience and inference. Such speculations also involve a degree of moral evaluation, rooted in the ideologies of a particular place. Fear is a passion, and passion takes it shape not only from a person’s nature, “but also from . . . differences of customs, and education.”

As I described in ‘war culture’, that we are cultivated how to fear and how to go to war, by giving what if-speculations on what could go wrong, we are not only using and propagating fear, but we are in a unified manner also teaching what, when, where, who and why to be afraid. As I have repeated in this thesis, the discourse is the action, and the language is its own experience therefore it is forming our identity, meanings and perception. So this is much more than just scaring people, it’s an institution of teaching and propagating old myths that forces people to walk the path of terror and panic. Here fear has its own constructed context, which is everything that we do not know about the possible outside threats. But these have to be learned, so our fear of the unknown is now becoming a known fear – which is not actual fear. Rather it is that which Robin calls a passion, or an obsession of cultivation which leads to a form of addiction. I must emphasize here that, this passion is very seductive when one can sit safe at home, and experience the terrors of the world on the screen. People actually do pay money, for watching horror films.
4.6 Be afraid

Telling people, outright, to be afraid and how afraid they ought to be, based on the threats provided by Fox is the most common ingredient in the news presented. Here are some examples.

This one is the presentation of terrorist planning’s, in the course of paranoia and suspicion Fox is saying that anyone can be a terrorist:

“How long until we here that doctors or professionals such as the homegrown terrorists in London and Scotland- are living among us.”

Here are examples from three different presentations of Fox overemphasizing the threats and their persistence:

“And history tells us that when al Qaida doesn’t succeed they try, try again.”

“A new terror warning coming from the white house today that al Qaida is intensifying its efforts to place operatives inside the United States.”

“Al Qaida has an alarming 56 hundred to 17 thousand websites, all used to brainwash and recruit new terrorists and they may add 9 thousand more sites a year. These websites primarily used to brainwash, but also for planning and plots as well.”

Here are examples of Fox emphasizing that one should be afraid:

“No that is not at all true, I mean Iran has a to do list, to create nuclear weapons, now that they have temporary halted is great news, but that doesn’t mean that we should take a big sigh of relief and say oh okay we don’t have anything to worry about – we certainly do have a lot to worry about,”

“Martha it is just frightening, because Usama Bin Ladin has talked about gathering nuclear weapons and using them, he was offering 5 million dollars for it.”

Here is an example of how the fear discourse is the most interesting:

“It turns out that China is not only stealing our military secrets but even our technology research as well. So what exactly are the Chinese up to? And what is the US going to do about it? Joining us is Peter Brooks. Let’s talk about the scarier; which are the military secrets, how and why are they doing it?”

In all of the presentations investigated in this thesis, Fox is trying to tell people that they should be very afraid through emphasizing how dangerous or, boldly, how frightening something is.
4.7 The Savior

The Savior frame works as a, perceptual, power of equilibrium, in the construction of fear discourses and abstractions. When Fox is providing fear, they also must construct something in its opposition, to balance. Creating fear and providing safety is a fine-tuned duel here, which leaves a satisfying feeling of the sensational struggle and the protection and comfort of safety. The fear discourse creates this dualism automatically, and it is up to Fox to provide safety to the fears that they have originated. Fox is here creating its own identity, some examples of doing this is through being a hero, a provider of knowledge, a patriot, an investigator of the threats and horrors outside. A news Channel that does not let the American people be misled.

For example, by watching Fox we do not have to be deceived by the Chinese, we become fully aware to what our enemies are doing. This presentation of China is spying and stealing US intelligence: “Two days ago, we told you about a Chinese ship spying on the US carrier, in the pacific. It turns out that they are not only stealing our military secrets but even our technology research as well. So what exactly are the Chinese up to? And what is the US going to do about it?

- Besides the military they are actually stealing our technological secrets, our manufactory secrets?
- So what do we do?
- Well we have some real challenges here, we have to put more effort against the Chinese in this, but we are actually very distracted by the war of terror, the FBI is responsible not only for Counter Terrorists but even counter intelligence and China with the world’s third largest intelligence agencies are significant challenges to us. So we need to put more recourse in to this. These are our crown jewels, the way we maintain our economic and military competitiveness in the world is through the technology in places like Silicon Valley and our defense firms, if we can’t protect these than it would be very undermined.”

The emphasis is on how difficult this task is, but at the same time the US is capable to solve the problem because they are putting a lot of effort in to this. This combination of thoughts makes the idea of the savior and protector shine like a candle in the dark-surroundings of terror and threats. Stressing that they have a lot of challenges, the observer should feel that the threats are many, at the same time protection is on the increase and more is needed. The savior discourse is given as, us against them thinking. So the observer of the news feels not only that they are being saved and protected, but that they also are involved. And thinking about these events is a necessity, as some sort of service to the nation.
The observer is not only being saved, but one can help out, by looking for example at the al Qaida websites to figure out and solve the puzzles of threats, terrors and other dangerous movements that is taking place inside the dark side, against us – in this presentation of the al Qaida using Internet to spread hatred, we get an explanation on what is occurring in this field:

“This is a very difficult thing to shut down because of the freedom that is given by many countries. We ought to be monitoring these website very, very carefully, and they are growing very rapidly; besides recursions and messages of hate they also have embedded messages. They are actually launching operations, with some of the details in these websites; that are not apparent; you really have to know what you are looking for.”

Emphasizing that one has to know, means that they have the knowledge that can save us from these threats and terrors. This duality of knowing and not-knowing is the fear discourse, used in a very sensational approach. The hero and villain myth has many varieties, and the drama this provides is immense; personalizing the news this way makes every threat a positionality of defensiveness and being the victim. Not wanting to be the victim, that Fox stresses that they are, automatically puts the identity in a suspicious position of paranoia and need for comfort, and a sense of security is demanded. With anticipation, Fox is fulfilling this demand, as heroic acts of kindness over and over again, while sustaining the status quo.

4.8 Romanticizing conflict

Life is first boredom, then fear.

Phillip Larkin

This, romanticizing conflict, frame has a purpose of fulfilling the identities need for excitement and drama. When the meanings that the identity is pursuing are fulfilled and there is no more need to continue struggling for the protection and acceptance of the status quo, monotony sets in. Here sensationalism is a significant tool for recovery, propagating the world more violent inflames the need to further the position of defensiveness.

Chomsky (1989, p281) describes this particular predicament of monotony as apolitical, in his account of the perception of the evil scourge of terrorism: “Left Wing Terror in the United States... grew from the crisis of identity, suburban boredom, the desire for excitement and action, a certain romantic streak -- in short terrorism as a cure for personality problems.”
When the identity hits monotony, the desire for excitement is automatic and fear is therefore sought after.

Besides boosting fear, as in the other frames, Fox News presentations glorify war and conflict. Examples of this is in the presentation on al Qaida spreading hatred on the internet, were the reporters elevated and praised the war between the US and the terrorists, by calling attention to its miscellanies:

- That’s right; we are fighting a virtual war at the same time a hot war against these guys!
- That’s a great war! Nine thousand new sites a year – do the math?
- Absolutely, it’s extraordinary, and there is 17 thousand, as you said, now. It is very hard for us to keep up in this game.
- Yes, it makes it very, very difficult, - the virtual war as you said.
- Absolutely!

In this discussion they are emphasizing how great the war is, how the war is a game, and how the war has many features. Maximizing that the war is both virtual and hot makes it more interesting and seductive. It’s almost like they are selling a new gadget, like a cell phone. This is not just the reporters talking without restraint, this has a purpose; drama is well paid. And the demand for more drama just increases as the world left behind becomes mundane. The news is therefore forced to pursue constant dramatic presentations, so their presented events have significance and a sense of real existence.

This way of manufacturing glory of war and conflict, is much easier through videos and images of actual war. Fox is providing images of war, outside the context of the presented events, to boost this notion. In seven of the eight investigated presentations this occurs, here are some examples:

Here are images of tanks and military forces of china presented in the event of the Kitty Hawk snub. Other images of Chinese military leaders and officers working are also shown.

Movie clips on air strikes and tanks shooting missiles, are presented on the event of “China might be spying”. For an identity that likes military movies and actions, this might be interesting, but it is totally outside the context of the presented event.
During talks and presentations of the Al Qaida, training terrorists and terrorists aiming weapons at refugees, are presented. These videos get played over and over again, in every talk about ideas concerning terrorists. So it doesn’t have to be about the event, it rather fills up the screen with more action.

This uncontaminated way of providing sensationalism in the news is the usage of fear at its best. The news is orienting the viewers starting fear and being the victim - to safety and defense - and then to hounding and looking guardedly for enemies - to glorification and sensationalism of the gala of war and its heroes. The more ferocious terrorists are, the grander the heroes become. The more images of war and terror Fox fits into a presentation, the more sensational and amusing is the show. This way of experiencing ‘reality’ in our living room, is recreation in a sanctuary.
5 CONCLUSIONS

By framing the news in a way of constructing a collective discharge of fear, the news produce the basis for reaffirming group solidarity. And this is just a kickoff. This working of the group, forming a psychic us, is managed through the identities that share the common fear. This sharing forms a consensus of hatred and paranoia in relation to the not-us/others. For as long as the fears and threats continue, the group experiences a sense of exultation through its new found wholeness. Righteousness is the force the group follows, a force that makes everybody feel a satisfying community that they belong to. (Robins, 1996, p70) Fox is not only providing exciting stories, they are also constructing their own identity - as the heroic and patriotic news Channel. This image of the patriotic news Channel has many peculiar ways of expressing itself:

- The provider of awareness
- The Savior from enemies
- The good doer of society
- The reason contemporary US policy is intact
- The place for the patriots

These constructions can only have value when the identity of the observer is similar to the identity of Fox. The image of perception provided by Fox becomes its own devotion to the principles that Fox inherit in the overall cultural context. Fox News can therefore apply fear blatantly in their news presentations, as acts of courage. And with it form their identity as honorable and dependable, for reporting the real news.

The Fox News Channel and its audience are both products of the same context; this context is the meanings they share. The Fox News presentations can only have continuity when they deliver the right meanings and values that people already have. Framing actual events to form their particular bias is not extraordinary; rather it’s more a form of necessity from both sides. Their identity depends on it. In the context of fear, Kevin Robins (1996, p71) describes this phenomenon “as projecting fears out to the images of external threats”. The mediation of threats works as a defensive mechanism against the fear and anger that people feel inside. It is crucial to understand here that the nature of media news functions as a protector and separator from the harsh reality that they provide. So the duel between the struggle of safety and the fear of terrors and threats happens within the same discourse action, which is the presentation
of an alerting event. Therefore propagating fear is essential to the continuity of the interest, the status quo, and devotion of the principles that the identity strives for in its search for meaning.

That Fox focuses on 9/11 in resemblances to their ‘new’ stories is a functioning of proof and evidence for their prevailing meanings that desires perpetuity. This way the identity can feel that righteousness in one’s own valued meanings is logical and valid. The usage of fear, from actual events as 9/11, produces not only more fear but factual reality.

By using the need for some permanent certainty, that one’s meanings are valid, Fox uses the future as a mechanism of giving their discourse as a protector and a savior from possible threats. I have to point out that fear is apolitical in the context of news media and fear discourse. The Fox News is not the cause of fear. Neither is any political value they have, or I have, more superior for the change of the discourse. The discourse is its own action, fear and the struggle for safety is one action in the same discourse. Fear is not the cause of the struggle for safety and awareness, it is the solitary act. Our descriptions separate the feelings from the discourse, yet there is no actual separation between fear and our need to be free from it, through our political methods. The political methods are fear, trying to find a solution for its propagated misfortune.

The honesty of Fox News has made this work easier, in pointing out how absurd it is to provide future knowledge about how things are. The persistent search for stability can only be propagated with talk about the hypothetical future, which summons fear.
6 REFERENCES

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