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BETWEEN AGENCY AND STRUCTURE: SITUATING CANADIAN
WAR REPORTAGE IN AFGHANISTAN, 2001-2002

by

MICHELLE FRENCH, B.A.

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in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Journalism

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Abstract

Using a combination of structural, routine/organizational, and sociological approaches, this thesis uses Pierre Bourdieu's theories of practice and fields to ground the media study of the Canadian coverage of Afghanistan from Sept. 11, 2001 until Sept. 11, 2002. Emphasizing the theoretical space of the mezzo level of analysis between structure and individual agency, this thesis: 1) describes accounts of journalists and editors covering and managing the coverage of Afghanistan respectively, 2) places accounts within practice and fields theory, and 3) extrapolates the quantitative distribution of sources and their overall qualitative narrative constructions within media texts, drawing out overarching story lines of continuing Eurocentrism. This thesis arrives at a balanced vision of agency that includes an acknowledgement of the constraints at work in the field while recognizing that motivations, habitus-related identity politics, strategizing, and struggle are an active part of the practice of everyday life in the field of journalism.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the study of Afghanistan post-9/11 – establishing terms, the research question, and methodology

Part I – Introduction: defining agency

We consume the fruits of their labour every day – reports on the genocide in Rwanda, guerilla warfare in Colombia, paramilitary terror in East Timor, the U.S. bombing of Kosovo, and more recently, the U.S.-backed invasion and transitional presence in Afghanistan. Yet how much do we know about the agency and constraints of Canadian foreign correspondents working in zones of conflict? At least in academic circles – not very much.

By “agency and constraints,” I refer back to a long lineage of social scientific and, in particular, sociological and anthropological thinkers who have variously explored the relationship between the individual and his/her culture. According to Harker et al. (1990), a divide developed over the last few centuries between “voluntarist” and “structuralist” schools. Voluntarist thinking – including Weberian and phenomenological accounts of society – centres on “the actions of individuals to create and recreate the world, as if external constraints did not exist” (p. 22-3). Marxist and functionalist schools focus on structure, which emphasizes the “structuring and determining quality of society over and against the voluntarist capacity of agents” (ibid.). As an addition, culturalist and cultural studies schools represent a microcosm of this debate. While they tend to focus on text and discourse, examining how language structures and reproduces the perception and actualization of culture (see for example van Dijk 2000) – the study of culture has spawned many schools within cultural studies, some which have moved away from determinism towards agency (see Hall 1980, p. 60), particularly given the discipline’s history as an

intellectual ferment between “the economic determinates at work” (political economy) and “the cultural discourses at play” (cultural studies) (Cottle 2003a, p. 7-13).

Echoes of intellectual polarity can be seen in various critiques of the media. Chomsky & Herman (1988/2002) remove the journalist as agent completely from the equation. Their political economic framework establishes a “propaganda model” of the press, whereby five media filters, including 1) ownership, size, and profit orientation, 2) advertising license, 3) sourcing strategies, 4) public outcry against coverage, termed “flak,” and 5) the fear of being labeled communist, function to “amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society” through “systematic propaganda” (p. 1). However, as advantageous as their systematic examination of international news is to a reading of corporate and state hegemony, the journalist is mute; barely there at all. It also reads culture – that of the journalists and the society to whom they report – as lacking in dynamic fomentation and change, caught in a nightmare of Orwellian imagination, as if both populations are completely uniform and passive conveyers or recipients of propaganda.

Similarly determinate, McCombs & Shaw (1972) posit the “agenda-setting” function of the media, arguing that through the frequency of coverage, length, and story placement over time, the media communicates to the public a rough ranking (agenda) of what constitutes important issues. Once again, agency is not attributed to individual journalists, just their cultural products at the expense of the public. And yet

we know from de sola Poole & Shulman's (1959) classic study that journalists write for their audience.

At the other end of the spectrum, right-leaning thinkers are liable to decry the "liberal bias" in the media, which they attribute to a profession which they claim is dominated by similarly biased journalists, opposing, rather than reporting on "the system" (McChesney 1999; see for example Miljan & Cooper 2003, Lichter et al. 1986). This more volunteerist approach ignores the constraints that journalists face in their work environment.

In yet another vein, some analysts explore agency through the focusing lens of constraints at the expense of agency. Hackett & Zhao (1998) for example explore "politics of objectivity" in the media, positing that right-wing critiques:

...overlook the institutional or economic pressures that lead to the avoidance of news that audiences might perceive as lacking in objectivity. They also overlook the extent of management control of news content. (p. 139)

They also argue that the regime of journalistic objectivity "typically (if unwittingly) tends to reinforce dominant social relations, hegemonic worldviews, and/or established powerholders" (p. 141; see also Hall et al. 1978; McChesney 1999; Hackett et al. 2000). However, while this rebuttal paints another picture of the journalist as constrained by dominant institutional and cultural hegemony, the extent to which journalists recognize and negotiate these constraints on a conscious level is unknown. In another example, drawing from critical cultural studies (see for example Hall 1997, 1981; van Dijk 1991) and speaking to the regime of objectivity relative to

the white, male bias of Canadian dailies and the subsequent marginalization of non-Western peoples and domestic minorities, Henry and Tator (2002) argue that:

The media do not objectively record and describe reality, nor do they neutrally report facts and stories. Rather, some media practitioners socially reconstruct reality based on their professional and personal ideologies, corporate interests, and cultural and organizational norms and values. (p. 5)

However, Henry and Tator ascribe little agency to journalists, in fact lessening even the importance of constraints upon the journalist as agent in favour of a more cultural approach to news production. As well, their analysis is based upon a comprehensive content analysis of English-language Canadian daily newspapers. By ignoring the cultural producers – journalists – that construct the product, they are only exploring one end of the production line. In comparison, media sociologists have taken journalists themselves as their unit of analysis in workplace studies, focusing on how journalists manufacture the news, concentrating to various extents on agency and/or constraints, though in the language of routines, practices, and values (see Cohen & Young 1973; Tuchman 1978; Gans 1979; Shoemaker & Reese 1996; Pritchard and Sauvageau 1998).

The trick then, is to advance what Harker et al. (1990) describe as “a method which accounts for both structure and agency” (p. 23) – in this case, the concept of “habitus” as defined by French philosopher and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977). Briefly defined, a habitus is “a system of durable, transposable dispositions which functions as the generative basis of structured, objectively unified practices.” (Bourdieu 1979 p. vii in Harker et al. 1990, p. 10). Thus, while individuals are inculcated, or socialized

into the habitus — the habitus is a “mediating construct, not a determining one” (Harker et al. 1990, p. 12).

Referring back to the research at hand then, whether in a domestic or international context, habitus says a lot about how news is manufactured, and to what extent the journalist as agent plays a role in the collection and presentation of news within an environment of institutional, situational, and cultural constraints. And while the less explored notion that journalists negotiate through cultural constraints may upset notions of objectivity as reified in journalistic code, it is one of the major intrinsic constraints that influences journalistic writing, especially when considering journalists who are reporting abroad on other cultures. However, while literature on foreign correspondents exists, much of it fails to make culture, let alone the various permutations of agency and constraint central objects of study.

Part II – Review of literature: on foreign correspondents

To begin, many accounts of foreign correspondents appear in autobiographies (for Canadian accounts see Stewart 2002; Bastien 1998; Abel 1992; Schlesinger 1990; Cahill 1987; Worthington 1984; Nash 1984; Keyserlingk 1948; see also Douglas 1993 for a popular historical review of the profession; for U.S. accounts see Hedges 2002; Gellhorn 2001, 1998; Geyer 1996; Arnett 1994; Fialka 1991; Salisbury 1989; Chung 1989; Blitzer 1985; Nagorski 1985; Levine 1973; Sheperd 1962; Dubois 1959; Higgins 1955; Ebener 1955; for U.K. accounts see Steele 2002; Simpson 2001; Loyd 1999; Bell 1996; di Giovanni 1994; Gutman 1993; Heren 1988, 1978). However, while accounts vary widely from witness-to-history accounts (see for example Gutman 1993) to deeply personal reflections (see for example Hedges 2002; Loyd

1999), many journalists' accounts of life spent abroad in zones of conflict tend to gravitate towards close-call story-telling, in which danger and adventure eclipse critical, self-reflexive explorations of the profession, the news they produce, the relationships they develop between the peoples' they report on, other journalists with whom they cooperate and compete, and/or editors back home. The result, according to Morrison and Tumber (1995) is a "somewhat grand presentation of both role and occupation at the expense of more mundane and characteristic features of the occupation" (p. 445 in Hannerz 2004, p. 236; see also Feinstein 2003, p. 14-5; Hedges 2002; for critiques of "macho" language and/or the masculine ethos of this occupation see Pedelty 1995, 1997; Knightley 2000; Flanders 1990; Dietrich 2002; Stasio 2002).

Aided by hindsight and historiographical analysis, historians and researchers have also taken up the work of biographical excavation. There are historical summaries of (mostly U.S.) "greats" (Hohenberg 1964/1995; for a women-specific summary see Edwards 1988; Sorel 2000; Emerson et al. 2002); Cold War biographies of Western correspondents on hostile ground, including Edgar Snow in China (Thomas 1996; Farnsworth 1996), U.K. correspondents in Moscow (Cockburn 1989), Wilfred Burchett in Korea (Manne 1989), and Carleton Beals in Latin America (Britton 1987). There are also histories of recovery, in which historians and researchers document the lives and work of women foreign and/or war correspondents at a time when the profession's androcentric tendencies selected against their participation in the pull and tug of war coverage (on Canadian journalist Kathleen ("Kit") Coleman

see Freeman 1988, 1989; Ferguson 1978, 2001; on Anna Northend Benjamin see Brown 1969; on Marguerite Higgins see Fleming 1970, p. 116-128).

When it comes to the relationship between state and media, some authors have explored historical relationships between journalists and their host country in European countries (Heald 1988), the former U.S.S.R. (Bassow 1988), and China and Hong Kong (MacKinnon 1987; Lee 1994; Knight & Nakano 1999). Others have looked at the relationship between journalists and their own state's capacity for propaganda and censorship (Chomsky & Herman 1988/2002; Carruthers 2000; Thrall 2000; Fox 1995; Kellner 1995; Roper 1995; Norris 1994; Taylor 1992; LaMay et al. 1991; Mueller 1973), varying between painting journalists as enterprising muckrakers in the face of military censorship to complicit military voyeurs reproducing the legitimacy of warfare. However, while the autobiographical accounts and some of the historical accounts previously mentioned highlight anecdote over structure, these latter studies perform the opposite operation. While both groups add considerably to the knowledge of some of the constraints journalists undergo when confronted with war, both approaches tend to gravitate to one side of the pendulum or the other, failing to link them together in dialectical and dynamic fashion, limiting the capacity to understand how journalists both negotiate and acquiesce to situational, institutional, and cultural constraints.

Most of the studies cited explore wars of intervention, complete with a Western actor (usually the U.S.) in a bipolar, Cold War or recently post-Cold War setting. However, it is important to note that throughout the 1990s some media researchers, scholars and practitioners – spurred by the post-Soviet geopolitical world and the rise

of localized “ethnic” wars and the potential for *la fin du siècle* Western military and humanitarian intervention – began to look at the media as a unitary entity, pressuring Western governments to wield peace-establishing influence around the globe (see Wolfsfeld 2004, 1997; Power 2003; Mills & Brunner 2002; Seib 2002; McLaughlin 2002; Ignatieff 1998; Livingston 1997, 1995; Gutman 1993). However, while this may have instilled a sense of structural agency for journalists, again the individual as existing within a web of relationships was often ignored. As well, much of this discussion was alarmist, taking place partly in response to an atmosphere of decreasing production and consumption of foreign news as local stories, and in some eyes “infotainment-style” journalism, began to encroach on space and time formerly devoted to foreign news (see for example Seib 2002; McLaughlin 2002; Ignatieff 1998).

The attacks of September 11th, 2001 would shift the discourse again.

Indeed, as the debris from the World Trade Center in New York City settled, the familiar Cold War narrative of the West existing in opposition to its polar opposite, was renewed in the form of fragmented terrorist cells and the “rogue” states that harbour them. One particular buzz in journalist and media studies circles regarded the extent to which the resulting increase in both space devoted to foreign coverage and audiences that consumed them after 9/11 would continue or decrease after the shock of Western victimization subsided (see for example Carey 2002; Dean & Brady 2002; McChesney 2002; Parks 2002; Schudson 2002; Tucher 2001). In another vein of discourse, some analysts began critiquing the language of “Us” and “Them” as promulgated by the new hawks of U.S. foreign policy and reproduced in the news

media (Brennan & Duffy 2003; Kaplan 2002; Bell 2002; Butalia 2002; Klein 2002; Peters 2002; Sturgeon 2001; Shiva 2002; Hoge & Rose 2001). Lastly, some began wondering how this new bipolar discourse might affect journalism in terms of patriotism and self-censorship (Waisbord 2002), the sphere of legitimate coverage and criticism (Fawcett 2002; Knightley 2002; Mindich 2002), the role of embedded reporting (Cardiff School of Journalism 2003), the language of jingoism (Lule 2004; the Canadian Islamic Congress Dec. 2002, Sept. 2001a, 2001b; Aufderheide 2002), the new security discourse (Vujakovic 2002), the extent of sustained foreign coverage and the limits of parachute journalism (Manthorpe 2001), the under-representation of women journalists reporting on the state of affairs (Overholser 2002), the relationship between the media and government (Hess & Kalb 2003), prescriptions for journalists to overcome racist stereotypes (Karim 2002), the use of history following 9/11 (Winfield et al. 2002), and the misrepresentation of public opinion (Miller 2002). With a few notable exceptions, (see Playdon 2002; Reese 2001), few analysts commented on the constraints journalists themselves face while covering the “War on Terror” in terms of demands on their labour and situational difficulties and how they continue to negotiate meaning in the context of this media environment that is influenced by, but not necessarily determined by, pre-existing notions of the new post-9/11 reality. Once again the journalist as agent does not receive extensive analysis. It is both the lack of journalist-centred analysis generally, and the lack of this analysis relative to post-9/11 coverage specifically that I address in the main research question of this thesis.

Part III – Establishing the research question: from anthropology to Eurocentrism

Since my days in the student press, during which the invasion of Afghanistan commenced and the now ubiquitous “War on Terror” took its first, hesitant steps, I have felt a yawning disquiet relative to the media coverage that seemed, at the time, to embrace a U.S.-filtered New World Order – a world of radical mullahs and democratizing U.S. soldiers, with a few Canadian peace-makers thrown in to fulfill Canada’s role as kinder, gentler middle power. From my “lofty” desk at an alternative student press, I combined a concern for Western representations of non-Western “Others” gleaned from my degree in cultural anthropology with a new-found journalistic voice of criticism regarding what I felt was inadequate coverage (see French 2001). If it wasn’t the “axis of evil,” it was the military techno babble and strategizing, or even the dramatization of Afghan women’s inequality – all of which appeared in the Canadian media, hard and soft news, analysis and commentary, and even parachute journalists’ tales from Afghanistan. Given my background in an academic discipline that prides itself on critiques of representation and the subject-object relationship, I found journalists’ tales from the hinterlands of Western influence discomfiting, beginning with accounts of the fog of war – referring in this case to media efforts to extract accurate and empirical information and analysis from the situational and cultural chaos of war (see Mercer et al. 1987) – and continuing as journalists hopped on the backs of jeeps with Canadian peace-makers to patrol the streets of a newly pacified Kabul.

Certain exercises in anthropological reflection seemed horribly lacking in the coverage. Since the 1960s for example, many anthropologists have started to interrogate their privilege in representing non-Western “Others,” reporting, in a sense,

on peoples in a way that reifies difference, promotes exoticism, and fails to acknowledge that anthropologists who “report” on other cultures often reproduce a Western cultural bias while forming unhealthy information-gathering relationships with colonialist administrators and/or modernizing development specialists (for summary, see Barnard 1990; for crucial texts, see Clifford 1988; Clifford & Marcus 1987; Marcus & Fischer 1986).

What is more, the language of ethnocentrism and its colonially influenced counterpart – Eurocentrism – were also anthropological terms ripe for application to journalistic discourse. Ella Shohat & Robert Sham (1994) define the former as a sort of cultural “lens,” a discourse through which a person of one ethnicity views “the Other” in relation to one’s own ethnicity, values, morals and norms (p. 22). Often, or at least potentially, “the Other” is placed at the lower end of perceived adequacy, with one’s own culture coming up on top. But while this self-love does not have to be damaging to whoever is on the receiving end and can actually benefit the identity of culture groups, this is not the case with Eurocentrism. According to Samir Amin (1989), the latter brings with it the burden of a historical relationship – that of colonialism and its current geopolitical antecedents – in which domination, marginalization, and/or decimation form the substance of the relationship (see also Shohat & Stam 1994, p. 15). In its current formation – that of U.S. military and economic predominance over developing countries, in this case Afghanistan – Amin lists several defining characteristics (p. 89-117; see also Shohat & Sham 1994, p. 23-25). To begin, Eurocentrism is often supported by the denial that “the Other” has contributed to history – Afghanistan’s historical narrative being drowned out by U.S.

democracy-building. Eurocentrism is often supported by the laws of “oppressor” states – including private ownership – in this case rebuilding of Afghanistan in the political image of Western democracy. Eurocentrism is not absolute, but a project to justify the gains of the Western power – once again, the language of democratization as opposed to real democratization comes to mind here. Finally, and perhaps in Amin’s harshest criticism, Eurocentrism is considered to be racist, setting in motion relations of power that situate the victim as inferior and the aggressor as superior. While most critical media analysts don’t use the language of Eurocentrism to tease out evidence of bias, many have lobbed the criticism that racial bias exists in the media, whether referring to the portrayal of ethnic minorities – domestic and international – in the media (Henry & Tator 2002; Bullock & Jafri 2000; Karim 2000; Hackett 1989), the superstructural domination of Western media at the marginalizing expense of non-Western media (Shohat & Sham 1994; Amy 1999; Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen 1998; Robinson & Sparkes 1977/1981), or in the case that interests me here – the Western media portrayal of Arab and/or Muslim voices following 9/11, for which a growing literature can be cited (Fahmy 2004; Ibish 2003, p. 119-131; Thobani 2001; Zacharias 2003; Karim 2002; Canadian Islamic Congress 2002, 2001a, 2001b).

Even in anthropological circles, discussions arose as to the representation of Afghan society. Abu-Lughod (2002) critiques the use of Muslim women as catalysts to support U.S. intervention under the idyllic banners of equality, freedom, and rights, arguing that the Western media’s appetite for understanding difference through a “culturalist,” or culturally determinist lens at the expense of additional historical and

political factors and explication reifies cultural difference at the expense of understanding, among other things, Afghanistan's history as a colonized region and the West's need to address current global injustices in the geopolitical landscape. Shahrani (2002) looks at the discourse surrounding the "failed state" approach to Afghanistan's factionalist, war-torn country, noting again that cultural explanations which blame the country for its own weakened state fail to acknowledge that in the unipolar New World Order, Afghanistan has been influenced by the "broader geopolitical circumstance of foreign manipulation and proxy wars that have given rise to particular forms of ethnic factionalism" (p. 716). Both anthropologists take a swipe at Eurocentric discourse, from justifying intervention to blaming the victim. And yet, Eurocentrism is not an isolated discourse promulgated by policy analysts and pundits. Shohat & Sham (1994) argue that the "dominant media" "devalourizes the lives of people of color while regarding Euro-American life as sacrosanct" (p. 24); while Amin (1989) identifies, describes, and deconstructs the language of Eurocentrism beginning with a set of common ideas and opinions "transmitted by the media, on which a broad consensus exists in the West, in order to summarize the Eurocentric vision" (p. 107).

Given that foreign correspondents report on other cultures, albeit in a more popular format than anthropologists (see Hannerz 2004; Spurr 1993), I found the impulse to critique correspondents through an anthropological lens overwhelming. However, as I came to wet my journalistic appetite at the student newspaper and later Carleton University's Department of Journalism and Communication, my critical vantage point took on a whole new politics. I could no longer lounge on the armchair of academic

distance; I had shifted from outsider to insider, from subject to object, and from observer to participant. Criticizing journalists as unthinking purveyors of Western media dominance and hegemony seemed to grossly distort and undermine the journalist's agency as thinking subject. Thus agency seemed the best way to integrate an anthropologically-influenced critique of cultural, economic, and political constraints, with the active participation of the journalists themselves. Therefore, the final research question is inspired both by anthropological studies and journalism practice. It is from thinkers who fuse some of these penchants together that I draw my inspiration for the central research question.

To begin, there are only a few works that deal with workplace culture in a foreign correspondent context, including Ulf Hannerz's (2004) ethnography of foreign – but not war – correspondents in Johannesburg, Tokyo, and Jerusalem throughout the 1990s, and Mark Peddeley's (1997, 1995) participant observation ethnography of war correspondents covering the tail end of the Salvadoran civil war in the early 1990s. While Peddeley's work exposes the frustration of journalists trying to tell a story under the thumb of disinterested editors and a hush campaign promulgated by U.S. administrators attempting to reduce public awareness of their financial promotion of the ruling government, whose human rights abuses repeatedly targeted both guerilla fighters and civilians (see Herman & Chomsky 1988/2002), Hannerz's (2004) work balances constraints back home with agency abroad:

I want to throw some light on the continued order of foreign correspondent activity and the room for maneuver, improvisation, and choice within that larger frame...a bit less structure, perhaps, and some more agency. (p. 9)

I believe that Hannerz's approach – that of a former journalist – to emphasize agency is directive in terms of being able to describe, rather than prescribe the constraints of journalists reporting after 9/11. However, this opening should be balanced against notions of “Othering” as established above. In particular, the potential for non-Western peoples to be misrepresented in the media is also important because this potential can negatively affect public understanding of different ways of life, histories, and belief systems (see Said 2001; Canadian Islamic Congress 2001a, b, 2002; Karim 2002; Abdo 2002; Razack 2003; Thobani 2001; Zacharias 2003; Fahmy 2004).

Thus my central research question is as follows:

To what extent did the Canadian foreign correspondents in Afghanistan post-9/11 exercise agency in their journalistic coverage relative to the constraints faced by the demands of routine/organizational, logistical, economic, political, and cultural constraints?

To answer this question, it is important to describe the news produced in terms of the story lines and source strategies (male/female sources, known/unknown sources, Western/Afghan sources, “upper”/“lower” class sources) that journalists used to construct their stories (chap. 5). It is also important to understand the dynamic intersection between agency and constraints that influenced the production of these news stories; in other words, the stories behind the news stories (chap. 3, 4). Finally, it is important to view agency and constraints in the context of Eurocentric, cultural bias relative to the tug and pull of the business and structure of journalism in a post-9/11 context (chap. 3, 4, 5). By establishing these dynamic influences, I hope to draw

as complete a picture as possible of the work and interactions of foreign correspondents reporting from Afghanistan.

Part IV – Methodology and limitations

In order to answer the preceding questions, three major methodological processes were used.

To begin, I conducted telephone interviews with editors and managers of elite publications who sent journalists to Afghanistan from September 11, 2001 until September 11, 2002, including the *Globe & Mail*, *CanWest Global*, and the *Toronto Star* (chapter 3). As papers of national reach, they also have the budget for foreign corresponding, and were the only print media that sent correspondents on a regular basis to Afghanistan throughout the bombing campaign and during early post-Taliban peace-making efforts (not including wire service *Canadian Press*). In the interest of limiting the scope of the research, and preventing the different sets of influences that broadcast journalists bring to foreign coverage, radio and television journalism has been eliminated as a topic of study (except for Chapter 3). As well, Hackett (2000) argues that no other mass medium offers the same degree of accessibility, in-depth analysis, diversity of views, and reflective capacity as newspapers, further bolstering the focus on print.

Moving from the foreign desk to the field, I conducted phone interviews with nine journalists to gather information on the range of constraints listed above, as well as personal agent-centred aspects of motivation and identity-politics (chapter 4). In addition to interviews, all journalists studied were also asked to fill out a research questionnaire (see appendix 3) that recorded a number of logistical and technical

details, adding to the fullness of research material produced. In terms of ethical human subject research, the Carleton Ethics Committee cleared both the questionnaire and interview questions so as to manage issues of informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality (see appendix 3 for Committee approval letter).

Following the study of these interviews, 190 articles were reviewed for their source content, which was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods (chapter 5). Sources were coded according to the following characteristics including male/female, known/unknown, Western/Afghan, “upper”/“lower” class in order to describe trends in journalists’ reports. Sources were also studied to determine representational context, and from this, the degree of political constraints and Eurocentric tendencies were balanced against journalists’ claims to motivation and stories covered.

Between this heavy focus on primary research and methodology lay several theoretical streams pulled together for the purpose of understanding this research. Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, field, and the field of power are established in chapter 2, compared to other routine/organizational studies of the media, and applied to the remaining chapters to varying extents. Additionally, structural critiques of proximate coverage and the market imperative are also linked to Bourdieu in chapters 3, 4, and 5. Lastly, the political and journalistic fields are viewed through the lens of Eurocentrism in chapter 5. Bourdieu runs throughout this investigation, linking structure, agency, and primary research material together in a complex web of non-determinate interactions, the end result being to lay out, as much as possible, an answer to the primary research question.

Chapter 2: The Field of Journalistic Production – from habitus, to field, to field of power

Tracing the dynamics of news people, their daily exploits, and the people with whom they regularly engage within the overarching construct of the organizational setting of journalistic practice has been the subject of much academic work beginning prolifically in the 1970s (Tuchman 1972, 1978; Epstein 1973; Sigal 1973; Sigelman 1973; Roshcoe 1975; Gans 1979; Fishman 1980; Gandy 1982),¹ and continuing up until the present day (Hackett 1991; Pedelty 1995, 1997; Shoemaker & Reese 1996; Couldry 2000; Reese 2001; Hannerz 2004). How do personal and organizational structures influence what journalists write given the vast – almost infinite – number of potential storylines, angles, and events in the public and private realm? Liberal-pluralist media scholars might chalk up the day's top headlines to the vicissitudes of the journalist's role within the public sphere, mediating the day's conflicts for a consuming public; while critical, radical, or even critical-pluralist scholars might see a hegemonous and thus limited world view and blame corporate influence, routine journalistic practice, and/or deeply engrained ideological/cultural values.² But whether liberal or radical, there is a tendency among theorists to reconstruct the apparent workings of the news environment according to their structural-theoretical mode of choice. But to avoid structure is to advocate instrumentalism³ – in which case the journalist is sole actor; and structure verges on the irrelevant. The fissures of this debate reveal a proverbial grain of truth in each position: Journalists operate with

¹ See also Tumber (1999) for a well-organized, comprehensive selection of excerpts from classic and/or essential organizational studies and theoretical texts relating to the news media.

² For a discussion of the liberal-pluralist versus critical/radical perspective, see: Hackett (1991, p. 51-85) and Goldsmith Media Group (2000, p. 28).

³ For discussion of instrumentalist position, see Hackett (1991, p. 61)

independent agency to a point, they follow routine that is designed to canvass the sphere of public opinion to a point, they are constrained by official sources representing dominant world views to a point, and they reproduce culturally dominant ideological discourses unthinkingly to a point. Indeed, generalizations on the tenor of media texts and/or the behavior of journalists *are* possible – most scholars from multiple orientations are able to highlight legitimate silences in text and actor. But what instrumentalists miss in their preoccupation with the individual and reproductionist and structuralist theories miss in their concern with corporate and political power, and the overarching influence of organizational culture is the flexibility of French theorist Pierre Bourdieu’s praxis – a theory of habitus, field, and practice that forms the backbone of this thesis which accounts for the practice of everyday life without necessarily predicting it.

Before setting out a plan of action though, it is important to establish a reflexive qualification. I am not about to lay the groundwork for an investigation that sees all and explains all. Most academics – or those who are honest about it – will admit that the silences they observe in their investigations often reflect their own ideological underpinnings (see for example Gans 1979, p. xiii, 40; Hall 1980, p. 57-8; Schudson 1989, p. 156; Goldsmith Media Group 2000, p. 19; Cottle 2003a, p. 7). Herbert Gans’ (1979) empirical workplace study of national television and newsmagazines in the U.S. reveals a distinct critique of power and a left-leaning concern with the absence of class and structure from the national news. Pierre Bourdieu (1998) critiques the media through essays that have tended to become preoccupied with struggles between journalism and academia, and the constraining media influences that turn intellectuals

into “fast thinkers” producing five-second sound bites at the expense of context (p. 29). My own investigation, which lacks the depth of Gans quasi-ethnography but contains more empirical research materials than Bourdieu’s media-focused essays, is sensitive to the play of race, gender, and class in terms of individual agency and broadly delineated literary construction, and is couched in the discourse of constraint and agency.

Turning preoccupation to production then, chapter 2 draws on both Bourdieu’s critiques and workplace studies to situate my research within these variegated theories. This chapter is divided into four parts (and a conclusion). Part I introduces the nomenclature of practice theory and its significance to journalism/media studies. Part II expands upon Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus in terms of agency and constraint relative to class, race and gender. Concepts of struggle and strategy will also be introduced. Part III applies the concept of field to operations within it, comparing Bourdieu’s observations regarding the media’s internal logic with more traditional workplace/organizational media studies. And finally, part IV explores how the media field is influenced by other fields – namely the political and economic fields which together are part of the larger field of power. Moving from individual (habitus) to newsroom (intra-field), to supra-newsroom influences (field of power), it will then be possible to look at agency and constraints in terms of the coverage of Afghanistan from the perspective of editors (chapter 3), journalists (chapter 4), and through the sourcing genealogy and narrative flow of media texts (chapter 5). Constantly wresting focus from one element to the other, I will draw out different perspectives without necessarily forgoing a modernist conceptualization of truth,

juxtaposing constraint with agency in an attempt to demystify the journalistic practice of international foreign reporting. In the end, it will be clear that journalists respond to the strictures within and outside of their craft, according to their own motivation(s), with more or less appreciation for these strictures, and resulting in journalistic output that can bear similarities *and* differences to other journalists on the ground. This last point is neither a paradox nor an analytical error. Rather it is the result of utilizing the theory of practice to excavate information on the way journalists act and are acted upon without falling back upon an instrumentalist, structuralist, or even routine/organizational position, and/or any combination thereof.

Part I – A primer on practice theory: habitus, capital, and field

Although this larger investigation is not exclusively an exercise in identifying every manifestation of Bourdieu's logic, it is important to establish a foundation for practice theory by describing its major components. Thus, this section begins with term definition, using a combination of Bourdieu's own work and those of others who have studied and summarized this work to define all three elements that make up practice theory including habitus, capital, and field. Once practice theory is clearly delineated, it will be placed within the larger literature of journalism/media studies, identifying strengths and weakness, and interpretations leading from those strengths and weaknesses that will guide the remainder of this investigation.

An introduction to nomenclature

The theory of practice can be explicated using Bourdieu's "generative formula" which reads $(Habitus \times Capital) + Field = Practice$ (Bourdieu 1984, p. 101). According to Mahar, Harker & Wilkes (1990) this "generative structuralism" is

designed to understand both the genesis of social structures and the “dispositions of the habitus of the agents who live within these structures” (p. 3-4).⁴

In *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Bourdieu (1977) writes that “the structures constitutive of a particular type of environment” produce *habitus*, that is: “principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively ‘regulated’ and ‘regular’ without in any way being the product of obedience to rules,” adapted to specific goals “without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends” or an “explicit mastery of the operations necessary to attain them” (p. 72). In terms of journalism then, the habitus of each individual is the result of different histories, or “life trajectories” (Mahar, Harker, and Wilkes 1990 p. 9-10) and experiences within social space. Indeed the “journalist is an abstract entity that doesn’t exist” – instead, there are “journalists who differ by sex, age, class, level of education, affiliation, and medium,” (Bourdieu 1998, p. 23) a point that will be returned to throughout this investigation.

Capital is inseparable from habitus and is an essential element of Bourdieu’s formula. However, for ease of explanation, I will briefly describe field first.

In between habitus and the practice of social existence is the *field*. Field is a “relational concept” (p. 25) which Bourdieu developed in his earlier sociological work (see Bourdieu 1984, 1990, 1994) and later applied to journalism. It is essential to this investigation and can be defined as follows:

A field is a structured social space, a field of forces, a force field. It contains people who dominate and others who are dominated. Constant, permanent

⁴ While I won’t be exploring the genesis of social structures, I will be looking at the latter in relation to the field.

relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time become a space in which various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field. All the individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal. It is this power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies. (Bourdieu 1998, p. 40-41)

To enter a field, one must possess “the habitus which predisposes one to enter that field, that game,” (Johnson 1993, p. 8) “the minimum amount of knowledge, or skill, or ‘talent’ in the most advantageous way possible,” (ibid.) and the will to “invest one’s capital” so as to derive a profit from participation (ibid.).

Thus participation in the field involves *capital*; but how exactly is capital defined? According to Bourdieu’s (1977) “general theory of the economics of practice,” economic calculation is extended to “*all* goods, material and symbolic, without distinction, that present themselves as *rare* and worthy of being sought after in a particular social formation” [author’s emphasis] (p. 178). In the economic field, agents struggle for economic capital. In the field of cultural production generally speaking, the field to which journalism belongs as a broad category that covers both the material and symbolic production of cultural works such as art, literature, and journalism (Johnson 1993, p. 20), the types of capital at the disposal of cultural producers such as journalists usually involve symbolic and cultural capital, which involve “forms of cultural knowledge, competences or dispositions” (p. 7). Once established in the newsroom, journalists can use symbolic capital to gain prestige and renowned as per the particular internal logic of their field (Bourdieu 1977, p. 179).

Important in any field including journalism are the concepts of struggle and strategy, which are products of the habitus but interact in the field “for the purposes of recognition, legitimation, capital and access to capital within the symbolic and material word” (Mahar et al. 1990, p. 19). Those who are successful in jockeying for position using symbolic and cultural capital to attain “symbolic power” – a certain degree of authority based upon consecration and/or prestige (Johnson 1993, p. 7). But with authority comes struggle, because there are a limited number of positions available in the field. As this struggle plays out, those who are able to attain positions – manifested as “position-takings” – can theoretically challenge the orthodoxy of established traditions by attempting to introduce “new modes of cultural practice” (p. 16-7).

Drawing from this formula and the terms that define it, the media field of Bourdieu’s imagining then is one of relationships of power – between journalists and other journalists, and journalists and their immediate (editors) and distant (publisher and advertisers) supervisors. In other words, field enters the equation as a space that bounds agents as they strategize and struggle to achieve prestige, whether material or symbolic. And it is struggle and strategy – in combination with individual dispositions (habitus) and the contextual environment (field) – that make up the *practice* of social existence, or the *praxis* that takes place when habitus interacts with field (Mahar et al. 1990, p. 15). Having established these basic elements of Bourdieu’s formula, it is now possible to place practice theory within the larger literature of journalism/media studies.

Journalism/media studies and practice/fields theor(ies)

Practice theory has not had much play in media studies research (for exceptions see: Benson 1998; Hanke 2001; Marlière 1998; Matheson 2003).⁵ Those who have used Bourdieu in media studies research have done so with a number of specific objectives: Hanke (2001) uses Bourdieu's concept of fields to explore the tenuous relationship between the media field and media studies academic field in terms of air time and problem definition; Matheson (2003) combines phenomenological sociology with Bourdieu's more sociologically and anthropologically-grounded understanding of journalistic communities to reduce challenges to journalism's self-understanding; while Marlière (1998) and Benson (1998) attempt to place Bourdieu within media studies theory more generally. Drawing on the later two theorists then, I will outline Bourdieu's place within and contribution to media studies.

To begin, Benson (1998) notes that references to Bourdieu are "especially rare in studies of news organizations" (p. 490). Whether this is because media sociologists – particularly in the U.K. and U.S. – already possess a rich toolbox of theoretical orientations and categories (for summary see Cottle 2003a; Goldsmith Media Group 2000; Schudson 1996, 1989), or because Bourdieu's media-specific work is slim (as opposed to his large collection of sociological work), or because of a geographical and linguistic barrier between works produced under Bourdieu's sphere of academic influence (see Bourdieu, 1993) and U.S and U.K. media theorists, is unclear.⁶

Nevertheless, Bourdieu's own work (especially 1998) still follows on the heels of

⁵ Cottle (2003a) also gives a nod to Bourdieu for his concept of field in relation to his own concept of "news ecology," (p. 19) and his own division of Bourdieu's concept of cultural production into micro, mezzo, and macro-levels (p. 20).

⁶ Bourdieu, who was a professor of sociology at the *Collège de France* in Paris and the director of studies at the *École des Hautes Études*, has a number of research associates who have produced media-related work (Bourdieu 1993; see also Benson 1998, p. 263). Bourdieu and his research associates also produce a journal – *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*.

three decades of sociological work (see for example Bourdieu 1977, 1984, 1990, 1994) collected under the rubric of practice theory – an orientation from which he launches his description and critique of the field of journalism in *On Television* (1998).

Thus, Benson (1998) outlines several unique contributions of practice or media fields theory to media studies, two of which I will focus on here. First of all, Bourdieu's focus on the "mezzo" level of the field offers "both a theoretical and empirical bridge between the traditionally separated macro-'societal' level models of the news media such as political economy, hegemony, cultural and technological theories, and micro-'organizational' approaches" (p. 463). Thus the social scientific study of journalistic production is a "process of detailing the convergence of 'disposition' (habitus) and 'position' (structural location within a field)" (p. 467). Secondly, Bourdieu highlights processes of change in terms of the media itself and how a reconfigured media affects other major societal sectors (*ibid.*). Thus we have the irreducible logic of fields and the persistence of inter-field interactions regardless of discussions of domination and subordination (p. 491). However, field theory shares with organizational approaches – which "tend to focus only on individual media organizations or sectors of the media" – an emphasis on empiricism and an interest "in the everyday practice of journalism." (p. 481). It also shares a hegemony-based interest in the constraining power of culture as it manifests itself in professional practices, traditions, and codes" and a "concern with how macro-structures of media power are linked to organizational routines and journalistic practices" (*ibid.*). It does not share, on the other hand, political economy's interest in explaining the news

media's behavior by sole reference to its capitalist owners (p. 479); or cultural studies' interest in the "overarching constraints of symbolic systems" while downplaying more mundane power struggles (ibid.). In sum then, Benson (1998) argues that the media fields model rightly offers a "structural-relational perspective" on the world media system that is friendly to hegemony models (483). Overall, it rightly:

Positions itself between those approaches that commit the 'short-circuit' fallacy and link cultural production directly to the interests of broad social classes or the national society, and those that focus too narrowly on cultural producers without taking seriously the structured relation between the field of cultural production and its environment (p. 481-2).

However, fields theory is not perfect. Benson (1998), for example, argues that there is a frequent elision between economic and political interests that does not parallel the irreducible concept of fields itself (p. 482). As well, the state, as an entity is not clearly defined, leaving room to equate it narrowly with government officials – which creates a distinct division between the media and politics; or more widely in terms of the Western world view and both the role of the media and state educators in producing that world view – which actually rolls the media field more closely into the field of power (ibid.). As well, Marlière (1998) argues that Bourdieu doesn't do enough to look at divisions within the field of journalism, including the different types of journalism and different types of journalists (p. 223). Instead, a surprisingly homogeneous world of journalism results (ibid.). However, like Benson (1998), I grounded my use of media fields theory within his larger theoretical discourse of

practice theory, producing a more complete picture than *On Television* allows.

However, the problem of economic and political field collusion and the ambiguity of the definition of the State persist, leaving me to juxtapose the two fields of power and simplify journalism-political relations. To these criticisms I would acknowledge that – like Malière suggests – a more subtle reading of the internal logic of the field and relationships there within is helpful and clarifying.

As I conclude this section then, it is with the conscious intention to add context and detail to an understanding of foreign reporting through my analysis of the Canadian coverage of Afghanistan, while avoiding the organizational blunder of removing the micro from its macro context.

Part II – The habitus and the journalist: class, race, and gender

As stated in the prior section, the “journalist is an abstract entity that doesn’t exist” (Bourdieu 1998, p. 23). The formative impact of identity – in the form of sex, age, class, education, affiliation, and media, to name a few distinguishing features of selfhood in relation to a larger social grouping – must be considered when explicating the subtle factors that contribute to habitus formation. Thus while focusing on habitus, this section is divided into three subsections. Subsection one explores the relationship between class and capital; subsection two race and genesis amnesia, subsection three gender and struggle.⁷ In the end it will be clear that identity, and

⁷ I chose class, race, and gender for several reasons. First of all, I am inspired by Fellows & Razack’s (1998) concept of interlocking systems of domination of imperialism, capitalism, and patriarchy, which create interlocking hierarchies of oppression. Secondly, class, race, gender as interrelated societal intersections have been written about extensively in anthropological, sociological, and feminist circles (see Hill Collins 1999, 2000; Stasiulis & Yuval-Davis 1995 for examples). Thirdly, class, race, and gender have also been a source of interest for scholars of journalism and communication (see introduction and this chapter for references). It is integral to this analysis in terms of the First and Third World dichotomy which divides journalists from their Afghan sources and brings up issues of race and the extreme differences in wealth. In terms of gender, issues of the masculine elements of war

what journalists do with it on a conscious and unconscious level, has an impact on agency and constraint as journalists produce journalism within the field.

Class and capital

In the early 1990s, Stephen Hess (1996) – a Brookings Institution senior fellow – produced a considerable amount of research on foreign correspondents reporting for U.S. networks and print empires. The product of detailed surveys with journalists and editors, Hess found that in terms of the class and education of domestic reporters, representativeness relative to the general population decreases as size of city and media outlet increases (p. 11). When foreign correspondents are added to the equation this division is even greater. Foreign correspondents, especially those whose careers began post-1990, are more likely than the general population to have: attended selective schools, spent more years abroad, and had fathers with managerial or professional jobs than the general population (p. 12-14). Even freelancers – who lack the job security and benefits of their staff counterparts – tend to come from upper middle-class backgrounds, partly because they are more able to risk financial loss associated with traveling to dangerous regions without first securing an employer (p. 18).

Although Canadian numbers are hard to come by, Pritchard and Sauvageau's (1998) mid-1990s survey of domestic journalists provides some clues into the class make-up of foreign correspondents. It indicates that the landscape of domestic Canadian journalism is predominately middle class, with earnings averaging \$49,999 per year (p. 380). Assuming that many foreign correspondents are pulled from the

and war reporting are relevant, as well as the playing out of difference between Canada and Afghanistan's gender politics through media-non-media interactions. The specific application of class, race, and gender will occupy chapters 3, 4, and 5.

ranks of domestic staff (a point which will be discussed in part III), it is not unreasonable to posit that Canadian foreign correspondents are also middle class, mirroring Hess' findings. But what does class have to do with it?

Coming back to Bourdieu's equation – (Habitus x Capital) + Field = Practice – the role of capital can be theorized in light of class considerations. On the most basic level, a journalist needs capital – read here in an economic and material sense – to interact with his/her habitus to launch his/her career. This does not preclude economically challenged individuals from making it *per se*, but it does make it harder for them to establish themselves in the field.

What other effects can growing up in the suburbs, having access to international experiences, education, and the money to get there, have on the budding journalist's habitus and practice? According to Bourdieu (1977), “the homogeneity of the conditions of existence is what enables practices to be objectively harmonized without any intentional calculation or conscious reference to a norm” (p. 80). In terms of individual habitus, Bourdieu posits that a “class habitus” producing such a “homogeneity of the conditions of existence” is entirely possible; given this, “‘interpersonal’ relations are never, except in appearance, *individual-to-individual* relationships” ([original emphasis] p. 81). While this point can be applied to other potential habitus-forming criteria – race and gender – I will look at it here in terms of class.

To begin, many workplace studies have noted that an ideology of sorts exists in the newsroom. Studying the U.S. national journalist in a “community-study tradition,” Gans (1979) felt that his book “was as much about its economic and political

underpinnings, as about [the journalists]” (p. xiv-xv). Using an analytical, non-critical perspective (p. 6), Gans argues that news is imbued with ideology, or “paraideology” – which is the aggregate of values and judgements about the nature of reality (reality judgements) (p. 68). While this ideology or paraideology is only partially thought out, poorly integrated, prone to change, and flexible (ibid.), it still contains a number of consistent values that loosely fall under a seemingly oxymoronic “right-liberal” or “left-conservative” perspective. The fusing elements of these perspectives champion responsible capitalism and rugged individualism, advocate meritocratic and anti-bureaucratic governments, scorn political demagogues, and oppose socialism (p. 68-9). Most importantly, Gans argues that through paraideology, news preserves the upper-class and upper-middle class social order (p. 69). These ideological underpinnings parallel “enduring values” manifested in news texts, including ethnocentrism, altruistic democracy, responsible capitalism, small-town pastoralism, individualism, and moderatism (p. 42-51). However, rather than linking the class interests of journalists directly to ideological tendencies in the news, Gans argues that values often originate with sources – mostly high federal officials (p. 12). But the link returns shortly. Values, he argues, are also the product of the inability of both sources and journalists to be objective, “or proceed in the end without values” (p. 39). Given that the majority of these values parallel white middle-class values (to be explained below), we must assume that a certain white, middle-class aesthetic structures, but does not necessarily dominate, the newsroom.

Other authors have attempted to describe the tendency towards white, middle-class values in the press. Stuart Hall’s (et. al. 1978) construction of the “primary definer”

mirrors Gans (1979) concern with sources and enduring values. In short, “primary definers” in Western society are those with whom the power of policy-making and authority wielding is legitimized. The media rely on the primary definers to disseminate information. They must translate this information into a “public idiom,” a popularized language that reinforces the viewpoints of the primary definers. Those sources outside this space of primary definition, or advocates of an alternative position are forced to frame their arguments according to the “primary interpretation of the topic in question” in order to receive media coverage. While Hall introduces the concept of struggle between elite and non-elite sources in his hegemony-based model, his approach leans towards reproductionist: Class is present through the structural influence of elite sources at the expense of adding the individual habitus of journalists into the equation as a potential site of contestation.

Moving more towards the potential influence of habitus, Hackett’s (1991) investigation of the peace movement in Canada – which, like Gans involves both interviews and textual analysis – finds that oppositional perspectives are more likely to gain legitimacy when they “speak within the ‘we’ group that news addresses,” thus accepting the fundamental ideological and cultural assumptions about the values of liberalism and Western civilization (p. 281). However, Hackett qualifies the hegemony-based approaches of Gitlin (1980) and Herman and Chomsky (1988), in order to regard the press as “a site of contestation” which is “structured in dominance” (ibid.). When oppositional actors are able to “mobilize discourses recognized as authoritative within the framework of a broadly liberal and modernist political culture” the press will respect them (ibid.). Though the term “middle class”

doesn't work its way directly into Hackett's analysis, he does list certain blockages on a journalist's agency that reproduce a "conservative" reading of security issues, including the dispositions of individual journalists as well as media routine, organization, and economic imperatives. In his chapter on journalists (chap. 5), we learn that reporters who cover peace and security issues are oriented towards their careers, are not paid that well, (p. 106) are overwhelmingly male (p. 110), and their backgrounds, routines, and perspectives tend to reinforce the "knowledge institutionally produced by the State and its agencies" (p. 114). Citing Gitlin's (1980, p. 258) textual analysis of news values in relation to the student movement – including private property relations that honour the prerogatives of capital, the national security state, the reform of selected violations of the moral code through selective action by State agencies, and individual successes within corporate and bureaucratic structures – Hackett argues that journalists would not "recognize most of the news values sketched above as manifestations of political or personal bias" (p. 77-8). Instead, they are usually taken as "hallmarks of objectivity and professionalism" even though they have "inscribed within them social relations of power and inequality" that constitute a "link between social stratification and signification" (p. 78). Thus, even though Hackett does not break down the class composition of his subjects, it is implied that they are middle-income earners with a middle-class habitus and a tendency – through a myriad of influences including personal (class) background – to reproduce the status quo. Any investigation into journalists' coverage of Afghanistan then must take class into consideration when considering how a journalist might be orientated relative to covering a war in which the Canadian

state – assumed to be representing the interests of the average Canadian – invested military personnel to support an aggressive war against terrorism.

Race and genesis amnesia

Race is another significant factor to consider when exploring the habitus. In the introduction, I touched upon Ella Shohat & Robert Sham's (1994) definition of the "cultural lens" of ethnocentrism (p. 22) and Samir Amin's (1989) description of Eurocentrism and its attendant darker actualization – racism (p. 89-117, see also Shohat & Sham 1994, p. 23-25) – in an attempt to draw out critical, structural approaches to the role of race in media studies. However, here I will look at the ethnicity of journalists, linking it to democratic racism (Henry and Tator 2002).

To begin, Pritchard and Sauvageau (1998) note in their survey of domestic Canadian journalists that 97 per cent were white as of the mid-nineties (p. 380). Once again, specific numbers are not available for foreign correspondents. Nevertheless, given that Canadian foreign reporters are likely selected from these domestic ranks (again, a point to be discussed in Part III), one can assume that most Canadian foreign reporters are similarly constituted. Could race represent an aspect of habitus that predisposes a journalist to choose one of a number of structured responds to particular circumstances and under conditions of certain capital attributes as well as desires? Given Bourdieu's avowal that individual-to-individual relationships represent larger structural relationships, race could very well condition a journalist to respond to different desires and values, depending on their particular experience of whiteness or Otherness. Indeed, in terms of wider critiques of race and racism in Canada, Henry and Tator (2002) argue that "white culture is the hidden norm against which the

‘differences’ of all other subordinate groups are evaluated” (p. 10). Whiteness then, suggests “normality, truth, objectivity, and merit” (ibid.). Taking a critical stance, they argue that press discourses – particularly on immigration and multiculturalism – are couched in a broader discourses of domination in which the primacy of individual rights over collective rights, freedom of expression, equal opportunity, tolerance, and colour-blindness are used to obfuscate positions of unrelinquished power in a system that continues to marginalize racial minorities (p. 23, 38). These inherent contradictions – referred to by the authors as intrinsic to “democratic racism” – are so common as to be rendered invisible to all except those outside the dominant culture (p. 23). That is in the domestic context. Back to the domestic context though, while Henry and Tator’s concept of “democratic racism” agrees with Bourdieu’s assertion that certain aspects of one’s habitus remain outside the realm of conscious reflection, their media output analysis tells only one part of the story – they describe what is produced and see the text as a reflection of social reality in the vein of Stuart Hall (1981, 1997). They argue that media constructions “flow out of a set of complex and often contradictory system of structures, practices, and discourses, and not the personal inclinations of any of its practitioners” (Henry & Tator 2002, p. 6), leaving the individual’s race submerged under the larger discourse of culture and inequality. Bourdieu (1977), on the other hand, leaves the journalist as agent in the equation, even though neither the journalist, nor any other agent for that matter is likely to recognize the “schemes of thought and expression” that he/she may have acquired relative to the habitus (p. 79). This “*intentionless invention* of regulated improvisation” [original emphasis] is what Bourdieu calls “genesis amnesia” (ibid.) –

a term which is applied here to race for heuristic purposes, but which is equally relevant to other elements of identity. In sum, like class habitus, journalists don't necessarily have to recognize race for it to be a mediating factor in journalistic interactions, even when they are describing the toll of war on Afghan citizens. In any case, Henry and Tator bring to attention the fact that – at least when it comes to extra-media evaluation of purported (mis)representation – the pages of the newspaper can and have become a site of anti-racist struggle – a point which I consider in subsequent chapters.

Gender and struggle

Pritchard and Sauvageau (1998) note that the landscape of domestic Canadian journalism is predominately male (72 per cent) (p. 380). Even so, while class and race reveal homogeneity within journalism, gender is becoming increasingly heterogeneous and better describes another component of the theory of practice – the interaction between the habitus and field through struggle and strategy. According to a report from the International Federation of Journalists (2001), as little as 50 years ago journalism was “almost exclusively [a] male profession” (p. 3; see also Mills 1988). To the extent that women were present as domestic journalists, they were mostly relegated to women's pages, assistant staff, or wire copy rewriters. “Real” news – including politics, economics, and public affairs – was covered by and for men (Mills 1988; Carter, Branston, & Allan 1998). “Malestream news” (Carter, Branston, and Allan 1998, p. 8-9) extended to the realm of foreign and war reporting almost uniformly until the Second World War, when 127 women were accredited by the U.S. War Department (Dietrich 2002, p. 1; see also Mills 1988, p. 4). By the

1970s, women represented about 16 per cent of first-time correspondents in the U.S. (Hess 1996, p. 16). As of 1992, that number had risen to approximately 30 per cent (ibid.).

To what extent might gender influence the motivational drives and literary penchants of women covering foreign countries and wars? Historically, when women “invaded the sanctity of the newsroom” (Carter, Branston and Allan 1998, p. 13), they posed a threat to what had been a male domain of work shaped by patriarchal norms, values and traditions. But rather than disrupt this sanctity, a dualism was created between masculine “hard news” or news focusing on politics, wars, and economics, and feminine “soft news,” or news focusing on “human interest” (ibid.; and see Holland 1998, p. 17-32). In a survey of media attitudes and values among domestic journalists in Canada, Robinson and Saint-Jean (1998) found that women favoured content-orientated media roles that privilege the intellectual and social missions assigned to the media in democracies, while men focused more on the business aspect and profit-making roles (p. 363) – suggesting that some aspect of this dichotomy may continue to exist. What about in the international context? Would women journalists write “soft” stories dealing with non-elite sources and the social consequences of war even though combat, militarism, and national chauvinism are conflated with ideological and cultural notions of manhood (Peterson 1992, p. 48-9; see also Enloe 2000, p. x)? Could an increase in the number of women’s reports increase the number of human interest stories (Mills 1988; Carter, Branston & Allan 1998) generally and the human consequences of war specifically (Pedelty 1997;

Starowicz & Nanson 1998, Stasio 1998, Dietrich 2002)? Some scholars make this assertion (Mills 1988; Pedelty 1997).

To answer this question though, one has to utilize the role of the field in relation to the habitus. To start, while predominately white, middle-class journalists might struggle for position in the field, women might do the same, in addition to struggling to extend the realm of coverage to spheres outside the male-defined prerogatives of war. Gender is a significant factor in Pedelty's (1995, 1997) ground-breaking ethnographic study of the Salvadoran Press Corps Association (SPCA). He found that women foreign reporters were viewed as "anomalies, situated in a field where the historical, mythical, and ritual core is saturated with masculine symbolism and cliché" (1997, p. 49). He also found that some women tried to propose stories that took into consideration the long-term social effects of war, but were often refused by male editors. If their story ideas went ahead, they were relegated to a marginal and obscure place in the paper (p. 61). In Pedelty's assessment then, androcentric norms were interpreted as truth by editors, and what he considers to be the "subversive discourse" of women reporters was counteracted (ibid.).

This assessment parallels the gender theory of Carter, Branston and Allan (1998), who argue that male definition continues to pervade the newsroom – from the predominance of white men in positions of power, to mostly middle-class, middle-aged, professional men as authoritative sources, to the "masculine narrative form" which relies on certain commonsensical notions of objectivity while relegating experiences that speak to women's experiences as "different" and marginal (p. 6-7),

and to assumptions of an innately white, male audience at the expense of women and minorities (p. 8-9).

In effect then, a struggle could theoretically be going on in the field, whereby the definition of news could be transformed by the influence of women journalists as they become more represented in newsrooms and on foreign assignment. However, certain facts reduce the likelihood of gender-based position-taking and transformation.

Firstly, many of the women covering foreign news – at least by the early 1990s – were disproportionately freelancers and stringers rather than the more prestigious and thus influential staff reporters (Hess 1996, p. 18; see also Flanders 1990, p. 38).

Secondly, even in countries where women represent around 40 per cent of working journalists, they only make up three to five per cent of decision-making positions (International Federation of Journalists, 2001). Both these facts suggest that male definition will continue, though perhaps in a slightly lesser form.

However, referring back to the concept of genesis amnesia, the question of whether or not journalists might even recognize this struggle for or against male definition is uncertain. In a study of racism and sexism in Canadian television broadcasting culture, Minelle Mahtani (2001) asks why a profession in which women now make up close to half of the employees continues to be underpinned by sexist and racist assumptions. She counts multiculturalism as a part of this obfuscation, both on the part of women who have been strongly sated by the language of multiculturalism, and the larger taken-for-granted assumption that multiculturalism – as a strongly-funded policy – must predicate the decline of racism in such a “racially diverse” nation (p. 354). Her research – based upon a series of interviews with women (white and non-

white) broadcasters – uncovers a few main points. First, that women’s descriptions of feminism and anti-racism continue to be “couched in the vernacular” of dated, 1960s and ‘70s stereotypical discourses (p. 362-3). Two, that most journalists are not aware of the growing academic discourse of anti-racist feminism, which links racism to sexism in an attempt to overcome the structural interrelationships of both within larger society (p. 363). And three, that women of colour – who according to her research suffer more from experiences of sexism and racism in terms of considerations of their job performance and their assignment to particular stories continues to go unchallenged in a workplace hierarchy in which white males are over-represented at managerial levels (p. 363). What is more, although her study reveals that women of colour recognize their own racial and gendered marginalization, white women, generally speaking, do not. Using arguments approaching those of Henry and Tator (2002), Mahtani (2001) posits that the persistence of racism and sexism can be understood by taking a critical look at the “official discourse on multiculturalism and anti-racism in Canada:”

As a policy, multiculturalism expresses the ideology of the national as a unity of human difference, without unraveling how tensions arising from those differences can be managed. ... Multicultural policy as a backdrop for Canadian identity often ensures that forms of institutionalized racism are rendered invisible. (p. 363)

Mahtani’s findings move from the text to the individual in the context of the field and evoke Bourdieu’s concept of struggle and strategy. While a journalist might seek out a serious career as a foreign correspondent to (consciously or unconsciously) gain

symbolic capital and thus power in the field in order to suit a number of habitus-related motivations – whether these involve upper-middle-class professional motivations, or out of a need to acquire the necessary capital to facilitate upward mobility within the field – it is not necessarily of strategic advantage to go against the dominant position and the internal logic of the field, especially since women have just recently emerged from a position of marginality. In other words, an association with marginality does not necessarily suit position-taking or attempts to change the field. Instead, it is more advantageous – at least for white women – to operate within the existing field and draw on nodes of similarities in their habitus relative to their male counterparts, rather than highlighting differences, in order to struggle for symbolic power within the field. There are, after all, a limited number of positions in the field. In subsequent chapters, I will address the “malestreamness” of 9/11 and post 9/11 coverage and the extent to which feminist and/or female-orientated voices were aired or ignored in relation to Afghanistan.

In conclusion, it is important to think of class, race, and gender as interrelated factors. Linking them produces a picture of fragmentation. The journalist – as Bourdieu insists – is not a uniform entity. Class, race, and gender are all ingredients that must be considered when describing and analyzing the actions of journalists in the field. And while I wrote of class in relation to capital, race in relation to genesis amnesia, and gender in relation to strategy and struggle, it is important to note that habitus-inscribing factors and Bourdieu’s nomenclature of practice are not mutually exclusive. A journalist may fail to recognize her gendered marginalization while struggling to counteract racial stereotypes; another might use his capital in a position-

taking gamble to write of oppositional discourses in the vein of class considerations. Indeed, according to Bourdieu (1998), the “journalistic milieu cannot be represented as uniform: there are small fry, newcomers, subversives, [and] pains-in-the-neck who struggle desperately to add some small difference” (p. 26). This is the beauty of practice theory – it predicts by refusing to predict anything other than practice itself, at least on the habitus level. However, the journalist does not act in isolation from other factors within and outside of the field. Drawing on the work of Patrick Champagne and others, Bourdieu (1998) argues that journalists don “special glasses” which they use to “organize perception” according to categories that are the product of education, history, the exigencies of their jobs, their world view, and the “reasoning intrinsic to the profession itself” (p. 19; see also Bourdieu 1993). Having established ways in which habitus fractures many elements of a journalist’s disposition while also producing similarities worthy of the criticisms listed above, it is now possible to explore the internal logic of the field into which the habitus acts and is acted upon.

Part III – The field: organization, routine, economics, and politics

A good portion of Bourdieu’s work on journalism and the field of cultural production explores the organization of the field as a semi-autonomous entity that interacts with other fields. In other words, speculating on how a journalist might act in a given context, wielding what degree of power, and to what ends, requires an analysis of the internal logic of the field as well as constraints within and outside of it. In this section I look at some of Bourdieu’s descriptions of the field, juxtaposing them

with workplace/organizational studies to better place fields theory and practice theory within journalism/media studies.

Organizational, routine-based constraints

As a field, journalism “is a microcosm with its own laws, defined both by its position in the world at large and by the attractions and repulsions to which it is subject from other such microcosms” (Bourdieu 1998, p. 39). In *On Television* Bourdieu (1998) describes a number of field characteristics. Routine-based constraints that are partially a function of the organization of news include: the invisible censor of time (column inches), which restricts what can be said (written) and the range of opinions aired (canvassed) (p. 15); and deadlines, which encourage “fast-thinking” or the regurgitation of cliché and “received ideas” through the frequent sourcing of known authorities (p. 28-30). This last point is tied to the symbolic functioning of television and increasingly the press, in that the media must “call attention to those elements which will engage everybody” without creating divisions (p. 18).

Many authors of workplace/organizational studies have recognized the importance of these particular routine-based organizational constraints. Anthropologist Hannerz’s (2004) study of international correspondents makes a point to acknowledge the need to understand deadlines and space limits in relation to the “comparative ecology of reporting, the practical, spatial, temporal, and organizational constraints of foreign news work.” (p. 8) He argues that covering foreign news often involves striving to cover an abundance of events, leaving little time for research intensive feature stories (p. 219-220; see also Pedelty 1995, p, 116). As well, quick,

but not always effective copy editing back home can sometimes muddy the details of a story – which has as much to do with the geographic distance between editor and writer, as with time constraints in a 24-hour news cycle (p. 148-52). Pedelty (1995) notes that foreign reporters, especially those parachuting into other countries but even staff correspondents and stringers, must work under significant deadline pressure – appeasing editors back home by producing according to velocity rather than quality (p. 115-6). Still others examine routine organizational constraints from a domestic perspective. Tuchman’s (1978) study of newspapers and television stations in the U.S. focuses on journalists’ constant struggle to present factual accounts of events in relation to the press of work and omnipresence of deadlines:

If an occurrence does not readily present itself as news easily packaged in a known narrative form, that occurrence is either soft news (requiring more reportorial time and editorial attention) or nonnews. It is dismissed by the limits inherent in the news frame. (p. 215)

To do otherwise, she writes, journalists would have “to recognize the inherent limitations of the narrative forms associated with the web of facticity” (ibid.) – that is, the professional verification of fact in news as a political and professional accomplishment (p. 83). Similarly, Fishman (1980) argues that daily copy – and thus the deadlines that ensure them – is part of the economic logic of news reporting within the capitalist system (p. 146) and is very much a constraint affecting assembly time, access to sources, and the pace at which events develop and information is made available to journalists (p. 35-7).

In terms of Bourdieu's idea that deadlines encourage the regurgitation of received ideas, Fishman's study adds ethnographic weight. He argues that bureaucracies are organized to meet journalist's deadline and routine-based constraints (p. 143). Thus hard news is fact, fact is bureaucratic account (p. 88), and bureaucratic account is status quo in terms of reinforcing certain political structures (p. 71-2, 138), or received ideas over other interpretations of reality. Indeed, non-bureaucratic accounts – when they appear in papers – take the form of soft news, or interpretive or analytic pieces, and are usually seen as too speculative and opinionated for the news section (p. 89). In fact, Fishman speculates that if journalists used different methods of news gathering, a reality to challenge the status quo might emerge (p. 13). But once again, the media avoids copy that creates divisions. According to Hackett (1991), who studied the peace movement in Canadian newspapers, “audiences cannot be enticed and entertained if they are being upset by media content that consistently challenges prevailing preconceptions and cultural stereotypes” (p. 274). In his own study of the peace movement in Canada, he found that the press denigrates peace activists' sensibilities and activities, reinforcing a Cold War logic and Canada's pseudo irrelevance as a middle power (p. 174, 264, 274, 277). In sum, these ethnographic accounts reinforce an awareness of one of the most ubiquitous dynamics in a news organization – routine organizational constraints. One can expect the influence of deadline constraints to emerge through interviews with editors and journalists in chapter 3 and 4 respectively, and the influence of constraints that exist in the realm of received ideas and stereotypes to emerge in chapters 3 and 5.

Economic constraints

However, just as the construction of received ideas and audience reception can be traced to routine organizational constraints, they can also be traced to three types of economic constraints which can be tied to economic elites, audience support, status quo conceptions, and the constant drive for scoops and drama. To begin, Bourdieu (1998) describes economic censorship, which can be understood banally as direct ties between owners, and/or advertisers (p. 16) and the tendency for journalist/editors who represent market concerns to occupy higher positions in the field (p. 71). Secondly, he describes competition for market share and favourable opinion polls in the never-ending drive to get a scoop (p. 17, 20), which can be understood as satisfying corporate pressure to attain good ratings/distribution numbers and thus advertisers at the expense of output, which – when subject to the same pressures, opinion polls, and “cast of commentators” or sources – tends to homogenize content (p. 23). Finally, he points to the drive for sensational content that will sell papers and attract viewers, which he argues tends to promote a search for the so-called extra-ordinary story over reality “in all its ordinariness” (p. 19-21), ignoring and marginalizing the multiplicity of interpretations of ordinary versus extra-ordinariness relative to a heterogeneous population (p. 18-9). Below, these points will be expanded upon using micro-organizational studies.

Economic censorship and ideology

As Bourdieu (1998) asserts, despite its banality, the reinforcement of direct economic interests must be taken as one aspect of economic constraints (p. 16). And in fact, the reproduction of status quo economic predispositions through journalistic practice does not go unnoticed in micro-organizational and domestically-situated

studies. However, in most of these studies, economic predispositions are often linked to ideology, values, and/or organizational socialization, as opposed to equating economic predispositions to overt bias or direct economic links between media organizations and corporations (Miliband 1973; Bagdikian 1983; Herman & Chomsky 1988; Golding & Murdock 1996; McChesney 1999). What results, as will be demonstrated in the domestic and international studies to follow, is a tendency on part on journalists to ignore class-based issues in news stories, compromising a complete reading of the news.

To begin, Gans (1979) notes that in ten years of reading and watching domestic news, he did not get a sense that the domestic economy was dominated by oligopolies (p. 20). Besides multinationals, corporations barely make the news at all. As well, Gans notes that the idea that (U.S.) social structure is bisected by class hierarchy and power structures is completely lacking (ibid.). In a domestic reading of the news, Gans fires off a list of economic leanings, including a faith in responsible capitalism – in which corruption, bureaucratic misbehavior, and failed business experiments (even those that use public funding) are tolerated “to a somewhat greater extent” in business than in government (p. 46-7), and small town pastoralism, in which big government, big labour, and even big business (when the latter of which is actually mentioned) are rarely portrayed as virtuous (p. 48-50). To explain these tendencies, Gans (1979) suggests that journalists form “symbolic complexes” as new actors and activities develop in order to register their existence according to pre-existing complexes (p. 19). Given that journalists often subscribe to the economic (as well as political and social) ideas and values which are dominant in America (p. xv), these complexes tend

to mirror the economic status quo. However, while Gans argues that journalist “have more power than the rest of us” (ibid.) mainly because of this conformity to the norm, he does not paint journalists with a pejorative swath. Instead, this failure to register the new and ongoing activities of economic players (p. 19) allows more room for unconscious tendencies within the journalists themselves. In other words, they may not recognize these complexes, thus necessitating the need for a content analysis (chapter 5) to flesh out interviews with journalists (chapter 4).

If certain economic topics are being avoided domestically, what about internationally? Gans indicates that internationally, economic considerations include a distrust of communism and democratic-socialist economies, where the shortcomings of these forms of government – conceived as “cultural homogeneity, the erosion of political liberties, and the burgeoning of bureaucracy” – are a “preoccupation” of foreign reports (p. 47). According to Pedelty’s (1995) study of the Salvadoran War, reporters repeatedly ignored sources within popular economic organizations, such as unions, peasant cooperatives, and politically uninvolved members of the oligarchy (p. 99). Throughout the war, issues of land distribution were completely ignored, despite its relationship to the ongoing civil war:

Journalists were perfectly free to visit the extensive areas of countryside lying outside the conflicted zones. There they would have been able to cover peasant life, questions of land tenure, and many other rural dynamics which led to the war (p. 103).

Similarly, Daniel Hallin’s (1986) study of the coverage of the Vietnam War uncovered an “ideological blindspot” in terms of U.S. coverage and analysis of

peasant support for the National Liberation Front. The Strategic Hamlet program, which was instituted by the U.S. and Saigon governments to protect the rural population physically from guerilla forces by forcing peasants to relocate to government encampments where their movements were controlled, was actually a “hindrance to [the local population’s] ability to make a living, often one more reason to side with the ‘agitators’” (p. 57). In the end, the coverage of the South Vietnamese tended to be paternalistic, laced with enthusiasm for Western development, and complemented by an ignorance of complex political divisions (p. 201-2). In general, journalists would not, or could not see the economic grounding of NLF support – including the avocation of land (re)distribution, and support for the peasantry’s economic and political security in opposition to the abuses and corruption of South Vietnam’s old feudal elites and current government respectively (p. 56). Although issue of language, culture, and the U.S. military’s tendency to take journalists on short tours (p. 205-6) were certainly at play in perpetuating this ignorance from a logistical perspective, Hallin also argues that American’s seemed unable or unwilling to see revolution in terms of concrete class, and thus economic, interests (p. 57). Thus, it is clear from these studies that issues of economic and ideological conformity must be taken into consideration when exploring journalists’ coverage of Afghanistan. However, what else can micro-organizational approaches tell us about this conformity over and above Gans’ concept of symbolic complexes?

Hannerz’s (2004) study of foreign correspondents argues that “organizational socialization” (Hannerz 2004, p. 80), ideology, and upward mobility within one’s career come into play when attempting to understand conformity of content.

According to Hannerz, “in-house socialization” begins with: learning the craft, practicing fact-finding, writing, and editing; “absorbing an organizational culture,” including a history, background understandings, and basic values; and finally, finding comfort in “face-to-face acquaintance,” or the ability of journalist and editor to develop a rapport based on physical familiarity (ibid.). In terms of foreign news then, Hannerz writes that “news organizations are inclined to want to have foreign correspondents securely domesticated” before they are sent abroad (p. 80). Part of this has to do with ensuring the vigor of one’s reporter given the journalistic challenges of a foreign posting, but as well, the lack of daily contact with headquarters heightens the need for reliable news stories, topics, and output. Thus, more often, domestic journalists earn foreign assignments based on proving their worth and reliability through compliance with organizational culture domestically (ibid.). Whether this compliance is recognized as such is unclear. Sometimes censorship is an organizationally supported, routine-based, inculcated process – a “self-censorship” that helps a journalist navigate his/her newsroom and become a successful journalist (Lieberman, 2000). In Bourdieu’s language, an individual’s habitus works in tandem with the internal logic of the field so that the journalist might increase her/his capital within the field, gain symbolic power, and move up the organizational hierarchy. But sometimes self-censorship parallels closely enough with one’s ideology, values, paradigmatic and cultural readings of the world that self-censorship is too conscious a term, thus returning to Gans’ symbolic complexes.

In summary then, all of these case studies indicate that economic conformity is a strong pulse running through copy – domestic and international – and should be

carefully considered in terms of symbolic complexes, organizational socialization, and ideology when exploring journalists' coverage of Afghanistan.

Competition for market share and the homogeneity of content

When it comes to competition for market share, getting scoops, and the homogenization of content Hackett (1991) notes that although competition for scoops that embarrass the government and stimulate protest is a part of journalism culture (p. 279), when it comes to covering the peace movement in Canada there is "little scope for antimilitarist dissent in Anglo-Canada's large urban dailies" (p. 273). This is because "the most important economic pressures appear to derive from the media's imperative to reach audiences which are markets for advertisers" (p. 273). Since the "disarmament constituency" is not a "distinct target audience for advertisers," it's off the radar screen (p. 273-4). Epstein's (1973) analysis of network television news reveals similar trends concretized through concerns to maintain "audience flow." Networks are determined to maintain their audience through visually attractive material, easily recognizable images with universal meaning, action shots, stories with tidy narrative closure, and conflict that is two-sided but unlikely to create audience confusion (p. 262-3). In both Hackett and Epstein's analyses then, coverage is designed to appeal to the majority – inhibiting the play of real controversy in the news. Finally, in terms of homogeneity, Tuchman's (1978) study of newspapers and television links the relationship between routine fact finding in terms of quoting official sources and the probability that the "news net" will eliminate some occurrences from consideration as news events while repeatedly and formulaically covering others (p. 83; see also Pedelty 1995, p. 91-2). The power of legitimate

sources comes into play here (Tuchman 1978, p. 92) and thus represents an indirect way in which routine journalistic practices reproduce the status quo and homogenize content.

The drive for sensational content and the sacrifice of ordinariness

In terms of Bourdieu's third point – that the drive for sensational content leads to drama at the expense of ordinariness – several micro-organizational studies reinforce this observation. Television has been labeled with an inclination towards drama (Epstein 1973, p. 262), but print is not immune. Gans (1979) notes that news magazines produce dramatic narratives – usually through feature stories – “interspersed with vivid quotes and illustrated with action-packed still pictures (p. xii-xiii). Domestically, Hackett (1991) points out that when peace activists are written up at all, it is usually in the form of “folksy” human interest stories – as opposed to focusing on disarmament issues (p. 279). In terms of foreign reporting, Bourdieu (1998) argues that “journalism shows us a world full of ethnic wars, racist hatred, violence and crime” (p. 8). That these narratives skip over historical context, often becoming “one damn thing after another,” wraps “tribal wars” in Africa in a cloak of exotic “ethnic hatred” (Hannerz 2004, p. 219); a dangerous world – but a dramatic one. In Japan, when the complexity of political and economic life seems too opaque to narrate, the “theme of weirdness” can provide an escape through “home-grown” Japanese Orientalism “as well as the Occidental discovery of an alternative modernity” (p. 145). While this is not necessarily reflective of the ordinariness of Japanese society to its citizens, it is, again, dramatic to a Western audience – and journalists write for their audience (de sola Poole & Shulman, 1959).

In Pedelty's (1995) study, the cultural studies scholar accompanied eight journalists to Guatemala for the *Second Encounter of the 500 Years of Indigenous, Black and Popular Resistance Continental Campaign* – at the time the largest transnational meeting of indigenous leaders. According to Pedelty, most of the SPECA reporters demonstrated a “racist mind-set” throughout their coverage: “they were more interested in the images of indigenas than in their thoughts, plans, and protests” (p. 101). Thus, photographers and journalists alike produced “colourful” stories and pictures:

The emphasis on superficial appearance injects a *National Geographic* motif into what is intended to be a political news discourse; reporters ignored the fundamental causes and contexts of the indigena demonstration. (p. 102)

In the end, the coalitional and peaceful nature of the event, the lack of traditional costumes, and the class-based element of the politics disillusioned reporters in attendance who had expected something more simplistically extra-ordinary (p. 102-3).

Through expanding upon all of Bourdieu's points through micro-organizational studies, it becomes clear that, like the routine organizational concerns mentioned above, economic constraints and all their ideological and representational permutations need to be taken into consideration in the coverage of Afghanistan. From U.S. and British interests in Central Asian oil developments, to the causes and consequences of Afghanistan's poverty index relative to the world community – economics is a source of extremely relevant news because it adds context and recognizes power. Whether ideology gets in the way will be raised in chapter 5. Even

in terms of banal economics, the fact that – unlike the U.S. (Miliband 1973) – Canada’s corporate media lacks economic connections to the military-industrial complex (Hackett 1991, p. 62) is a point to consider when exploring the content of journalistic reporting of Afghanistan. As for the competition for market share and the drive for dramatic content – it will become clear in chapter 3 that the Canadian media were not about to let the biggest foreign story in a decade slip out of their purview, despite a ten-year-long decline in the number of foreign desks. Would the ordinary become extra-ordinary in the coverage of the civilians of Afghanistan? That subject will be covered in chapter 5.

Political constraints

However, there is still one more area that needs consideration when looking at Bourdieu’s (1998) characterization of the internal logic of the field – political considerations. Specifically, Bourdieu lists two political constraints in the field. The first – job insecurity – is another invisible censor which promotes “a greater tendency toward political conformity” (p. 15). The second – dealing with agenda-setting – describes the reliance of journalists on the political field for staple sources, which in turn drives the journalistic agenda and leaves copy vulnerable to the political establishment’s agenda, that is, the textual predominance of short-term effects relative to political decisions and simplicity over complexity, nuance, and gradual change (p. 7, 69-70). Once again, workplace/organizational studies will illustrate these constraints.

Political conformity through job insecurity

In terms of political conformity through job insecurity, according to Fishman (1980), “reporters systematically cannot and will not see as news things which might seriously challenge an agency’s idealizations of what is going on and what should be happening” (p. 134). Gans’ (1979) content analysis reveals that domestic news, for example, is pervaded by public officials, public institutions, and threats to these societal foundations (p. 16). International news focuses on U.S. actions in foreign countries, foreign activities that affect Americans and U.S. foreign policy, communist bloc country activities, elections, conflict and protest, disaster, and the excesses of dictatorships (p. 22-37):

In essence, then, foreign news deals either with stories thought relevant to Americans or American interests; with the same themes and topics as domestic news; or when the topics are distinctive, with interpretations that apply to American values.” (p. 37)

Adding to Gans’ listing of international topics, Chang, Shoemaker, and Brendlinger (1987) establish seven determinants of international newsworthiness: the normative deviance of the event, relevance to the U.S., potential for social change, geographical distance (proximity), language affinity, level of press freedom, and similarity in economic systems (in Jayakar & Jayakar 2000, p. 125).

What all of these observations point towards is the idea that events don’t just happen –they are also constructed. Thus, there is an element of organizational fixation and journalistic preservation that precede them. According to Pedelty (1995), journalists abide by emotionless, balanced fact retelling, following the narrative and event-based interests of their editors as a matter of self-preservation (p. 174). That the

objective news narrative gravitates to sources in the public bureaucracy – what Gans’ (1979) calls “knowns” (p. 8) and Hall (et. al 1978) calls “primary definers” (p. 58) – does not escape Pedelty’s notice. He notes that in the coverage of the Salvadoran War, staffers and stringers working for U.S. publications were forced to contend with their editors’ desire that official U.S. government positions – U.S. Embassy staff or the State Department – be included in most news reports (p. 87). The fact that U.S. involvement in the Salvadoran War left little doubt that Embassy and State Department staff would represent biased, and even false accounts didn’t seem to matter. The State Department frame critiquing and sometimes blaming FMLN guerrilla fighters for atrocities committed by the U.S.-supported Salvadoran military and, by extension, death squad paramilitaries, had to be treated as fact; adding historical qualifications would be seen as editorializing. Thus Pedelty suggests that editorial, state, and narrative disciplines create a “string” which “runs from the Administration and State Department through almost all news coverage” (ibid.). Deviating from the status quo would likely invite reprimands from editors whose publications of employment would in turn be harassed by State Department officials (ibid.). Thus Pedelty develops the concept of a “disciplinary apparatus,” gleaned from Foucault and Althusser, which posits that constraints on a journalist’s enterprising work include factors like elite sources, media institutions, reporting conventions, and the objective news narrative, among other things, that restrict the movement and freedom of journalists (in addition to military restrictions).

Following this vein of self-preservation, Tuchman’s (1972) domestically situated research finds that following standardized news-gathering routines and forms of

presentation that are recognized as objective enhances a journalist's claim to professional status and offers protection from the hazards of the trade, including deadlines, libel suits, audience criticism, and editor's reprimands – the neglect of which could leave a journalist scrambling for employment (p. 2; see also Tuchman 1978, p. 83).

I would also argue however, that in addition to political conformity through job insecurity and organizational structures that ideology – as in the previous section on economic constraints – is also at work here, namely through self-censorship and a lack of alternative symbolic complexes. After all, as Hallin (1986) indicates in his investigation of the Vietnam War, when a war is already underway, “political purposes” are taken for granted as public attention is already focused on the effort to win (p. 142), the assumption being that journalists are no less likely than the public to share this “taken for grantedness.” (This concept will be revisited in the next section under the political field of power through Entman's (2004) discussion of patriotism following 9/11.)

In the meantime though, it is clear that political boundaries, whether erected through organizational structures or ideologically inculcated preferences, tend to homogenize the breadth of political detail within journalistic texts.

Political conformity through staple sources

If we can assume that journalists learn to jump through the appropriate hoops in order to rise within the field at the expense of political diversity, we must also take into consideration a more routine element of political conformity – that journalists

reproduce the status quo because political sources are staple content, thus the political establishment's preference for short-term analysis persists in news copy.

Many authors look at this in terms of externally-directed political "agenda-setting" (Gandy 1982; Ericson, Baranek, & Chan 1989), while others focus on organizational requirements (Fishman 1980; Tuchman 1978; Hackett 1991). Gandy (1982) argues that political elites set the journalistic agenda through "information subsidies" in the sense that sources enter into an exchange of value with journalists in which they "reduce the cost of news work to increase their control over news content" (p. 15). Although earlier studies (see for example McCombs & Shaw 1972) posit that journalists in fact set the agenda through the frequency of coverage, story length, and placement over time, Gandy (1982) actually finds that economic factors often play a role in what information flows are picked up by news organizations (p. 51; see also Gitlin 1980; Hackett 1991). In other words, those with more cash at their disposal – official, often government sources – are more likely to influence the journalistic agenda than poorly-funded lobby groups or any other such group. Ericson (et al. 1989) note that bureaucratic sources are preferred because they are "socially authorized and socially sanctioned knowers" (p. 95). Thus journalists participate in reinforcing the normative order of authorized knowers in society (p. 144-5). In examining the way information is doled out, Ericson (et al.) argue that these authorized knowers represent a position of power relative to the wielding of "cultural capital;" authorized knowers "are asked to explain the behavior that has been designated as deviant within prevailing cultural criteria of rational acceptability" (p. 4; see also Hall et al. 1978). By preferring these authorized knowers over other

sources, news “constitutes an authoritative vision” of the social order through what sources are cited as saying, “conveying cathartic scenarios of police and other agendas of order coming to the rescue of citizens in distress, including their accounts of how they managed to get the job done this time” (ibid.; see also Gans 1979, p. 52). In sum then, Ericson (et al.) warn that “there are many strings attached to being a journalist in a news organization whose interests are ultimately bound at the elite level to those source organizations being reported on” (p. 5).

Bourdieu’s claim that detail and context are lacking in news coverage then, appears to be justified. As for Fishman, Tuchman, and Hackett, all seem to agree that either deadline pressures or other organizational needs reinforce political agenda-setting (Fishman 1980, p. 136; Hackett 1991, p. 273; Tuchman 1978, p. 5). In addition, Hackett (1991) notes that fears of being scooped, the infrequency of leaks from dissidents within the Canadian government, the social and cultural proximity of journalists within national media to officials, and the routine anchoring of news to the bureaucratic production of information by government agencies and other institutions, among other factors, add to the dependence on official public sources (p. 273).

In light of these political constraints, a number of questions should be raised in the remaining chapters: the effect of employment security on the copy of journalists and/or freelancers; and the effect of embedding with military units, (either the Northern Alliance or Canadian military), which sets up a number of potential story lines which journalists could and likely did rely upon when covering either the

advance of the Northern Alliance against the Taliban or the post-Taliban presence of Canadian soldiers in Kandahar respectively.⁸

Summing it up: homogeneity of content?

Moving back to an overall grounding of internal constraints in the field – routine/organizational, economic, and political – Bourdieu (1998) notes that while journalists themselves might differ in their perceptions and the field might be divided by conflict, rivalry, and competition, the products of the journalistic enterprise are “more alike than is generally thought” (p. 23). Thus far, there is nothing particularly new regarding his observations and overall evaluation. Tuchman (1978) decries the contradiction between media competition for the right to be identified with freedom of the press and freedom of speech, and the very real influence of news professionalism and organizational needs in “legitimizing the status quo” (p. 87). Pedelty (1995) argues that despite the masculine mythos claim to independence and supposed physical proximity to battle that shape the cultural identities of war reporters, institutional, ideological, and practical disciplines largely “determine news content” (p. 50). Finally, Gans’ (1979) comprehensive content analysis finds that “news assumes a consensus about values that may not exist for it reminds the audience of values that are being violated and assumes that the audience shares these values” (p. 40). What is more, the authors quoted in this section produced expansive ethnographic material to quantify and qualify their assertions. Where Bourdieu makes a unique contribution to media studies is in his construction of the field, which can be

⁸ For the purposes of this investigation, embedding refers to attaching an accredited member of the media who has agreed to be assigned to a military company/formation/unit (U.S., or Canadian) during an operation for an extended period of time. For reference, see “Media Coordinating Instructions for Embedding Program,” Department of Defence document, the Government of Canada, released privately to Michelle French in April, 2004.

explored as a unit in which journalists operate (part II), and a unit which interacts with extra-field influences (part IV). It is this latter element that the next section explores.

Part IV – The field of power: politics, economics, and the struggle between the autonomous and heteronomous pole

In order to further explore constraints and the field of journalism, one must first understand that the media field “is much more dependent on external factors than the other fields of cultural production” (Bourdieu 1998, p. 53). By “external factors,” Bourdieu is referring to his unique construction of extra-field influences that will help guide the rest of this investigation.

To begin, Johnson (1993) describes Bourdieu’s construction of a field’s independence through its ability to “refract” external influences in terms of its own logic governed by specific forms of symbolic capital (p. 14-5). Neither the larger field of cultural production to which journalism belongs nor the field of journalism operate in isolation from other fields. Specific to both the general field of cultural production and the field of journalism is a relationship of struggle against the “field of power” of which it is a part. The field of power, which involves the political and economic fields, derives legitimacy from the possession of economic or political capital – two forms of capital that have significant reach beyond their respective fields (Johnson 1993, p. 15; see also Bourdieu 1994, p. 37-9). Even so, these extra-field influences do not negate the power of journalism as a field of influence itself. The media field owes its societal importance “to their de facto monopoly on the large-scale informational instruments of production and diffusion of information.” Through these, they control

the access of ordinary citizens but also of other cultural producers” such as scholars, artists and writers, to “public space,” or the “space of mass circulation” (Bourdieu 1998, p. 46). They profoundly modify power relations within other fields of cultural production such as the justice field, the literary field, the artistic field, and the scientific field (p. 68). Therefore, I shall look at the economic and political fields now as dominant, but not uncontested influences, within the field of journalism.

The economic field

In order to understand how journalism operates in relation to the economic field, it is important to look at the larger field of cultural production to which journalism belongs. In terms of internal logic, Johnson (1993) describes Bourdieu’s conception of the field of cultural production as operating as an “economic world reversed,” based on a “winner loses” logic “since economic success...may well signal a barrier to specific consecration and symbolic power” (p. 7-8; see also Bourdieu 1994). In the field of cultural production, the subfield of “restricted production” is a good example of this reversed world. Based on competition for symbolic power, prestige, and artistic celebrity, this “pole” represents production for the producer’s sake (Johnson 1993, p. 15). The opposite pole – or the field of large-scale production – produces mass culture and is sustained by the industry and the bottom line (p. 16). Thus the economic field plays a less refracted, dominant role within this subfield. In other words, a best-selling book might earn financial capital, but it won’t be considered anything more than pulp fiction according to the internal logic of the field.

In terms of journalism, prestige has less to do with which publication is “large-scale” or “restricted,” as journalism by its very nature is large-scale.

Rather, this dichotomy is actualized in the distinction between the “heteronomous” pole representing political and especially economic capital, and the “autonomous” pole representing the internal logic and capital of the field (Bourdieu 1994, p. 40-1, 45-6; see also Benson 1998, p. 464). Benson (1998) summarizes Bourdieu’s conceptualization of these “binary” oppositions as reflections and refractions that exist between dominant and dominated classes, but also the split “between dominant economic and political power on the one hand and dominated cultural power on the other” (p. 464).

Thus, while news and features represent neither high art, nor the latest Margaret Atwood novel, there is a certain cultural appreciation attributed to the investigative piece, the colourful feature, and the beat-based analytical news piece. They all involve a certain degree of specialized knowledge which make them unique and thus valuable to the craft of journalism, as well as useful in conveying important knowledge to the public. Tabloid news, and the journalists who produce it, on the other hand, would be unlikely to win journalistic awards for the production of dramatic, sensational content on a shoe-string budget. Even analysts have been slow to broach the world of tabloid journalism as a legitimate object of study in the communications sphere until recently (see for example Gripsrud 2000; Rhoufari 2000).

Analysts were, however, quick to decry the decade prior to the 9/11 attacks as an era of corporate cutbacks, downsized foreign bureaus, infotainment journalism, and growing public resentment (Carey 2002; McChesney 2002; Rosen 2002; Schudson 2002). In the U.S. media, civic journalism advocate Rosen argues that pre-9/11,

corporate media interests denigrated the profession of journalism: “Serious news, we were told, was a minority taste in a culture of entertainment and its soapy narratives” (2002, p. 32-3). Jonathan Manthorpe (2001) argues that the Canadian news diet had become more and more parochial, increasingly trivial, and “addicted to the entertainment industry.”⁹ Clearly, a demarcation had developed between high or respected publications journalism proper – and their tabloid alternatives – the market pole.

At stake – then and now – is the quality associated with the media’s ability to inform the public of international happenings as a de facto monopolist of “large-scale informational instruments” and thus a privileged producer and purveyor of information (Bourdieu 1998, p. 46). According to Seib (2002), who sees international reporting as a means by which to spur humanitarian action and/or intervention in international conflict situations through truthful – no matter how gritty – international news coverage (p. 3-4, 8-10), the economic field threatens this humanitarian goal. Even so, as Part III of this chapter illustrated, market pressures (and political influences) are so inextricably linked to the fourth estate through organization, values, and socialization that internally, the field can’t really be separated from them. The same holds true for extra-field interactions between the media and economic fields. Rather than outline these influences as corruptions of the field, or the product of a misplaced hegemony, Bourdieu projects extra-field influences into the field itself, as inevitable, almost inseparable and inevitable components of the field. The fact that the media functions within the capitalist system is not a new idea. As far back as the

⁹ Manthorpe, Jonathan (Fall 2001) “Foreign Affairs: Whistling in the Wind about International Coverage,” *Media Magazine*. <http://www.caj.ca/mediamag/fall2001/foreignaffairs.html>.

1950s, “social responsibility theory” laid out journalism’s economic responsibilities quite clearly, including “servicing the economic system, primarily by bringing together the buyers and sellers of goods and services through the medium of advertising,” “providing entertainment,” and “maintaining its own financial self-sufficiency so as to be free from the pressures of special interests” (Peterson, Siebert & Schramm 1956 p. 74). Thus, satisfying advertisers, producing dramatic narratives, and existing as a corporate entity – to a point – is a part of the history and functional being of journalism itself, along with other tenets of its responsibilities to be expanded upon in the next subsection that lean more towards a traditional definition of journalistic responsibility and its relationship to the political field.

According to Bourdieu (1998), journalists may operate within a large, overarching system of values internal to the field, but this does not negate the tension “between those who would like to defend the values of independence, freedom from market demands, freedom from made-to-order programs, and from managers, and so on, and those who submit to this necessity and are rewarded accordingly” (p. 37). What these economic influences do create then, is a series of pressures and structuring affects that limit, but don’t determine the motivational drives and/or decisive actions of news organizations or the journalists and editors who work for them.

The political field

According to Bourdieu (1998), journalism has a preoccupation with the political realm that produces two consequences. Firstly, it creates a “social distance” between the public looking for the real consequences of political positions “on their own lives and on society at large” and the journalist’s attention to the minutia of the “political

microcosm” (p. 5). Secondly, it provides politicians with “symbolic support” that they need to govern even as it excludes journalism itself from sharing in this power (ibid.).

Indeed, the politics-journalism relationship has proven contestable enough to fuel much media studies research, including work on agenda-setting (McCombs & Shaw 1972; Gandy 1982), the CNN effect (Livingston & Eachus 1995; Livingston 1997; Hawkins 2002), frame theory (Jayakar & Jayakar 2000; Entman 2004), and the political contest model (Wolfsfeld 2004). As well, a growing bastion of literature continues to explore the link between media and citizenship (Cottle 2003b); keeping an eye on: governments’ public relations struggles to present their side of the story (Deacon & Golding 1994), the media for their capacity to facilitate citizenship through informed reporting (Golding 1994), and for their ability to present an accurate picture of war and international crisis (Taylor 2003; Philo 2002; McLaughlin 2002; Miller 2002), and finally, the voluntary sector for their ability to use public relations to break into this seemingly bipolar contest between politicians and journalists (Deacon 1996). My main concern in terms of fields conflict is between journalism and both fields of power. Thus, returning to Bourdieu’s (1998) assessment, journalists occupy an ambiguous position within the political field – they relay the politics of the day, but they are “not full-fledged members” (ibid.).

In comparison, the economic field has a much more direct, but perhaps less visible influence. As the field which represents the dominant mode of production in society – capitalism – other fields are often very subject to its influence. This is certainly the case with the literary field – which operates with a paucity of economic capital (Bourdieu 1994, p. 55) – but it can also be the case with journalism. Specifically, as

suggested in Part III, journalism is subject to market demands and attendant opinion polls (Bourdieu 1998, p. 58). But I would also argue that current journalism's love affair with objectivity and its disavowal of journalistic partisanship is predicated upon making enough money to remain that way.

Whether these two considerations make journalism more or less subject to advertisers and competition is a point of contention. But does the field of journalism need politically imbued symbolic capital to function? I would argue that it does. Whether because of routine practices, journalistic prestige, or deadline pressures, journalists need government bureaucracies to provide them with the stuff of news that will keep their own symbolic capital churning (Tuchman 1972, 1979; Gans 1979; Fishman 1980). Indeed, social responsibility theory imbues journalism with the task of "servicing the political system by providing information, discussion, and debate on public affairs," which in turn "enlighten[s] the public to make it capable of self-government," (1956, p. 74)

So what's the difference between the economic and political fields of power relative to the field of journalism? Although Bourdieu does not use this language, it seems that journalism and politics have a more symbiotic relationship than that of the journalism-economic nexus. It is more subject to negotiation because while journalists need politicians to produce news, politicians need journalists to attain public legitimacy. What is more, they both use words to attain symbolic power – in other words, their symbolic languages, and the contest and collusion between them, is easier to read. Whether these mutual needs are accommodated voluntarily and easily by both sides is another question. After all, social responsibility theory also states that

journalists are responsible for “safeguarding the rights of the individual by serving as a watchdog against government” (Peterson, Siebert & Schramm 1956, p. 74). But while the culture of journalism itself is wrapped up in scoops that might embarrass the government and stimulate protest (Hackett 1991, p. 279), this adversarial position has been scrutinized as ritualistic, superficial, and personalized (Tuchman 1978, p. 87). Tuchman argues that journalists “produce and reproduce the institutions that distribute power, even as they produce and reproduce the institutions that distribute knowledge as a social resource” (p. 217). Of course – those scoops will sell papers, so again the link between the two fields of power is apparent.

As my assessment of the situation in Afghanistan proceeds throughout the following chapters, several findings from some of the literature on the political-journalism relationship should be kept in mind. Firstly, the recognition that the CNN effect – which is defined as elite decision makers’ loss of policy control to news media (Livingston & Eachus 1995, p. 413) – must be mediated against the argument that “different foreign policy objectives will present different types and levels of sensitivity to different types of media” (Livingston 1997, p. 1). In other words, “shifts in policy will produce changes in media coverage, just as media coverage may change policy” (p. 14). Thus, Canada’s shifting political and military role in Afghanistan must be taken into consideration when exploring political-journalism field interactions. Secondly, though the collapse of the Cold War may have opened up political players to a less centralized means of categorizing international relations (p. 427), the news media does tend to move towards patriotism when attacked (Entman 2004, p. 2) – even if vicariously in terms of Canada’s response to 9/11. Whether this

signals a replacement of the Cold War story line and fears of communism with that of terrorism, jihad, and the non-Western Other is less clear. Even before 9/11 Hackett (1991) wrote of this possibility (p. 195) while other authors documented the media's negative framing of Islam (Said 1981; Karim 2000, 2003). However, while Jayakar & Jayakar (2000) discuss frames as the hegemonic representation of elite political consensus (p. 127), Entman (2004) points out that journalistic deference to the political world receded just weeks after the twin tower attacks (p. 2), even if dominant frames and schemas had already been established. Regardless, I will ask what stories are apparent in the texts from Afghanistan and ponder the extent to which journalists relied upon politically determined stories.

Part V: In conclusion

This chapter, while extremely detailed, was designed to explore three different areas of agency and constraints relative to Bourdieu's theory of practice and media fields theory. The first expanded upon Bourdieu's concept of habitus in terms of agency and constraint relative to class, race and gender (part II). The second applied the concept of field to operations within it, comparing internal logic and the agency and constraints within this logic to traditional workplace/organizational media studies. And finally, the third explored how the media field is influenced by the political and economic fields (part IV). While all points focus on agency and constraint, they do so with the realization that as one moves from individual (habitus) to newsroom (intra-field logic), to extra-field influences (field of power), structure increases. However, I would argue that structure is not actualized at the expense of agency, but is a product of it. In other words, in order for structure to function, agents must acquiesce and

disrupt media field logic, in the same sense that the media field must acquiesce and disrupt the economic and political fields within and against which it acts; boundaries wouldn't be boundaries if they weren't tested, and in some cases subverted and/or changed. But whether or not this acquiescence and disruption results in change is not the point. The point is rather that in spite of the very real relationships of inequality that cross-sect the media field in terms of class, race, gender, and seniority, to name a few, agency is not only possible but necessary in order to examine constraints without falling into a structuralist or instrumentalist perspective. On the other hand, even organizational/routine-based perspectives – which I have continually revisited throughout this chapter – err when the micro is removed from its macro, or structural-macro context – another hazard to avoid as this thesis moves into primary research on Afghanistan. Thus I conclude this chapter with a conscious intent to add context and detail to an understanding of foreign reporting through my analysis of the Canadian coverage of Afghanistan, avoiding a purely structuralist, instrumentalist, or organizational/routine perspective in favor of the complex but non-deterministic mezzo level which Bourdieu so deftly navigates. I now turn to the Canadian media's attempt to cover Afghanistan, with a specific focus on logistical and economic constraints as seen through the eyes of foreign editors.

Chapter 3: The view from the foreign desk – reporting Afghanistan, trends and developments, and the autonomous/heteronomous poles

In the months following the World Trade Center attacks of September 11th, 2001, the Canadian media would be faced with a significant foreign reporting challenge: how to cover the U.S.-led retaliation against Afghanistan's Taliban government and the tumultuous post-war period in an era of downsized bureaus and shrinking budgets for international coverage. While chapter 2 theorized constraints relative to the individual, intra-field, and extra-field levels, chapter 3 is designed to achieve three major functions. Firstly, it provides descriptive and contextual information on the overall media strategy involved in covering Afghanistan, which will enable a better reading of chapters 4 and 5. Secondly, as per the aforementioned (chap. 1) desire to wrest focus from one media player to the other, it derives information on the coverage of Afghanistan from editors – middle players in the media hierarchy – to move towards developing a relational understanding of the Canadian media's coverage of Afghanistan and acknowledging that there are many actors, motivations, and thus potential actions available to agents in the field. Thirdly, it explores conflict between the heteronomous and autonomous poles – in other words, editors' feelings on the influence(s) of the market on journalistic production, feelings that will be revisited from journalists' points of view in chapter 4. Thus, these three major functions are structured as follows: Part I provides background that will be relevant in subsequent chapters. It breaks down interview subjects in terms of research qualifications, provides a primer on Afghanistan, and describes Canada's participation in the U.S.-led War on Terrorism. Part II establishes a brief genealogy associated with the post-9/11 media race to Afghanistan, and the logistical constraints associated with

covering the fog of war. Part III takes a step back from Afghanistan, exploring academically-determined trends and developments in Canadian foreign reporting, including cutbacks in foreign bureaus and the tendency towards proximate coverage and links them with comments gleaned from interview data. Lastly, part IV ends the short break from Bourdieu by exploring how editors' accounts of the challenges associated with covering Afghanistan can be linked to academic critiques of proximate and declining coverage through Bourdieu's description of inter-field conflict between the heteronomous, or economic, and autonomous, or journalistic fields. In summary, while chapter 2 fused routine/organizational approaches with field and practice theory generally speaking, this chapter fuses media critiques and primary research interviews with fields theory with a focus on inter-field conflict. What results is a sober look at logistical (part II) and economic (part IV) constraints in the field. Add historical detail and analysis (part I) and academic structural critiques (part III), and chapter 3 adds one more layer to the multi-layered analysis of this thesis.

Part I – A research primer: interview subjects, an overview of Afghanistan, and Canadian military operations

While chapter 2 explored Bourdieu and routine/organizational studies in detail, its focus on theory did not leave space to establish a basic background on Afghanistan. Thus, part I is descriptive and contextual and divided into three sections. The first will review research qualifications particular to this chapter. The second will put Afghanistan's poverty and ethnic factionalism in historical perspective. And the third will give a brief synopsis of Canadian military operations, and international

diplomatic activities in Afghanistan. In summary, part I – particularly sections II and III – will enable a better reading of chapters 4 and 5.

Research qualifications

Although my overarching *subjects* of interest include print media reporters sent to Afghanistan, my *subject* of interest for this chapter – exploring trends in coverage as viewed from the foreign desk – can only be established through describing the overall context of Canadian foreign reporting. Given that the Canadian media is horizontally integrated – that is, print empires are part of, if somewhat functionally separate, from television (Taras 2001; Pitts 2002) – it is necessary to establish this context by widening the media scope to include both print and television agents. As a result, sources included editors from the foreign desks of three national newspapers (*National Post*, *Globe & Mail*, and *Toronto Star*) and Canada’s wire service (*Canadian Press*), producers at *CBC*, *CanWest Global*, and *CTV*, representatives of the Canadian Media Guild (CMG) and the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP), corporate administrators at *CBC* and *CanWest Global*, media specialists in the Department of National Defence, and one *Toronto Star* columnist, critic, and former Afghanistan correspondent.¹⁰ In total, 18 interviews were conducted for the general purpose of laying out some basic elements of Canada’s foreign coverage strategies generally and Afghanistan specifically.

A primer on Afghanistan

This section is divided into two major subsections. Subsection I gives a brief synopsis of the current economic/infrastructural climate of Afghanistan – speculating on how the country’s underdevelopment may have impacted journalistic work. The

¹⁰ Only some interviews will be quoted here, though all contributed to the research.

second describes factional politics in the country, using (mainly) the anthropological work of Shahrani (2002) to put these conflicts into historic perspective. Given that factionalism was so heavily reported in the Canadian presses, it stands out as an important element to explore further, planting the seeds of potential research links between the reporting of factionalism, and its reality, as will be assessed in chapter 5. Together, both sections prepare the reader for the context associated with specific accounts of journalists' activities in Afghanistan in chapters 4 and 5.

Economy and infrastructure

When Pashtun leader Hamid Karzai was sworn in as President of Afghanistan in October of 2004, he faced and continues to face many challenges. The country, which is now recovering from over 20 years of war, is one of the poorest in the world. A brief look at the *CIA World Factbook* bears this out.¹¹

Much of the population continues to suffer from shortages of housing, clean water, electricity, medical care, and jobs. And despite a return to stability, the country is still suffering the consequences of poverty: life expectancy for males is only 42.71 years and 43.1 years for women (as of 2005); the literacy rate for the total population is 36 %; between 167,000 and 200,000 people – mostly Pashtuns and Kuchis in the south and west – are internally displaced due to drought and instability (as of 2004); and only 2.3 million of the estimated 4 million refugees have returned to the country. The country is also highly dependent on foreign aid, owing \$8 billion in bilateral debt, mostly to Russia, and \$500 million to multilateral development banks (as of 2004). As for infrastructure, Afghanistan is lacking: the telephone system is very

¹¹ All of the statistics in this subsection are gleaned from the CIA's World Factbook, at www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/af.html, accessed on July 29, 2005.

limited; there were only 1,000 internet uses as of 2002; and of 21,000 km of highway in the country, 18,207 km remained unpaved (as of 1999). Although Afghanistan's economic outlook has improved significantly since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001 – partly because of the infusion of over \$2 billion in international assistance – recovery could take years.¹²

Suffice it to say when Canadian journalists arrived in Afghanistan in the fall of 2001 they were faced with more than just covering a limited war. They were also faced with a country that had been coping with two decades of war and over five years of increasingly brutal Taliban rule. As such, the country operated under regional warlords; the Northern Alliance anti-Taliban resistance consisted of a tenuous mix of regional and ethnic affiliations that were almost as likely to explode in internal conflict as fight the Taliban; and the average Afghan – assuming they could make a living at all – were more likely to be growing poppies to feed themselves, and the war effort, than wheat and other agricultural products. Even now, an estimated 53 % of the population is below the poverty line (as of 2003) and opium accounts for one-third of the country's GDP. Therefore, this continuing poverty and underdevelopment must be recognized when taking into consideration any journalistic venture into the country.

Historic ethnic divisions in geopolitical context

While it may be difficult to navigate, but easy to understand that a country like Afghanistan might be stuck in grinding poverty and underdevelopment, it will not be

¹² For an account of the country's human rights violations see Amnesty International's report on Afghanistan for 2004 at <http://web.amnesty.org/report2005/afs-summary-eng>; Accessed July 29, 2005. For an alarming summary of the status of women's rights, see Amnesty International's 2005 report: *Afghanistan: women still under attack – a systematic failure to protect*, at <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engasa110072005>, accessed July 29, 2005.

clear until chapter 5 whether the journalists in this specific thesis had a clear understanding of Afghanistan's complex factional politics. Writing during the mid-90's explosion in ethnic conflict, Allen (1996) argues that the media either view contemporary wars as "the result of certain ethnic groups expressing their true qualities following the lifting of external controls, or as revealing atavistic drives existing in all of us" (p. 27). Given this criticism, it is important to take note of certain anthropological and historically-grounded analyses of factionalism in Afghanistan.

To begin, Seddon (2003) argues that Afghanistan has historically been a pawn in external forces' geopolitical games (p. 176). In terms of the vestiges of colonialism, anthropologist Shahrani (2002) argues that the borders of Afghanistan were "gerrymandered" by imperial (Russian, British) interests during the "Great Game," resulting in an ethnically diverse country with little commonality in a conveniently weak country (p. 718). In the north, the Turkic and Tajik-speaking Muslim populations such as the Uzbek, Turkmen, Kazak, Kirghiz and Tajiks were carved up, leaving minorities in Afghanistan separate from neighbouring states (*ibid.*). On the western frontier, the Farsiwan, a Persian-speaking people, were located on either side of the Afghan-Iran borders (*ibid.*). In the south and southeast, the Baluch population was divided among Afghanistan, Iran, and what is now Pakistan (formerly British India) (*ibid.*). Along the east, the Pashtuns were divided by the Durand Line, leaving most of them on what is now the Pakistan side (*ibid.*). In fact, the Mongol-looking Persian-speaking Shia Harzara became the only large ethnicity that was contained wholly within the boundaries of Afghanistan, mainly because of their location in the central highlands (*ibid.*). The imprint of this imperial game can be seen today: the so-

called Afghans are actually the Pashtuns (42 %) who reside in the southeast; Tajiks (27 %) and Uzbeks (9 %) dominate the north; Shia Hazaras occupy the centre of the country; and Turkmen (3 %) and Baloch (2 %) exist in small pockets in the north and southeast respectively (Seddon 2003, p. 189).¹³

However, while Afghanistan's imperial history definitely resulted in the separation of ethnic groups, it is not the act of separation that inflamed ethnic conflict. Again, at a deep historical level Shahrani (2002) looks to colonialism, arguing that the leadership at the end of the 19th – the British-backed Pashtun “Iron Emir” Abdur Rahman (1880-1901) – installed a centralized state model that ethnic groups have yet to totally break from (p. 718-9). As well, the brutal policies of that regime, including terrorizing the Hazaras, Uzbeks, Turkmen, Tajiks, and rival tribes of the Pashtun near Pakistan for two decades, and instituting a form of internal colonialism in which Durrani Pashtun nomads from the south were resettled in Hazara territory and thousands of southern Pashtun tribesmen were relocated to strategic parts of Afghan Turkistan – laid the groundwork for the ethnic blowback that would erupt in the last few decades of the 20th century (ibid.).

However, it is not just colonialism that has wrought damage to what was cobbled together as Afghanistan. Fast forward to the last half of the 20th century, and additional meddling from current nation states – including Pakistan, Iran, the U.S., and the former Soviet Union – has also had a damaging impact on the country's ethnic stability. Iran's meddling is fairly straightforward. As a Shia Muslim regime, it supports the minority Hazara, who are also Shia. In the case of the U.S. and the

¹³ Ethnic statistics are from the CIA's World Factbook, at www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/af.html, accessed on July 29, 2005.

former Soviet Union during the Cold War, their interests were mainly ideological and geo-strategic. While Afghanistan was fairly securely under the Soviet orbit by the end of the 1950s, the country continued to brandish an independent streak – courting the U.S. for funding even though the Soviet’s supplied 90 % of their petroleum products (Seddon 2003, p. 189). When King Zahir Shah began taking small steps to democratize the country and move away from the autocratic system incubated by the British, the Soviet’s coveted additional sway in the region, pressuring the Shah to allow the Peoples’ Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) to operate legitimately. The Shah gave in, and paid for this allowance with his crown. In 1973, when radical elements of the Afghan Communist Party along with Prince Mohammed Daoud – the Shah’s brother-in-law – overthrew him, the country’s attempts to create a parliamentary monarchy and an embryonic democracy ended as well (Shahrani 2002, p. 719). In 1978, the Afghan Communists would murder Daoud and his entire family, “inviting” the Soviet’s to enter the country despite popular resistance. This began a decade long battle between the Soviets and Afghan communists who tried to centralize authority and pacify ethnic and regional resistance and the disparate mujahedeen (ibid.). Seeing a means by which to strike a blow against the Soviets, the U.S. funded the mujaheddeen, training fundamentalists including like Osama bin Laden to throw off the yoke of communism, only to abandon the country in 1989 after the Soviet’s withdrew in light of mounting casualties.¹⁴

In the chaotic power vacuum of the ‘90s that followed, each meddling country followed its own geo-strategic interests. Iran continued to support the Haraza.

¹⁴ Soviet casualties were estimated to have risen to 85,000, while Afghans withstood 1.3 million (Seddon 2003, p. 191).

Pakistan – which had ethnic ties to the Pashtun – rallied against the ex-mujahadeen government because Pashtun elements were not represented (Shahrani 2002, p. 719). Displeased, Pakistan threw its weight behind Hekmatyar, a Pashtun and the leader of the Hizb-i Islami (Islamic Party). Hekmatyar attempted to take control of Kabul from the Tajiks militarily, resulting in two years of bombing and extreme violence (ibid.) The resistance – led by the Shia Hazaras and Uzbeks – was fierce, though additional inter-ethnic fighting between resistance groups developed as well (ibid.). However, Hekmatjar was unable to secure Kabul, while the rest of the country divided into five or six semi-independent regions run by local governors/warlords – some of whom had succeeded in disarming their populations, restoring schools, and even instituting some media freedoms (ibid.). Despite the stability in these regions however, chaos reigned in Kabul and Kandahar. Weary of constant war, people in the south – particularly in and around Kandahar – began supporting Mullah Mohammed Omar and a group of ex-mujahadeen fighters who challenged some of the more notorious southern local warlords. Pakistan – which had been eyeing a plan by a consortium of oil companies including Unocal and Delta Oil to build a natural gas pipeline through Afghanistan from Turkmenistan to Pakistan, saw the advantage of a newly rising Pashtun leader and adopted Omar’s movement. Christening it “Taliban,” the movement of seminary students, Pakistan provided weapons and soldiers to its latest ally, hoping they would gain control and secure a corridor for the pipeline (p. 720). The Taliban bribed the southern Pashtun belt approaching Kabul into supporting their leadership and attacked the forces of Ismael Khan in western Afghanistan. Given that the population had already been disarmed, the western region fell quickly. In the rest of the country,

resistance was significant to the Taliban and Pakistan's "total war" approach, and many lives were lost in the ensuing conflict, especially the massacres of civilians in the north and centre of the country (ibid.). Nevertheless, most of the country was in the hands of the Taliban by the end of the '90s, bolstered not only by Pakistan, but also a non-state political actor – Osama bin Laden. At the time, the leader behind what would become 9/11 attacks was looking for a safe haven. Since he had been banished from his own country of Saudi Arabia for anti-American agitation, he had few escapes left (ibid.). With the help of Pakistan, bin Laden was spirited to Afghanistan, reinforcing his relationship with the Taliban by helping to finance and fight anti-Taliban resistance in the country. Under the watchful eye of the Taliban, bin Laden set up fundamentalist training camps, attracting foreign fundamentalists to the country which in turn radicalized the Taliban even further, eliminating what remained of the group's moderate element (ibid., see also H. Ghafour, personal communication, June 22, 2005). Under the Taliban's strict interpretation of Sharia Law, schools were closed – particularly to girls¹⁵ – music and kite-flying were disallowed, men and women were forced to abide by Taliban dress codes – including the burqa for women and beards for men, regardless of regional variation, and justice was swift and brutal.¹⁶ Although there was some media interest in the region, critics

¹⁵ When the Taliban came to power, women accounted for 70 % of all teachers, about 50 % of civil servants, and 40 % of doctors in the country (Seddon 2003, p. 193).

¹⁶ For the treatment of women under the Taliban, see Amnesty International, *Women in Afghanistan: pawn's in men's power struggles*. November 1, 1999, at <http://webamnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA110111999?open&of=ENG-AFG>, accessed July 29, 2005; for justice see Amnesty International, *Afghanistan: cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment or punishment*. November 1, 1999, at <http://webamnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA110151999?open&of=ENG-AFG>, accessed July 29, 2005; for the treatment of minorities, see Amnesty International, *Afghanistan: the human rights of minorities*. November 1, 1999, at

argue that many in the West forgot about Afghanistan during this period until history caught up with them in the form of the Twin Tower bombing of 9/11 (H. Siddiqui, personal communication, March 15, 2004). The rest, as they say, is history.

While this summary of recent historical conflict acknowledges the role of external nations in precipitating certain ethnic conflicts in Afghanistan, it can't assess Allen's comment regarding the ability of the media to recognize the roots of ethnic conflict. The challenge then, for parachuting journalists, is not just to recognize ethnic strife, but to understand its geo-political roots, without falling back into the false logic of explaining ethnic factionalism as the result of itself. Whether Canadian journalists were able to make this assessment remains for chapter 5 to determine.

Canadian military operations in geopolitical context

While the former section placed Afghanistan's poverty and factional politics in context, this section explores the Canadian political and military response to the U.S.-led call to fight the "War on Terrorism" on Afghan soil. To begin, on one hand, international peacekeeping and development aid have long been defining elements of Canada's multilateral and soft power approach to foreign policy (Hilmer & Appel Molot 2002); on the other, thousands died in the Twin Tower attacks and key actors in the world community – namely NATO and the U.N. – supported U.S. retaliation through Article 5 of the Washington Treaty and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1368 respectively.

Thus, for the first time since the Korean War, Canada launched Operation Apollo, a combat, rather than peacekeeping-oriented mission. The operation, lasting from

<http://webamnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA110141999?open&of=ENG-AFG>, accessed July 29, 2005.

October 2001 to October 2003, consisted of ground, air, and naval support to Operation Enduring Freedom, the U. S.-led military response to terrorism that saw the replacement of the Taliban government (for hosting terrorists) and the destruction of training camps and installations belonging to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda organization. Canada's commitment was small but significant for the country's first combat duty in decades: for six months beginning in January of 2002, Canada deployed 750 soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Battle Group for security and combat operations. At its peak, naval deployments comprised six warship and about 1,500 navy personnel. Lastly, the air force supported Operation Apollo through various deployments of air vessels to support medical evacuations, sustainment and re-supply, and personnel movement between November 2001 and August 2003.¹⁷ However, most of the troops operated in the region from early 2002 until July of the same year, during which time the bulk of distinct operations – and media interest – took place.

Most elite Canadian news organizations sent reporters to Afghanistan to cover the troop deployment element of Operation Apollo. Since this deployment commenced after the deposition of the Taliban, combat operations consisted of working with the U.S. to route out Taliban and al-Qaeda operatives, including Operation Anaconda and Harpoon in March, and Operation Torii in May in the Tora Bora region. Throughout June and early July, most of the Patricia's were in Zabol Province, 100 km northeast of Kandahar, establishing a coalition presence in the region. Another node of interest included the presence of Canadian special commando unit Joint Task Force Two

¹⁷ Department of National Defence, Backgrounder: The Canadian Forces' contribution to the international campaign against terrorism, *at* http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/Newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=490, accessed July 29, 2005.

(JTF-2) – to which access was extremely limited. Indeed, given the security issues surrounding all of these operations, they were not that well covered by the Canadian media (M. Potter, personal communication, June 11, 2005). On the other hand, Canadian casualties stirred the press and the nation. On April 18th, 2002, a U.S. pilot dropped a bomb on Canadian soldiers who were taking part in a nighttime training exercise near Kandahar. This “friendly fire incident” killed four Canadian soldiers and injured eight. It was the first loss of Canadian lives in an offensive operation since the Korean War in the 1950s. While some journalists informally embedded with the Canadian and U.S. troops on the makeshift base at Kandahar airfield, others went unilateral. However, given that the country was and is still bisected by regional warlords with independent militias, as well as surviving pockets of al-Qaeda and Taliban resistance, then and now (LeBlanc, 2005, p. A1), Afghanistan is not a particularly secure environment in which to operate as a journalist.

As the Patricia’s returned to Edmonton in July, Operation Apollo geared down as well. While the U.S. and NATO/U.N. maintained a security presence in the region, it was not until 2003 that Canada would recommit troops. Specifically, as the U.S. geared up for war in Iraq – a decidedly unilateral, pre-emptive attack on a sovereign nation – efforts by the U.S. administration to establish a “coalition of the willing” to fight in Iraq alienated Canadian multilateral values. In defiance of U.N. wishes, which only sanctioned war against Iraq under Resolution 1441, the U.S. charged ahead, calling for Canada and its other allies to dispose Saddam Hussein. In the end, Canada resisted U.S. pressure and opted to stand by the U.N. and bolster its presence in Afghanistan under a new operation instead. The operation – termed Athena – saw

about 2,000 Canadian troops return to Afghanistan in a peace-keeping operation in Kabul under NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Athena, a 24-month military operation which began in August of 2003 was a "peace support" mission, not a combat operation. Under the ISAF, Canadian troops were charged with providing security in terms of policing Kabul as part of Task Force Kabul. Each six-month rotation included about 1,900 Canadian Forces personnel, the largest contribution of any supporting country. About 1,700 of those troops were deployed in Kabul, conducting regular patrol missions in the "Canadian area of responsibility" in and around Kabul, as well as digging wells and repairing buildings to help "improve the quality of life of the people in their area." (The other 200 were deployed elsewhere in southwest Asia to support the mission).¹⁸ From the beginning of the mission until the spring of 2004, a total of 14 media agencies sent personnel to embed with Operation Athena, resulting in the total participation of 48 journalists and support staff.¹⁹

In May of 2005, Canada reaffirmed its commitment to the ISAF, extending its military presence well into 2006. In August of 2005, the fifth deployment of Canadian Forces (Petawawa) took place, helping to facilitate the Afghan National Assembly and Provincial Council elections in the fall. These troops started in Camp Julien near Kabul and will later relocate to Kandahar – an area with heightened resistance and thus security issues. Canada also deployed a Provincial Reconstruction Team of about 250 troops to the Kandahar area in July, 2005. Although the team will start out under U.S.-mandated Operation Enduring Freedom, leadership will transfer

¹⁸ Department of National Defence, *Operation Athena: the Canadian Forces participation in ISAF*, at http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/operations/Athena/index_e.asp, accessed July 29, 2005.

¹⁹ "Media Embedding Log as of March 2004," Department of National Defence.

to NATO in 2006. Finally, Canada will also increase its presence in the country in early 2006 with two additional deployments of a brigade headquarters and an army task force – both in Kandahar – for nine and 12 months respectively (LeBlanc 2005, p. A1).²⁰ Again, like the fifth deployment in August, 2005, all of these operations have a heightened risk element given the geography and political context.

In addition to facilitating peace building and reconstruction through the military, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has also contributed to the restoration of order in Afghanistan. In the December Budget of 2001, the federal government pledged \$100 million in humanitarian aid and reconstruction assistance.²¹ In March 2003, Canada renewed this commitment by pledging an additional \$250 million in new aid over two years.²² In March of 2004, Canada added \$250 million to existing funds.²³ Given the friendly climate between the two nations, both countries have established diplomatic offices in each others' countries.

In summary then, both military deployments and foreign aid have for the most part reinforced Canada's commitment to multilateralism and peacekeeping, at least in terms of stated objectives. How journalists reported this commitment is another question dealt with in chapters 4 and 5.

Part II – The Canadian media in Afghanistan: editor accounts

²⁰ See also the Department of National Defence, *Operation Athena: The Canadian Forces Participation in ISAF* at http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/operations/Athena/index_e.asp, accessed July 29, 2005.

²¹ CIDA, *Minister Susan Whelan announces details of assistance for Afghanistan*, press release, March 21, 2002, at http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/cida_ind.nsf/0/acc633007ee9cec885256b8300688876?OpenDocument, accessed July 29, 2005.

²² CIDA, *Afghanistan Overview*, paragraph 7, at <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/webcountry.nsf/VLUDocEn/Afghanistan-Overview>, accessed July 29, 2005.

²³ DFAIT, *Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Visits Canada*, press release, May 30, 2005, paragraph 8, at http://w01.international.gc.ca/minpub/Publication.asp?publication_id=382609&Language=E, accessed July 29, 2005

As the U.S. air force dropped its first bombs on Afghanistan on October 7th, 2001, the Canadian media would be faced with many challenges, from spiriting correspondents into Afghanistan during the initial U.S. invasion and bombing stage (section I), to piecing together developments in the fog of war (section II). Again, like part I, part II is descriptive and contextual and will provide background information and fruit for potential juxtaposition in later chapters (in terms of editors' accounts).

Getting in, staying alive, and reporting home

According to John Stackhouse of the *Globe & Mail*, news organizations in Canada and the U.S. “stampeded” to Pakistan in the days following 9/11. For the *Globe* and others, this meant dividing correspondents between Washington (to cover briefings), New York (to cover the aftermath of 9/11), and sending correspondents to Pakistan in anticipation of the expected U.S. retaliation. Following 9/11, the Taliban sealed the border until the bombing began on October 7th, soon after which the country was essentially lawless – correspondents could get into the country easily but faced the risk of falling under the *ad hoc* and sometimes deadly authority of unchecked warlords struggling amongst themselves for authority. Add to this the fact that correspondents were entering a country under attack – by U.S. air bombing and Northern Alliance ground forces pushing towards Kabul – and the degree of risk becomes clear. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, between 1994 and 2003, 11 journalists were killed – earning the country a place on the “most deadly countries” list.²⁴ In fact, of 37 journalists killed in 2001, eight lost their lives on

²⁴ Committee to Protect Journalists, *Journalists Killed in the Line of Duty: Statistics for 1994-2003*, at http://www.cpj.org/killed/Ten_Year_Killed/stats.html, accessed July 29, 2005.

assignment in Afghanistan during two particularly deadly weeks in November (Wright 2003, p. 30-2).²⁵

In spite of these risks, Canadian journalists tried to cross the Pakistan border into Afghanistan. The *Globe* redirected existing foreign correspondents – Miro Cernetig (Beijing) and Geoffrey York (Moscow) to the border. Although Cernetig's crossing efforts were unsuccessful, he opted instead to cover developments in Pakistan. York entered Afghanistan through Tajikistan in the north east and traveled with the Northern Alliance as they made their way to Kabul before U.S. bombing began. Every four to six weeks thereafter, the *Globe* rotated its correspondents – sending Alan Freeman (London) in through the north to replace York, Stephanie Nolan (Johannesburg) into Pakistan to replace Cernetig, and later, Peter Cheney to replace Nolan.

The *Star* was less successful. They sent Kevin Donovan, Rosie DiManno, Olivia Ward, Kathleen Kenna,²⁶ and Middle East correspondent Mitch Potter to Pakistan; but Donovan and DiManno would only get into the country after the bombing began via Turkmenistan. Most traveled with different groups of the Northern Alliance, though Potter reported from Kandahar airfield in a post-Taliban context. According to former Foreign Desk Editor Jim Atkins, traveling with the Northern Alliance was the only way to go:

²⁵ See also Committee to Protect Journalists', Report on Afghanistan from 2001, at <http://www.cpj.org/attacks01/asia01/afghan.html>, accessed July 29, 2005.

²⁶ Kenna had been on her way to open a bureau in India and was redirected to Pakistan. When Kenna ventured into Afghanistan shortly thereafter, she was severely injured by a car bomb on the way from Kabul to Gardez. (see Media Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, *Toronto Star Reporter Kathleen Kenna injured in ambush in Afghanistan*, press release, March 5, 2002, at <http://www.cjfe.org/releases/2002/ken-mar04.html>, accessed July 29, 2005.)

It was impossible not to have them with the Northern Alliance. They couldn't go into Afghanistan any other way. There was no way the Taliban would let anyone in, and they didn't. They expelled almost everybody that was there at the time. (personal communication, March 17, 2004)

According to Atkins, his reporters in Afghanistan were faced with two basic challenges: 1) gaining access to necessities like food and shelter; and 2) filing stories in a technologically backward country, often forcing reporters to use broadcast companies' generators to hook up their laptops or calling stories in on satellite phones at exorbitant costs:

The reporters [were] very vulnerable out there... you're far away from everything. It's Afghanistan after all – this is not a place that registered very much in North America at all until 9/11 happened.... When they go you try to equip them with as much stuff as possible for the conditions like making sure that they have proper winter gear, winter boots, but you don't know until they get there. (ibid.)

Add to this the physical remnants of Afghanistan's history of conflict – including unexploded bombs and landmines – and Atkins sums up the *Star's* coverage of Afghanistan as a “risky project” (ibid.)

As for the *CanWest* empire, the *Post* sent two reporters in succession into Afghanistan and another into Pakistan; *CanWest* (news service), sent in a pool of five reporters from various papers including the *Montreal Gazette*, the *Ottawa Citizen*, and the *Edmonton Journal*; and *Global Television*, having barely launched its national news program in early September, relied on *CanWest*

reporters and feed sources. *Global* notwithstanding, this overlap, according to McParland, is what brought to the attention of the whole organization that a streamlined, joint operation between print and television would be financially beneficial: “They needed to improve operations because they had four people over there being all paid basically from the same company and just chasing the same stories which didn’t make a lot of sense” (personal communication, February 27, 2004). At the time, *CanWest* owned half of the *Post*, and the two organizations operated separately. With *CanWest*’s purchase of the final shares of the *Post* from *Hollinger*, foreign coverage has become leaner. During the recent war in Iraq for example, the *Post*, *CanWest*, and *Global* set up a joint war desk in Toronto, coordinating their coverage with editorial representatives from each organization and sharing correspondents’ dispatches.

While the *CanWest* empire was struggling towards integration, *CTV* faced difficulties in establishing the appropriate satellite uplinks for Indian bureau correspondent Matt McCluer, who was sent to Afghanistan during the war and stayed shortly after as well. With only one satellite uplink in Kabul, McCluer often stayed there. In addition to the technological backwardness, Robert Hurst notes that language barriers and transportation issues made it difficult for McCluer to get a clear picture of Afghanistan outside of Kabul:

It is a hard story to cover because like most of the military situation, Kabul is fine, but going to the south or the north, you’re not really getting a true picture and it’s hard getting up to those places. It’s the same for the military.

(personal communication, March 1, 2004)

CBC TV and *radio* devoted more correspondents to Afghanistan than the other broadcasting networks. As the U.S. began bombing, *CBC* sent two correspondents from Moscow into Afghanistan through the north – Bill Gillespie for radio and Michel Cormier for television. Both traveled with the Northern Alliance. Gillespie was replaced by Tom Perry. Patrick Brown, primarily a Far East television correspondent, covered Pakistan and eventually crossed over into Afghanistan. Others reporters were on standby throughout the war. In addition to technological challenges, George Hoff, Executive Producer for Newsgathering at *CBC Television News* noted that just providing the basics to reporters became a serious issue: There were no hotels; shelter, water and adequate food became a problem; and Afghan civilians were often unable to cope with the media presence (personal communication, March 31, 2004). However, getting in was just the first challenge correspondents had to face; the second – establishing some sense of events on the ground.

Making sense of the fog of war

Whether as a reporter on the ground or an editor in the newsroom, all news organization representatives surveyed indicated that piecing together a picture of the war in Afghanistan was a significant challenge. On the ground, the fog of war was a literal issue. McParland of the *Post* notes that the war wasn't going on where reporters could see it:

It was American airplanes that you couldn't even see they were so high up, dropping bombs 100 miles away from the closest you could get to it. And the Taliban was in Kabul, you couldn't get there, it was too dangerous even to try. So you basically had people, on the perimeter, trying to figure out what those

big explosions were they could see on the horizons. (personal communication, February 27, 2004)

McParland also notes that reporters were often at the mercy of local warlords for information – some of whom lied to reporters to inflate their status:

It wasn't like an organized army. It was all a bunch of warlords, and all of them claimed to be in charge and all you knew was what your local warlord happened to tell you on a given day and you didn't know how true it was or even if you knew what he was talking about. (ibid.)

CanWest's Aileen McCabe compares Afghanistan to Bosnia – with multiple warlords and largely unidentifiable “good guys” and “bad guys:”

There are just so many elements that just aren't predictable. I mean, if you get armies where people are trained and stuff they're actually a lot more predictable than if you just get gangs and that's what Afghanistan turned out to be, you know, locals hating other locals from another town and there was just so much politics involved and so much just probably drug money that it was a very difficult, messy war and a difficult, messy country all this century. (personal communication, March 5, 2004)

Indeed, the *Globe's* Stackhouse argues that historically, Afghanistan has always been a difficult country to “figure out,” even for journalists with some knowledge of the geography and politics:

It's difficult for people to fly in, even for people who know the place fairly well, and think they can figure it out. And that's true of any number of places on earth, but given the lack of information, credible information

about the place, it makes it more difficult than most. (personal communication, March 5, 2004)

Back in Canada, foreign news editors had a number of source material from which to assemble the happenings in Afghanistan, including reporters' dispatches, Pentagon briefings, and newswires. Unlike their reporters though, editors were faced with the task of assembling a complete picture of the war, often in the face of contradictory information. The *Post*, for example, relied on their on-the-ground reporters, reports from Washington and wire services from the *Daily Telegraph*. Even so, their picture of the war often contradicted that of other Canadian papers:

Every paper was reporting big front page stories based upon what their particular warlord told them that day and it was all conflicting, no one knew if it was true... that was the really hard part and no one really had any idea what was going on. (K. McParland, personal communication, February 27, 2004)

Stackhouse faced similar difficulties at the *Globe*, but chalks it up to the realities of war reporting.

The Northern Alliance was a bit of a mystery... Even though there were a lot of reporters following them, they truly were an alliance and there were many elements to it and what was being reported on was often one element of the Northern Alliance. So information was sparse and often inaccurate, but that's true of any war. (personal communication, March 15, 2004)

Obviously, the logistical constraints of covering the war – particularly at this very early stage, made for reporting that was difficult for journalists to convey, and copy that was difficult for editors to piece together. Add the expense of communication

technology and war zone insurance and it is clear that reporting the war was no small investment. Indeed, it was an investment that kept all but the most elite news media out of Afghanistan. But for those who could afford it, why did they take the plane ride to Kabul? Before answering this question, it is important to look at how trends and developments in Canadian foreign reporting leading up to 9/11 played into who covered Afghanistan, how, and why. Thus, moving from description to critical structural analysis, the next part compares agent accounts (editors) of developments on the ground with academic analysis.

Part III: An overview – trends and developments in Canadian foreign reporting

What drives news organizations to send reporters to other parts of the world to cover the happenings of peoples who are often far removed from their Canadian audiences back home? What strategies do editors and managers enact when sending reporters abroad? Do they subscribe to the journalistic responsibility of informing the public of international events, or is money the matter to note? Do news organizations cover proximate countries at the expense of less Western nations? Drawing on academic structural critiques, two concerns are raised regarding the viability of Canadian foreign reporting. Section I explores the reliance of the Canadian media on international news wires and a decrease in the number of foreign bureaus, focusing on how financial liability in an era of corporate media consolidation has helped produce these results. Section II notes the persistent tendency to treat certain, less proximate areas of the world with less journalistic attention and links it with audience disinterest and economic constraints. Section III explores the idea that proximate coverage is the new *modus operandi* of managing foreign reporting from the home office. However,

part III is not a platform for structural critiques. In fact, in order to avoid structural determinism, academic critiques are fused with editors' views of these critiques, lending greater weight to a balanced, mezzo-level appreciation for the interrelations between structure and agency. In the end, part III asks what a distinctly Canadian example brings to an understanding of how news is produced, under what constraints, and with what objectives in mind.

Foreign reporting: modus operandi or financial liability?

In an age where information technology makes available a vast repertoire of international wire services and foreign domestic media, the maintenance of foreign news bureaus may seem questionable from an economic standpoint. Although print bureaus usually cost about \$250,000²⁷ annually, television bureaus are more expensive. According to Robert Hurst, President of *CTV News*, costs range from \$300,000 in the case of a small bureau of one or two correspondents, to \$1,000,000 or more, which is the case with *CTV's* Washington bureau of six employees (personal communication, March 1, 2004)²⁸ Indeed, in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, academics (Robinson & Sparkes 1977/1981; Hackett 1989) questioned the ability of the Canadian media to cover international news with a Canadian voice given the cheaper option of subscribing to international news wires. In one sense, Robinson & Sparkes (1977/1981) were concerned about the "elite status" and dominance of the

27 Vasil, Adria (Summer 2003) "World Domination: The big failure of foreign coverage today" in the *Ryerson Review of Journalism*, paragraph 32, at <http://www.rrj.ca/issue/2003/summer/399/>, accessed July 29, 2005.

28 Executive Producer for Newsgathering at CBC Television News George Hoff also indicated that bureaus cost around \$1,000,000 to maintain (personal communication, March 31, 2004).

U.S. media industry which “created a one-direction news flow from the U.S. to Canada” and weakened both Canada’s ability to project its own news abroad and its capacity to produce its own international news (p. 130). In another, they worried that the free-enterprise bent of the Canadian media would devalue international reporting and threaten editorial space devoted to foreign coverage (Royal Commission Report on the Mass Media (Davey), vol. 1, *The Uncertain Mirror*, Ottawa, Queen’s Printer, 1970, p. 233 in Robinson & Sparkes 1977/1981, p. 131). Ten years later, Hackett (1989) argued that *Associated Press (AP)*, *United Press International (UPI)*, *Reuters*, and *Agences France Presse (AFP)* “dominate the international flow of print news,” adding that “English-Canadian newspapers and broadcasters are highly dependent on the U.S.-based agencies for foreign news” (p. 810).

A decade and a half later, all print organizations surveyed for this research indicate that they borrow, heavily at times, from British, and U.S. newswires to fill gaps, monitor developments, and/or flesh out correspondences’ stories. Similarly, Canadian broadcast organizations purchase clips or packaged pieces from stringers often connected with local media in the country of interest, as well as broadcast news organization such as *CNN (CTV)*, the *BBC* and the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)*²⁹ and the *CNS Group (Global)*. However, most media organizations admit that this is not the ideal, particularly in terms of having to filter through the national biases of newswires.

²⁹ The *CBC* has a unique relationship with the *BBC* in which they can and do share material at no cost. This relationship also extends to the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*. Occasionally, the *BBC* will devote time to file stories for the *CBC* (Personal Communication, D. Downey, Executive Producer of *CBC National Radio News*, March 26, 2004).

Regardless of these preferences, the 1990s was an era of downsized bureaus – at least leading up to 9/11. All representatives from the *Toronto Star*, *Globe & Mail*, *National Post/CanWest News Service*, *Global*, *CBC*, *CTV* and even *Canadian Press*, noted that cost was an inhibiting influence on the Canadian media’s expansion of foreign coverage and bureaus.³⁰ With the exception of *CBC*, which indicated that the number of bureau since the early 1990s has remained relatively level, all other organizations admitted to cutting one or more bureaus either to shave costs, or because the bureau wasn’t producing stories of import relative to a) their perception of market audience interest and/or; b) more active parts of the world. For example, the *Toronto Star* has reduced its bureaus from six to four. At its “high water mark,” the *Star* had bureaus in Moscow, Africa and Mexico. Currently, they employ correspondents in London, Jerusalem, Washington, and Hong Kong. Given the cultural proximity of London and Washington, the volatility of Jerusalem, and the high number of Chinese immigrants and entrepreneurs in Toronto, the bureaus that remain appear to make sense in terms of newsworthiness, marketability, and cultural affinity (leading into the issue of proximate coverage which will be discussed below). Although foreign desk editor Bill Schiller feels that Toronto is “tailor-made for international reporting” and

³⁰ J. Stackhouse, Foreign Desk Editor, *Globe & Mail*, personal communication, March 15, 2004; P. Loong, World Desk Editor, *Canadian Press*, personal communication, March 23, 2004; K. McParland, Foreign Desk Editor, *National Post*, February 27, 2004; R. Hurst, President, *CTV News*, personal communication, March 1, 2004; S. Wyatt, Editor-in-Chief, *Global Television Network*, personal communication, March 17, 2004; B. Schiller, Foreign Desk Editor, *Toronto Star*, personal communication, March 2, & March 17, 2004; D. Downey, Executive Producer, *CBC National Radio News*, personal communication, March 26, 2004 & March 29, 2004; G. Hoff, Executive Producer for Newsgathering, *CBC Television News*, personal communication, March 31, 2004; A. McCabe, Foreign Editor, *CanWest News Service*, personal communication, March 5, 2004; J. Atkins, former Foreign Desk Editor, *Toronto Star*, personal communication, March 17, 2004.

would like to open more bureaus, he balances these needs with limited economic resources:

We have opened and closed bureaus based upon specific needs and we felt that that was the best way in which to husband our resources to deliver the kind of reporting that our readers want (personal communication, March 2 & 17, 2004).

The *Star* is not alone in cutting bureaus. The *Globe & Mail* has also shaved its bureaus from 10 to seven³¹ since the late 1980s and early 1990s. Bureaus closed include Tokyo, the Middle East, Africa, Mexico City, Rio, Los Angeles, Berlin, and, in 1999, New Delhi. Financial resources permitting, foreign desk editor John Stackhouse would like to reverse this trend by reopening Los Angeles and New Delhi in the next few years, adding to Beijing, Moscow, Jerusalem, London, New York, and Washington.³²

Yet despite these cutbacks, it seems that most news organizations consider bureaus to be a key ingredient of journalistic practice. Both the *Toronto Star* and *Globe & Mail*, for example, have a long-established history of distinguished foreign reporting. Between 1990 and 2004, the *Star* won six National Newspaper Awards for outstanding international reporting, with the *Globe* closely behind at five. As such, Bill Schiller (*Star*) emphasizes the importance of bureaus in spite of the costs relative to the availability of wire services:

I would much prefer to have our own eyes and ears on the ground and to have a particularly Canadian perspective emanating from the place where news is

³¹ The *Globe* currently operates with five bureaus. London and Jerusalem are “open.”

³² Stephanie Nolan also reports from many places in Africa.

occurring. I think that's always the optimum and that's what we would like to aspire to. (personal communication, March 17, 2004)

Stackhouse (*Globe*) shares Schiller's sentiment:

The *Globe* believes that you have to live in a country to understand it and write about it authoritatively, so for the major countries in the world, for China, Russia, the U.S., we believe our people have to live there and we get a great benefit from that. They see things that visiting journalists don't see.
(personal communication, March 15, 2004)

Both *CTV* and *CBC* register similar ideological commitments to the value of permanent foreign coverage, despite the added costs – both in terms of staff and technology – that television bureaus entail in comparison to the print media. Robert Hurst, President of *CTV News*, sites *CTV's* commitment to section 3.1(d)ii of the Canadian Broadcasting Act³³ as a guiding principle for the network:

- (d) the Canadian broadcasting system should
 - ii) encourage the development of Canadian expression by providing a wide range of programming that reflects Canadian attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity, by displaying Canadian talent in entertainment programming and by offering information and analysis concerning Canada and other countries from a Canadian point of view.³⁴

³³ *CBC* also maintains a commitment to the same section of the Canadian Broadcasting Act. (*CBC Journalistic Standards and Practices*, at <http://cbc.radio-canada.ca/accountability/journalistic/index.shtml>, accessed July 29, 2005.

³⁴ <http://www.efc.ca/pages/law/canada/canada.B-9.01.part-1.html>, accessed July 29, 2005.

In addition to this legislative impetus, both *CTV* and *CBC* place value on the insider edge that a landed foreign correspondent brings to her/his reporting, particularly in terms of enterprising work:

When you are living as a foreign correspondent in a foreign place, it is your obligation and your duty to know all of the pushes and pulls of that society. You are a student studying what's going on in this society. I have often been at crisis stories where foreign journalists come in because there's a few headlines going on, and essentially they sit in their hotel rooms, watch CNN, or ask those of us who are resident, what the hell's going on. And usually we tell them.³⁵ (R. Hurst, personal communication, March 1, 2004)

Downey of *CBC Radio* agrees:

If you're in a country, you can actually do stories that aren't strictly speaking hot spot coverage. And the one criticism that you hear about news – whether it's radio, television or radio – is that 'you only tell us about the bad stuff, when bad stuff is happening, but you never tell us about things that are going on in a country that aren't hideous, or people aren't killing each other.' I think having a bureau in a place gives you the ability to tell stories over time ...And also, the lifeblood of journalism is being able to make contacts and develop sources and you don't necessarily develop sources when you're flying in for a week and then flying out. (personal communication, March 26 & 29, 2004)

³⁵ For a similar criticism of the coverage tendencies of the press during the Gulf War, see Fialka, J. (1991) *Hotel warriors: covering the Gulf War*. Washington: The Woodrow Wilson Centre Press. For additional context see: Knightley, P. (2000) *The first casualty: the war correspondent as hero and myth-maker from the Crimea to Kosovo*. London: Prion. Pgs. 483-500; and Haies, H. (1995) "Putting Vietnam behind us: hegemony and the Gulf War," in *Studies in Communications: The Discourses of War and Peace*. (eds.) McCormack, Thelma & Robert K. Avery. Vol. 5. London: Jai Press Inc. pg. 35-67.

CTV has the largest number of permanent bureaus in Canada at 10, and more than traditional U.S. networks (CBS has four, NBC has five, and ABC has six),³⁶ which have been closing or consolidating bureaus over the last 10 years (Parks 2002, p. 53). *CBC TV* maintains seven English bureaus, while the newest and smallest national network, *Global Television*, has one.

Not all news organizations prefer bureau coverage. *CanWest News Service* – which includes papers formerly owned by *Southam*, the *National Post*, and *Global Television* – are moving towards consolidated bureaus, “swat team” reporting, and locally produced foreign news (ie. foreign news produced in Canada). When Conrad Black launched the *National Post* in 1998, the paper opened two bureaus in Washington and New York (with a third “features” bureau in London). To compensate for this bureau paucity, the *Post* developed two alternative strategies for covering foreign news. Firstly, they expanded their travel budget through which they finance spot coverage. According to McParland, the *Post* frequently sends reporters out from Canada to cover developing international news for short periods of time:

The whole bureau system really is a bit of an anachronism. You know, it was sort of set up. Papers had bureaus when that was the only way that you could get news from remote parts of the world. But it’s not true anymore, you know, it hasn’t been true for a long time and most of the papers have maintained their bureau networks to some degree, just because they were there already and it’s sort of a prestige thing. And since the *Post* was starting brand new, we

³⁶ Fox has six bureaus and CNN has 30 bureaus (Parks 2002, p. 53).

didn't really think we had to do that. (personal communication, February 27, 2004)

Secondly, the *Post* employs three reporters – Peter Goodspeed, Mary Vallis and Isabel Vincent – who produce foreign stories from Toronto by combing wires, the Internet, and calling live contacts.³⁷

Aileen McCabe, now foreign editor at *CanWest News Service*, spent several years as a foreign correspondent for *Southam* before it was bought by *CanWest*. “At the top of its game,” *Southam* had eight bureaus and a strong commitment to foreign news. Throughout the 1990s, *Southam* cut back, leaving bureaus “dark for longer in between correspondences.” By the time *CanWest* bought *Southam* in 2000, “there wasn't much left” – just McCabe's London bureau and Washington (personal communication, March 5, 2004).

Former *Southam* correspondent Johnathan Manthorpe (1998) writes of participating in the cuts. With bureaus in London, Washington, Costa Rica, Moscow, Cairo, Harare and his own bureau in Hong Kong, Manthorpe argues that *Southam* “probably had the largest networks of foreign bureaus of any Canadian news outlet” in the early 1990s. The cuts began as editors questioned whether public interest in international news justified the investment. As a result, bureaus including Latin America and South Africa shut down, followed by Moscow, the Middle East, and Hong Kong after Conrad Black took over in 1996.

³⁷ Although the *Globe & Mail* also employs three “foreign affairs” specialists, Stackhouse indicates that these reporters do not rewrite wire stories, but write from their particular interest area. Their work also tends to appear in the weekend features' section as opposed to the front news section of the paper (personal communication, March 15, 2004). The *Toronto Star* has a similar arrangement with Latin American specialist Oakland Ross and U.K./Blair specialist Linda Hurst. These articles usually appear in the weekend section in the Sunday paper (B. Schiller, personal communication, March 2 & 17, 2004).

It was argued that it was wasteful and unnecessary to duplicate offices in regions where Black already had bureaus through his other newspaper holdings, especially the Daily Telegraph. It made more economic sense, the argument went, to make Telegraph copy available to the Southam papers than to operate a separate, vastly expensive network. (p. 135)

In 2003, the *Post* and *CanWest* consolidated their foreign coverage through McCabe's post in Ottawa. Under the *CanWest News Service* banner, the media company now produces foreign news through *Post* bureaus in New York and Washington, and through *CanWest's* "roving reporter" Matthew Fisher.³⁸ Under *CanWest's* converged approach to reporting, journalists are handpicked from the *Post* or *CanWest* papers to cover unfolding international events for short periods of time. Although McCabe prefers bureaus, she feels they are too expensive to maintain:

I think that's definitely preferable but organizations don't have the money anymore. I'm at least glad that they're still sending people from Canada over there to cover the big stories, it makes it difficult for people who want to be foreign correspondents but that's the reality, bureaus now cost a fortune.

(personal communication, March 5, 2004)

Canada's smallest and newest *CanWest* television network – *Global* – launched *Global National News* on September 3rd, 2001. They "lurched right into 9/11" with only one bureau – Washington. Today Steve Wyatt, editor-in-chief of *Global Television Network*, notes that *Global* is in a "growth mode," and looking to hire a correspondent to work with Tel Aviv freelancer Martin Himel. This "growth" model

³⁸ Fisher is mainly based in Jerusalem now.

mirrors *CanWest's* model of “swat team” reporting in addition to multiplatform reporting. The latter involves cross reporting from print to television and vice versa:

The one thing about *Global* is that we're a little more experimental and we like to do things a little differently. We're looking at that right now actually. We want to, we definitely are seeking to expand our ability to cover international news, that's number one. Number two is trying to find the best way to do that, using the power of converged media...this is where I would like to see it go: is that we can get these very skilled reporters to provide analysis and coverage of events. But...print reporters, their limitations are [that] they...work within a format that's quite different from print obviously...Video journalists can do supplementary or complementary stories or first hand reports on breaking events in a television way. So in that sense, we can work together not [to] duplicate resources and get coverage for all media. (personal communication, March 17, 2004)

However, Gordon Fisher, President of News and Information at *CanWest Global Corp.*, feels that convergence means “using your journalists and resources in the most efficient way to benefit the consumer.” Thus, *CanWest* does not expect journalists to serve all media, all the time “because at the end of the day, it would affect the quality of the work” and deter viewers and readers. On the other hand, Fisher notes that *CanWest's* decision to purchase a print empire – aided by a more favourable regulatory climate for cross-media ownership (Pitts 2002, p. 7; see also Taras 2001) – was prompted by a desire to purchase content for *Global's* “untested” television network. Thus, *CanWest* uses multiplatform reporting and resource sharing when it

“makes sense” to do so, particularly in regards to expensive and unpredictable international coverage (personal communication, March 23, 2004).

Technically speaking, *CTV* and the *Globe & Mail* could converge in a similar manner. As recently as February 2002, *Bell Canada Enterprises* bid \$2.3 billion dollars for *CTV*, purchasing the *Globe & Mail* six months later. In partnership with the Thomson family, *BCE* then blended these media companies with *Sympatico-Lycos* to create *Bell Globemedia*. Operationally though, *CTV* and the *Globe* remain relatively autonomous media organizations.

John Stackhouse of the *Globe* remains committed to this division:

You can't have someone doing a stand up for TV, writing something for a website, and writing something for a newspaper and maintain the quality for any of them. And what we've decided to pursue instead is more a relationship of convenience, where we share resources and converge as much as is convenient and desirable for us but its very much on an ad hoc basis so, our bureaus are all merged, we share the same offices, and we share information, actually, fairly aggressively and that's a benefit, but we still have print people writing for print and then broadcast people doing broadcast, which is what they do best. (personal communication, March 15, 2004)

Hurst of *CTV* shares this position:

Television reporting is different and specialized from print reporting. Print reporting is specialized and unique from television reporting. And there are very few people who feel comfortable with both. And there are even fewer

people at the level demanded by the Globe & Mail, and at CTV that can do both. (personal communication, March 1, 2004)

Torstar has avoided the convergence game. Although the *Star* has fewer bureaus than the *Globe*, Schiller does not feel left behind:

Everyone sort of pointed the finger and said, ‘you know, the train’s leaving the station, and you’re not on it; you’re going to be lost and forgotten,’ and of course it has turned out to be anything but. We’ve prospered during this era. We haven’t overextended ourselves in the convergence game and it has held us in good stead. We have continued to remain the dominant newspaper in this market and we continue to be the largest newspaper in this country.

(personal communication, March 2 & 17, 2004)

Regardless of whether the news organizations surveyed gravitate towards the ideals of bureau building or consolidation and multiplatform reporting, all tend to frame their organizations’ foreign coverage positively. What is at stake in this debate is how to define the good journalist, or the good news organization. *CanWest Global* – a relatively new player on the field with distinctly business-orientated corporate leaders – seems intent to revel in the heteronomous pole, bringing an economic logic and commercial viability into the domain of foreign reporting – a part of the field with a quasi-sacred level of journalistic prestige. All other news organizations view economic factors as constraints on journalistic objectives – as something they struggle against instead of celebrate in order to safeguard their symbolic power. Their attitudes reinforce the current orthodoxy and lean more towards the autonomous, rather than the heteronomous pole (a point that will be returned to in part IV).

Nevertheless, the exigencies of economic factors has – at least leading up to 9/11 – produced a reality that includes a trend towards downsized bureaus, precipitating the need to pick and choose where to send reporters. However, picking and choosing leads into the second academic concern regarding Canadian foreign reporting: covering “proximate” countries at the expense of other areas of the world.

Proximate coverage, audience interest, and economic constraints

Given that audiences rely heavily on the selective retelling and interpretive reporting of news organizations when educating themselves on international issues – particularly because they are removed from the subject of interest’s “domain of experience” (Jayakar & Jayakar 2000, p. 127) – the importance of adequately communicating news becomes an even more significant journalistic task; which is likely why most editors and media representatives expressed both a commitment to more traditional forms of foreign reporting and an acknowledgement of its significance to the field of journalism.

However, as established in the last chapter, international newsworthiness often parallels stories that are relevant to a reporting country’s (political) interests and/or values (Gans 1979, p. 37). Proximity in terms of distance, language, economic system and democratic freedom also increases the likelihood of coverage (ibid.; see also G. J. Robinson & Sparkes 1977/1981, p. 131-2, 141-2). For countries outside of the reporting country’s proximity, regular coverage is less likely. Issues like normative deviance and/or potential for social change can precipitate coverage (Chang, Shoemaker, and Brendlinger 1987 in Jayakar & Jayakar 2000, p. 125) but the length of that coverage may not be sustained. For example, conventional warfare will rank

high on the journalistic and public agenda and thus generate significant media coverage (Livingston 1997, p. 11). On the other hand, although consensual humanitarian operations may generate some public scrutiny of potential “mission creep” (as in Somalia), media interest is usually low to modest (p. 11, 14). In between conventional warfare and consensual humanitarian missions are six other types of military interventions, one of which – peacemaking – registers high on the media interest scale but dips over time unless a violent development takes place (p. 11). In these cases of disaster or unfolding military developments, hot spot coverage – or flying a reporter in when disaster strikes only to fly them out when the dust has barely settled – tends to result.

In terms of proximate coverage in the Canadian media, Hackett (1989) raises concerns about the outcome of this coverage strategy. He argues that covering liberal-democratic, Western countries at the expense of non-proximate Third World countries results in an over emphasis “on negative events and secondarily on conventional politics at the expense of the long-term, multi-faceted struggle for development” (p. 822). Other critics argue that hot spot journalism is a disservice to the public (Said 1981; Harriman 1987; Pedelty 1995; Manthorpe 2001; Seib 2002). Pedelty (1995) notes that parachute journalists lack contacts, language skills, and information – often leading to politically decontextualized stories and a reliance on liberal democratic ethnocentrism (p. 101-3, 109-12, 186-8). Seib (2002) argues that parachute journalism subverts the potential for journalists to act as “sentinels” – providing an early warning system for potentially explosive international conflict (p. 14, 76-7). Seib adds that despite the hard work and dramatic narratives produced

through parachute journalism, reporting “tends to lack context and gives its audience a sense that the issues involved are less complex than they really are,” often reproducing government agendas (p. 76-7; see also Jayakar & Jayakar 2000). Said’s (1981) classic study of media coverage of Islam concurs with these criticisms:

Instead of trying to find out more about the country, the reporter takes hold of what is nearest at hand, usually a cliché or some bit of journalistic wisdom that readers at home are unlikely to challenge. (p. xi-xii)

Could the “routine’s and habits” resulting from “the particular form that competition takes” produce a reported world “full of ethnic wars, racist hatred, violence and crime...” as Bourdieu (1998, p. 8) proposes? Given that competition often involves catering to perceptions of audience interest and thus selling papers, it could well be that disasters are money to editors and managers; consciously or unconsciously utilized to titillate and thus increase market share.

Research seems to bear this out. In the last few years, for example, the size of the *Globe & Mail’s* foreign section has declined significantly, adding to the pressure of maintaining coverage of less “sexy” areas of the world outside the media glare of CNN (Vasil 2003, paragraph 6). Add to this the fact that all major print organizations surveyed have been hit with decreased advertising dollars in recent years (ibid.), and it becomes clear that in addition to bureau closures, the space devoted to non-proximate foreign news coverage has been shrinking for some time. According to Seib (2002) part of this could have to do with the lack of a simplistic Cold War frame of good guys and bad guys in a world that journalists could sum up easily and audiences could understand (p. 20-5). The Cold War, he argues, was replaced by

“globalization and its discontents,” including changes in the international political and economic structure that has led to less easily understood stratification of wealth and technology, as well as a shift towards complicated interdependence (p. 112-7). As well, the increasing corporatization of media ownership has decreased the comprehension of news as a public service and reduced the importance of foreign coverage (p. 19, 116-7).

As of September 11, 2001, there were only 12 full-time Canadian correspondents in all of the Canadian media reporting from outside of London and the U.S., which is a decrease of 40 % from the early ‘90s (Vasil 2003, paragraph 19). U.S. numbers bear evidence of similar pressures. Immediately prior to 9/11, *CNN* was in the midst of laying off 400 staffers, the *Boston Globe* was going through a round of buyouts, and departing *Knight-Ridder* executives were criticizing cuts at the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and *San José Mercury News*, as well as other papers in the chain (Parks 2002, p. 55). Studies were showing a decrease in interest – particularly among youth – for international news. For example, the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations Studies found in a Gallup poll that the number of interviewees who were “hardly interested” in foreign news had risen from 3 to 22 % between 1990 and 1998 respectively (p. 56). In Canada, Jonathan Manthorpe (2001) argued that the Canadian news diet had become more and more parochial, increasingly trivial, and “addicted to the entertainment industry.”³⁹

Although it is impossible to determine what trend – cut backs in foreign coverage or audience disinterest – predisposed the other, a number of studies bear out the

³⁹ Manthorpe, Jonathan (Fall 2001) “Foreign Affairs: Whistling in the Wind about International Coverage,” *Media Magazine*, paragraph 5, at <http://www.caj.ca/mediamag/fall2001/foreignaffairs.html>, accessed July 29, 2005.

consequences of both trends: A (U.S.) Newspaper Advertising Bureau study estimated that at least before 9/11, foreign stories accounted for 2 % or less of the average daily paper's news, down from 10 % in 1971 during the Vietnam War (Parks 2002, p. 55); another study found that the proportion of international news in major U.S. newsweeklies declined to 13 % from 22 % between 1985 and 1995 (ibid.); similarly, before 9/11, network newscasts sometimes carried no international coverage, though a generation prior foreign reports constituted an average of 45 % of newscasts (ibid.).

Proximate coverage as modus operandi?

All of this research leads to the conclusion that at least leading up to 9/11, people weren't buying, and news organizations weren't producing. Throw in corporate conglomeration and a post-Cold War "lull" in easily constructed narratives, and it becomes clear that these factors – all of which are enmeshed in economic imperatives of competition for market share – have produced a decline in foreign news. On the other hand, the interviews conducted with media editors reveal – for the most part – a continued adherence at least on the part of news editors and producers to informing the public of international news – with economic and competitive objectives coming in a grudging second. A balance then, between foreign reporting as *modus operandi* or economic liability, is to acknowledge the multiplicity of factors at work in determining the extent of foreign news. Rather than "blaming" the media generally and the Canadian media specifically for hot spot journalism for example, Hackett (1989) prefers to outline a number of mediating factors affecting trends in coverage:

- 1) the journalistic criteria for newsworthiness and assumptions about audience

interest; 2) broader ideological and cultural conceptions of the Non-Western world; and 3) the logistics of news production, including technology and budgetary constraints and the location of correspondents; “all of which interact with the fluctuation of events, the nature of political and social life, and the degree of government restrictions on the media in different regimes” (p. 824). These points bear a similarity to Robinson & Sparkes (1977/1981) summation: that a country’s news values, which determine the “focus and content of its world picture,” depend on the availability of communication technology, historical precedents, and economic and political relations and editorial judgments (p. 130). However, Robinson & Sparkes also note that market pressures – or conceptions of audience interest – impact the range and extensiveness of foreign coverage. They argue that it is often “the editor’s perception of what the public wants, and not any theory of what the public needs that determines which news gets into print and which does not” (p. 132-3). Putting both interviews and critics’ thoughts together then, a picture of the production of international news emerges that takes into account a number of structuring influences, but that also places emphasis on economic factors when determining the proximity of coverage as well as agents’ struggles to come to terms with these influences, celebrating or resisting to various extents, these economic influences on journalistic practice. As for linking proximate coverage to Eurocentrism, only a content analysis (chap. 5) will be able to make any determination in that regard, and only in relation to Afghanistan.

Part IV: Afghanistan as modus operandi: proximate coverage, economics, and the heteronomous/autonomous poles

While part III explored trends and developments in Canadian foreign reporting and media practitioners' reactions to those developments, part IV reintroduces Afghanistan and Bourdieu into the equation. How did the media's efforts to cover Afghanistan measure up relative to the ideal of a strong Canadian media presence abroad? What can this gauge tell us about the state of the Canadian media relative to Bourdieu's heteronomous/autonomous pole? These questions will be answered in three sections. Drawing from academic concerns raised in part III regarding the independence of Canadian foreign reporting, section I measures the strength of the Canadian media's indigenous response to 9/11 and the call to Central Asia in terms of their reliance on foreign wires and editors/managers perceptions of their ability to cover a post 9/11 world with a distinctly Canadian voice. Section II explores whether academic criticisms of proximate coverage hold true for Afghanistan by looking at how long the Canadian media maintained a presence in the region. Finally, section III analyses findings from sections I and II through the lens of Bourdieu's autonomous/heteronomous dichotomy, gauging the strength of the economic field within the field of journalism in an Afghanistan-specific context. Again this section uses material gleaned from academic and journalistic (editors/managers) sources to avoid structuralism or instrumentalism respectively. It will be clear that neither autonomous, nor heteronomous influences exercise absolute sway in predicating the coverage of Afghanistan.

Measuring the Canadian voice in Afghanistan

Writing shortly after 9/11, Canadian media scholar Robert Hackett (2001) would raise concerns about the capacity of the Canadian media to report independently and

critically in the face of the U.S. tragedy. “Through the shared trauma of Sept. 11,” he wrote, “close personal and social ties, the influence of American media on Canadian popular culture, and our partial dependence on U.S.-based networks and wire services for foreign news, Canadian journalism is not immune to the silencing pressures of American media.”⁴⁰ Different news organizations dealt with these concerns in different ways. Although *Global* relied on *CanWest* reporters and news feeds from *CNN*, *NBC* and *APTN* to package the day’s news on the war, according to Steve Wyatt, they also relied on *Global’s* anchor Kevin Newman to filter through U.S. bias:

We all rely on international news feed services to give us pictures from this area and they are quite often clouded with an American perspective. He knows how to cut through that – because he knows, he’s a Canadian – but he knows from his experience in the U.S. [how to take] that apart and [give] us the context in which [the feed] was probably presented or how it was obtained and giving it more of a Canadian angle. (personal communication, March 17, 2004)

For the *Star*, in addition to sending their own correspondents to Afghanistan, wire bias was counterbalanced with an intimate knowledge of reliable wire reporters and access through the Internet to other papers’ dispatches. According to Atkins, the *Star* and the Canadian media generally performed well in Afghanistan because the *Star*, *Post*, and *Globe* sent “their best people” and because Canadian reporters “weren’t there as an adjunct of U.S. defence, or even Canadian defense” (personal communication, March 17, 2004). In other words, there was a clear desire among

⁴⁰ Hackett, Robert (Fall 2001) “Covering up the war on terrorism” *Media Magazine*, paragraph 4, at <http://www.caj.ca/mediamag/fall2001/analysis.html>, accessed July 29, 2005. (For a U.S. discussion, see: Hess & Kalb 2003).

Canadian news organizations to filter through official story lines and the national biases of international newswires using their own reporters and their own media savvy. However, independence does not necessarily mean that Canadian reporters did not introduce their own values into reporting, an issue that will be explored in chapter 5. Regardless, having one's own eyes and ears in a country does not negate the second concern of academics in Part III – proximate coverage.

Proximate coverage and fire truck journalism

In the early 1980s, Palestinian scholar Edward Said would introduce a convenient pun with which to criticize the Western media's coverage of the Muslim world. *Covering Islam* (1981, p. xi-xii) implied that the process of fire truck journalism – in which reporters parachute into a Muslim hot spot, without language, experience, or preparation – results in a covering up *through* coverage, of the non-Western world. Over 20 years later, Haroon Siddiqui, *Toronto Star* columnist and foreign correspondent during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, would raise similar concerns. In effect, he argues that the world lost interest in Afghanistan after the collapse of the Soviet occupation – the media left, and with it, world attention. Developments such as the rise of Osama bin

Laden (armed by the CIA to fight the Soviet occupation in the 1980s), and the rise of the Taliban (in the absence of Western intervention) – went unreported, leading the West to be “perpetually surprised” when disasters like 9/11 struck. Afghanistan, in Siddiqui's estimation, continues to lack historical context in a media environment content to parachute journalists into the fray only to pick up and leave once the excitement dies down.

However, as mentioned in part III, a dialogue of hope emerged after 9/11 regarding the capacity for media practitioners to move away from reactionary coverage of the world. Writing just after 9/11, journalist historian Andie Tucher (2001) argued that “if the United States is entering yet another era of pain and challenge, a small compensation might be that journalism too has a history of rising to the occasion” (p. 156). Intrinsic to rising to the occasion would mean a renewed commitment to foreign bureaus (p. 158) and covering areas of the world, like Afghanistan, that had gone “dark on the mattering map” (Rosen 2002, p. 31). Yet writing after 9/11, Manthorpe (2001) would quickly denounce the Canadian media’s coverage of Afghanistan, arguing that it was indeed of the “fire-truck chasing school” variety. “If reporters are only sent to stories of mayhem, death and destruction,” he wrote, “over time they present a grossly unjust view of the world to Canadians.”

All of the media organizations surveyed for this chapter parachuted correspondents into Afghanistan. In this sense, Manthorpe and Siddiqui’s comments remain unchallenged. The real question then relates to the endurance and tenor of the coverage – did Canadian news organizations pull out after the fall of Kabul or remain to report on the post-Taliban era? Did they shallowly report developments in the fog of war or produce thoughtful analyses and background on Afghanistan? Did they ride around on the backs of military jeeps or venture into the markets and homes of Afghan civilians? The answers to these questions are mixed.

Contrary to criticisms of fire truck coverage, a quick review of news coverage indicates that most organizations retained some presence in the post-Taliban era. At the height of the bombing and immediately afterwards for about six months, the

combined *CBC radio* and *TV* presence would equate to about two to four correspondents at any given time, after which point operations were scaled back. In 2002 and 2003, *CBC radio* would return to Afghanistan for follow up coverage projects. *Afghanistan: the Sky Cries Blood* (2002), and *Afghanistan: Yesterday's Promise* (2003) bisected news and current affairs programming and focused on how the people of Afghanistan were coping with the sweeping changes in their country. According to Downey, these projects were *CBC radio's* answer to the charge of hot spot coverage:

The thing that people always say is 'you guys always go in when it's really awful but you never do the follow up to say how things are now.' So that was an attempt by us to do that kind of thing. (personal communication, March 26 & 29, 2004)

Stackhouse admits that the *Globe* has been "guilty" at times of spot coverage, but has tried to mediate this by sending Moscow correspondent Mark MacKinnon back to Afghanistan in the summer of 2003 to produce a series on changes in the country. The *Globe* also contracted freelancer Hamida Ghafour in 2003 to produce regular features on the country. As a Canadian living in Afghanistan who also happens to be working for the *Telegraph* in London, Ghafour is a cheaper alternative to employing a full time correspondent. Lastly, *Global* send Wilf Dinnic to Afghanistan to produce a series of stories and a documentary. While the *Star* has not dispatched a correspondent to Afghanistan recently, Atkin's argues that during the earlier period of the conflict, the *Star* ran context pieces during "down times." As such, he believes that the *Star* was able to qualify their immediate coverage with the necessary, though

admittedly “hastily” constructed background pieces (personal communication, March 17, 2004).

Although there have been many post-Taliban stories to cover over the last few years, many Canadian news organizations – including *CTV*, *CBC TV*, and *CanWest/National Post* – have chosen to follow the Canadian military contribution to NATO’s International Security Assistance Force – Operation Athena. The mission has since been extended well into 2006.⁴¹ While covering the story involved embedding with the Canadian Forces, most organizations took the opportunity to write the occasional development story. In the case of *CBC TV*, embedding enabled them to “look at Canada’s role in the world” while reporting from Camp Julien, a Canadian base near Kabul.

In sum then, the Canadian media has invested editorial and financial resources into covering Afghanistan, with efforts skewed slightly more towards covering the Canadians in Afghanistan as the immediate conflict passed. Although projects have and continue to be undertaken – particularly with the *Globe* and *CBC radio* – to cover Afghanistan for its own sake, the pull and tug of other international flash points, particularly the invasion of Iraq,⁴² forced news organizations to concentrate their resources in areas for a finite period of time. Stackhouse accept this as a function of news:

⁴¹ Department of National Defence, Operation Athena: the Canadian Forces participation in ISAF, at http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/operations/Athena/index_e.asp, accessed July 29, 2005.

⁴² John Stackhouse mentioned Iraq as an inhibiting factor in the coverage of Afghanistan (personal communication, March 15, 2004). Similarly, Kelly McParland has noted that 9/11 put the rest of the world on hiatus, as so much attention was focused on ongoing developments on the “War against Terrorism” (Vasil 2003).

That's the nature of the media. It's got a very limited attention span and reacts to the most dramatic events, which usually are bombings and killings and then usually focuses upon measurable events and transitions – like elections – rather than longer, immeasurable social change. (personal communication, March 15, 2004)

Atkins demonstrates a similar resignation:

[Coverage] could always be better, but you know, there's just so much money you can spend and it is expensive to run bureaus over seas, it really is expensive, so people have pulled back, newspapers have pulled back, but they're much smarter about the way they cover events now. You know it's better to swamp it with two or three people when something happens rather than to spend on a bureau if it's just not registering on the radar with your readers. That's what you have the wire services for. (personal communication, March 17, 2004)

In other words, fire truck journalism and combing the wires can be forgiven because media pockets are shallow – at least according to the logic of foreign editors. I would add that parachute reporting is also dramatic, tends not to ruffle any ideological or political feathers, and sells papers. What this means for the Canadian media's adherence to the internal logic of the journalistic field remains to be determined.

Economics: autonomy versus heteronomy

While no media representative disclosed the costs involved in sending so many reporters to Afghanistan, the interviews described above make it clear that each news organization had to contribute a significant amount of money to the coverage of

Afghanistan. Yet the idea that the Canadian media would not cover the war in Afghanistan – the first war in the vaguely classified “War on Terrorism” – was not an option. The race to coverage can be explained using both autonomous and heteronomous logic. In the former, covering Afghanistan was a public service, and a national responsibility given the involvement of Canadian troops starting in January of 2002 – Canada’s first combat duty in decades. (Whether this represents a slide into the internal logic of the political field is a question best left to chapter 5). In terms of heteronomous, or economic logic, a case can also be made for the business of journalism.

Not only is the media interest “extremely high” during conventional warfare, but the public is also highly interested and attentive (Livingston, 1997, p. 11). In other words, consumers want coverage, other papers will be obliging their consumers, and market share is at stake – getting off the Afghanistan bandwagon, especially as an elite national media organization, risks losing credibility, advertisers, and consumers. Thus covering a war makes good business sense. Although most of the editors queried for this chapter would likely agree with the logic in this assessment, they spoke of the coverage of Afghanistan as a forgone conclusion, a strategy that did not require an explanation. One can assume that if pressed for an explanation, an autonomous one would likely be given, with economic considerations taking a backseat, mainly as a source of budgetary constraints on journalistic practice. This heteronomous explanation is likely disguised unconsciously by *genesis amnesia*, or the “*intentionless invention of regulated improvisation*” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 79). After all, neither journalists, nor editors (many of whom in this case are former foreign

reporters) would likely choose a heteronomous argument as a means of justifying their media organization's actions. Yet as part III established, economics affects everything from the number of bureaus to the length and duration of coverage. Whether or not the obtrusive influence of economics and competition for market share homogenizes media content as Bourdieu (1998, p. 23) suggests is difficult to determine. But it does – if anything – delimit the number of structured responses that media organizations can take when faced with the explosion of conflict in an area of the world that has fallen off the radar screen.

Part V – In conclusion: putting it all together

This chapter has accomplished four tasks: it provided a primer on Afghanistan and Canadian military operations, recounted details on logistical constraints in terms of the Canadian media's efforts to cover Afghanistan from the perspective of editors, outlined trends in reporting leading up to 9/11, (highlighting concerns among academics and critics relating to the viability of Canadian foreign reporting in a world of downsized bureaus, hot spot journalism, and decreased audience interest in foreign news), and assessed the Canadian media's coverage strategy relative to Afghanistan in terms of national viability, proximate coverage, and autonomy from economic influences. As discovered, economics and competition for market share play a significant role in influencing the foreign coverage of war zones. However, one can't assume that these influences have an absolutist impact on the type of stories that journalists pursue. In the chapter to follow then, journalists' individual experiences of constraints while covering Afghanistan collide with individual motivation and notions of journalistic responsibility. Thus if the present chapter problematized structure in

terms of editors' non-homogenized responses to trends and developments in the field, chapter 4 explores similar concerns from the ground, focusing on the journalists who produce the media texts about which so much academic and structural discussion persists.

Chapter 4: The view from the ground – journalists on motivation, agency, and constraints in Afghanistan

For Canadian journalists covering Afghanistan after September 11th, 2001 until September 11th, 2002, money, audience interest, and competition lay outside the primary realm of deliberation. Editorial quibbling over what constituted international news and how long correspondents should be left to report in the field gave way to the journalistic determination to get the story, and in some cases, fight to keep it. For Canadian journalists, it was clear that Afghanistan's war-torn countryside was the next big ticket story of the year, and perhaps the decade. Therefore, while the previous chapter explored the media field in terms of economic and competitive constraints, the present chapter asks how journalists responded to this call – what they covered, how, and why. This chapter then, is a recovery of the first-hand perspective so often lost in critical structural media analyses as well as narrative and quantitative analyses focusing on the text alone. On this note I take direction from Bourdieu (1994), who argues that one must “escape from the usual dilemma of internal (‘tautegorical’) readings of the work” because it is a reductionist vision that tends – among other possible consequences – to explain “the act of production and its product in terms of their conscious or unconscious external functions, by referring them, for example, to the interests of the dominant class” (p. 34). This attitude, through my analytical lens, recognizes that the text is the sum of a complex number of factors that can neither be easily summed up, nor broadly applicable to every journalist or every war-zone reporting context. The information produced provides directional research that could theoretically be cross-referenced with journalism studies research from other zones of conflict, national media organizations, or other time periods in the

reporting of Afghanistan in order to more clearly identify trends and differences in reporters and reporting. It is divided into three major parts. Part I establishes demographic information gleaned (mainly) from survey data in order to establish habitus-related information like age, gender and ethnicity, as well as the acquisition of field-dependent seniority. Part II explores agency and journalistic autonomy relative to motivation and identity politics; followed by looking at motivation and identity politics in terms of Afghans' relations to and understandings of journalists. Part III discusses the relationship between the foreign desk and the foreign correspondent. Finally, the conclusion sums up this information and discusses the limits of subject-centred data. Blending personal storytelling with the theoretical concepts associated with habitus and field established in chapter 2, this chapter provides a first-person prelude to the content analysis of chapter 5 to follow.

Part I: Defining the journalist, the habitus, and field-dependent status – demographics on age, race/ethnicity, gender, class, marital status and seniority

In order to generate adequate but manageable research material, open-ended research interviews were conducted with nine national and/or daily, English-language print research subjects. Journalists included three representatives from the *Globe & Mail*, staff foreign correspondents Geoffrey York and Alan Freeman, and contract stringer Hamida Ghafour, three representatives from the *Toronto Star*, Rosie DiManno, Mitch Potter, and Kevin Donovan, and three representatives from the *National Post/CanWest*, Matthew Fisher, Hilary MacKenzie, and Levon Sevunts. Originally, invitations to participate in this research were extended to strictly national, English-language print media including the *Globe & Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, and the

National Post. This was designed to simplify any differences that might arise between national reporters and their regional counterparts. However, the non-participation of *National Post* reporters Patrick Graham and Stewart Bell jeopardized the representation of *National Post/CanWest* reporters. To compensate, Hilary MacKenzie, former Washington Bureau Chief for *CanWest (Southam)*, and Levon Sevunts, former *Montreal Gazette* reporter, were recruited instead. Given that the *National Post* often prints the work of non-staff *CanWest* reporters, Mackenzie and Sevunts were often writing for a broader audience than their particular regional affiliations suggest. For this reason, as well as their valuable insight, concerns over confounding the national bent of the research were outweighed by the dearth of material available in their absence. That said, after careful consideration, *Canadian Press* reporters were not included in this research. While notable reporters Nahlah Ayed, Stephen Thorne, and Terry Pedwell produced excellent material, their position as front-line wire reporters meant that their output was more difficult to track, as well as driven by breaking Canadian stories for Canadian media outlets and audiences. While juxtaposing wire, chain and national daily motivations and objectives is a worthy pursuit, it lies outside the manageable scope of this research. However, it is important to note that in addition to difficulties in recruiting *Post* reporters, former Moscow correspondent Mark MacKinnon also declined to participate in the research. Thus Hamida Ghafour – whose reporting work took place outside the time frame of this investigation from August 2003 until October 2004 – was also contacted for an interview. While she was not able to comment on invasion, and/or immediate post-Taliban reporting challenges, she was able to provide a fascinating counterpoint to

staff-based, parachute reporting. As a year-long stringer in Kabul, she had insights into parachute reporting constraint that other interview subjects were less able to articulate in an Afghanistan-specific context. As well, as a woman and an Afghan-Canadian, her sense of Western misunderstanding and in some cases media-perpetuated misconception of Afghans and their country aided in highlighting areas where the conventions of parachute war reporting stunt accurate culturally-sensitive reporting.

In terms of describing journalists interviewed, several factors should be considered including age, race/ethnicity, gender, religion, class, marital status and dependents as well as position or status within respective media organizations. As established in chapter 2, such habitus-related information provides a starting point for understanding how agents navigate the media field and interact with people outside the field (part II), as well as react to extra-field influences (part III). To begin, age showed a clear clustering of high-ranking journalists in the 40 to 50 year-old range, with permanently stationed foreign correspondents hovering in the same age bracket. Younger journalists – 35 and 27 (in 2005) – had no permanent employer and no job security, though the 35-year-old is currently carving out a freelance/war corresponding career in the absence of staff employment. Eight of nine could be identified as of European stock, while one research subject identified as Afghan-Canadian. Six were men, three were female. In terms of religion, one was Jewish, one was Russian Orthodox, one was Catholic, two identified as “Christian,” one as “vaguely Protestant,” and three did not self-identify either as a matter of legitimate privacy, or because they did not fill out the background questionnaire. Five of the

journalists interviewed were single with no dependents, one was married with no dependents, and three were married with no more than two dependents. While four out of the five journalists interviewed without children were well into their 40s and 50s, those with children varied in age from early 30s to mid 50s. None indicated that they were homosexual.

As for location in the hierarchy of the field of journalism, establishing a determining scale is difficult. Of the seven journalists interviewed who filled out the survey, only three filled out information related to their annual salaries, with one at the \$100,000+-a-year bracket and two at the \$50,000 to \$99,999-a-year bracket. While one journalist willingly indicated that they had received a pay cut since moving from contract to freelance status, two of the highest ranking journalists in this research investigation elected to leave salary information blank on the questionnaire. This obvious resistance indicates that salary, which is an indicator of class status, is a taboo topic in a society that tends to misrecognize economic stratification (Bourdieu 1977, p. 80-1) and a media that tends to ignore class in media-text creation (Gans 1979, p. 20).

Overall though, both research subjects' professional status, as well as information gleaned from those who were forthcoming about their salaries, indicates that roughly 80 per cent were of middle, to upper middle-class status. However, while journalists of higher rank are definitely rewarded with higher salaries – paralleling the predominance of the economic field as indicator of status within Western society generally-speaking, as well as Bourdieu's assertion that symbolic power tends to have an unrecognized material base (Mahar, Harker, & Wilkes 1990, p. 5) – it is not the

most recognized field-specific (and therefore symbolic) indicator of status within journalism. Indeed, title and length of employment have more symbolic weight when it comes to mutually recognizable status across media organizations. Assuming then that foreign correspondents who are stationed permanently abroad occupy the highest position as journalists, followed by parachute reporters who are based in Canada, followed by freelancers or stringers, between September 11th, 2001 to September 11th, 2002, four of the journalists interviewed were foreign correspondents or serial parachutists (meaning that they move from assignment to assignment but generally stay abroad), three were parachutists, one was on contract with a regional daily, and one was a contract stringer. The contract employee and stringer occupied the youngest age group and had less than five years of experience with their respective organizations when they covered Afghanistan – suggesting that age and status are linked in a positive, but not necessarily exclusive, feedback relationship. Correspondents and parachutists had 14+ years of experience with their individual or cumulative organizations.

As for special characteristics associated with status within each media company, it is interesting to note that although Mitch Potter of the *Toronto Star* went on to become a Middle East foreign correspondent, all of the *Star* journalists interviewed who covered Afghanistan were parachutists with various levels of experience. This is likely part of the *Star's* recent attempt to build up their foreign bureaus, and the injury of foreign correspondent Kathleen Kenna as she drove into the country. As for *CanWest/National Post*, the corporation's sequence of recent mergers and the recent establishment of the *National Post* makes charting seniority more difficult.

Obviously, a staff employee is more senior than a contract employee. However, there are also divisions separating regional dailies from networked news service affiliates from the *Post*. The fact that *CanWest* is less devoted to the establishment of foreign bureaus and is increasingly interested in “swat team” (K. McParland, personal communication, Feb. 27, 2004) reporting for short periods of time also makes it more difficult to delineate clear seniority in the foreign reporting realm. Nevertheless, you have the lowest end of the totem pole, former *Gazette* contract employee Levunt Sevunts, who, among others, was parachuted into Afghanistan partly out of his determination to get there and partly through his experience as an ex-Soviet soldier. Sevunts was followed in a dead heat by former Washington bureau reporter Hilary MacKenzie, who established her foreign post and thus seniority before *Southam* merged into *CanWest*, and “roving” reporter Matthew Fisher, whose fiercely independent streak and devotion to covering war zones and the military has seen him bounce from various media organizations including *Sun Media* and the *Globe* before landing in *CanWest*’s lap just a few years ago. While issues of seniority tend to be a little more fragmented at the *Post*, even the *Globe* has been known to take gambles on neophyte reporters. Such is the case with Hamida Ghafour, a recent journalism graduate who, in her early twenties, convinced the *Globe* to take her on as a stringer in Kabul. While it is clear that she was in the right place at the right time, and her ethnicity as an Afghan-Canadian likely added to her case, she still managed to establish a unique place at the *Globe* – respected but not salaried. Nevertheless, the *Globe*’s continued support of foreign bureaus and the journalists who run them means that when the invasion of Afghanistan began in 2001, only the most senior foreign

correspondents had plane tickets – including then Moscow correspondent Mark MacKinnon, then London correspondent Alan Freeman, and Beijing correspondent Geoffrey York – leaving Ghafour to tie up loose ends at an affordable price. Overall however, it is safe to say that the majority of journalists interviewed were of fairly senior rank.

This is important, because Bourdieu (1998) argues that in order to understand what a journalist is able to do, one has to take into account “the degree to which press ownership is concentrated,” the position occupied by the newspaper within the larger space of newspapers, (in other words, its location on the market and autonomous pole), a journalist’s own position within his/her news medium, and finally, the journalist’s own “capacity for autonomous production” (p. 69). While chapters 2 and 3 established how points one and two delimit the enterprising spirit of independent production through self-censorship and top down concerns with market share competition respectively, points three and four remain to be actualized through rigorous analysis. In the next section, research interviews will explore a journalist’s capacity for autonomous production, looking at motivation, identity politics, and journalist-source relations. While the first two involve a degree of proactive behavior on the part of journalists interviewed, the last involves source interactions with journalists interviewed, recognizing that journalists both act, and are acted upon.

Part II: Journalistic autonomy in the field of production: charting the effects of motivation, identity politics, and journalist-source relations

Taking into account the constraining influence of logistical difficulties in chapter 3, and the establishment of the status of each research subject relative to their

employer in the last section, it is now important to examine how a combination of factors including individual motivation, habitus-related identity politics and journalist-source relations impacts each research subject's capacity for autonomous production. Information gleaned from this section will enable an analysis in the discussion section, which will explore how journalists' volunteered perceptions of agency, constraint and motivation in the field relate to journalist-foreign desk relations, press concentration and the tangible tension between the market and autonomous pole within journalism.

Afghanistan or bust: journalistic motivation

For the nine journalists queried for this research, only Hamida Ghafour was new to conflict zone reporting when she took up her assignment in Kabul. However, some journalists have defined their careers through war coverage more than others. Kevin Donovan has recently been promoted to editor of investigative research at the *Toronto Star*, but has also managed to spot cover the 1991 Gulf conflict and the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan. On the other hand, Matthew Fisher lives out of a suitcase. He has reported overseas for 23 years, worked in 153 countries, and covered 14 wars including two Iraq-U.S. conflicts, Afghanistan, East Timor, Chechnya, Somalia, Rwanda, Nagorno-Karabakh, Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo as of 2005. Despite the range of war zone experiences, all journalists interviewed who filled out the questionnaire indicated that they would like to take part in conflict zone reporting again, despite the fact that most journalists volunteered several drawbacks to the work.

MacKenzie, Donovan, Freeman, and Potter cite the sacrifice of a settled life and the stress that conflict zone reporting has on their families/partners. They have a point. None of the journalists interviewed with children were stationed permanently overseas (outside of North America), suggesting that foreign correspondent work – particularly in conflict zones – clashes with partner/family life. And in fact, all of the journalists with partners/family noted their correspondent work is a significant source of stress and that their partners/families have somewhat of a dampening influence on their commitment to extended conflict zone reporting.

Freeman and York cite difficulty and exhaustion, and Potter complains of physical danger and harassment for “being the messenger,” especially in terms of his current assignment in the Middle East. Surprisingly, those journalists interviewed who have covered the most conflict situations – including Fisher (14), Sevunts (about 8), and DiManno (8) – also have the fewest complaints. DiManno downgrades drawbacks like a lack of “creature comforts” and injuries such as broken teeth and a host of physical ailments that she suffered on her return from Afghanistan as “annoyances.” There is “nothing” she doesn’t like about covering war zones. Fisher, who has suffered several low grade injuries – including undiagnosed stomach ailments that put him in the hospital twice, a dislocated collar bone, severe dysentery, severe sunburn, a broken finger, broken ribs, a slipped disc, and badly bruised legs – wrote “Any time, anywhere. That is what I do,” in response to a survey query regarding the desire to cover more wars. Finally, Levon Sevunts, the only one of the three with a partner and children, has no complaints either. Risk, he argues, is “part of the job,” adding that he has already developed a “thick skin” from serving as a Soviet

soldier in Armenia and witnessing the Armenian earthquake of 1988. Shockingly, this resolution comes from the one interview subject who survived a Taliban ambush – three colleagues didn't make it.

Regardless of DiManno, Fisher, and Sevunts' lack of stated drawbacks, they are similar to other journalists interviewed in their appreciation of the positive aspects of war reporting. Enthusiasm for reporting in a foreign environment, learning about new cultures, and witnessing history were mentioned by several of the journalists interviewed as reasons to report in a foreign context. Additionally, family history impacted at least two journalists. In veteran *CanWest* reporter Hilary MacKenzie's case, her desire to cover wars comes out of a love of travel, and a family history in the British Foreign Service. Fisher's father, who also traveled and was a journalist, advised a teenaged Fisher to finance his own wanderlust in the same manner. Single at 50 with no dependents, Fisher describes his job as more of a vocation than a career – he is always scouting stories, familiarizing himself with the particular lay of the land, and is perpetually “alive to the possibility of working.” MacKenzie is similarly passionate about covering wars. She admits to being motivated by a “naïve belief” that talking about the human toll of war can prevent it. The two journalists interviewed with the most expertise in issues of war and the military – Fisher and Sevunts – indicate that they are at least partially motivated by a profound belief that war should be covered by those like themselves who have extensive experience. In his questionnaire, Fisher writes the following explanation:

I firmly believe that as much as possible those going to awful places should have previous experience of such hellholes...not only because it makes for

better comparisons and therefore better journalism, but also because the more you do the more careful you become and the more you understand when things have become too hairy and you must pull back. Too many news organizations – and not just Canadian ones – send tourists who are totally unprepared for the working and living environment. (M. Fisher, personal communication, June 16, 2005)

In terms of Afghanistan-specific motivations, subject responses varied across the board. Some, like York and Freeman, were driven by a combination of job responsibility (York) and a sense of obligation to colleagues to carry part of the reporting burden (Freeman). Potter, who was a features writer of foreign stories at the time, took the assignment in Afghanistan out of a desire to follow the news. MacKenzie saw reporting in Afghanistan as a unique opportunity to report the subjugation of women under the Taliban with an interest and access unavailable to her male counterparts. Some – like Ghafour and Donovan – expressed professional motivations for covering Afghanistan. In Ghafour's case, Afghanistan was a means to launch a career in foreign reporting. For Donovan, it was the sheer thrill of conflict reporting combined with the ambition to get on the front page and by extension, bolster his career. Still others – DiManno and Sevunts – harboured less profession-related reasons for volunteering to cover Afghanistan. In DiManno's case, Afghanistan was an unrequited travel destination. As a teen, DiManno had developed a fascination with the country, collecting a personal library of books on the subject and buying a plane ticket at 19 so as to backpack across the country. Her plans were cancelled on short notice by the Soviet invasion. Sevunts spent his teen years in the

Soviet Union fearing the draft – which could have sent him to fight in Afghanistan against the mujahedeen. As a college student in Persian Studies at the University of Armenia he found many of his classmates were war veterans from the Soviet-Afghan War, furthering his exposure, and in this case, interest, in the Soviet Union's Vietnam-like thorn. In fact, Sevunts' interest was so piqued that he began approaching the *Gazette* as early as 1999 with story ideas on the Taliban resistance in Afghanistan. Sevunts had no takers until September 3rd, 2001, when he received financial support to conduct a phone interview with Ahmed Shah Massoud, the Taliban resistance's military and spiritual leader, only to have Massoud cancel the interview under the pressure of major offensives. Massoud would die five days later – killed by an Algerian posing as a journalist, but believed to be working for Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network. The 9/11 attacks that would see media attention on the beleaguered nation sky-rocket followed shortly thereafter.

Whether or not these motivations – a sense of responsibility, enhancing one's profession, or personal fascination – in addition to wanderlust, witnessing history, reporting the human toll of war, and covering the military with the experience and skill required, translated into differences in coverage strategies is unclear at this point. Indeed, one needs to blend motivation with habitus-related identity politics if a clearer picture of subject-directed autonomous production is to be established. In the next sub-section, I look at what journalists said they covered, were interested in covering, and why.

Did you get the story? Identity politics and enterprise in Afghanistan

It's not enough to have the drive to buy a plane ticket and fly off to war-torn Afghanistan. Once on the ground, what to cover is determined by a combination of factors. Following logically from motivation in the prior sub-section, this sub-section moves from motivation to journalistic enterprise – from thought to deed – using interview data to record each research subject's perception of the stories they wanted and in many cases were able to cover. However, enterprise does not exist in isolation from habitus-derived identity politics, and questions of the relationship between the two will also be problematized, introducing a number of cases in which habitus blends with motivation to affect the type of articles produced. These cases will provide nodes of interest to be explored further in the content analysis of chapter 5.

To begin, the *Globe*'s Geoffrey York, who as the former subsection established is driven to cover foreign countries and conflict zones out of desire to witness history, mentioned that in Afghanistan, it was part of his job to cover the universals of war, featurizing those elements of Afghanistan in which the public was interested – such as uncovering the deep cultural and historical roots of the burqa. Afghan politics and factionalism and all its complicated manifestations ranging from historical tribal conflict to Soviet-era sprung divisions has less of an audience and thus had to be simplified for an uninterested Canadian public. This is a surprising admission, given the fact that the longtime Beijing and former Moscow correspondent has made a name for himself writing complex political features that are more likely to be found deep within the foreign section of the *Globe* than on its drama-churning front page. Getting on the front page – he argues – is a motivation he “got over” a long time ago.

As the first correspondent sent to Afghanistan during the U.S.-led invasion, the only *Globe* correspondent sent to Afghanistan in the spring before 9/11, and one of a select number who returned to write post-conflict stories in August and September of 2002, it is not surprising that he would feel relatively secure following his feature-minded sensibilities regardless of front-page-friendliness. As for identity politics like gender and race/ethnicity, York did not comment on any specific motivational drives emerging from any aspect of his habitus-forming background as a white, middle-class male. However, he did mention that when confronted with a wide number of potential Afghan sources – thanks to his translator – his decision to interview was often dependent on his interviewee’s level of education. Whether this comment translates into a significant paucity of uneducated sources will have to wait until chapter 5. However, whether this trend is visible will introduce another question – whether source paucity is related to class-based sensibilities or logistical difficulties. It is clear from other subject interviews though that some subjects (Ghafour, MacKenzie, and Freeman) developed a keen sensitivity to the very poor, in some cases going out of their way to talk to them, or at least make socio-economics a pre-occupation of their articles. As for the simplification of politics in York’s features, whether his articles actually reflect this perception is another question best left to chapter 5.

Alan Freeman, who replaced a very weary York in October 2001, was motivated by a sense of duty – to do his fair share of the reporting in Afghanistan – as well as a more general desire to travel, experience new places, and write new and different stories. The *Globe*’s Washington correspondent, who previously corresponded from London and Berlin, was disappointed that “nothing much was happening” in

Afghanistan upon his arrival. Forced to stay by York while his predecessor waited several days for a helicopter out of the country, Freeman wrote of the U.S. bombing, and then came up with features that York hadn't already covered. So he wrote of the Northern Alliance, life on the front, and social issues before his reporting shifted to "newsier" items like the siege of Kunduz (Konduz) and the fall of Kabul. It wasn't "hard hard" news, he admits, but it was difficult to "do something off the news" because of time zone differences. In the end, he was disappointed by the play of his stories – they did not grace the front cover. He suggests this is because he was not the first *Globe* correspondent in the field. However, his concern with the "hardness" of stories likely plays into this front-page preoccupation. More than likely, Freeman's interest in "hard" news paralleled his very real experience with reporting posts – particularly Washington – that tend to be hard news hot, driving a sizable portion of the U.S. and global news agenda. Still, Freeman was not all news, all the time. He would love, for example, to return to Afghanistan to cover girls' education, the position of women, infrastructure, and the economy. Freeman was struck by how poor and isolated the populace was relative to other poor countries and the Western world. Too often, he argues, the civilians in wars are afterthoughts to any externally-driven liberation. It is possible then that Freeman's interest in social issues – such as girl's education and child poverty – might have something to do with his own position as a father of college-aged children, and/or his Western-middle-class cultivated desire to provide for them in a way that guarantees a minimum, if not comfortable, standard of living. However, a follow-up interview could not verify this supposition. Freeman did say that being from a different society, having different

values, and being obviously richer than foreign sources shouldn't preclude a journalist from taking up the craft. I would suggest though, that differences between journalists and their sources could likely add to the sensitivity of the journalistic lens, whoever wields it. According to Hannerz (2004) for example, there are two types of foreign correspondents (parachutists aside) – “spiralists” who spend about five years in a country before spiraling off to a new reporting location, and “longtimers” who basically “go native” and set roots down in the country in question. While all of the journalists interviewed including Freeman were parachutists relative to Afghanistan, Hannerz's delineation does achieve a point – namely that editors and journalists have been known to fear the possibility of longtimers “going stale” and losing their sense of foreignness through habituation, and the eyes of their readers in the process. While I doubt that any reporter could become habituated to the desperate poverty of Afghanistan on such a short assignment, it is likely that if given the time, journalists' descriptions of thread-bare clothing, amputated limbs, and shoeless feet would likely diminish almost inexorably as journalist, editor, and/or audience became acclimatized, or indifferent, to Afghanistan's economic despair – though such a hunch lies outside of the confines of this investigation. Thus, perhaps without even knowing it, identity politics likely affected Freeman's stated interests in certain stories and themes.

What about a journalist with national roots in Afghanistan? Ghafour, who covered Afghanistan from August 2003 until October 2004 from Kabul, felt Afghanistan was a sound place, given her Afghan heritage, to launch a foreign corresponding career. However, while the Canadian angle of the story was alive and well with Canadian

troops situated at Camp Julien near Kabul in Operation Athena, it was still a peace-making mission, and thus, competed for attention with the high violence post-Saddam situation in Iraq. This makes sense according to Livingston's (1997) delineation of press interest relative to military operations: Peace making registers high on the media interest scale but dips over time unless a violent development takes place (p. 11). Perhaps for this reason, as well as a desire to prove her nose for news, Ghafour speaks of being "on top of the news agenda." As a landed stringer, there was little she didn't cover, producing over 50 stories during her 14 month stay and covering the ratification of the constitution. Perhaps because of her length of stay and national heritage, Ghafour has strong criticisms of the coverage of Afghanistan. Afghanistan is not a country bisected exclusively by so-called ethnic divisions between Taliban Pashtuns and Northern Alliance Tajiks and Uzbeks. Ethnic factionalism, she argues, didn't exist to the same extent 30 years ago, and is a product of war – namely the Soviet era tendency to pit one group against the other. Instead, conflicts are more nuanced and involve rural and urban divisions, foreign nationals from Pakistan who infiltrated the Taliban and native Afghans, and the remnants of ideological conflicts between communists and non-communists. "It is always very, very dangerous to look at Afghanistan through the prism of ethnic divisions because it is very simple and always gives a very disturbing picture." Combining these criticisms with her determination to demonstrate her nose for news then, it will be interesting to discover whether a content analysis of Ghafour's work uncovers a greater depth of detail relative to conflict within the country and the cultural manifestation of that conflict.

DiManno, who has a youth-developed fascination with Afghanistan and a profession-developed love for following the news, describes how important it was for her to demonstrate in stories the character of Afghans – kind, polite, sharing, and “fiercely independent.” As a columnist and “point of view writer,” DiManno is unapologetic for the luxury of being subjective in a journalistic sense – in other words, she shared the Northern Alliance point of view and was openly impressed by their soldiers who had “so much fight in them” and their commanders who were “tough buggers.” The political story, she says, can be written from anywhere. But putting aside one’s own presumptions of right and wrong, and using the right textual imagery to convey Afghans on their own terms – with their own sensibilities, rules, and dignity – was her challenge as a writer. It can be assumed, and possibly verified in chapter 5, that DiManno’s pieces will contain a lot of texture and historical detail given her self-declared “Afghanophile” obsession, and mostly Northern Alliance-friendly writing.

Writing political stories was also less of a thrill for DiManno’s replacement, Kevin Donovan. His assignment from head office was to “see some shooting.” The only problem with this task, he felt, was that unless he was being shot at, observation action pieces would be “dull.” Luckily, or unluckily depending on one’s perspective, Donovan was shot at and ran with Northern Alliance soldiers throughout an entire Taliban offensive. Both head office’s marching orders and Donovan’s habitus-related sensibilities were assuaged. But what are these sensibilities? Donovan prefers to write war stories, leaving the politics for the permanently stationed foreign correspondents. However, he is also partial to human stories, and wrote pieces that informed his

readers about the Soviet-Afghan conflict, hospital pieces on amputees, and “Saving Private Ryan” stories about soldiering and valour. Whether this interest has anything to do with his gender is unclear, and remains an association only. However, his desire to experience exciting and challenging foreign assignments does jive with psychological studies into gender and thrill-seeking behavior. Canadian psychologist Anthony Feinstein (2003) notes that “sensation-seeking behavior” – or “the search for varied, novel and intense sensations and experiences, and the willingness to take physical, social, legal and financial risks to get them” (p. 63) – is found in higher rates in men, particularly young men, with sensation seeking behavior decreasing with time. While he goes on to link sensation-seeking behavior to the high – about two-thirds – percentage of men in war reporting, I would also argue that social conditioning, economics, and childbirth are also likely at play; especially given the wide range of motivations for covering war listed in this thesis between the men and women. Nevertheless, given that sensation-seeking behavior - if Donovan in fact is or has harboured this tendency in the past – wanes with time. As a 42-year-old with two children, it is likely that any sensation-seeking behavior is at least partially dampened by his age and parental responsibilities. Donovan notes that after the final liberation of Afghanistan in December 2001, he struggled with this parental responsibility to return to Canada, admitting that despite “pushing his luck,” he felt an overwhelming need to go to Kandahar, regardless of the rise of post-Taliban factional violence. He returned home; his family was “ecstatic.” If it weren’t for good friends and their patient ears, Donovan says that he would have taken the *Star* up on the offer of post-conflict counseling to deal with the psychological consequences of his

disappointment. In spite of the conservative effect his family had on his foreign reporting ambitions, his role as a father did play into his stories. For example, Donovan mentions that children entered almost all of his stories and that he is a “very involved” parent. In other words, it seems clear that this hyperawareness of what he considers harsh, servant-like treatment of Afghan children likely offended his Western cultivated sensibilities of parenthood, though a direct question in this regard was not posed. Therefore fatherhood and gender will likely play into the content analysis of Donovan’s work in chapter 5.

As one of two journalists interviewed who covered post-Taliban Afghanistan for a significant stretch between January 2002 and August 2002, Mitch Potter entered the Kandahar airfield base in February of 2002 and immediately tested his limits. His beef was access – as a Canadian journalist sent to cover the first Canadian combat mission since the Korean War, he felt the story was less about what the troops were eating, and more about the special commandos wandering around plain clothed in his mist. Operation Apollo, Canada’s participation in the U.S.-led international campaign against terrorism, Operation Enduring Freedom, was at that point designed to establish security in the highly fragmented post-Taliban political and military climate, as well as combat operations to route as many Taliban and al-Qaeda members from the surrounding countryside. Unilaterals – in this case, journalists who were not embedded informally with the military – were reporting of civilian casualties from Special Forces bombing, but military briefings were making no comments on such matters. As well, there were several Taliban detainees at the air base to which Potter’s access was blocked. As a former feature writer for the *Toronto Star* who had penned

many foreign assignments, the superficiality of falling back on “fluffy” stories about the troops left him disappointed, and confrontational. He was not impressed with the system that public affairs officers had to accompany him on formal interviews. As such, he wrote increasingly critical accounts of the troops, and a gonzo-style account of press restrictions. Given that Potter has gone on to break stories in Iraq about private Jennifer Lynch – who was presented by the U.S. military as being roughed up at an Iraqi hospital and was “rescued” by U.S. forces – and links between al-Qaeda and the Saddam regime, it is not surprising that he would scorn such restrictions during what became a cautious prototype for formal embedding that was established later during Operation Athena. The media and military – he argues – are like oil and water: journalists “don’t do well in groups,” have self-initiative and are enterprising; military people, “tend to cover their asses” by asking their superiors before they do anything. Officially, Potter was kicked off the base for violating press restrictions, and unofficially for having little to no deference for the Canadian and U.S. forces. A few years later in Iraq, Potter would get kicked off a U.S. base in Baghdad for writing about racial tensions between U.S. and Iraqi troops, who were supposed to be cooperating to maintain security and reduce insurgent activities. It is likely that an analysis of Potter’s articles will follow closely the confrontational tone he acknowledges in the interview. As for post-base stories, it is clear from interview data that Potter’s interest and sensitivity to Pashtunwali, the indigenous honor code and religion of Pashun culture, as well as his interview-stated admonition to avoid judging non-Western cultures according to Western standards, will translate into analytical sensitivity to cultural variance.

Sevunts, whose motivation to cover Afghanistan was both personal and the result of a sense of superior war and military reporting skills, feels that this background played out in his reporting in several ways. In terms of the former, Sevunts lists several advantages that he attributes to background cultural research and his identity as an Armenian including his sensitivity to the plight of minorities and nationalism.

All of that allows me as a reporter to understand the psychology of conflict situations. When I see the Taliban and the Northern Alliance fighting it out, for me it's not just a more hard-line Islamic approach, fighting for control of a less hard-line Islamic group. It's also one major ethnic group trying to dominate the others. You see all the social and ideological divisions, former communists, nationalists, Islamists, so all these things become a bit more apparent to you. (L. Sevunts, personal communication, June 30, 2005)

As for Sevunts' experience covering war and being a former Soviet soldier, Sevunts admits there are positive and negative effects. Firstly, his understanding of the nuts and bolts of the military has allowed him to behave appropriately in combat situations. Also, his understanding of military tactics and strategies enable him to report critically on military press briefings that fail to announce truthful or concrete information. On the other hand, he admits to pushing his limits: "That's something I have to always keep reminding myself of, that I'm not a soldier, I'm a reporter" (ibid.). However, such an interest is only partly predicted by identity-politics and motivation. Instead, Sevunts adds that stories during this first field excursion were "mostly dictated by what was happening." In other words, there were more military than civilian stories because that was the story according to

Sevunts' nose for news. Thus his military radar picked up on the preparation, tasks, challenges, and complexity of the Northern Alliance's changing military circumstances from defensively controlling a mere 10 per cent of the country, to a fast and furious offensive that saw the Taliban ousted from their base in Kandahar. In summary then, Sevunts' content analysis should indicate a clear, but informed pre-occupation with military matters, as well as a heightened interest in cultural and historical detail due partly to his past experiences and his consensus with the editor's desk as to what was news.

Unlike Sevunts, Hilary MacKenzie entered post-Taliban Afghanistan with an eye to make up for the military-focused work of her male colleagues at *CanWest*. Motivated by the need to report the human toll of war, and by doing so contribute to its prevention, MacKenzie wasted no time establishing contacts with people "who give you the cultural nose for a place." Her strategy – involving good contacts, an inquisitive mind, lots of reading, and a female translator – enabled her to conduct interviews with women who had been branded, brutalized, and raped under and by members of the Taliban regime. Of course, sewing the seeds of womens' stories didn't occupy all of her time. She also wrote breaking, hard news stories, and interviewed warlords. However, MacKenzie tried to bring as much context as possible to all of her stories, regardless of topic or theme. She also gravitates to "poor, voiceless people," a tendency that she attributes to her gender. MacKenzie then, is one of the few journalists interviewed to take a strong stance on gender issues. Having experienced war in several countries, including Bosnia, and having witnessed the work of women war reporters, she feels that women cover war differently. This

difference has to do with a combination of access that women receive to the more private realm of women and their families' and sensitivity to the human toll of war. Given these strong beliefs, MacKenzie's content analysis will likely contain more female sources, more female-themed stories, and greater cultural detail.

Like Mitch Potter, Matthew Fisher reported from Kandahar airfield during post-Taliban operations. Fisher's stay was short – he produced about 5 articles between April and May of 2002 – returning to Camp Julien near Kabul during the Canadian Forces participation in Operation Athena as part of the ISAF's security operations. Given Fisher's identification with military operations, and his sense of responsibility to cover the military over and above his less experienced counterparts, it is not surprising that Fisher emphasizes military stories in his interview, reciting a veritable how-to guide on covering the military properly. For example, public affairs officers are harmless, they don't do anything so don't worry about their presence during interviews. Fisher also says too many reporters can't distinguish between "warriors" and the "rear echelon." In other words, don't waste time talking to low-level officials like captains, privates and corporals – they don't have access – talk to colonels and senior sergeants. Find a company to get good stories. Besides being self-contained units of between 125 and 150 soldiers, they can be followed over time. Fisher tends to make informal contact with troops at the "chow line," taking pressure off official journalism-source interactions. He also tends to pick out the engineers and reconnaissance troops because the former "blow stuff up" and the latter are off the base a lot. Fisher has little sympathy for journalists who fly in to a military base, ride officials for contacts, and leave. He, argues Fisher, is not out to advance his career or

blow the lid off a dramatic story. Of course, the fact that Fisher is already so well known makes advancing one's career an unlikely goal in the first place. Nevertheless, he is devoted to long-term coverage of the military in order to truly understand the military and gain the trust of soldiers and officials. The military, he states, will relax with time. And the assignment is like a beat – don't cover everything because access is at risk. In cases where military rules prevent reporting, Fisher points out that rules can be circumvented. For example, Fisher was able to talk to Special Forces while at Kandahar airfield. However, he could only use them as deep background – in other words, no direct quotes. As for preparation for Afghanistan, which would indicate particular interest areas, Fisher admits that his knowledge of the country is mostly informed by reading news reports and understanding it as a flashpoint, rather than studying the social system, language, religion or other more detailed characteristics of the society, which he considers an unrealistic research goal. Nonetheless, he feels that after having covered 14 wars, his ability to compare one with the other means that he is more comfortable covering military matters, and knowing what risks he can and can't take, such as venturing out alone to Kandahar after military officials had already cautioned journalists against taking such actions. Taking all of these factors into consideration then, Fisher's stories will likely reflect the context and detail of his expertise, while sacrificing non-military issues, peoples, and stories.

In sum then, what is clear from interviews is that identity politics – from unique habitus-related characteristics, family, gender, and class – did translate in some cases to differences associated with each research subjects' sensitivity and desire to cover certain issues. Information on the influence of race/ethnicity however is less clear,

and will have to wait for the content analysis of chapter 5 in order to detect any signs of impact. Certainly no journalist indicated that race affected their intent to report, at least any effect of which they are conscious. However, any analyses of subject-centred habitus-related agency and constraints must take into consideration influences associated with habitus that escape the control of the journalists themselves. The next sub-section explores how identity-politics affects coverage from a logistical perspective.

Identity politics and journalist-source relations: Afghans, women, and the military

From Hilary MacKenzie's account above of hiring a female interpreter and establishing contacts with sources who could lead her to women and children, it is clear that gender is one of several facets of a reporter's identity that has an impact on interactions with sources. Although there are tomes of work establishing the struggle between journalists and official sources to frame the news agenda (Entman 2004; Cottle 2003b; Deacon 1996; Deacon & Golding 1994; Ericson, Baranek & Chan 1989; Gandy 1982; Sigelman 1973; McCombs & Shaw 1972), few, if any look at interactions between journalists and non-official sources that can be directly associated with habitus-related identity markers. This subsection first explores the contribution of Couldry (2000) to media-non-media research. It identifies agency and constraints relative to gender – the most singled-out source of reporting constraints mentioned by journalists interviewed. Focus will be given to journalists' relations with Afghans, the Northern Alliance, the Taliban, and the Canadian military. Secondly, given the lack of emphasis journalists interviewed placed on the perceived importance of race/ethnicity in terms of their motivation to get certain stories and not

others, race/ethnicity will be combined with the East-West cultural dichotomy and explored in terms of its effect on journalist-source relations, with emphasis on Afghan civilians and the Northern Alliance. Class, mentioned above in Alan Freeman's hypersensitivity to socio-economic issues, won't be addressed here. I feel, as a researcher, that the dichotomy between journalists and sources in terms of race/ethnicity and culture are so embedded in a larger structure of inequality between First and Third World that while noting that journalists like York may have gravitated in some cases to more educated and well-off individuals, it is impossible to interpret journalists' accounts of Afghan-to-journalist interactions according to class alone.

"Culture of belief"

Before launching into an examination of gender, it is important to establish Couldry's (2000) research on media-non-media interactions and compare it to the Afghanistan context. Couldry argues that studying the direct interactions between media organizations and non-media people (as opposed to, for example, audience reception of media texts) is "a new approach to analyzing the social impact of the media" and is a source of "sociological interest in its own right" despite the fact that such issues "have rarely been explored empirically" (p. 273). Yet studying these relationships: "shed[s] light on the power relationships at work in routine processes of media production and thereby yield[s] insights into the social sources of media power" (ibid.). By "media power," Couldry draws on Bourdieu's conception of "symbolic power," or the "concentration of symbolic power in media institutions" that allow the media to "speak 'for us all' – indeed to define the social 'reality' that we all share" (ibid.). On the other side of media power are those who legitimize the

media through consumption and by allowing themselves to be represented if and when through rare media encounters (p. 285). Thus, “media power rests not only on an institutional structure, but also on an intricate web of background assumptions about the media and non-media people’s relationship to them,” as well as a “culture of belief” that sustains media power (ibid.). However, while Couldry establishes interesting points, his field of investigation is mono-, rather than cross-cultural, and rests on the assumption that non-media people have this common “culture of belief” in the first place.

In the case of Canadian reporting in Afghanistan, I emphasize identity politics partly out of a realization that many Afghans were unable to place journalists within any known cultural category. Freeman found that many Afghans didn’t have a “clue” as to what a journalist was or did. Many assumed that they were working for a Western government, or were some form of a soldier. In fact, Afghans would volunteer certain information, expecting it to get back to a government or military source. As for Canada, most were not aware of its geographical location. However, it is important to keep in mind that few Westerners, especially prior to 9/11, would likely describe as facile a geography test on the proper names of Central Asian republics. Additionally, the very small indigenous media presence in the country after 20 years of civil war also makes identification with the media difficult. In some cases, this lack of media savvy worked to some journalists’ advantage. Potter, who has spent the last three years in the Middle East covering the Israel/Palestine conflict, compares the two assignments. In Jerusalem, both sides have had decades to perfect two very evolved narratives. This struggle over definition plays out in media interactions, as

both sides describe atrocities committed by the other side to the media as massacres. In effect, each side battles to define the news, hoping to gain support for their cause. Afghanistan, Potter argues, is “less mediated.” As such, people generally told him the truth. However, there were several pockets of the Afghanistan population who were very aware of the potential power garnered through capturing media attention.

In interviews, two pockets of Afghan society arose as having a certain degree of media savvy – the middle class and the Northern Alliance/warlords. Donovan recounts covering a hospital, only to encounter five female Afghan doctors requesting an interview. It is very likely then that the doctors’ middle-class education contributed to their recognition of Western media power. In another incident, Potter lobbied successfully for access to female students in Kabul. Though some of the women openly supported the burqa as a garment of cultural significance, one of the Afghan men supervising the interview stopped Potter after the interview, explaining the burqa was not cultural, but the product of an attempt to rewrite history to parallel the values and practices of the Taliban. Harboring an obvious distaste for the Taliban’s particular brand of conservative Islam and rural cultural practices, he was obviously keen to undo these practices, and felt that informing the Western media of accurate historical detail was one of the ways to achieve this goal. In terms of military savvy, journalist accounts seem to support the assertion that the Northern Alliance/warlords were very aware of the benefits of framing the military story according to their objectives. Thus while MacKenzie and Potter encountered difficulties getting to the bottom of civilian casualties associated with U.S. and Special Forces bombing, Freeman, DiManno, and Sevunts expressed frustration at

getting to the bottom of Northern Alliance truth claims. Freeman says he was never sure if he was being misled, or if people were just telling him what they thought he wanted to hear. DiManno notes that the Northern Alliance struggled for 10 years to gain media attention, until 9/11. Given the outcome of U.S. intervention, it is not surprising that the Northern Alliance – composed of everything from soldier to commander to government in exile – would be particularly cued to the potential power of securing Western support through positive media attention.

Race/ethnicity/culture

Though the media may have lacked a “culture of belief” within Afghan society proper, this did not preclude Afghans from interpreting journalists according to their own value systems, posing an interesting challenge to Western assumptions of media role definition. How journalists responded establishes another level of agency and constraint.

According to questionnaire data, four journalists took up residence with an assortment of Afghan civilians (Fisher & DiManno – Pashtun and Tajik; Potter – Pashtun; Sevunts – Tajik, Donovan – civilian ethnicity unspecified in questionnaire). In some cases, journalists interviewed stayed in the guest homes of warlords/local governors (York, Freeman, Ghafour). Lastly, for those journalists who entered the country during the Northern Alliance offensive, many traveled southward with the advancing army (Freeman, DiManno, Sevunts). In sum, there was ample opportunity for journalistic and Afghan interaction.

In some cases Afghans marked journalists as distinctly Other, enabling journalists interviewed to behave in ways unacceptable in their own cultural context. DiManno,

MacKenzie, and Ghafour for example indicate that access to male Afghans was not restricted according to Afghan conventions, namely the segregation of men and women. Ghafour describes the Self/Other divide less as a hierarchical one than a set of “different standards” – foreigners can drink and have contact with the opposite sex and members of a different culture without the latter being taken as sexual. York and Freeman’s general experience concurs with this assessment. York says that foreigners are granted an “important status” while Freeman attributes that sense of difference to an awareness of economic disparity and cultural variance.

While journalists interviewed were marked as Other in certain contexts, they were also incorporated into tribal code in others. Potter, for example made sure to acknowledge the hospitality proffered by the Karzai family – the Pashtun family of U.S.-supported current president Hamid Karzai – when he stayed at their guesthouse in Kandahar. Failing to do so could have invited retribution – as Potter discovered when a Canadian colleague neglected to pay his accommodation fee to a Pashtun family. The family was incensed, only calming down when Potter paid the bill, assuring them incorrectly that the money was from his colleague. The family was “so happy” that Potter pondered whether his colleague had narrowly escaped violent retribution in the absence of his intervention. The colleague found the whole situation funny and failed to understand the risk Potter had averted. In another incident, Potter’s translator, an ethnic Pashtun originally from Kandahar, was roughed up in Kandahar by an opposing Pashtun group. Had he informed his father of this incident, Potter’s translator could have initiated a tribal war, which, by extension, would have left Potter in a sticky situation.

Potter's examples indicate that at least in terms of Pashtun culture, a journalist would be unwise to neglect Pashtunwali code; what of the cross-ethnic practice of extending hospitality in the form of armed protection? Many journalists interviewed (MacKenzie, Ghafour, Donovan, York, Sevunts) partook of armed escorts when traveling at night, riding to the front, crossing over into different tribal areas, avoiding minefields etc.. Who these escorts were varied across subjects: Donovan befriended a Northern Alliance affiliated warlord who provided occasional security and news tips on the Northern Alliance offensive; MacKenzie vaguely describes the "boys with Kalashnikovs," or Russian weapons, who accompanied the media convoy she was part of while covering operations in Tora Bora; York secured the protection of warlord escorts in the north, but it "only happened a few times;" Ghafour secured the protection of eight local police when traveling through an unsafe passage near Kabul; and Sevunts secured the armed protection of a warlord's guards for security, and to avoid minefields. He also adds that as one travels through different areas of Northern Afghanistan, one comes across different local commanders controlling different areas who want to know that it is okay for journalists to travel in their areas. Thus warlords/other local commanders act as guides and facilitators, who secure access to different areas. Given that being armed as a journalist isn't the norm, journalists interviewed varied in their perception of its appropriateness. On one hand, Freeman did not secure the armed protection of warlords, and takes a strong stance against being armed: "If you go armed to the teeth you look ready for a fight." On the other hand, Ghafour argues that armed protection is a "cultural thing:" Afghanistan is a hostile country and Afghans feel duty bound to provide security – regardless of

whether protectorates are Afghan. Donovan admits to developing affection for “his” Northern Alliance warlord – who provided protection and insider information on the ground offensive. Potter admits that armed protection is usually a bad idea – everywhere but Afghanistan. MacKenzie seems to think it is a necessary precaution. Three of the journalists interviewed that didn’t volunteer that they had secured armed protection – DiManno, Sevunts, and Fisher – also traveled with the Northern Alliance (DiManno, Sevunts), or stayed at the Kandahar airfield base (Fisher) with the Canadian and U.S. military, according to questionnaire data. Thus, the need for protection was likely less urgent. Finally, while Freeman may not have liked the idea of an armed escort, he did (along with York, Ghafour, and Sevunts) stay at warlord-affiliated homes. York stayed at a warlord-affiliated house. According to York, this warlord was more appropriately termed a “local governor,” as he was basically in charge and had already appropriated the few homes suitable for journalists in the area. Freeman’s translator’s cousin was a warlord. So while not looking to cozy up to power, Freeman did stay at this warlord’s house and gained access to sources that he feels wouldn’t have talked to him otherwise. While interview data lacked clear information on the extent of Ghafour’s warlord-affiliations, Sevunts volunteered that he stayed at a warlord’s home because it brought him closer to the front.

Thus, while either securing an armed escort, accommodation, or access, armed guards and the warlord/tribal affiliation that usually went along with it in Afghanistan was the equivalent of a cultural stamp of recognition, one that allowed journalists to benefit from the symbolic power of their protectors in an environment where their status as journalists could not achieve the same security. It is clear from interview

data that culture was a significant logistical element of covering Afghanistan in terms of access, protection, and accommodation. One was better off generally to play by their rules and reap the benefits than go it alone. Whether variances in gender/race/ethnicity resulted in any independent and/or significant advantages or disadvantages is unclear. Only one research subject was non-white – Ghafour. But while she admits to attracting a lot of attention from Afghans who struggled to place her in the Afghan/non-Afghan category (not – significantly – any specific ethnic group), their interest did not affect her access. In other words, on balance, she was treated more like a white (female) foreigner than an Afghan woman.

Before moving to issues of gender though, the relationship between journalists and the Northern Alliance/warlords opens up another node of conflict that will be explored further in chapter 5 but should be briefly raised here. Namely, that while securing some element of accommodation/protection/access reaped advantage through abiding by cultural code, it also likely benefited the benefactor through positive media coverage. What this means to objective reporting was interpreted differently by journalists interviewed. While some journalists (Potter, MacKenzie) did express a clear preference for unilateralism, others (DiManno, Sevunts, and even MacKenzie) expressed some awareness that they were not, as journalists, without some leanings in favour of the Northern Alliance. DiManno and Sevunts admit to supporting the Northern Alliance and favouring the “underdog” respectively. Even MacKenzie acknowledges that there was more of a “consensus” in Afghanistan in comparison to the narrative of legitimacy accompanying the U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003. However, journalists (Potter, DiManno) made comments in interviews

reinforcing their commitment to truth. According to Potter, journalists “are bound by what [they] see with [their] eyes;” while DiManno admits that if and when the Northern Alliance did something “wicked” – in her case she found that they treated prisoners of war poorly – she would and did write about it.

Technically speaking, similar concerns could be raised in relation to embedding with the Canadian or U.S. military. Two of the three reporters who covered the post-Taliban transition and thus the U.S. and Canadian military presence in the region – MacKenzie and Potter – are extremely wary of establishing close affiliations with the military. Fisher, on the other hand, argues that covering the military is like a beat – there are things you report and don’t report in order to maintain access. After having covered the military for years, he argues that he is no more or less corrupted by association than a political reporter who spends a significant time on a campaign trail – perhaps less so. While this topic will be revisited later in this thesis, for the purposes of this subsection, these conflicts raise a red flag about the possible consequences of “going native” – either in terms of the Northern Alliance, warlords, or the Western military – namely the ability to report objectively.

Gender

While race/ethnicity/culture affected the logistics of conflict zone reporting for journalists interviewed, gender was another node of difference between Afghans and non-Afghans that required some accommodation on the part of journalists, and acceptance of denied access for others. In terms of female journalists interviewed, access to women was restricted but not uniformly denied. DiManno says she rarely ran into women, especially outside the more Westernized Kabul. Even when she did

see them, usually in the market, it was a rare occurrence. From a quick review of articles produced and interview data, she tended to travel with and report on the Northern Alliance more than any other people, group, or story line. As for MacKenzie, as mentioned above, she established contact with women and children through working relevant sources, and was able to talk to Pashtun women who had been brutalized by the Taliban. But this access was not without considerable effort, a female translator, and enterprise on her part. Lastly, Ghafour was also able to speak with Afghan women for several reasons including interest on her part, her knowledge of Dari (she estimated her competence at 70 per cent), combined with the obvious advantages of being Afghan and female. Overall, gender and nationality was more symbolically significant to her female sources than her position as a journalist in determining access, the opposite of findings above. On the other hand, female sources did not feel that their gender or nationality delimited their access to Afghan men. In Ghafour's case, she feels that they saw her as a "young woman," and "not a threat." MacKenzie found that warlords were "rather more interested in being interviewed by a woman than a man." DiManno found that her access to the Northern Alliance was "good" – and likely due to her position as outsider (though she made sure to cover her hair). However, not all access was easily granted. MacKenzie, for example, managed to secure an interview with the Taliban. However, this came with the observation of several strictures – mainly that the Taliban spokesman would not look at MacKenzie and only address and look at her male translator. MacKenzie describes this as like being a "fly on the wall." In sum, female journalists interviewed experienced equal

and in some cases better access to sources in the field in comparison to their male counterparts.

As for male journalists interviewed, although some gained access to educated women through considerable lobbying effort (Potter) or chance (Donovan, York), for the most part women were not accessible to them. When York climbed up onto the roof of a house to get a better view of bombing efforts, members of the Northern Alliance asked him to come down, as their women were visible in the outdoor compound of nearby homes. He returned to the roof later. Thus, it seems as though safeguarding Afghan women from Western eyes was more important to Afghan men than allowing Western media-affiliated women to speak with men. Given that women are the embodiment of a group's honour in Pashtunwali code, it is not surprising that men would face more difficulty accessing female sources, at least in the south.

However, it is important to note that both the Northern Alliance (personal communication, R. DiManno, June 29th, 2005), and warlords (personal communication, G. York, June 21st, 2005) were likely more media savvy than the average Afghan civilian and perhaps more likely to fudge the social rules – at least for female journalists wanting to interview Afghan men. Whether access to civilian Afghan men was as good as access to warlords and the Northern Alliance for female journalists interviewed is unclear and will be revisited in chapter 5.

Again, on a final note, it is important to address issues of the Western military relative to gender and the pan-cultural question of the maleness of war it raises. To begin, only one interview subject commented on gender issues in the military. Fisher feels that being a man significantly aided his access to troops and the military. He

argues that women – at least in a North American military context – will initially pique male sources' interest because they enjoy being interviewed by women. However, access declines steeply after a few days depending on “how much they know.” Unfortunately, female journalists interviewed did not embed, formally or informally, with Canadian or U.S. troops during Operations Apollo and Enduring Freedom respectively, though there was no policy against this. Thus it is impossible to fully compare Fisher's observation with women's experiences on the ground.

However, it does suggest an important node of similarity between Afghan and Western militaries that seem to transcend the culture divide. Given that war-making is a project dominated by men (see Peterson 1992) it is not surprising that women would become a source of peripheral (perhaps even sexual) interest (see Enloe 2000), even as journalists. Perhaps this is why women – according to MacKenzie – cover war differently: it is perhaps easier to wield a critical eye – though not necessarily an unbiased one – when residing in a cultural and sociological space outside the majority; as well, if women are in a sense a spoil of war, female journalists are more likely, though not uniformly, to sense the suffering this entails in the form of rape, murder, and destitution (for an overview of women's suffering in war, see Meintjes, Pillay & Turshen 2001, p. 1-18). For example, though most journalists interviewed acknowledged that it was a popular misconception that the burqa would disappear with the Taliban, only Ghafour argued that war culture must take some credit in terms of the garment's longevity (personal communication, June 22nd, 2005). In other words, Afghan women are afraid of the attention they could invite by entering the public realm burqa-free. Given Afghanistan's history of war, and the violence

suffered by women at the hands of the Taliban and Northern Alliance, Ghafour argues that women are not secure enough to venture out alone – regardless of which faction serves as the government.

This section began by looking at what journalists interviewed brought as eager, enterprising, motivated journalists to Afghanistan. It proceeded to examine how habitus-related identity-politics combined with motivation to produce that which subjects volunteered that they covered or wanted to cover. Finally, it looked at the cultural divide between journalists suddenly lacking the symbolic support of a “culture of belief” and Afghans who varied in their level of media savvy and tendency to apply cultural signifiers to suspecting and unsuspecting journalists interviewed. On the whole then, a picture emerges of journalists acting and being acted upon, searching for access and to an extent not fully analyzed in this investigation, being acted upon by media savvy Afghans. As well, the gendered nature of war – though broached only briefly – adds a further layer of complexity to the context in which male and female journalists interviewed operated on the ground. In the next section, acting and being acted upon moves from ground level interactions to the field, where journalists struggle and strategize to wrest agency from the foreign desk and management.

Part III: Intra-field interactions and extra-field influences: journalists versus management in the struggle to define the “good” journalist

No one wants to be told what to do, right? Well, when it comes to taking orders from the foreign desk and management, journalists interviewed were split. Some quite accepted direction from head office; while others put up a fuss for reasons

ranging from journalistic values to their location – usually low – within the hierarchy of the field of journalism. In anthropology this latter behavior is called “foot dragging” – which, along with other forms of resistance, are “ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups” (Scott 1985, xvi; see also 1990).⁴³ And while I doubt journalists constitute a class of disenfranchised resisters, my interview data does indicate that many subjects signified their commitment to the autonomous or journalistic pole through acts of identity that signified their difference from economic imperatives. Thus, this subsection is once again about agency, bringing in constraints imposed from within the field that have origins in the economic systems critique launched in chapter 2 – that is, the tendency for the economic pole to seep into the autonomous or journalistic pole. But this subsection is also about limitations on an absolute reading of the definition of “organizational socialization” (Hannerz 2004). Socialization through learning the craft, absorbing organizational culture, and developing face-to-face relationships within news culture (p. 81) leaves the impression that journalists integrate without resistance, which doesn’t appear to be the case. Thus, part III is divided into two subsections. Subsection one juxtaposes status within the field with journalists’ perceptions of autonomy, highlighting editorial direction and resistance strategies that some journalists utilized to promote their autonomy of production. Subsection two explores journalists’ perceptions of “good” journalism, focusing on the ideological disjuncture between the autonomous pole of journalism championed by some journalists interviewed and the economic

⁴³ When James Scott studied the resistance strategies of the rural poor in Malaysia, he viewed everything from a class-based perspective. The powerless, or lower classes, disrupted the upper classes to whom they answered in ways that were available to them – in subaltern, indirect but discrete ways that challenged their status without actually risking life and limb to do it.

imperatives, or economic pole, that are thought to affect editors and/or management. In the end, this section adds depth in terms of agency and constraint to a structure-only characterization of the media, while getting to the heart of inter-field interactions.

Status, autonomy, and resistance

Part I established that overall, the majority of journalists interviewed were of fairly senior rank. This was an important point, as Bourdieu (1998) lists the position of a journalist within her/his organization as a significant factor in determining what a journalist is able to produce autonomously (p. 69). However, the extent of this autonomy and how it is achieved is unclear.

To begin, it is important to point out that the two least senior journalists interviewed – Ghafour and Sevunts – both speak of having consulted with their editors quite extensively, suggesting that they were on shorter journalistic leashes than their senior counterparts. In contract stringer Ghafour's case, this consultation involved pitching about four stories on a regular basis, leaving the final decision to the *Globe*. However, Ghafour says she never had stories axed and there was never anything that she wasn't able to cover. This might reflect the *Globe's* commitments to international coverage, or even their trust or her competence in producing stories on demand. Neither Freeman nor York complained about the range of their stories, or being circumscribed by head office. On the other hand, neither York nor Freeman indicated in any way that they had to check in like Ghafour (see next page). Obviously, this is partly due to the logistical constraints of being on the ground in a war zone versus being stationed permanently in a post conflict city. But still, in terms

of Hannerz's (2004) characterization of "workplace socialization," it is clear Ghafour was being monitored – probably because she would not have had the time to prove her stuff in a traditional workplace setting before being sent abroad. And indeed, Ghafour bragged politely that she worked hard to be on top of the news agenda, proving her nose for news to the foreign desk that was likely watching very carefully. Thus her leash may have had some give, but it was still a leash. Sevunts, also a less financially and journalistically senior contract employee, consulted with *Gazette* editors before leaving on his assignment. Like Ghafour, he communicated story ideas with editors, who then confirmed the viability of certain stories with the full realization that both parties would have to play it by ear on the ground. In the end, Sevunts' stories were dictated by developments in the ground offensive, which satisfied head office, but sacrificed Sevunts desire to write big picture analytical pieces in others – a point returned to in the subsection below. For this section though, it is relevant that Sevunts, 35, is not new to the game. He obviously understands the difference between his wants, and the media's needs. But rather than pursuing the former, it is likely that in Afghanistan and on post-*Gazette* freelance assignments, he must consider an altogether independent variable – his two children. Thus, though Sevunts became a career freelance writer after being cut from the *Gazette's* roster after Afghanistan, he admits that if given the choice, he would choose media wants, and secure employment, over his own desires as a writer. In summary then, both Sevunts and Ghafour acquiesced to the dictates of the media enterprise in Afghanistan, which limited their journalistic autonomy but secured, if temporarily, their financial viability.

In comparison, York and Freeman indicated that, in York's words, "they let me do whatever I want." Freeman was unable to come up with an answer when asked if there were stories that head office didn't let him do. He didn't really recall whether he failed to achieve the go ahead to cover certain stories, indicating that (time lapse considered) there probably wasn't much by way of a struggle for one story over the other. Does this mean that York and Freeman are socialized and know what to write? Or do their editors so trust them as to take a hands-off management approach? I would guess that both processes were at work in Afghanistan. In terms of the former though, both did indicate some awareness of writing to accommodate the needs of their editors and audiences. As mentioned above, York simplified certain political details because they weren't relevant to a Canadian audience. Freeman complains that the *Globe* doesn't seem to value language skills training, at the cost of a foreign correspondent's ability to integrate into the countries they report from. Overall though, their criticisms were muted.

In comparison, Hilary MacKenzie showed a lively independent streak in her interview. In one sense she followed orders – writing hard news (with as much analysis as possible!), but she also fought head office twice to stay in Afghanistan when the story seemed to fade. MacKenzie verged on insubordination to convince them otherwise, arguing correctly the first time that U.S. bombing was just around the corner. The second time she tried unsuccessfully to convince head office to let her stay in Afghanistan to cover post-Taliban stories. In the end, she came home to her responsibilities as a Washington Bureau Chief, but argues that "any good journalist wants to fight to stay on" – a point returned to below. As for asking permission to

cover a story, MacKenzie seems to sit between York and Freeman and Ghafour and Sevunts. She says she asks to cover stories, but only as a courtesy, or check in: “It was a question of really saying I’ve got this opportunity, I’m going.” In other words, MacKenzie had earned enough stripes to be able to dictate to head office – to a point. As mentioned earlier though, her commitment to covering the toll of war is only strong enough to withstand so much pressure before she calls mercy and pulls out. It is however, important to point out that as per chapter 2, *CanWest* is the least foreign reporting-friendly news organization in terms of investing money in correspondents and bureaus. Thus, MacKenzie could be responding to a historical memory of her years with *Southam*, when foreign reporting was more of a priority.

Fisher – a serial parachutist lacking in seniority at *CanWest* but over-bounding with symbolic clout as a seasoned war correspondent – seemed pleased in his interview that this lifestyle takes him away from the office, emphasizing that “you can do whatever you want” under these circumstances. Thus he demonstrates a clear autonomous streak. However, because he limited his discussions in the interview to his brief experience in Afghanistan in 2002, it is unclear how this personality trait can be interpreted on the ground as an act of resistance or a behavior of compliance, though it is likely that the former overshadows the latter.

How do the seasoned parachutists fair? At 14+ years of employment, Donovan, Potter, and DiManno have been at the *Star* long enough to be organizationally socialized, without a doubt. However, all three of them showed signs of resistance behavior. DiManno, for example, says with some pride that “she has been known to ignore directions from head office,” though it didn’t happen in Afghanistan. Potter

found himself stuck reporting the Canadian and U.S. troops in post-Taliban Afghanistan under unacceptable press restrictions. Head office wanted him to stay put because of the troop deployment's historical significance, as well as the competitive need to have a body there when all the other papers had a presence. But Potter craved the unilateral designation, and it was not long before he had himself kicked off the base. In a sense, this was a resistance strategy – if of the indirect foot-dragging variety. Lastly, Donovan doesn't pitch stories. He doesn't even want to keep his editors in the loop. In Afghanistan he left messages on answering machines so as to avoid asking for permission. Given Donovan's desire to stand out, make the front page, advance his career, and perhaps assuage risk-seeking behavioral tendencies, it isn't surprising that he would take these measures. In Afghanistan, he won the gamble. He skipped permission and followed a warlord's news tip – ending up in a major combat operation that unfurled, singularly, in front of his Western eyes.

In summary, all three parachutists took chances in disregarding the authority of head office in Afghanistan. And while none were foreign correspondents during the coverage of Afghanistan, they exhibited a comfort level with pursuing autonomous production similar to that of the foreign correspondents, even if, like MacKenzie, their behavior wrought friction within the field.

Why so many brazen reporters? Again, the careful separation of contract employees from the more senior seasoned parachutists and foreign correspondents proves Bourdieu's point – that as the position within one's organization increases, the attempt to produce autonomously increases. However I would argue that the extent of that autonomy and the way it is achieved is at least partially dependent on the

motivation and life trajectory of the reporter, as well as one of Bourdieu's additional points – that the position of the news organization and their location in the autonomous-economic dichotomy (ie their commitment to foreign news) can also affect the need for acts of resistance in the first place. What is also clear from this subsection is that financial security is linked to brazenness and autonomous production. Without it, a journalist must jump through a news organization's hoops or risk financial impediments resulting from head office's displeasure.

The “good” reporter versus “polishing the profit margins”

In the former subsection, MacKenzie argued that any “good” journalist would fight to stay on in Afghanistan. But what does “good” really mean in terms of the internal value systems at play in the field of journalism? MacKenzie doesn't necessarily spell out her definition, though in the interview she was liberal in her open criticism of news management. And she is not alone. Recognizing that the antonym for good is bad, and for every value, there is a presumption of err, this subsection looks at some research subjects' critiques of the craft.

Money and time

MacKenzie, the former bureau chief who always keeps a “war bag” packed, has choice words for the organization that inherited *Southam: CanWest* is always keen to “polish the profit margin” and tends to preference the “bottom line” (personal communication, June 28th, 2005). While MacKenzie argues that editors are passionate and tempered (fair) people generally, it is the “bean counters” that run the show at the expense of international coverage. In *CanWest's* case, this involves pulling people from areas of less Western interest every time the spotlight fades. The lack of

permanent posts at *CanWest* is “shocking” and “appalling.” With tensions on the rise between the fragile Karzi government and Afghanistan’s coterie of warlords, even though MacKenzie says she’d love to go back, “it’s difficult to argue for a reporting trip when the thing is ‘who cares about Afghanistan’” unless Canadian troops are in the vicinity. *CanWest* restructuring didn’t appeal to her as noted in the former subsection, and it doesn’t here. After all, reporting the human toll of war doesn’t necessarily lend itself to short, cost-effective assignments.

MacKenzie’s criticisms aren’t unique. Sevunts has similar beefs about Canadian news organizations’ commitments to international news. As a freelancer Sevunts says that the Canadian media is plagued by a “provincial” outlook resulting in limited interest in his international pitches (personal communication, June 30th, 2005). He also says that news organizations are less interested in big picture stories. In Afghanistan he was able to produce one feature on the future of the Northern Alliance, but only after he left the country for Uzbekistan. So even when editors share a similar penchant for feature stories – as they did when he was in Afghanistan – they’re also paying an arm and a leg for tangible results. In most cases, this translates into forgoing the two or three days required for an analysis piece in exchange for shorter, and less contextualized daily stories.

Ghafour argues that, as a journalist, she feels that Afghanistan doesn’t get enough coverage (personal communication, June 22nd, 2005). Instead of basing people in the country, news organizations send parachutists in for a week to become “instant experts.” Meanwhile, they don’t have a real understanding of what’s going on. But with fewer foreign correspondents and fewer pages devoted to foreign news, this

movement is part of a larger trend. Thus, the real story – that Afghanistan is a recipient of a mostly “band aid” Western solution – will likely remain untold. While Ghafour was able to buck the trend and report from Afghanistan for a year, carrying the burden of long-term correspondence was not in her cards: she missed London, and her partner. However, Ghafour is able to cover Afghan and Muslim issues from London.

While MacKenzie, Sevunts, and Ghafour demonstrate a resistance to the status quo, DiManno seems on the surface to be more accepting of the relentless pace of news. When Western attention slips away so do journalists: “that’s what reporters do, we move on,” she explains (personal communication, June 29th, 2005).

“By choice or design?” I ask.

“By sheer fact of the news,” DiManno replies, leaving me puzzled; because despite DiManno’s hard core news nose, she also waxed romantic about returning to the land of her childhood fixations. She would like to check out the Western part of the country, Kandahar, and troop deployments. She would also like to explore whether Afghans’ lives have changed, if the country is working at all, and if there is some substance to growing concerns of a Taliban revival. Almost four years later, her continuing interest demonstrates a resistance to hotspot coverage that doesn’t jive with her stated acceptance of the “sheer fact of news.”

Are journalists resisting economic imperatives in news? I argue that they are because from interview data raised above, it seems that interview subjects’ sense of inculcated journalistic responsibility, partnered with unique individual motivations and habitus-related interests, produces enough friction to mimic James Scott’s

“weapons of the powerless.” Obviously, as journalists they have too much invested to reject the hand that feeds. But as smart, successful, and ambitious journalists, they have risen to the top through strategies of resistance and compliance. Acts of resistance prove their commitment to the story, while the industry – in a general sense – adjusts the leash to bank on the symbolic power that journalists, as manifestations of the autonomous pole, bring to their legitimacy as a news organization. They aren’t just corporate entities selling papers, and, as MacKenzie argues, “polish[ing] the profit margin.”

Machismo and war zone training

On March 5th, 2002, *Toronto Star* reporter Kathleen Kenna was seriously wounded in a grenade attack while traveling by van to Gardez in eastern Afghanistan. While Kenna survived, the attack sent shock waves through the *Star*, and Canadian media organizations generally. Potter, a good friend and colleague of Kenna, did not spare his company any criticisms for their “Hemingwayesque” approach to parachuting people into conflict zones without training (in safety measures, emergency preparedness, first aid, understanding military engagement, etc.). Despite the fact that former managing editor Mary Deanne Shears had told Potter that when it comes to war coverage, the “biggest chicken wins,” Potter still argues that a lingering “male-dominated,” macho mentality persists across the field. While people are thrown into wars because it’s exciting and sells papers, he argues that in the twenty-first century, this is a pretty “asinine” way to operate. None of the journalists interviewed in this investigation had war zone training prior to their work in Afghanistan. While the *Star*, as well as the other three media organizations in this

thesis have since introduced conflict zone training, the damage has already been done. Do papers cut costs at the expense of journalists' safety? Does the symbolic power of machismo compromise the imposition of safety measures for war reporters? Probably not intentionally, though machismo probably has contributed, especially historically, to overlooking safety measures for journalists reporting from conflict zones.

In sum then, the criticisms raised in this subsection broadly speak to a disconnect between the autonomous and economic pole raised above. In terms of agency and constraints, it is clear from interviews that a significant number of journalists question and resent actions on the part of management that cut costs at the expense of ensuring quality journalistic production and they aren't too shy to voice these concerns. They also aren't shy – under the right circumstances and given a certain tipping point of financial and job security – to buck the office and follow their journalistic noses.

Part IV: Conclusion – the limits of subject-centered data

This chapter has cast a deliberately wide net: From laying out demographics, to focusing on general and Afghanistan-specific motivations for covering conflict zones, to rating identity politics signified and responded to on both sides of the journalist-source relationship, to establishing inter-field interactions between journalists and head office and ideological divisions rooted in perceptions of what constitutes good journalism relative to the influence of economics in the field. While the topics were to some extent self-contained, they also linked together in a very real way – specifically they left traces of what journalists cover and why, acknowledging that the world is not a pre-packaged press release waiting to be sniffed out from grazing journalists in search of the day's feed. Journalists act, and are acted upon in ways at ground level

that throw into doubt any strict adherence to systems, or deterministic approaches. The journalist is constrained – most definitively – but not to such an extent that anyone can predict the course he or she will take, under what circumstances, and to what ends. However, while this chapter tended to focus on the active negotiation of constraints, and in some cases highlighted acts of resistance and elements of motivation, there are limits to subject-centred data. There are issues of memory loss, perceptions of grandeur unbeknownst to subjects themselves, and then of course the naturalization of culture and identity. Drawing on anthropology Bourdieu (1977) does, after all, indicate that we are liable to misrecognize our material and symbolic exchanges (p. 5-6) and that language maintains a certain symbolic order that separates the thinkable from the unthinkable (p. 20-1). What is more, as mentioned above and in prior chapters, there are elements of the habitus and the larger realm of the field that remain so inculcated as to be unthinkable, or at least less reflected upon. In other words, the written word alone can't reveal assumptions that journalists themselves don't recognize themselves as having. For this reason, and the need to find trends in the text that reinforce or add light to the words above, subject-centred data is not enough. In the next chapter, the text is the word.

Chapter 5: The text is the word – sourcing, story lines, and power

Bourdieu (1994) may have cautioned against reading a text in a way that produces reductionist visions of some “conscious or unconscious function” (p. 34), but he also argues that language separates the thinkable from the unthinkable (1977, p. 20-1). By extension then, a critical mind can use a toolbox of quantitative and qualitative methods to excavate trends and patterns in written language. While some scholars delve into discourse and the discursive realm of text and talk to uncover nodes of contention within language that perpetuate racial inequality (van Dijk 2000), others study sources to determine dominant narratives emanating from elite sources (Hall et al. 1978; see also Gans 1979; Gitlin 1980), while still others (Deacon & Golding 1994) categorize and quantify social actors to explore the limits of public debate. Lederman (1993) outlines dominant story lines – or a “frame into which a journalist can place seemingly random events and give them coherence” emanating from news texts (p. 12 in Hannerz 2004, p. 102-3).⁴⁴ For the purposes of this chapter, a hybrid approach is in order and needs to take two factors into consideration: firstly, chapter 4 delineated journalists’ agent-centred, as well as logistical battles, to report certain people(s) and groups in Afghanistan; secondly, as mentioned in chapter 2, Bourdieu critiques the tendency of the media to perpetuate “received ideas,” particularly in regards to foreign coverage (Bourdieu 1998, p. 28-30). Thus, on a quantitative level, this chapter will categorize and quantify sources according to affiliation, gender, and class, establishing who sourced whom, how often, and how this relates to the sources and topics journalists’ indicated they were interested in interviewing and reporting on

⁴⁴ For a good summary of media studies and communications work on news and public policy, see Cottle 2003b.

in chapter 4 (such as MacKenzie and Ghafour's interest in covering Afghan women, DiManno and Sevunts interest in covering the Northern Alliance, and MacKenzie, Ghafour, and Freeman's interest in covering economically challenged individuals). On a qualitative level, this chapter will use the concept of story line – or “a frame into which a journalist can place seemingly random events and give them coherence” (Lederman 1993, p. 12, in Hannerez 2004, p. 102-3) – to determine how these sources were represented relative to journalists' narrative constructions. The information gleaned from these two analytical exercises will facilitate the study of two notions of power established in prior chapters. Firstly, while fields theory was used to examine how the economic field and media field interact in chapters 2 and 3, the influence of the political field has not been systematically explored. Thus, counting sources and analyzing their contextualization will enable a better reading of who was able to define issues – the political (Northern Alliance, Western elites) field, or the journalistic field. Secondly, while Eurocentrism and its consequences in terms of power and representation was defined in the introduction and referred to in subsequent chapters, the exploration of story lines will point to the continuing existence of Eurocentric narratives in Canadian foreign reporting.

Thus, this chapter is divided into three parts. Part I will quantify sources, using this information to revisit some of the predictions made in chapter 4 in regards to the influence of motivation and identity-politics on the work of journalists who were interviewed. Part II will expand further on this by combining source use with source representation, utilizing the notion of the “story line” to understand how agency is written into texts through similarities and differences in source presentations. Finally,

part III uses the text to study two relationships of power and struggle: the media and political field relationship, and the journalist-Afghan relationship. The former establishes media independence; the latter Eurocentric representation. In the end, this chapter celebrates the uniqueness of each reporter's work, while recognizing the limits of (parachute) reporting on the representation of other peoples and places in the context of war.

Part I – Sources: quantifying difference across the social, economic, and political divide

An essential element of agency is difference – difference that can be recognized in text. Specifically, chapter 2 and 4 probed the question of journalistic agency first by looking at how other academic work had problemized race, class, and gender in reporters and reporting (chapter 2), and followed this with primary interview data that sought to match specific habitus-related identity markers with the 9 journalist subjects in this research (chapter 4). While some linkages were tentatively established between journalists' stated motivations and interests in the field, these linkages were by no means definitive. Part I seeks to expand on these connections through an analysis of sourcing. Thus, it is divided into two sections. Section I will explore the significance of quantifying sources generally, and will summarize the research data in terms of the significance of findings relating to elite sources, gender, class, and other political divisions. Section II will review each journalist's sources and link these with the motivations and identity politics first established in chapter 4. Information on sourcing will set up the qualitative analysis of part II to follow.

Sourcing: quantitative analysis and research data

According to Riffe (1998) quantitative content analysis involves “the systematic assignment of communication content to categories according to rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those categories using statistical methods” (p. 2). Deacon & Golding (1994), for example, use quantitative methods to identify actors sourced in a public debate regarding the imposition of a controversial poll tax in the U.K. The U.K. government’s “flagship” policy created a “policy crisis” in which many actors – government and otherwise – battled it out through the pages of the newspaper. Given the power of both government interests to fund a publicity campaign and the media to construct and inhibit the structure of public debate through the selection of sources, Deacon and Golding measured who journalists sourced, how often, and in what context to record this larger discursive policy battle as media savvy opponents fought, if not uniformly, to pressure the government to change the policy (p. 109). However, this is a study with minutely identifiable characters wielding specific interests. In Afghanistan, quantifying individual actors from different cultural positions (not all of whom are elite political and/or military representatives) adds another layer of complexity that is not appropriately explored using Deacon & Golding’s model because it assumes a common discourse and cultural playing field that didn’t exist.

Afghanistan – as an assignment – was more of a space of representation than a site of policy contestation (to be discussed further in part III). Thus, in addition to recognizing gross political actors (Afghan, Canadian, and U.S./Other), social divisions were also categorized, including elitism, gender, and class. All of these

elements of source identity work together to produce an overall impression of representation as it differs across journalists studied.

Elitism

Gans’ (1979) general content analysis of sources in the U.S. national media over a 10-year period distinguished between “knowns” and “unknowns” (p. 8). Knowns are political, economic, social, and cultural figures that hold power (ibid.). Unknowns are “ordinary people prototypical of the groups or aggregates that make up the nation.” (ibid.). Knowns, such as those in political office, including the president, leading federal, state and local officials, and known alleged and actual violators of laws and mores (p. 9-11), make up between 70 and 85% of all domestic news. Unknowns are less well-represented and consist of protestors, victims, unknown alleged and actual violators of the laws and mores, voters, and other aggregates of participants involved in unusual activities (p. 13). The unknowns, he argues, “who appear in the news are, by most criteria, an unimpressive lot” (p. 15).

Using the logic of “knowns” and “unknowns” as a starting point, this content analysis begins by dividing sources into the following categories:

Table 1 Known and unknown source distinctions

KNOWNNS	UNKNOWNS
Northern Alliance/post-Taliban government elite military	Northern Alliance/post-Taliban government soldier
Northern Alliance/post-Taliban government elite political (male/female)	Civilians (male/female)*
Canadian elite military (male/female)	Canadian soldiers (male/female)
Canadian elite political (male/female)	---
U.S./Other elite military (male/female)	U.S./Other soldiers (male/female)
U.S./Other elite political (male/female)	---

*Civilians were further broken down according to class/education (upper/middle income and/or well educated versus low income and/or not well educated/unknown income) and status as refugees or internally displaced individuals

These categories were established through a preliminary reading of articles, taking note of actors sourced, and using Gans to conceptualize dualisms of elite and non-elite sources. As is clear from the table, there was no opposing category listed for Western political elites. This is because there were no Western civilians (unknowns) sourced in the articles reviewed besides humanitarian workers, who were sourced separately (see below).⁴⁵ In a few cases, Afghan-Americans were sourced, but it was unclear from the data whether they identified themselves primarily as Afghans, or Americans, and were thus placed in the “Other” category (see below).

Gender

When relevant, sources have also been divided according to gender – a criteria that Gans overlooks. The significance of gender has been established in previous chapters and involves: the difficulty in sourcing Afghan women because of the strident public/private dichotomy in Afghan society that tends and has tended to relegate women to the private realm (chapter 4); criticisms of “malestream” news and the predominance of men in positions of journalistic and sourcing power, especially when it comes to political and economic issues (chapter 2, see Carter, Branston, and Allan 1998, p. 8-9); and the conflation of combat, militarism, and national chauvinism with ideological and cultural notions of manhood to the marginalization of women as both actors negotiating these notions and as victims of physical and structural violence (chapters 1 & 3; see also Hallin 1986, p. 143; Peterson 1992, p. 48-9; Pritchard and Sauvageau 1998, p. 138; Enloe 2000, p. x; Meintjes, Pillay & Turshen 2001, p. 1-18).

⁴⁵ Domestic journalists did canvas public opinion, sometimes using dubious public opinions research (see Miller 2002).

Class

Lastly, although it does not appear on the above table, civilians were also subdivided by income (in a general sense only) and education where possible, and a separate space was devoted to refugees and internally displaced individuals. Like gender, issues of class have also been established in prior chapters, including assertions from chapter 2 that journalists tend to: earn middle to upper middle-income salaries (Pritchard & Sauvageau 1998, p. 380; Hess 1996, p. 11), represent the prerogatives of capital (Gans 1979, p. 20; Gitlin 1980, p. 258; Hackett 1991, p. 77-8), and source elites (Hall et. al 1978, p. 69). As well, primary research from chapter 4 showed evidence that journalists interviewed in this thesis are in fact middle-income earners but display varying levels of interest and sensitivity to class issues, particularly in regards to the economic divide between Canada and Afghanistan (see also chapter 3). In summary then, class as distinguished in journalists' salaries, and ideological preferences, as well as routine/organizational sourcing practices is a thread of relevant interest for this chapter.

Beyond dichotomies: humanitarian sources and the Taliban

In addition to dichotomies involving elitism, gender, and class, two other categories – lacking a dichotomous element – were established, including humanitarian and Taliban sources. In terms of humanitarian sources, the aid recipient could technically be set up in opposition to aid workers but these sources were spread across civilian and refugee/internally displaced sources and were not recorded in this separate “aid recipient” category to avoid duplication. In terms of the Taliban, sourcing of this group was so infrequent, that only one category was established and

encompasses officials and civilian military conscripts. However, as the “enemy” against which the war in Afghanistan was fought, both this infrequency of sourcing and issues of representation will be explored further in part II.

The numbers

Having established the logic behind content categories, 190 articles were chosen between September 11, 2001 and September 11, 2002 for source coding. One exception was made to this date-based limitation: 25 of Hamida Ghafour’s articles were coded, even though she reported as a landed correspondent between August 2003 and October 2004. Her articles were included – and her interview – because as a visible minority, woman, and temporary resident correspondent, her insight and articles represented a valuable point of potential difference relative to other interview subjects. However, given that she produced over 55 articles during her stay, only the first 25 beginning in August, 2003 were coded. In terms of the total articles coded, only articles written by interview subjects while in Afghanistan were included. Not included were articles produced by interview subjects in neighbouring countries (ie Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan) even when Afghanistan was the topic of focus. This distinction was made because of the importance of being able to comment on Afghan-journalist interactions without adding the additional confounding factor of a different geographic reporting location. In total, 491 sources were categorized:

Table 2 – Summary of Sources Coded

KNOWNNS	%	UNKNOWNNS	%
Northern Alliance/post-Taliban government elite military	11%	Northern Alliance/post-Taliban government Soldier	8.8%
Northern Alliance/post-Taliban government elite political		Civilians <i>Middle/upper income &/or well educated</i>	
Male	10.4%	Male	11%
Female	0.6%	Female	3.1%
---		<i>Economic and/or educational status unclear</i>	
		Male	6.5%
		Female	1.4%
		<i>Poor and/or not well educated</i>	
		Male	4.3%
		Female	0.8%
		<i>Refugee</i>	
		Male	2.2%
		Female	1%
Canadian elite military		Canadian soldiers	
Male	2.6%	Male	2.2%
Female	0%	Female	0.4%
Canadian elite political		---	
Male	2.0%		
Female	0.2%		
U.S./Other elite military		U.S./Other soldiers	
Male	4.7%	Male	0.8%
Female	0.4%	Female	0%
U.S./Other elite political		---	
Male	5.5%		
Female	0.2%		
Elite sources (out of 80.1%)	37.6%	Non-elite sources (out of 80.1%)	42.5%
(out of 100%)	46.9%	(out of 100%)	53.1%

NON-KNOWN/UNKNOWN CLASSIFIED SOURCES			
Taliban	4.3%	Humanitarian	5.9%
Other	9.4%		

Total of all sources	99.7%*
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*Total sources does not add up to 100% because of round up calculations.

Gans' 80/20 split between knowns and unknowns doesn't really map out in the articles sourced for this thesis. Replacing huge divisions between mostly sourced knowns and marginal unknowns is more of an even, (46.9/53.1) split overall. In terms of specific categories, for example, the Northern Alliance/post-Taliban military, there seem to be nearly as many soldiers (8.8%) quoted as elite officers (11%). The same holds true for the Canadian military, where the elite comprise 2.6% and soldiers 2.6% of sources. The only area where a significant difference is found is in the U.S./Other category, where the elite military consist of 5.1 % and soldiers 0.8% of sources. There are likely several reasons for these numbers. The first is that unlike domestic journalists, parachuting war reporters are much more restricted in terms of access to elite sources beyond their immediate geography. As well, when journalists were traveling with the Northern Alliance during the invasion period from September to December of 2001, they were under pressure to produce a new story every day, and there are only so many times a journalist can source middle-level commanders about the particularities of one group's advance. Finally, journalists couldn't and weren't expected to do big picture military stories, particularly during the invasion period. They had access to something journalists and editors on the home front didn't –

colour, and lots of it. As for the high incidence of soldier sources – Northern Alliance, Canadian, and U.S./Other – I would argue that this points to journalists’ perceived significance of the soldiering story in the imagination of consumers. When Mitch Potter arrived at Kandahar airfield, he was instructed by the foreign desk to report on Canadian operations because it was Canada’s first combat mission in decades. And while clearing a landmine, going on reconnaissance missions, and hunting out Taliban and al-Qaeda resisters might come with the territory for military personnel, it certainly isn’t familiar ground for the majority of Canadians. In Bourdieu’s (1998) words, the drive for sensational content that will sell papers and attract viewers promotes a search for the so-called extra-ordinary story over reality “in all its ordinariness” (p. 19-21). In other words, military culture and mainstream Western culture are not particularly well acquainted – the former is as exotic as any other foreign culture. As for those Canadians with family, friends, and/or colleagues serving – military culture might not be exotic, but it certainly is personal. As for descriptions of Afghan society, Afghan soldiers are compelling figures in a war culture society beyond Canadian imagining. As for the very small number of U.S./Other soldiers sourced, this is likely the result of the very minimal involvement of accessible U.S. troops during the invasion period. Those who were active in the country including pilots dropping bombs kilometers above the earth, and Special Forces units involved in covert operations. As for the larger number of U.S./Other military elites sourced relative to Canada, this is likely the result of the obvious dominance of the U.S. military machine in the War on Terror. As for political figures, again, journalists on the ground were (conveniently) covering the Afghan story more

than anything else. Thus Afghan political sources (minus the Taliban) constituted 11%, while Canadians and U.S./Other constituted 2.2% and 5.7% respectively.

Table 3 – Content analysis of Afghanistan by reporters

Post-9/11: Sept. – Oct. 2001

	Geoffrey York (G & M)		Alan Freeman (G & M)		Rosie DiManno (Star)		Kevin Donovan (Star)		Levon Sevunts (CanWest)	
Northern Alliance/Post-Taliban Government Sources										
Northern Alliance/Post-Taliban gov't soldier	17	20.2%	6	7.8%	2	7.7%	5	33.3%	11	21.6%
Northern Alliance/Post-Taliban gov't elite military	8	9.5%	10	13%	5	19.2%	4	26%	17	33.3%
Northern Alliance/Post-Taliban gov't elite political -male	10	11.9%	7	9.1%	3	11.5%	0	0%	2	3.9%
Northern Alliance Post-Taliban gov't elite political - female	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Civilian Sources										
Civilian - male – upper/middle income and/or well educated	11	13.1%	11	14.29%	3	11.5%	0	0%	0	0%
Civilian – male – poor and/or not well-educated	3	3.6%	4	5.2%	1	3.8%	0	0%	1	2%
Civilian – male - economic and/or educ. status unclear or other	7	8.3%	8	10.4%	2	7.7%	3	20%	4	7.8%
Civilian – male – refugee	3	3.6%	3	3.9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Civilian - female – upper/middle income and/or well educated	3	3.6%	2	2.6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Civilian - female – poor and/or not well-educated	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Civilian – female – economic and/or educ. status unclear or other	1	1.2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Civilian – female – refugee	1	1.2%	3	3.9%	1	3.8%	0	0%	0	0%

Taliban Sources	10	11.9%	4	5.2%	4	15.4%	0	0%	0	0%
Humanitarian sources (male and female)	5	6%	7	9.1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
Canadian Sources										
Canadian – male – elite – political	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
Canadian – male – elite – military	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Canadian – male – non-elite – soldier	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Canadian – female – elite – political	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Canadian – female – elite – military	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Canadian – female – non-elite – soldier	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
U.S./Other Sources										
U.S./Other – male – elite – political	0	0%	5	6.5%	3	11.5%	0	0%	3	5.9%
U.S./Other – male – elite – military	0	0%	2	2.6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
U.S./Other – male – non-elite – soldier	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
U.S./Other – female – elite – political	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
U.S./Other – female – elite – military	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
U.S./Other – female – non-elite – soldier	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other Sources	5	6%	5	6.5%	2	7.7%	3	20%	10	19.6%
Total	84	100.1%	77	100.09%	26	99.8%	15	99.3%	51	100.1%

Post-Taliban: Late Dec. 2001 – Sept. 11, 2002

	Hilary MacKenzie (G&M)		Mitch Potter (Star)		Matthew Fisher (CanWest)		Geoffrey York (G&M)		Hamida Ghafour* (G&M)	
Northern Alliance/Post-Taliban Government Sources										
Northern Alliance/Post-Taliban gov't soldier	0	0%	2	3.8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Northern Alliance/Post-Taliban gov't elite military	3	4.3%	2	3.8%	0	0%	2	7.1%	2	2.6%
Northern Alliance/Post-Taliban gov't elite political -male	14	20%	2	3.8%	0	0%	3	10.7%	10	13.2%
Northern Alliance Post-Taliban gov't elite political - female	3	4.3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Civilian Sources										
Civilian - male – upper/middle income and/or well educated	3	4.3%	5	9.4%	0	0%	3	10.7%	18	23.7%
Civilian – male – poor and/or not well-educated	1	1.4%	4	7.5%	0	0%	5	17.9%	2	2.6%
Civilian – male - economic and/or educ. status unclear or other	1	1.4%	2	3.8%	0	0%	0	0%	5	6.6%
Civilian – male – refugee	0	0%	3	5.7%	0	0%	2	7.1%	0	0%
Civilian - female – upper/middle income and/or well educated	1	1.4%	0	0%	0	0%	6	21.4%	3	3.9%
Civilian - female – poor and/or not well-educated	2	2.9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	2.6%
Civilian – female – economic and/or educ. status unclear or other	1	1.4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	6.6%
Civilian – female – refugee	1	1.4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Taliban Sources	1	1.4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	2.6%
Humanitarian sources (male and female)	3	4.3%	3	5.7%	0	0%	5	17.9%	5	6.6%
Canadian Sources										
Canadian – male – elite – political	0	0%	0	0%	3	30%	1	3.6%	5	6.6%
Canadian – male – elite – military	2	2.9%	5	9.4%	3	30%	0	0%	3	3.9%
Canadian – male – non-elite – soldier	0	0%	9	17%	2	20%	0	0%	0	0%
Canadian – female – elite – political	1	1.4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Canadian – female – elite – military	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Canadian – female – non-elite – soldier	0	0%	2	3.8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
U.S./Other Sources										
U.S./Other – male – elite – political	13	18.6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	3.9%
U.S./Other – male – elite – military	12	17.1%	6	11.3%	1	10%	0	0%	2	2.6%
U.S./Other – male – non-elite – soldier	1	1.4%	3	5.7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
U.S./Other – female – elite – political	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
U.S./Other – female – elite – military	2	2.9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
U.S./Other – female – non-elite – soldier	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other Sources	5	7.1%	5	9.4%	1	10%	1	3.6%	9	11.8%
Total	70	99.9%	53	100.1%	10	100%	28	100%	76	99.8%

- Ghafour alone was in Afghanistan between Aug. 2003 and Jan. 2004
- Total sources do not add up exactly to 100 % because of round-ups to the nearest tenth of a hundred.

Note: Articles analyzed include all reports filed by the named journalists during their tour of duty in Afghanistan

Returning to the knowns/unknowns dichotomy, another blatant reversal of Gans 80/20 split is clear: Afghan official political elites (minus the Taliban) constitute only 11% of sources in comparison to 30.3% for civilians. Even when the elite Northern Alliance/post-Taliban military is taken into consideration, Afghan elite sources still only represent 22% of sources. In accordance with the preferences of interview subjects as established in chapter 4, journalists were keen to, and successfully managed to interview Afghan civilians. Again, as will be further explored in section II, they were essential components of the war culture narrative, as well as exotic in their poverty, suffering, and difference relative to the West. A Canadian, for example, would be unlikely to open up the *Globe* and find so many stories of everyday Canadians going about their business. To summarize, the particular circumstances under which journalists operated, their foreign perspective and motivations translated into a numerical reading of sources in which Afghans took centre stage, and non-elite, rather than elite sources – whether Afghan, Canadian, or U.S./Other – competed with and overshadowed Afghan elite sources.

In addition to the knowns/unknowns dichotomy, divisions of gender were also apparent and paralleled criticisms of the malestreamness of war and reporting. In terms of total sources, irrespective of all other sourcing categories, women only constituted 8.1% of sources, leaving a huge lead for male sources – 76.3%.⁴⁶ This divide was more significant between Western than Afghan sources: As per table 2, Western women represented 1.2% of Western sources (minus humanitarian and other

⁴⁶ Humanitarian and other categories were not broken down to gender. However, Taliban sources were exclusively male. Thus, percentages are out of a total of 84.4%.

sources); while Afghan women represented 6.9% of sources. While most interview subjects impressed upon me their interest in but inability to talk to and thus report on Afghan women, none mentioned efforts to seek out Western women sources. The fact that Afghan women suffered extensively under the Taliban, as well as under the Northern Alliance (Hirschkind & Hirschkind & Mahmood 2002; Abu-Lughod 2002) is one reason for this interest. The second has to do with the way elites in Washington framed the invasion of Afghanistan as both a war on terrorism and the states that harbour them,⁴⁷ and the liberation of Afghan women (Hirschkind & Mahmood 2002, p. 340). As for Western women, their source paucity represents a continuation of the exclusion of women from positions of political and economic power as raised above, particularly the absence of women from positions of import relative to the theatre of war. The fact that the absence of Western women from the range of sources available to journalists interviewed didn't come up in research interviews attests to the naturalization of women's marginalization. Even if they perceived this inequality on some level – Potter criticized the machismo of war and reporting and MacKenzie the unreported suffering of women in war – journalists interviewed did not pinpoint in a voluntary sense the paucity of Western female sources in interviews as a node of contention, or link it to larger issues of structural inequality. In summary then, women were significantly underrepresented in journalist sources, both as a result of logistical constraints and structural inequality.

Which – as suits this analysis – leaves one last structural stone unturned – class.

While it is clear that elite, or known sources balanced non-elite, or unknown ones, the

⁴⁷ The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, September 2002. Accessed July 29, 2005, at www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf.

instances of very poor and/or uneducated Afghan sources in journalist texts is less clear. While a total of 14.1% of Afghan civilians had a clear economic base and/or some education – as small entrepreneurs, teachers/professors, doctors and students, etc. – only 5.1% of Afghan civilians (not including refugees) were defined in stories by their financial or economic lack. However, the large number of Afghans whose economic base and/or education is unclear – a full 7.9% of sources – suggests that while journalists may have been dealing with fairly poor individuals (especially in comparison to Western standards – see chapter 3) subjects were often referred to in contexts other than their income/education. Thus, a civilian whose house had been bombed was a villager, and a civilian heading to polling stations was a voter. Part of this could have to do with the fact that a certain level of education might facilitate the ease of an interview. As well, as established in chapter 4, middle-class individuals had much to gain from the defeat of the Taliban, including the return of secular education and economic recovery – stories that were likely familiar and logical to Western reporters. As a final qualification though, to say that an Afghan is “well-off” is more of an abstract construct than a material one. In practice, well-off is more accurately gauged as engaging in those activities that Westerners value – including making money and educating oneself – than being well-off by any Western standards.

The last two categories (besides Other) include humanitarian (5.9%) and Taliban (4.3%) sources. While the number of humanitarian sources is low, this likely reflects the small number of humanitarian organizations working on the ground in Afghanistan – particularly during the invasion stage. Besides the Red Cross, few organizations maintained a presence during this dangerous time, while organs of the

UN such as the High Commissioner for Refugees and other information-rich organizations were more responsible for providing information to journalists on immediate humanitarian concerns than delivering food aid on the ground. Indeed, Geoffrey York sourced humanitarian groups more than any other journalist interviewed, but most of these interviews came about during his second visit in the summer of 2002 – after a semblance of stability had returned to the region (see Table 3). As for the Taliban, they were likely sourced infrequently for a number of reasons. First of all, Hallin (1986) asserts that the “enemy” is rarely given space in journalistic reporting of war. This will be explored further in part II and III. As chapter 4 determined, many journalists interviewed admitted to identifying with the Northern Alliance. Lastly, the fact that Afghans in general were not that media savvy meant that journalists couldn’t be sure they would be recognized as journalists (as opposed to representatives of Western governments or militaries. As well, the fact that the U.S. media had become a target of terrorism in terms of the anthrax scare immediately following 9/11, and Taliban leader Mullah Omar showed contempt for the value of democratic media when he offered money for the murder of *Wall Street Journal* journalist Daniel Pearl and Western journalists generally (Knightly 2002, p. 170-1; Waisbord 2002, p. 206-7), suggests that it is not surprising that journalists interviewed would be less than inclined to jump across the front line, sit down for tea with the Taliban, and potentially infuriate their Alliance guides. In summary then, humanitarian groups were likely sourced infrequently because they were not present on the ground, and the Taliban were denied a platform for reasons ranging from the

identification of journalists with the Northern Alliance, to the inaccessibility of the Taliban, to the danger of becoming a target of Taliban violence.

This overview of sourcing establishes certain trends in reporting – including the predominance of Afghan and non-elite sources, the cross-battlefield marginalization of women, and the lack of Taliban “enemy” sources. However, where individual journalists stand relative to the numbers crunched above is less clear.

Sources and identity-politics: difference across journalists interviewed

Chapter 4 indicated that identity politics – from habitus-related characteristics like family, gender, and class – translated for some journalists interviewed into differences in reporting emphases, at least in terms of subject-centred data. Issues of the influence of race/ethnicity on the other hand remained less clear. This section reviews the differences suggested in chapter 4 and compares them with source data to arrive at a more complete picture of difference across journalists interviewed.

Geoffrey York (*Globe & Mail*)

Starting in October 2001, and again in August 2002, York produced a total of 32 articles and quoted 84 sources. He was the first *Globe* reporter parachuted into Afghanistan (producing articles and analyses with an Afghanistan dateline from October 2001 to January 2002), and the only journalist interviewed who returned during the year-long time frame of this investigation (August-September 2002). As an established and high-ranking foreign correspondent (Beijing, formerly Moscow), York is at the top of his game and knows it. During his interview, York acknowledged the difficulties in covering Afghan women, and his tendency to source Afghans according to their level of education, with an increase in education

increasing the likelihood of an interview. During his first visit to Afghanistan, 6% of his Afghan sources were women (3.6% – upper/middle income and/or well educated; 0% – poor and/or not well educated; 1.2% – civilian economic and/or educational status unknown; and 1.2% – refugees/displaced persons). In comparison, Afghan (non-Taliban) men constituted 70.2% of his sources (20.2% – soldiers; 9.5% – elite military; 11.9% – elite political; 13.1% – civilian upper/middle income and/or well educated; 3.6% – poor or not well educated; 8.3% – civilian other; and 3.6% – refugees/displaced persons). Taking into consideration the fact that covering a war required talking to the military elite, soldiers, and political sources – most of whom were men – in terms of civilians, 25% of sources (not including refugees) were still men, in comparison to 6% women. The gender divide is clear, but what about class/education issues? No women during his first visit were characterized as living in financial and/or educational paucity. In terms of men, only 3.5% were represented as clearly poor. While this does verify York’s tendency to quote well-educated and/or more affluent individuals, the fact that 8.3% of male civilian sources and 1.2% of female civilian sources were not easily classifiable along this dichotomy makes it difficult to assess his admission that class and education influenced his sourcing tendencies. The fact however that these unclassifiable sources were not characterized as living in poverty likely indicates that they weren’t – otherwise York would have been more likely to define and describe them in abject economic or educational terms. Thus, this information supports, but does not verify interview data. As for whether York – as claimed – simplified the Afghan politics is not quantifiable and will have to wait until part II to determine. As for other trends in sourcing, York has the highest

number of Taliban informants of any other journalist interviewed (11.9%), an interesting finding that might have to do with a reflection piece on his earlier encounters with the regime before the post 9/11 war (see part II). As for differences in his reporting on his return trip to Afghanistan, as mentioned above, there is a clear increase in the number of humanitarian groups sourced (from 6% to 17.9%), a huge jump in the number of affluent women sourced (from 3.6% to 21.4%) and a jump in the number of poor civilian men sourced (from 3.6% to 17.9%). While the fact that York only produced 6 articles during his second foray and 28 sources leads one to be cautious of overstating these jumps, I would argue that his assignment during this second trip took on more of a development and recovery focus – in which case stories on the opening of education to women and the struggle towards economic recovery embodied in the poor male civilian, are appropriate. The fact that so many humanitarian groups were sourced recognizes that they were able to set foot in the country, and reinforces this likely trend towards post-Taliban development stories.

Alan Freeman (*Globe & Mail*)

Freeman was the second senior *Globe* foreign correspondent (Washington, previously London and Berlin) to touch down on Afghanistan – producing 30 news and analysis pieces with an Afghanistan dateline from October to December of 2001 and quoting 77 sources. Freeman indicated that he was struck by the poverty Afghans faced and interested in economics. But while his male Afghan civilian sources contained more overtly poor men (5.2%) than other journalists in Afghanistan during the same period (York – 3.6%; DiManno – 3.8%; Donovan – 0%; and Sevunts – 2%), he also talked to more middle-educated/income Afghan men (14.29%) than York

(13.1%), DiManno (11.5%), Donovan (0%), and Sevunts (0%). These numbers hold up Freeman's interest in both poverty and economics, as a lot of his middle-income stories involved economic issues (see part II). As for Alliance sources, Freeman is weak: he has the fewest soldiers (7.8%) and the second least elite military sources (13%) of journalists in Afghanistan during the same time period. Then again, the Alliance was not as much of an interest to Freeman than DiManno and Sevunts. As for the Taliban, they constituted only 5.2% of Freeman's sources, most of whom were second-hand quotes relating to disputes about the withdrawal of Taliban troops, and likely reflect his stated distaste for covering Taliban prisoners. As for Freeman's position as a father of one or more female college-aged children, his female sources were small – only 2.6% of sources were female Afghan civilians (and 3.9% were refugees) – but he did interview women struggling to open a school for girls (Freeman, November 19, 2001, p. A4). Overall then, Freeman's interview findings concur with source data.

Rosie DiManno (*Toronto Star*)

While *Star* veteran parachuter Rosie DiManno produced 26 articles with an Afghanistan dateline from October to November, 2001, they only contained 26 sources. This likely reflects her status as a point-of-view writer. In other words, she writes analytical and diary-style pieces, as well as some news-oriented stories and doesn't usually require as many sources. However, of the sources available in her stories, DiManno shows a clear preference for Northern Alliance military elites (19.2%) and (male) political figures (11.5%), as well as Afghan civilian males (11.5% – affluent; 3.8% – poor; 7.7% – unclear). She also shows an interest in the Taliban

(15.4%) and U.S./Other political elites (11.5%). Her sources are partially a function of logistics – given that she traveled with the Alliance. Still, given that other journalists went out of their way to source, for example, Afghan women, DiManno’s source data reveals that Alliance military stories as well as historical pieces (the latter of which usually lacked sources) were a priority. In fact, these figures bear out some preferences mentioned in her interview – that she likes to follow the news (explicating her elite sources); and is a self-declared “Afghano-phile” (supporting her high number of Northern Alliance sources and her historically-grounded analysis pieces).

Kevin Donovan (*Toronto Star*)

Kevin Donovan was the second *Star* reporter (after DiManno) to parachute into Afghanistan. However, he only produced 4 printed articles and quoted 15 sources with an Afghanistan dateline from November to December, 2001, so it is difficult to read to deeply into his source data. He also traveled with the Northern Alliance and was directed from the foreign desk to “see some shooting.” Thus, his sources are mostly Northern Alliance soldiers and the military elite (33.3% and 26.7% respectively), facts that also jive with his stated desire to experience exciting and challenging foreign assignments. As for other sources, affluent civilian men were well represented (20%); women were not (0%). Paralleling his dislike for “political stories” there were no references to Afghan, Canadian, and U.S./Other elites. As for his identification as a father and interest in children, this content analysis did not quantify children separately.

Levunt Sevunts (*Montreal Gazette/CanWest*)

As an Armenian and former Soviet soldier with a personal interest in Afghanistan, it was suggested in chapter 4 that Levon Sevunts of the *Gazette* would show a preference for Afghan military sources and military matters. Judging from his sources, this appears to be the case. Of 18 articles and 51 sources from September to November, 2001, 21.6% of Sevunts' sources were Northern Alliance soldiers, and 33.3% were Alliance elite military. However, his stated interest in covering wars and issues of ethnicity and history with an expert lens will have to wait until part II.

Hilary MacKenzie (*CanWest*)

CanWest Washington Bureau Chief Hilary MacKenzie arrived in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban with articles with an Afghanistan dateline appearing from December, 2001 to March, 2002. MacKenzie produced 26 articles and quoted 70 sources. As per chapter 4, MacKenzie demonstrated a clear desire to cover daily developments while striving to seek out women's stories. As her sources indicate, she covered more Afghan female elite political figures than anyone else (4.3%), likely because of the non-existence of female politicians until after the fall of the Taliban. Non-elite Afghan women also accounted for 7.1% of her sources, with 2.9% and 1.4% coming from poor or refugee women. However, she also sourced a large number of U.S/Other political (18.6%) and military elites (17.1%), while Canadian elite sources were negligible (2.9%). This likely has to do with her role as a Washington Bureau Chief and familiarity with U.S. elites. As for the suggestion in chapter 4 that McKenzie's stories would bear more cultural detail and female-themed stories, this will have to wait until Part II.

Mitch Potter (*Toronto Star*)

Star reporter Mitch Potter covered Afghanistan in February, 2002 – again a post-Taliban context. He produced 18 articles and quoted 53 sources. However, unlike MacKenzie, Potter informally embedded with the Canadian and American troops, though he was somewhat hostile to military restrictions on his movements and was kicked off the base. As such, his sources include a decent representation of Canadian military elites (9.4%) and soldiers (17% – men; 3.8% – female), as well as U.S. military elites (11.3%), though not as many soldiers (5.7%). As well, as he moved off base, he seems to have put his research on Pashtunwali culture to work: 26.4% of his sources were Afghan civilians (men and women) with a fairly balanced distribution across class lines, though only more affluent Afghan women were sourced (5.7%).

Matthew Fisher (*CanWest*)

Matthew Fisher, veteran war reporter representing *CanWest* in Afghanistan, established a clear preference for covering the military in his interview. Unfortunately, he only produced 6 articles and quoted 10 sources during his brief stay in the country between April and May, 2002 after the fall of the Taliban. Given his interests and his decision to stay with the Canadian military, it is not surprising that most of his sources were distributed among elite Canadian political figures (30%), elite Canadian military figures (30%) and Canadian soldiers (20%).

Hamida Ghafour (*Globe & Mail*)

Globe stringer Hamida Ghafour was the only journalist subject to be interviewed specifically about her time in Afghanistan after the September 11, 2001 to September 11, 2002 time frame. Given that she produced over 50 stories during her stay between August, 2003 and October, 2004, only 25 of her articles between her entry time and

January 2004 were selected for analysis and included 76 sources. As an Afghan-Canadian female with a good understanding of the country, and some knowledge of Dari, chapter 4 assumed that she would cover more Afghan women of various economic backgrounds. As well, as a neophyte reporter bent on proving her nose for news in a stationed reporting context – as opposed to a parachuting context – it seemed likely that she would cover more political elites as well. In terms of women, 13.1% of her sources were non-elite Afghan women with a decent representation across class. However, non-elite Afghan male sources were more uniformly affluent (23.7%), as opposed to less affluent (2.6%) and unknown (6.6%), suggesting that it was still easier for Ghafour to source more affluent, than less affluent men. As for Canadian and U.S./Other soldiers, none were covered in comparison to the total Canadian and U.S./Other elite (military/political) sources, which all together accounted for 17% of sources. Both the lack of poor civilian men and soldiers (unknowns) probably represent her role as a stationed reporter reporting breaking political stories.

Summary

In summary, part I has laid out the basis for sourcing categories and has identified overall trends in sourcing tendencies – including the lack of women, low economic and Taliban sources, as well as the high percentage of unknowns in terms of Afghan soldiers and civilians. It has also broken down sourcing strategies according to individual journalists, juxtaposing information siphoned from interview data with number crunching on sources. How sources were used in terms of favoured story lines will be answered in Part II.

Part II – Story lines and sources: definition and analysis

While quantifying sources shows some patterns in the coverage of Afghanistan, it doesn't reveal the larger narratives into which these sources were placed. While there are several means to approach qualitative analysis, this chapter focuses on story lines and sources. As such, part II is divided into 2 sections. Section I defines the story line and establishes how it will be used to focus on the reproduction of sources. Section II explores how different sources have been represented in media texts of Afghanistan, including the Northern Alliance, Taliban, Afghan women, civilians, and Canadian soldiers; identifying similarities and differences across journalists interviewed and providing relevant data for part III to follow.

Story lines defined and hybridized

Ulf Hannerz's investigation of stories in foreign reporting draws on Jim Lederman's concept of the story line, which can be defined as follows:

The story line is a frame into which a journalist can place seemingly random events and give them coherence. It simplifies the narrative threat, reducing it to manageable dimensions by using a single overarching theme so that each dramatic incident can be highlighted as it occurs and each "chapter" of the ongoing story can be slotted in easily and given a context. It gives all who use it, be we hacks, ideologues, area specialists, diplomats, or scholars, a common reference point, a set of agreed bearings from which to set out into the unknown and through which to communicate with our audiences. (Lederman 1993, p. 12 in Hannerz 2004, p. 102-3)

Whether story lines are anchored around conflict – such as the Palestinian-Israeli divide or tribalism and/or ethnic conflict in South Africa – or the “thematization of difference” such as “weirdness” in Japan (Hannerz 2004, p. 107-128), Hannerz argues that stories “are selected, contextualized, and presented to portray regions in foreign news” and can enter reporting as both a focus and context (p. 103).

But where do sources fit? Sources, according to Tuchman (1978) reinforce the “web of facticity” through the implicit validation of existing social and political institutions (p. 103). However, Tuchman’s research functions in the domestic context where elite sources are given preference. As the previous section discovered though, sources in Afghanistan were not dominated by individuals representing political and/or institutional elites *per se*, and non-elite sources did not for the most part frame their stories and information in attempts to validate an existing social or political institution – that would require a level of media savvy that didn’t exist at the time. This leaves more room for journalists to represent their subjects. And while journalists interviewed obviously used their eyes, ears, pre-entry research, and localized expertise to facilitate this representation, they also likely exercised a “fundamental agreement on certain basic values and institutions” as a means for “identifying what constitutes news” (Hartley 1982, p. 81-3 in Hackett 1991, p. 77). As well, as much as journalists generally report conflict in the news, domestic or international, there is usually a basic understanding of the underlying consensus to which these conflicts are a threat (*ibid.*). In order to expand on these understandings relative to Afghanistan then while maintaining a focus on sources, constructions of the Northern Alliance, the Taliban, civilians, women, and the Canadian military by

journalists interviewed will be summarized, looking for discrepancies and/or parallels between journalists' interests and narrative presentations.

Sources as story lines: the Northern Alliance, Taliban, Afghan women, civilians, and the Canadian military

The Northern Alliance: factional disaster or victim of foreign meddling?

Given the large number of Northern Alliance soldiers and elites quoted throughout research articles, the Afghan opposition was a major preoccupation for most journalists interviewed. From their battle against the Taliban to inter-ethnic conflict, the viability of the Alliance emerged as a dominant narrative during the invasion of Afghanistan. Interpretations however, varied across subjects.

In the early days before U.S. and British bombing began on October 7, 2001, early parachutists set the narrative stage for the key protagonists in the battle against the Taliban. "The opposition's prospects might not be as promising as the world would like," York warned on October 1, 2001. The city of Faizabad, opposition headquarters for what would later be termed the Northern Alliance, was a "fly-blown city of muddy streets where men dress in rags and rubber slippers." Would a U.S.-led antiterrorism coalition against the Taliban lead to the restoration of a Northern Alliance government, York asks? Not if the capital beset by poverty and the countryside teeming with drugs and drought is any indication. York describes the Alliance as: "rag tag" (Oct. 2, 2001); unable to "afford a pair of binoculars to study the Taliban position" (Oct. 3, 2001); vastly outnumbered by the Taliban; and defending less than 10% of the north of Afghanistan. Alliance territory is a "bleak landscape that seems lifeless" (ibid.). As York quotes a Northern Alliance

commander as suggesting that U.S. aid is the Alliance's only hope (Oct. 2, 2001), readers might be compelled to believe that the Third World opposition group is a hopeless mess. As York's pieces move from the speculation of U.S. bombing to its fruition, skepticism remains: "this will not be a short, swift war. The White House has already prepared the American public for a lengthy campaign" (Oct. 8, 2001); and an unnamed source is quoted as doubting that the Pentagon would share its bombing target lists with the "fragmented leadership of the Northern Alliance," despite the fact that the Alliance would like to project an image of cooperation with the U.S.. By focusing on the poverty of the Alliance, and the speculative politics between the U.S. and Alliance, York paints a very shallow historical picture of them. Indeed, as chapter 4 suggests, and this analysis confirms, York did simplify the politics of the Alliance – but is it really what his audience wants?

According to Philo (2002), negative audience responses toward the Third World – such as the "insanity" and "chaos" of the Rwandan genocide – are actually the result of decisions made by broadcasters (based on commercial criteria) to produce news with low levels of explanation (p. 174-5). When the international economic and political links that underpin the continuance of war are explained, audience interest is radically altered, as are attitudes (p. 174). In conclusion, Philo argues that the media "are engaged in the mass production of social ignorance" (p. 173) and journalists should "summarise the key relationships that explain events they are reporting, to say why it matters and how they relate to the audience, routinely," as interest will increase as a result (p. 184).

How did other authors fair?

Levon Sevunts – who identifies his motivational interest in chapter 4 with a habitus-related penchant for ethnic politics and a deep understanding of military matters – seems to have painted a more complete picture of the Alliance. Unlike York, Sevunts constructs the Northern Alliance as an active opposition movement. The landscape is not barren and remote as York suggests, filled with idle Alliance fighters, but “full of evidence of much heavier fighting this year” (Sevunts, October 30, 2001). Hundreds of spent DShK large-calibre machine-gun shell casings line the side of the road; and Alliance fighters are busy “correcting the first from the tanks hidden in a poplar grove below,” and eye-witness accounts confirm the covert participation between U.S. soldiers and Alliance commanders (ibid.). In terms of U.S./Alliance cooperation, it becomes clear throughout his reporting that strains in the relationship are complex. The Alliance: resents the U.S.’s inability to deal with the Alliance on a government-to-government basis even though it is an internationally recognized as the government of Afghanistan; scorns the U.S.’s reliance on Pakistani intelligence as Pakistan helped to build and continues to fund the Taliban through weapons and volunteers (Nov. 1, 2001a); resents the U.S.’s tendency to supply particular commanders that it trusts with war materials instead of funding the Rabbani government (Nov. 7, 2001) – particularly General Abdul Rashid Dostum, an Uzbek with an abysmal human rights record who supported the Taliban at one point and is also responsible for a looting rampage following the 1992 rise of the Rabbani government (Nov. 17, 2001); and finally grows weary of ineffectual precision bombs that fail to open a clear window for a ground offensive (Nov. 2, 2001). As for ethnic divisions, while Sevunts admits that Afghanistan is a “tribal kaleidoscope” (Sept. 29,

2001), he argues that the Alliance has managed to patch up differences between the Hanaraz, Uzbeks, Tajiks, and non-Taliban aligned Pashtuns that killed an estimated 50,000 people in the early 1990s in order to fight the Pashtun-dominant Taliban (ibid.; Nov. 17, 2001). He then goes on to acknowledge some of the roles that foreign powers have played in the country – including Iran’s funding of the Hanaraz and Saudi Arabia’s (until disagreements arose regarding the 1991 Gulf War) funding of a powerfully connected anti-Taliban Pashtun group (Sept. 29, 2001); the more recent involvement of Pakistan in funding the Taliban (Nov. 1, 2001a); and the U.S.’s favouring of Alliance-affiliated warlords, potentially to balance the strength of other ethnic groups in the Alliance (Nov. 17, 2001) but weakening the Alliance’s cohesion in the process. In comparison with York then, Sevunts deliberately complicates ethnic and military circumstances, though he admits in chapter 4 to feeling frustrated that such complexity is not always an easy sell to editors.

How about the two *Star* reporters? Like her interview and source data suggest, DiManno paints the Alliance favourably. Like York, she characterizes the Northern Alliance as “rag tag” (Oct. 12, 2001); part of a “poor man’s war” (ibid.) – but one that had been actively planning an offensive to recapture Mazar-e-Sharif and the town of Taloquan before the U.S. turned its gaze to the failed state (Oct. 12, 2001). As well, the Alliance may be a “dog’s breakfast of intertribal and interethnic rivalries,” (Oct. 12, 2001) but it is also the latest incarnation of a people who are fabulous for repelling or absorbing conquerors throughout history, but infamous for being unable to unite (Oct. 1, 2001). Like Sevunts, DiManno goes to great pains to outline various factions of the Alliance and the last 20 years of conflicts between them (Oct. 12,

2001). As well, she also highlights the role of Afghanistan's "menacing neighbours" throughout history that have meddled in Afghan affairs to suit their own purposes (ibid.). Like Sevunts, DiManno emphasizes the role of Pakistan. Pakistan supported the Taliban, because they "were afraid of having a strong army next door," according to a commander cited by DiManno (Oct. 29, 2001); Pakistan has a special "place in hell" for Alliance soldiers who are sick of their meddling, and the infiltration of Pakistani (and Gulf country) rebels in the Taliban army (ibid.). Donovan, who arrived right in the middle of the Alliance advance, also describes them in active terms, noting the influx of foreign (Pakistan and Chechen) soldiers on the Taliban side (Nov. 11, 2001). Though Donovan befriends a general and "sees some shooting," he does not display an understanding of military strategy, dwelling on the Alliance's poverty, their treatment of children, and assumptions about "poor training" without actually having a background to accurately assess these observations (ibid.). Overall, his is a wide-eyed foreigner's tale.

Though it is true that all four authors dwell to some extent on the Northern Alliance, only DiManno and Sevunts display a deeper interest in understanding both the military tactics at work, vaulting the Alliance from hopeless to resilient. As for the foreign – particularly the Pakistani – involvement in the battle field, most authors "got it" to some extent. However, their readings of larger geopolitical imperatives did not necessarily acquaint Pakistan with the fall of the Alliance government in the early 1990s and the rise of the Taliban government. As well, the role of oil and gas pipeline deals – a source of interest for Pakistan throughout the 1990s (Shahrani 2002, p. 720) is not mentioned except by Sevunts, and only after he has returned from Afghanistan.

In terms of U.S. oil interests in the region, until the War on Terrorism moved the U.S. from a commercial to a security focus, fossil fuel exploration was a key factor in their foreign policy of the region (Garnet 2000, p. 10) ⁴⁸ Throughout the 1990s, the need to facilitate the extraction of oil and natural gas from the region was so paramount that until the Feminist Majority – a U.S.-founded feminist organization that is dedicated to women’s equality – began campaigning against a secret deal between U.S. oil company Unocal and the Taliban to build a pipeline through Afghanistan in spite the Taliban’s human rights record and politics towards women, the U.S. administration supported the deal (Abu-Lughod 2002, p. 787). Whether or not a security or commercial frame dominates U.S. policy today, the fact that the current U.S.-supported president of Afghanistan is a “pliant U.S.-trained Unocal oil executive” (Palat & Selden 2003, p. 172) seems at least to indicate that oil and gas could emerge again as a factor of some significance. And yet, this fact was lost on all journalists interviewed besides Ghafour, who mentions it briefly in the second last paragraph of a 959-word story – Karzai “joined the U.S. oil company Unocal Corp. as a paid consultant” (Ghafour & Sallot, Sept. 27, 2003). In her interview, in fact, she admits that while it is a topic of interest, she can’t really speak to it because she isn’t well versed in the topic (personal communication, June 22, 2005).

As for factional conflict, though most subjects (excluding York) did give a nod to external meddling, the deep history of British imperial involvement in supporting the Pashtun “Iron Emir” Abdur Rahman at the end of the 19th century and his brutal policies towards ethnic minorities and internal colonialism as established in chapter 3

⁴⁸ See also U.S. Centcom Information page at www.centcom.mil/aboutus/aor.htm, accessed July 29, 2005.

is also absent. Part of the reason Afghanistan's tribal kaleidoscope exists is because the country was fashioned that way at the end of the Great Game⁴⁹ (Shahrani 2002, p. 718-9). As for the rise of fundamentalism, most authors acknowledge the CIA's involvement in funding Osama bin Laden, among other mujahedeen groups, against the Soviets in the 1980s. But it is mentioned more as an interesting aside than a controversial policy that bred radicalism across the Taliban-Northern Alliance divide, mainly because the CIA tended to fund the more extreme groups because they fought better (Hirschkind & Mahmood 2002, p 340).

As for Allen's (1996) argument that the media either view contemporary wars as "the result of certain ethnic groups expressing their true qualities following the lifting of external controls, or as revealing atavistic drives existing in all of us" (p. 27) – the lack of consistent geopolitical and historical analysis likely means that (mostly) in York and Donovan's case, factionalism took on an atavistic element. And although DiManno and Sevunts mediated atavism with some historical and political detail, particularly in regards to the involvement of Pakistan, these readings are not expansive or comprehensive enough to give readers a clear picture of how foreign meddling unfolded over time. The Alliance might be resilient and impressive underdogs, but they are still presented ethnically, to the expense of a deeper geopolitical reading.

The Taliban: oppressors and foreign devils?

As stated in part I, enemies of the state aren't usually given much space to air their concerns, and this holds true for the coverage of Taliban sources. Overall, the

⁴⁹ The Great Game is a term used to describe the rivalry and strategic conflict between the British Empire and the Tsarist Russian Empire for supremacy of Central Asia taking place from the early 1800s until the beginning of the 20th century.

Taliban were portrayed as radical, oppressive (especially to women) and exacting significant damage on the population. However, the severity of this demonization varied across journalists interviewed.

York wrote an analysis piece in November, 2001 reflecting on his unique experience covering Afghanistan following the Taliban's infamous destruction of the Buddhas of Bamiyan in the spring of 2001. He visited the local museum and probed officials there for their reaction to the carnage. In his post-9/11 reflection piece, he immediately constructs a division between a "normal human response" and that of the Taliban. Officials displayed a "blank fanaticism," he explains, repeating phrases like: "We cannot say anything personally about it. When there is an official decision, we should obey it" (Nov. 1, 2001). Weaving this into an assessment of the bombing campaign, York adds that "the Taliban are displaying the same zealous willingness to sacrifice anything for their ideology, and the same obsessive devotion to religious edicts that has blinded them to any human cost" (ibid.). However, Knightley (2002) argues that "the spectacle of the world's most powerful industrial nations bombing a Third World agricultural one, in the middle of a famine was never going to be an edifying one" (p. 169). The West's bombing campaign would certainly exact its own cost in the form of casualties, but I did not get a sense in 190 articles of just how many civilians, let alone the Taliban, lost their lives in the bombing and fighting. In another twist mentioned in the Alliance review above, the story line of foreign infiltration emerges again. York quotes a Taliban defector who claims to have left the radicals after being disturbed by their tactics of: conscripting young men by force, supporting the assassination of Tajik commander Ahmed Shah Masood, and (most

importantly), welcoming vast quantities of Arab and Pakistanis into senior positions in the army (Oct. 19, 2001). This narrative is reinforced by a prisoner piece in which Pakistani and Arab Taliban are quoted at length in regards to their fundamentalist rhetoric. Fundamentalist organizations, one Pakistani argues, “will always help” the Taliban, “from Pakistan and other Islamic countries. We want to make Afghanistan an Islamic country, and then we want to make other countries have Islamic governments” (Oct. 20, 2001). In separating Afghans from the Taliban, York reinforces the story line of liberation, justifiable military intervention, and as Kellner (2002) notes in the larger War on Terrorism, the “clash of civilizations” boiling down to a battle for freedom against evil (p. 143).

DiManno shows a similar contempt for the Taliban, removing Afghans from the Taliban equation by noting that the latter were “incubated in the fundamentalist religious schools of western Pakistan” who “imposed on Afghans an Islamist fervour never before seen in a country that had traditionally respected religious diversion and Islamic moderation” (Oct. 3, 2001). In an article based on a visit to the Khoja Bahawuddin prison, DiManno speaks with what remains of the Taliban prisoners there – 8 native Afghans (she notes that the Alliance shipped away 100 Taliban foreign nationals to their stronghold in the Panjshir Valley). The three prisoners quoted are all under 25, and all explain that they were press-ganged into army service (Nov. 2, 2001).

Freeman is the interesting exception. He writes of the “mythical status” that “foreign terrorists” have taken on in this war, “taking more of the blame for the conflict from Alliance supporters than the Afghans who founded the Taliban. (Nov.

16, 2001). For many Afghans, he writes, “these outsiders are the devil incarnate;” Pakistan is “Public Enemy No. 1 because of its long support of the Taliban;” and Arabs are loathed because of the assassination of Ahmed Shah Massood, reportedly by suicide bombers from Morocco (ibid.). In another instance, he writes of a Taliban cleric who surrendered to the Alliance and hitched a ride in his van. Freeman and the mullah chatted about changes in Afghanistan, while Freeman published the mullah’s criticisms of the Northern Alliance and Taliban – the former has no discipline and the latter has become overrun by foreign nationals with their own agenda. In one sense, the mullah’s narrative parallel York and DiManno’s portrayal of the Taliban noted above. However, Freeman also notes that the mullah joined the Taliban to “save Afghanistan from the lawlessness” of the country in the early 1990s, when infighting among what would become the Northern Alliance caused the death of 50,000 Afghans. Thus, in spite of the demonization of the Taliban and the projection of foreignness by York and DiManno, Freeman’s reality check confirms the thoughts of Ghafour expressed in chapter 4 (personal communication, June 22, 2005) – that the Taliban at least started out locally, gained popular support in the south due to its call for stability in a region that had suffered the most as a result of infighting (other regions had stabilized under regional warlords/governors), and had a moderate element that was slowly edged out by an increasing number of foreign radicals. The fact that Freeman quotes Taliban spokespeople on the status of the war as well indicates that he was less partial to oversimplification and constructions of good and evil.

In summary then, in addition to being quoted infrequently, the Taliban were more likely to be characterized as foreign devils, corrupters of the everyday Afghan, and uniformly zealous, than containing at least some localized legitimacy, as well as moderate elements that had been marginalized by the influx of foreign influences, (some of whom were non-state actors, while others represented the tacit support of foreign countries). However, Freeman's skepticism of the Taliban's foreignness, and his interview with a mullah provides a reality check that curbs this uniformity, and supports the notion that when confronted with evidence to the contrary – such as a defecting mullah – journalists can and will add at least some of the context they were unable, or unwilling to provide when they first arrived.

Afghan women: victims of Taliban oppression, war culture, or traditional society?

To say that Afghan women were the poster victims of the Taliban – and thus in need of saving via Western intervention, is not far off the mark relative to public discourse on the issue; it's another case of “white men saving brown women from brown men” (Spitvak 1988 in Hirschkind & Mahmood 2002, p. 784). On one level, the invasion of Afghanistan can be interpreted as part of the War on Terrorism, coinciding with the U.S.'s most recent National Security Strategy (2002) which aims to “defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants” (p. 3) and “hold to account nations that are compromised by terror, including those who harbor terrorists” (p. 3-4). On another, the burqa-clad body of the Afghan woman is a visible sign of an invisible enemy that threatens not only “us,” citizens of the West, but our entire civilization (Hirschkind & Mahmood 2002, p. 341). Given that talk of liberating Afghan women from their Taliban oppressors garnered a “remarkable consensus” – at

least in the U.S. – for an otherwise unilateral move to topple a foreign government (p. 340), it is important to recognize the importance of the liberation narrative in creating space for interventionist policies, providing a:

Point of unity for groups from a range of political perspectives: from conservatives to liberals and radicals, from Republicans to Democrats, and from Hollywood glitteratia to grass roots activists (ibid.)

As for journalists following the story of Afghan women – it is clear from the data that while journalists scorned the Taliban’s treatment of women, they also sidestepped the public narrative emanating from the White House – writing of women’s oppression with a greater deal of subtlety.

As established in chapter 4, Hilary MacKenzie made a point of seeking out women who had suffered under the Taliban. Four months after the regime’s collapse, she produced an exclusive article in which former wives of Taliban husbands and their female family members spoke out about beatings with cable whips studded with nails and iron brandings, and in one case – murder: “few knew the extent of the abuse that went on behind closed doors,” writes MacKenzie, “especially in the case of women married to Taliban officials.” (Mar. 30, 2002). However, she does not spare the Alliance and post-Taliban transitional authority her scathing criticism – much remains the same after the fall of the Taliban; “thousands still live in relentless poverty; and complex cultural issues, such as the traditionally inferior status of women, are far from being resolved.” (ibid.). Although the phrase “traditionally inferior status” isn’t technically culturally appropriate, (see Abu-Lughod 2002, p. 785), it does represent an awareness on MacKenzie’s part that the Taliban were only

one social actor in the repression of women. Ghafour, York, Potter, and DiManno register similar qualifiers.

DiManno, for example, describes the Taliban as “a theocracy of ultra-misogynists,” (Nov. 12, 2001). However, she also recounts a rare quasi-historical fact: the Taliban “was born in response to an infamous gang rape” in 1994; a little-known village mullah named Mohammed Omar led a group to exact revenge on the perpetrators. Soon, others seeking justice turned to Omar, igniting the popular support that helped usher Omar and his followers to power. As for the Northern Alliance, DiManno warns her readers that not only are women unlikely to throw off their “shuttered hideaway” burqa if the Taliban regime falls, but most “Alliance army commanders are Islamic fundamentalists themselves” (*ibid.*).

Following this theme, Ghafour takes her readers to a women’s prison two years after the fall of the Taliban. Half of the inmates are women who have run away from their husbands for various reasons including resisting enforced marriages to escaping systematic beatings (Dec. 22, 2003). The women were shunned by their families for their defiance. In a time when the post-Taliban government was holding a loyal jirga (grand council) to develop a new constitution in which women’s rights were to be defined, fundamentalists – including the former president of the Northern Alliance – lobbied successfully to have a clause dropped that would have enshrined a woman’s right to divorce. Thus, Ghafour’s story line of suffering carries the added bonus of holding the new government to account, and exposing the Northern Alliance’s track record on women’s rights.

The lifting of the burqa law and the reinstallation of education were two other themes promulgated by the U.S. administration to justify intervention that research subjects followed with some caution. As per the aforementioned prison article, Ghafour quotes a female guard who argues that as a literate woman, she is educated enough to realize that when her husband beats her, she shouldn't flee, throwing doubt on the notion that the return of education to Afghanistan will necessarily bring liberation. Freeman links the burqa and education with rural/urban divisions. In a profile of two female school teachers beginning the process of reopening a school for girls in Taloqan (Nov. 19, 2001), he notes that while his female interview subjects took off their burqa for the interview, such a feat would not likely become a common practice any time soon. Writing of one of his sources, Freeman argues that as "a native of Kabul, she has known life without the burqa. But in rural areas like this one, covering up has been the norm for women since well before the advent of the Taliban" (ibid.). York also follows this rural/urban divide, while also taking pot shots at the Alliance. He takes his readers to the small rural town of Faizabad – the capital of Alliance territory circa October 2001. He notes that women's bodies and whereabouts are no less disciplined than under the Taliban – besides the fact that a few women can work in health and education (Oct. 13, 2001).

Mitch Potter introduces complexity to rural/urban divisions as well, but does not adequately resolve them. He notes in one piece on a nursing school for women that protégée female students defend the burqa as a part of their culture. In quoting these students, he partially displaces misconceptions that the Taliban and burqa are one and the same. On the other hand, he also quotes a mid-level school administrator's

whispered response to their claims – 30 years ago, Kandahar and Kabul didn't segregate women and men, both attended school together, and women did not wear the burqa, he is quoted as stating. Fair enough, but Potter does not contextualize these comments with the historically significant point that in addition to different ethnic groups and localized cultural traditions relating to women and the burqa, urban-rural divisions have also played a significant role in reinforcing difference throughout the region. In other words, 30 years ago, Kandahar and Kabul represented pockets of Westernization that did not necessarily translate to other rural cultural traditions (see Abu-Lughod 2002). By neglecting these details – either out of ignorance or to facilitate the simplicity of the story – Potter mistakenly paints a picture of Afghan women as being victims of a false consciousness; one that contributes to their own oppression. In comparison, Ghafour writes articles that move away from victimhood. In other words, she tries to write women going about their everyday business into her stories, writing of female Olympic hopefuls (Sept. 12, 2001) and activists (Sept. 3, 2001). In other words, she writes stories of Afghan women fighting at the behest of their own causes – not those superimposed from the West.

Taken together, most journalists interviewed produced articles that deviated from White House-implied liberation themes. This is not to say that journalists did not fall back on simplified narratives of the shroud of the burqa and the light of education, but they did so with additional subtlety, and a recognition that the oppression of Afghan women is complex and involves a multiplicity of factors that cannot fit in the West-will-liberate-Afghan-women-from-the-Taliban story line. If anything was missing from these stories, it was a greater clarity in regards to ethnic and historical

dimensions. In terms of the burqa, for example, what happened in Afghanistan under the Taliban actually represented one style of regional dress being imposed on the rest of the country as “religiously” appropriate, even though there had been different styles popular to different groups and classes beforehand (Abu-Lughod 2002, p. 786). And even though the Taliban’s policies in terms of education, the public-private divide, and the burqa made conditions worse for urban women, they did not substantially affect the vast majority of rural women, either because their policies matched rural life, or because they couldn’t enforce their own edicts (Hirschkind & Mahmood 2002, p. 346). As well, the fixation on the burqa may zero in on questions of patriarchal oppression, but misplacedly so. Abu-Lughod argues that veiling must not “be confused with, or made to stand for, a lack of agency” (p. 786). Only Ghafour shows a clear inclination to look beyond the burqa in her stories, focusing instead on the impact of policy issues on the very poor. Finally, although Ghafour did mention the positive relationship between safety and the wearing of the burqa in her interview (see chapter 4), this did not come across in any of her articles, or any other articles produced by journalists interviewed for that matter. Thus, by focusing on the Alliance versus the Taliban versus rural-urban divisions, the context of women’s suffering relative to 20 years of war remained unexplored. Namely, that the burqa provided some measure of protection from rape and harassment – a protection, ironically, that the Taliban reinforced during its short reign by disarming the population (Hirschkind & Mahmood 2002, p. 346).

Civilians: victimized and resilient?

Part I found that civilians were a significant part of the story of Afghanistan and that well-off individuals were quoted more often. A qualitative reading establishes the truth of the first point. As for the second, it seems from a qualitative reading that on balance, a decent cross-section of Afghan society is represented. As for story lines – both victimhood and resilience are represented in journalists’ narratives.

In terms of victimhood, several sub-themes emerge. To begin, York paints a picture of victimhood by characterizing the majority of Afghans as being too socio-economically bankrupt to revolt against the Taliban (ignoring the seven-year fight of the Northern Alliance and Pakistan’s foreign aid to the Taliban) (Nov. 1, 2001). Freeman links the Taliban and victimhood by looking at civilians who have suffered: evictions under Taliban rule (Nov. 22, 2001), unjust imprisonment and torture (Nov. 23, 2001), and grinding poverty that makes simple medical procedures a luxury (Nov. 15, 2001). Finally, poverty and suffering after 20 years of war is expressed in the embodiment of mounting refugees and internally displaced persons (York Aug. 12, 2002; Potter Feb. 20, 2002), orphaned children (MacKenzie Jan. 4, 2002), and the booming prosthesis business (York Nov. 1, 2001). Specific to U.S. intervention, victimhood is also apparent in the frequent references to the casualties of U.S. bombings (Freeman Nov. 19, 2001, Nov. 24, 2001, Nov. 28, 2001; York Oct. 27, 2001, Oct. 29, 2001, Sept. 2, 2002).

As for resilience, Freeman writes of a poor Afghan boy of about 10 years of age who transports passengers across the Kokchka River for money – his father died six years ago in the continuing Afghan civil war (Nov. 5, 2001), and a blacksmith who

makes shovels out shell casings (Nov. 5, 2001); while York describes resilience in the form of continued trade (Oct. 18, 2001).

Generally speaking then, on qualitative reading, there is decent balance between poor, displaced, and middle-class sources – and a narrative of struggle runs throughout. Even so, victimization is paramount, and confirms Hallin's (1986) findings regarding the coverage of the Vietnam War that, Cold War politics aside, civilians were consistently painted as the “real losers” of war (p. 176). This story line, along with industriousness and resilience, make up the bulk of narratives emerging from the texts of journalists interviewed.

Canadian military: brave or marginal soldiers?

In the spring of 2002, Canadian Forces – specifically 750 infantry from the Edmonton-based 3rd battalion of the Princess Patricia's regiment and a squadron of 12 Canadian-built Coyote light-armoured reconnaissance vehicles from the Lord Strathcona's Horse regiment based in Edmonton – joined about 4,000 coalition troops operating under the command of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Assault Division (and later the 82nd Airborne Division). Their assignment, as mentioned in chapter 3, was a combination of de-mining and humanitarian operations, as well as securing the base at Kandahar airfield. What is more, soldiers were expected to be ready if called upon to undertake combat operations in rooting out Taliban and al-Qaeda resistance. It was Canada's first combat operation since the Korean War, and represented an opportunity to participate in the War on Terrorism, adding to Canada's already well-known international peacekeeping record. Only two reporters covered the Canadian

troops to any significant extent – Mitch Potter and Matthew Fisher. Their perspectives varied considerably.

Fisher, a veteran war reporter, wrote with little questioning or criticism. While he only covered Operation Apollo (see Appendix 1) for a short time following the death of four Canadian soldiers in the friendly fire bombing incident in April 2002, his personal perspective emerged in articles. For one, in spite of the mistaken death of Canadian troops by U.S. pilots, he presents Canadian-U.S. troop integration as a good news story. In one piece, he writes at length of a U.S. officer's praise for Canadian snipers who performed excellently in a mission to hunt out al-Qaeda resistance fighters (Operation Anaconda); five of those snipers had been recommended for U.S. medals of decoration – the bronze star (May 3, 2002). In another perspective piece, he chastises the Canadian public for delivering little but “tears and prayers” for Canada's fallen soldiers (May 7, 2002). Canada's shamefully “dwindling” forces are nearly 10% under approved strength, and “tears are not enough” (ibid.). Canadians and by extension, the government of Canada, should reinvest in the Canadian Forces and appreciate that Canadian troops have been undertaking ambitious operations and peacekeeping missions in dangerous territories with little comment or appreciation for years. In Afghanistan, Canadian soldiers have been living under harsh conditions in Afghanistan – to mention nothing of losing four men in the friendly fire incident – and have still managed to keep their spirits high. Unfortunately, further exploring Fisher's obvious identification with military issues is not possible as he only produced seven articles during his brief reporting assignment.

Mitch Potter displays more skepticism than Fisher. For one, his reading of Canada-U.S. cooperation is more critical: though Canadian troops are not under the direct command of the U.S. military, Potter wonders how that will translate on the ground (Jan. 10, 2002). By article five, Potter's skepticism of the Canadian-U.S. "military marriage" heightens. He quotes an anonymous source as admitting that the Coyote deployment is the main reason the U.S. decided to bring the Canadian battle group under its wing (Feb. 4, 2002). As for Canadian soldiers' insecurity regarding combat operability in the face of the U.S. behemoth, Potter argues that Operation Apollo is a "mission of identity" relative to Canada's peacekeeping tradition (ibid.). He quotes a Canadian soldier as complaining that "for the past 10 years, whenever someone saw a Canadian soldier, they said 'Oh look, there goes a peacekeeper'" (ibid.). Finally, instead of praising the Canadian Forces' ability to stand in the face of less than comfortable living conditions, Potter complains about them. Many soldiers suffer from "Kandahar Krud," a harsh phlegmatic cough; and "beige wind[s]," "filthy fields," and the "nefarious" fecal particles from the U.S. army's daily diesel-fired burning of human excrement" that fills the air (Feb. 7, 2002). Furthermore, he mentions ironically that soldiers are so camp-bound performing security detail on base that they have been interviewing him about Afghanistan (Feb. 10, 2002) – another shot at the Forces' combat-readiness. Whether Potter's contempt has to do with reporting what he sees, an inclination against military intervention, or displeasure at having his movements limited by Canadian Forces, is unclear. What is significant is the difference between the two men's reporting orientations; so much so that in the absence of additional information, readers of opposing reports would

barely know they were perusing information on the same operation. Whether Potter's perspective would have changed had he been allowed to accompany troops on missions, let alone stay long enough to find out whether he might be able to tag along on missions, (instead of getting kicked off base) can't be answered. Nevertheless, even with this small sample size, the data suggests that at least when it comes to reporting on Canadian troops, an agent-centred interpretive power was wielded, leading to the production of very different articles.

Summary

This section has analyzed a number of texts, looking for agency in the source representation and story lines presented in five source areas. Representations of the Northern Alliance indicate that subjects varied significantly in the depth of their historical military and geopolitical presentations, with DiManno and Sevunts leading the charge in terms of context. The Taliban were given little space at all to air their concerns and perspectives, but as mentioned above, this likely had to do with their inaccessibility and position as "the enemy." As for the treatment of women, though journalists tended to gloss over issues of war culture and security when discussing such things as the burqa, they also showed a fairly uniform skepticism of a "Taliban-only" approach to their oppression, pointing out rural divisions as well as Alliance transgressions in their delineation of women's suffering. Civilians were presented as victims by a majority of journalists interviewed. However, Freeman went out of his way to celebrate the resilience and in some cases entrepreneurial spirit of Afghans; perhaps seeing in their everyday lives fragments of Western values from which to construct familiar narratives, if not familiar circumstances. Lastly, though the sample

size was small, Canadian troops were subject to fairly opposing treatments via Fisher and Potter, indicating that narratives are sometimes as much interpretation as straight observation. In other words, for this and other cases, agent-centred perspectives significantly impacted content.

Part III: Reflections on power in reporting: the field of politics and Eurocentrism

Throughout this thesis, question of power, politics, and representation have arisen under the auspices of various theoretical guises. In chapters 2, 3, and 4 Bourdieu's concept of the economic field enabled an exploration of how the market structures agents without predicating actions. In chapter 1, 2, and 3 the power of journalists to represent non-media people was explored using a grab bag of concepts from Eurocentrism, to structural critiques of proximate coverage, to Couldry's practice-based "culture of belief" (2000, p. 285). But there are loose ends. Given the information outlined above, how, for example, does the field of politics fair in terms of the reporting of Northern Alliance, Taliban, or broadly Western narratives of the conflict in Afghanistan? What, if anything, do these presentations reveal about the existence of Eurocentrism in the press? Part III is divided into two sections. Section I explores how the journalism and political fields collided in Afghanistan relative to the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. Section II asks whether the findings of section I reveal evidence of Eurocentrism in the articles of journalists interviewed, agent-centred imperatives, or just situational constraints. In the end, underlying these questions is a basic reference to the importance of power in source relationships: what does the information collected in this chapter tell us about how power operates, on

what level of consciousness, and who wields the proverbial “upper hand” when it comes to defining the limits of representation?

Consider the source: fields theory on the Taliban, and the Northern Alliance

As stated in chapter 2, Bourdieu (1998) argues that journalism’s pre-occupation with the political field creates social distance between the public looking for the real consequences of political positions and the journalist’s attention to the minutia of the “political microcosm” (p. 5). Of course, he was writing with a domestic framework in mind; one in which the wielders of political power exist in a balanced, though often strained relationship with media power – journalists need politicians to produce news, and politicians need journalists to attain and sustain public legitimacy. In Afghanistan, political authorities were not as clearly marked – at least not from a review of the media texts of journalists interviewed.

The Taliban

The Taliban, as is obvious from the data above, were not given space to air their concerns. Whether this is the result of media demonization, Taliban inaccessibility, or censorship is not certain. In terms of demonization, journalists interviewed demonstrated an uneven capacity for brandishing the Taliban with an unapologetically “evil” swath. As for inaccessibility, as mentioned above, issues of safety and logistics likely made it difficult to provide space for the other side to a point. However, the inability to get a sense of Taliban casualties, let alone their perspective on the legitimacy of U.S. intervention speaks both to an ideological blindspot relative to the media’s capacity to provide space for “the enemy,” and to the

influence of Western political players on the democratic media in the first place.⁵⁰ As Knightley (2002) notes, in the U.S., Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld formally warned media chiefs that they could expect little cooperation through the invasion of Afghanistan from the Pentagon because this “was a new type of war in which secrecy was paramount” (p. 169). In the U.K., Prime Minister Tony Blair asked media bosses not to rebroadcast video messages from the Taliban, “ostensibly because they might contain coded messages to their followers, but actually to deny the enemy the oxygen of publicity” (ibid.). Given that the U.S. and U.K. were the main forces involved in the bombing operation, restricting the available information to their domestic media likely chilled other Western media such as Canada. Without the aid of U.S. transparency and (in the case of the U.K.) the freedom to report both sides, journalists who managed to make it to Afghanistan – mostly traveling with the Northern Alliance – had to report with their own eyes and ears; a difficult task in the fog of war. And though a few journalists interviewed did demonstrate some reticence towards demonizing the other side completely (Freeman, DiManno), Eve-Ann Prentice, a foreign correspondent who covered the Balkans, argues that at least in the case of the extremely complex politics of the Balkans, most eyes and ears coverage tends to fall back on “colour writing,” or the “description of scenes” at the expense of context and analysis (Playdon 2002, p. 273). Thus readers were not likely to understand: the extreme chaos out of which the Taliban arose, preaching stability along the way; or the role of CIA or Pakistan in financing extreme versions of fundamentalism in the 1980s and 1990s respectively; or the moderate element of the

⁵⁰ Although it would have been a good idea to conduct research interviews on journalists’ attitudes and experiences with the Taliban, this lay outside the possible reach of this work.

Taliban that was squeezed out (partly) via foreign nationals; or lastly, the U.S.'s ambiguous relationship with the Taliban in terms of oil and gas prospects and developments in the 1990s.

The Northern Alliance

As for the Northern Alliance, it is clear from part II above that the U.S.'s ground force "allies" were also subject to an uneven reading and presentation by journalists interviewed. Were they hopeless or inspiring? Resilient or disorganized military tacticians? On the one hand, Sevunts and DiManno wielded both an impressive knowledge of military tactics and history – thus their eyes and ears reporting was balanced against personal knowledge acquired through a combination of armchair academics, first-hand experience, and personal fascination. On the other, Donovan, York, and Freeman hit the ground running with various levels of success in accurately representing the situation on the ground. However, the Northern Alliance was not exclusively a military machine. The Alliance was also a government recognized by the UN since the early 1990s. As well, the Rabbini government had a lengthy list of complaints against U.S. actions in the region. As expressed above, they wanted to be treated as the government of Afghanistan, which involved negotiating with the U.S. on a government-to-government basis and having their military intelligence sought to better coordinate the ground war. While the former involved being guaranteed the leadership of the country following the collapse of the Taliban regime, the latter involved coordinating military tactics to accurately and efficiently bomb the Taliban front and successfully carry out post-Taliban mop-up operations. The Rabbini government was shut out of all three requests: U.S.-friendly Hamid Karzai was

appointed as interim leader; inaccurate and improperly-focused bombing produced significant civilian casualties and paralyzed the forward advance of the Alliance for some time; and the U.S. denied the Alliance the right to chase the retreating Taliban and al-Qaeda groups, perhaps at the expense of capturing the elusive Mohammed Omar and Osama bin Laden. While it is easy after reading 190 articles to list off the Alliance's ails, an average reader would be unlikely to manage such a feat from the articles of the journalists interviewed. In other words, the idea that Afghanistan had a legitimate government in waiting prior to U.S. bombings with broad ethnic representation and a desire to cooperate with U.S. administrators did not really come across consistently in the press reports of journalists interviewed. Returning to political fields theory, the Alliance did not carry symbolic weight in the articles of journalists interviewed and, as a result, were somewhat marginalized as a political power in the coverage. Again, it is difficult to attribute this to another ideological blindspot or the sheer logistics of covering a war. According to Gandy (1982), whether political elites are successful in setting the agenda of journalists depends on their ability to garner "information subsidies" to "reduce the cost of news work to increase their control over news content" (p. 15). While York, MacKenzie, and Freeman might be able to work their Western sources for information on fairly short notice, the Alliance leadership was not available on the other end of the satellite phone on a moment's notice. Even Sevunts, who wanted to talk to the Alliance leadership at length, he had his hopes dashed on the ground.

Even so, it would be irresponsible and inaccurate to chalk up the uneven media play of the Alliance solely to their information paucity. On the flip side, whether the

Alliance had adequate access to the media – as opposed to coverage, which “entails some news space and time but not the context for favorable representation” (Ericson et al. 1989, p. 5) – is unclear. What is clear is that the Alliance was not the only player in the political field wooing media attention. As well, journalists were subject to their own cultural baggage which may have affected the reporting of the Alliance. In the next section, questions of Western political elites and Eurocentrism – specifically in regards to the Canadian government – will be considered.

The War against Terrorism and Eurocentrism

Reflecting on both Operation Apollo and Athena in September of 2003, former Defence Minister John McCallum argued that while “the attacks of September 11th were not directed at Canada,” 24 Canadians died that day, and four more were among the 200 killed in the Bali bombing in October of 2002. Much of the planning for these “savage attacks” happened in Afghanistan, leading McCallum to proceed with a stern warning for his audience:

In the absence of international forces, there is a serious risk that the country would fall back into the hands of the Taliban – a serious risk that it would once again become a breeding ground for terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda. That is something the world cannot allow.⁵¹

Clearly, a year-and-a-half after the 9/11 attacks, Canada’s sense of security was still shaken; shaken enough to move from the familiar ground of peacekeeping to combat in an effort to realize a sharper point to the defence component of Canada’s foreign policy mantra – defence, diplomacy, and development. And while immediately

⁵¹ Minister’s Speech, National Defence, “Why Afghanistan? Why Canada?” at www.army.forces.gc.ca/lf/English/6_4.asp?FlashEnabled=1&ID=3, accessed July 29, 2005.

following the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. administration's policy of unilateral intervention was met with muted criticisms on the part of their own domestic media, and in some cases hawkish patriotism (Waisbord 2002), Canada was not immune either to some form of a media chill.

Consider the case of anti-racist feminist Canadian scholar Sunera Thobani immediately following the 9/11 attacks. Thobani spoke out on October 1, 2001 at a national conference on violence against women, imploring feminists to reject the War on Terrorism as an imperialistic venture soaked in a long history of blood. She asked why the primacy of the West should go without challenge, allowed to export democracy to the backwards Other (read Afghanistan) to save Third World (read Afghan) women from patriarchal brutality (read the Taliban). Her dissent was met with a severe backlash. While the press painted Thobani as an isolated, anti-U.S., hateful woman who was obviously ungrateful for the advantages the West had bestowed upon her (Thobani 2001, p. 18-9), certain members of the public responded with personal threats to her life (p. 21-3). Clearly, Canada was not immune to the chill on dissent. But what this case also revealed was a certain lingering paternalism that helps explain why the Alliance could not be allowed to manage its own affairs.

As race expert and discourse analyst Teun A. van Dijk (2000) suggests, the reporting of ethnicity in the media identifies the polar opposition between "Us" – mostly white readers, journalists, and elite sources – and "Them" – in van Dijk's specific reading, domestic minorities (p. 36-7). While domestic minorities can and are often constructed as threats to the status quo (van Dijk 2000; see also Henry & Tator 2002), it isn't appropriate to construct the Alliance – a group that was fighting

alongside, if not in complete accord with, the U.S. and British air forces – with the same brush. On the other hand, the fact that on the whole they were singled out and described for their poverty, perceived disorganization, use of ancient equipment, and lack of clear partnership with the U.S. does parallel van Dijk’s benign reading of “Otherness” – that of the non-threatening “Other” that can be identified with “weirdness,” “ethnic hatred,” and/or the Occidental discovery of an alternative modernity” (p. 145, 219). The impression I got from the 190 articles I read was that, on the whole, the Alliance couldn’t handle their own affairs – with the unstated conclusion being that the West must play the role of neocolonial babysitter, installing a proxy government lest Afghanistan be expected to stand on its own two feet, directing its own affairs. While there was certainly a significant interest in what the Alliance was up to in the articles reviewed above, their status – as aids to the U.S. regime but not government material *per se* – likely reflects an underlying mood of Eurocentrism that many, but not all, authors conveyed without necessarily being obvious, or even aware of it. In other words, Eurocentrism whispers its way through the press as other authors have contended (Shohat & Stam 1994 p. 22; Amin 1989, p. 107). Recognizing this fact is not a theoretical leap. The mistake, I would argue, is when Eurocentrism is constructed in an absolute sense, dismissing the role of agency in mitigating its uniform dispersal.

In part III two concepts were revisited – political fields and Eurocentrism. Using the comprehensive material of part II, part III assessed the power of sources to interact with the media in texts. Despite the fact that the Alliance was given media space, often more space than Western military and political elites, they were not

given access to the legitimate definition of the story line. They were the story line, just not the authors of it. Authorship ended up being a three-way split between independently operating journalists, structuralizing Western culture, and influencing Western elites.

Part IV: Conclusion

This chapter has spun a complicated tale of media sources, their representations, and the sophisticated web in which journalists operate and are caught as they report in the fog of war. From part I it is recognized that no one group – Western or Afghan – dominated media sources. However, it is also clear that particularly in regards to gender, male-definitions of world affairs hold sway, even when the subject involves a persistent narrative of women’s oppression. In part II the chapter moves from quantifying sources to establishing their qualitative character. Sources are studied to reveal an uneven presentation on the part of journalists of such actors as the Alliance, Taliban, Afghan civilians, Afghan women, and the Canadian military. However, moving from the acknowledgement of difference to similarities, part III revisits political fields theory and notions of Eurocentrism to acknowledge that even agency can’t necessarily overcome the tide of a story line – in this case that the “enemy” can never be anything but, and that Afghans can’t be expected to save themselves. As suggested in the introduction of part III, quantifying, qualifying, and establishing structure to the use and presentation of sources is shot through with relationships of power that are as unavoidable as they are hard to determine without an Excel chart and plenty of time. In the end, the story line of Western superiority, in spite of

conflicting story lines (sometimes) haphazardly constructed by critically-minded
journalists interviewed, rules the day.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and hunting the mezzo: findings, reflections, and locating the space between

This thesis began with a feeling more than an actuality; a visceral impression aided by four years of cultural deprogramming in the University of Manitoba's anthropology department that the Canadian media coverage of Afghanistan lacked a certain depth of focus. And as media players, pundits, and practitioners were busy reporting on a new world order of risk (Waisbord 2002), and Afghanistan's failed state, I became uncomfortable. As I look back, Glassner's (1999) "culture of fear" and Debord's (1977) "society of the spectacle" seem like appropriate descriptions of my impression, and criticism, of the immediate post-9/11 climate of public and media sentiment. But here's the rub – through this thesis' research, I realize that I was superimposing a critical reading of "media" coverage onto journalists (the individual level), when the output I was studying was the outcome of a complex series of processes, players, and structures – the media (the macro level). In other words, I was equating the former with the latter in a glaring error of logic. The simple fact is that journalists are not the media. Journalists are individuals operating within, and sometimes outside of the amoebic structure that is the media. And although they vary by skill level, experience, and penchant for critical reflection, they are just as capable as a critical anthropologist when it comes to looking beyond simple narratives of good and evil washing over this so called new world order. But they aren't free-spirited intellectuals (neither are cultural anthropologists for that matter). Journalists relinquish their right to more extreme critical and unadulterated reflection (unfortunately) the minute they step into a newsroom, or in this thesis' case, onto the so-called barren landscape of Afghanistan with a satellite phone and a deadline. They

are agents operating within the structurally-limiting mezzo level, but not necessarily limited realm of the Canadian media. It is this mezzo level, and all the conflict, dissent, and acquiescence that it generates among those individuals who attempt to navigate its maze-like corridors, that became the focus of this thesis – a narrative of structure and agency taking its cues from French theorist Pierre Bourdieu. Having spun my own academic tale of Afghanistan, it falls to the conclusion to: review and refresh all the jigsaw-like insights scattered throughout this thesis, locate the space between these individual insights (and cases where more insight is needed), and reflect on the capability of this thesis to hunt the mezzo.

Part I: From one to five – chapter objectives and findings

Before the work of delineating the mezzo began, the introduction set up a few basic concepts to work from and keep in mind respectively – the notion of agency and constraints, and the larger socio-cultural concept of Eurocentrism. In terms of the former, I reviewed sociological conceptions of structuralist and volunteerist thinking, with media-related permutations in the valuable but somewhat determinist work of Chomsky and Herman (1988), who tend to remove the journalist from the equation in a larger process of propaganda distribution, and Miljan and Cooper (2003), who tend to blame journalists for a “liberal bias” in the press. The trick, I argued, was to describe a method which “accounts for both structure and agency” (Harket et al. 1990) – namely Bourdieu’s concept of habitus which accounts for a journalist’s personal socialization (not necessarily in the media field *per se*) without assuming that such socio-cultural influences determine their actions, or agency. As for the environment in which a journalist operates, whether exploring the newsroom or

globalized reporting contexts, constraints on agency range from institutional, to situational, to logistical, to cultural impediments, to name a few. On the other hand, my cultural anthropological training (Clifford 1988; Clifford & Marcus 1987; Marcus & Fischer 1986) had instilled in me recognition of cultural constraints, the extent of which cannot easily be traced through interviews, or even a quick review of media texts. After all, Bourdieu was not specifically referring to cross-cultural interaction. Thus I reviewed concepts of Eurocentrism, or a sort of cultural “lens” through which one ethnicity views the other (Shohat & Sham 1994, p. 22). Agency or no agency, how would journalists measure up to culturally sensitive reporting? Thus, with these two threads, I set up the central question of this thesis – how does one delineate agency within an environment of constraint while remaining conscious of the power of representation, particularly in the context of Afghanistan?

Chapter 2 moved from setting-up research concerns to establishing a theoretical map from which to springboard into primary research material in subsequent chapters. I wanted to review socio-cultural workplace/organizational studies of newsrooms, linking them to Bourdieu’s larger theory of practice and his concept of fields in order to establish a concrete conceptualization of the environment in which journalists operate on an abstract level. To begin, I introduced Bourdieu’s theory of practice equation, which reads (*Habitus x Capital*) + *Field* = *Practice* (Bourdieu 1984, p. 101). Of specific import was the blending of habitus with the field, the latter of which was defined as “a structured social space,” containing people who dominate and others who are dominated,” “constant, permanent relationships of inequality,” and “a space in which various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of

the field” (Bourdieu 1998, p. 40-41). Agents operating within the structuring influence of habitus and field result in struggle for capital – whether capital exists in a material or symbolic sense as actors use the prestige of their particular field’s capital currency – to establish themselves in the field (in this thesis’ case, the media field). Moving from the theory of practice to fields theory, the basic premise of which revolves around conflict between one field, such as the media field, and the field of power, which (in Western society) involves the field of economics (predominately) and the field of politics (see Bourdieu 1994), it was found that the field of economics exerts an influence on the media field and the larger field of cultural production to which journalism belongs. This is achieved by disrupting the internal logic and non-material symbolic capital of the field being affected (in this case the journalism field). Thus, while journalism proper might be considered an independent field which reports on social happenings in order to inform the public and create political dialogue, the influence of the economic field moves journalism from this autonomous pole to a more heterogeneous one, or one in which the symbolic power associated with the economic field, namely material capital, corrupts the sanctity of all the values of balance, objectivity, social service, and public good associated with journalism. In other words, the definition of being a good journalist becomes a discursive battle in which traditional journalistic values of informing the public of essential information to facilitate their participation in a society of governance conflicts with economic values of writing a dramatic story to increase market share at the expense of an accurate portrayal of the facts. Does being a good editor mean covering as much of the globe as possible to facilitate world citizenship, or does it

mean cutting bureaus to cut costs, pulling global stories from wires and parachuting reporters into zones of conflict without proper cultural sensitivity training so as to revel in the drama and misrepresentation of proximity coverage that brings to the reader a world full “ethnic wars, racist hatred, violence and crime” (Bourdieu 1998, p. 8)? On the other side of the field of power, does the influence of the political field emanating from politics and their particular form of spin-doctoring compromise the integrity of an independent journalistic presentation of the facts either because journalists are susceptible to the particular narrative (and potentially socio-cultural) discourses of those in positions of power (Gans 1979, p. 281), or their reliance on so-called authority sources (Bourdieu 1998, p. 7, 69-70; see also Ericson et al. 1989, p. 95), or a climate of acquiescence to political power in the newsroom that makes deviating from standard narratives and thus cultural truisms risky in terms of maintaining one’s position in the media field (Bourdieu 1998, p. 15)? These were the basic academic issues raised in chapter 2, which were then linked with organizational studies of newsrooms and practices to establish and “prove” that such discourses of critical concern have taken place – in somewhat other forms – mainly in terms of ethnographies of the media produced in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Tuchman 1972, 1978; Epstein 1973; Gans 1979; Fishman 1980).

Having established the limits of theoretical discourse in chapter 2, chapter 3 began the slow process of analyzing the Canadian coverage of Afghanistan. It did so by acknowledging structural critiques of foreign media coverage, including the downsizing of foreign bureaus and the continued reliance on proximate coverage – or the selective coverage of countries based upon whether they are relevant to a

reporting country's political interests and/or values (Gans 1979, p. 37), and/or similar in terms of distance, language, economic system and/or democratic freedoms (ibid.; see also G. J. Robinson & Sparkes 1977, p. 131-2, 141-2) – and juxtaposing these concerns with the activities of Canadian editors and managers. Thus, what emerged from interviews was a distinct commitment of the foreign desk to the symbolic power of journalism proper. In other words, a commitment to maintaining a foreign presence around the globe and trying as much as possible to provide context to readers to facilitate global citizenship. However, the influence of the heteronomous (in this case economic field) established in academic critiques did play out in the discursive space of interview subjects who admitted to needing to balance journalistic objectives with economic ones. Proximate coverage could not be avoided – there was just not enough money to go around; alternatives in terms of global coverage including parachute and swat team reporting, as well as relying on wire stories to fill the gaps had to be facilitated in order to maintain what they could of foreign reporting. Thus, this thesis's first group of agents displayed their struggles within the field that included struggles from without. In the end I came to the conclusion that proximate coverage was also facilitated by editors' perceptions of audience interest.

The next chapter introduced the nine journalists in this investigation who covered Afghanistan, focusing on how they responded to the call to Central Asia – what they covered, how, and why. Recovering the first-hand perspective lost in critical analyses of the text alone, it: established basic demographic information of journalists interviewed in order to establish habitus-related information like age, gender and ethnicity, as well as the acquisition of field-dependent seniority; explored agency and

journalistic autonomy relative to motivation and identity politics; excavated journalist-Afghan relations; and finally, discussed the ways in which journalists collude or collide with the foreign desk. While many interesting findings were discovered, three significant ones will be listed here. 1) For one, journalists interviewed had diverse interests and motivations for covering Afghanistan, bringing these penchants with them into the field – confirming that habitus-related identity politics and objectives are very much alive and well in the field of journalism. 2) Secondly, interview data uncovered the very real unevenness of journalist-Afghan relations – the “culture of belief” (Couldry 2000) surrounding journalists in Western society and the symbolic power and authority they wield within it did not translate to Afghanistan, a comparably unmediated country. As a consequence, journalists had to abide by Afghan culture, which limited their access to certain interview subjects, particularly women, and forced them to discard objective neutrality, hopping into warlord-armed vehicles in order to guarantee themselves a modicum of safety and borrow from the symbolic power of another culture in order to facilitate the reporting process. 3) Lastly, while journalists were very much aware that the journalism field was influenced by market imperatives (read the economic field), this did not stop them from subverting these influences by small acts of resistance, from failing to communicate with editors before pursuing certain stories, to actively fighting leaving the field. And while disrupting the chain of command by ignoring it didn’t necessarily endear “rogue” journalists to their editors, I argued that these acts of resistance also upheld classic journalistic imperatives like sticking to the story, reinforcing the public legitimacy of news organizations’ journalists and thus the news organizations

themselves. This allowed media organizations to reap the benefit of added symbolic capital, and financial capital given that such dedicated journalism likely produced dramatic narratives to entice news consumers. Thus, chapter 4 touched on habitus, agency, field, and inter-field dynamics while accounting for inter-cultural interactions. What was left, after recognizing the limits of relying exclusively on subject-centred data, was an examination of the text.

Chapter 5 moved from subject-centred data to the articles they produced in an effort to balance the claims of journalists interviewed against the production and representation of sources in the text. It began by looking at quantitative sourcing data. Three significant observations resulted: 1) women and the Taliban represented a tiny fraction of sources; and 2) so-called elite sources like Western and Afghan political and military players did not dominate source representation as some domestic studies have found (Hall et al. 1978; Tuchman 1978; Gans 1979). Appended to this finding, Western authoritative sources did dominate Afghan authoritative sources. However, 3) the overarching story lines in which sources were characterized revealed a tendency to interpret Afghan actors according to the objectives of the Western Eurocentric political field, not in an absolute sense, but in terms of larger narratives of the superior West and its backwards East. Thus on the one hand, journalists interviewed were willing and able to perform reality checks on certain aspects of the Western narrative of the essentialness of taking the War on Terrorism to the failed state of Afghanistan and subverting notions like: the Taliban are uniformly radical and evil and did not rise to power in Afghanistan with any legitimacy; and Afghan women will be liberated once white men save brown women from brown men; and

(to a lesser extent) factionalism in Afghanistan is atavistic. On the other hand, these critiques were not expansive, consistent, or deep enough on a historical and political level to recognize the role of Western powers in facilitating Afghanistan's continued "backwardness," as well as the very real and recent history of (mostly) Western economic imperatives in the region. As a result of these oversights, it wasn't just women that needed saving – it was all of Afghanistan's failed (brown) society.

Part II: Discussion – finding the space between, and not

By using multiple points of focus, this thesis aimed to produce as complete a picture as possible of the field of journalism and the agents that operate within its fractured borders. Thus, journalists and editors/managers were queried, looking for points of similarity and difference to better excavate agency and constraints as well as the structuring but not structured influence of the habitus and field. As well, journalists' individual histories and motivations were recorded, looking for difference across the field to better understand how this may have translated into differences in texts.

While some of my research yielded results that were definitive, some was less conclusive. For one, discovering the very real tension between editors and journalists as both groups struggled to define whether to tip their hats to economic or journalistic objectives did work. It revealed a concrete actualization of extra-field tension, reinforcing and legitimizing Bourdieu's conceptualization of the paramount role of the field of power. In terms of differences between journalists, very different interests and motivations did result in preoccupations within the text on different sources and

story lines, despite the fact that all journalists interviewed were middle-class Canadians working for the prestige press.

In terms of less conclusive results, two points must be noted, including the linkages between gender, race, and class in reporting, and a comprehensive examination of the political field in relation to the journalistic field. On the former, this investigation only revealed the uppermost tip of the proverbial iceberg in terms of gendered, racial, and class-based differences in reporting. With only three female sources, one visible (two ethnic) minorit(ies), and a fairly uniform group of middle-class journalists as sources, there simply wasn't enough information to draw any specific conclusions regarding how, if applicable, fractures within Canadian society might translate into different perspectives and reporting foci. Hamida Ghafour and Hilary MacKenzie did indicate their interest in covering women – but judging from texts produced, so did Freeman, York, and Potter. Additionally, Ghafour did show a tendency to contextualize the situation facing women, avoiding structural narratives of saving Afghan women, but reality checks on this topic were (to various extents) provided by most other journalists. Lastly, while Ghafour, MacKenzie, and Freeman showed an interest in speaking to even the most economically downtrodden, it was impossible to link this to their class backgrounds. Although journalists were asked to include income-related information on their surveys, (only a few of whom complied), unfortunately, they were not asked for their class-based family histories. Attempts to re-contact journalists regarding this sensitive topic were met with disinterest. What is important to note then is that this investigation was not set up to adequately report on differences in gender, race, and class in terms of reporting, even though it was

recognized as an important in terms of habitus and field. On this, research findings can only be considered indicative of some sensitivity on the part of some journalists to the complicated issues surrounding race, gender, and class, but there is little evidence from the small amount of data collected that they followed through in their media reports with race, gender, and class-sensitive reporting.

As for the political field, I did not have access to agents operating within the field of politics beyond Western sources, such as Alliance sources, and I was only able to juxtapose critical academic readings of the geopolitical context of Afghanistan with journalists' interpretations of the Afghan conflict in media texts. While this process did reveal a level of continuing Eurocentrism (though not comprehensively) in terms of both a resistance to, and acceptance of certain Western cultural and political narratives of East and West, it also tended to lose the space between, settling uncomfortably in the macro level at the expense of the analytically-rich mezzo level. I know that journalists tended to characterize Afghans as "in need" of Western intervention, I might even know why in terms of the deeply embedded Eurocentric tendencies that work their way through the subtext of Western society, but I don't know how Afghan political and Western journalistic fields interact to produce this reading. After all, journalists interviewed may have disclosed some of the logistical (and in one case economic) constraints that predisposed them to simplify and construct story lines to reinforce Eurocentrism, they certainly did not say that they were being Eurocentric. They definitely didn't admit to any form of cultural bias, or the perpetuation through journalistic texts of their own government's cultural bias. An adequate investigation of the mezzo level would require interviews with political

sources – particularly the Alliance elite – and a qualitative analysis specifically of politically-focused news texts in which the presentation of political objectives was a greater sum of the academic focus. However, analysis of the journalists' media accounts did clearly show a lack of sources, history, and context cited that would have demonstrated that they have sufficient grasp of the situation to inform readers reliably.

Part III: Coda – hunting the mezzo

Social reality is not static, and its agents don't sit frozenly, ready to have their sociological picture snapped from an academic camera balanced precariously on a distant (and thus objective) ivory precipice. Just as my interest in the coverage and covering of Afghanistan derives from my own habitus and the tensions between cultural anthropology and journalism that this represented in terms of being a significant enough disjuncture to warrant further exploration (but never resolution), so do the interests of journalists derive from their own distinct and incubated motivations. This point – I would argue – was established in my investigation. Additionally, moving from habitus to field, my investigation also delineated the structuring but not structured influence of the journalism field in interaction with the field of power. Thus, rather than establishing a unidirectional reading of media practitioners and texts that highlighted the tendency towards dramatic, market-generating, extra-ordinary coverage, I focused on struggle and negotiation, which was definitely apparent in my analysis of the interviews conducted with the journalists and my content analysis of their media reports. Journalists and editors, it was discovered, are constantly negotiating, fighting against, and submitting to influences within and

outside of the field. From organizational, to situational, to logistical, to economic, to political constraints, journalists and editors balanced structure with agency according to their own symbolic objectives, illuminating, in their battles, the mezzo level, and by extension, the space between.

Appendix 1: Post 9/11 Timeline: Canadian Military and Diplomatic Activities

September 11th, 2001

Al-Qaeda terrorists bomb the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon.

September 19th, 2001

CIDA contributes \$1 million to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to help respond to the emerging needs of refugees in the region. By October 17th, 2001, overall refugee assistance totals \$16 million* since 9/11.

October 1st, 2001

Canada announces plans to ease sanctions against Pakistan by converting up to \$447 million in outstanding loans owed into development funds. Economic austerity measures were imposed in 1998 after Pakistan performed tests on nuclear weapons. Following Pakistan President Musharraf's decision to join the international coalition against terrorism, Canada reduced these measures in support of Pakistan's change of heart. The country was also one of the few to support the Taliban.

October 7th, 2001

U.S. and British forces launch the first wave of air strikes in Afghanistan designed to strike training camps and military installations belonging to Afghanistan's Taliban leadership and Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda organization.

October 17th, 2001

More than 900 Canadian troops head to the Arabian Sea to join U.S. and British forces. They leave aboard the HMCS Charlottetown, HMCS Iroquois and the supply ship Preserver. They join two other Canadian frigates. A sixth ship joins later. The mission is part of Operation Apollo, Canada's first combat operation since the Korean War. The operation is also Canada's military contribution to the international campaign against terrorism. The mission runs from October 2001 until October 2003.

Nov. 9th, 2001

The Northern Alliance takes Mazar-e-Sharif from the Taliban. Two days later, the Northern Alliance takes Taloqan in the north.

Dec. 7th, 2001

The Northern Alliance takes Kandahar. Canada begins shipment of food aid that sees the government match 4-to-1 public donations collected by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Dec. 19th, 2001

Former Defence Minister Art Eggleton confirms that about 40 members of Joint Task Force 2 (JTF-2), Canada's counter-terrorism unit, are in Afghanistan in and around Kandahar.

December 2001

The Bonn Agreement – Under the UN, Afghan groups meet in Germany to develop a framework for governance. The Agreement calls for the establishment of an Interim Administration, the holding of an emergency Loya Jirga (a council of community leaders) in 2002, and the appointment of a Transitional Authority and the construction and adoption of a national constitution prior to holding national elections.

The Federal Budget – The Canadian government pledges \$100 million in humanitarian aid and reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan. As the Transitional Authority comes into being in January, Canada earmarks \$1.5 million in order to support the re-establishment of peace and social services in Afghanistan.

Jan. 4th, 2002

A U.S. soldier is killed – the first American military casualty directly caused by enemy fire in the three-month-long conflict. Sgt. First Class Nathan Ross Chapman, 31, a Green Beret, was killed on a mission in a remote area near the Pakistan border.

Jan. 7th, 2002

Former Defence Minister Art Eggleton announces that about 750 Canadian soldiers, members of CFB Edmonton's Third Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, will be sent to Afghanistan by mid-February as part of Operation Apollo.

January 2002

The International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan is held in Tokyo, Japan. Former Minister for International Cooperation Susan Whelan announces that Canada will support peacebuilding, the reintegration of refugees and displaced peoples, demining, food and medical aid, and efforts to establish gender equality.

February 2002

Soldiers are deployed to Kandahar for six months as part of Operation Apollo. The 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Battle Group (Edmonton) takes part in offensive operations against the Taliban regime. The Group is supported by a squadron of Coyote armoured reconnaissance vehicles and combat support elements. After six months at Kandahar airfield, the troops return home in July 2002. Operation Apollo continues in the Gulf Region with about 1,300 naval, air force, ground force, and logistical personnel. All Apollo operations cease in October 2003, when existing operations finish or are re-designated as part of Operation Athena.

March 2002

Operation Anaconda brings 16 Princess Patricia's to the mountains of Paktia Province east of Gardez. Anaconda is a U.S.-led coalition effort to search the mountains for al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters. Soldiers come under fire. Al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters are killed.

March 13th – 19th, 2002

Operation Harpoon – a joint Canada-U.S. operation – is a similar mission in roughly the same area as Anaconda. Land and air forces are used to destroy a small pocket of Taliban and al-Qaeda resistance. The land component is under the tactical command of Lieutenant-Colonel Pat Stogran. A U.S. platoon finds and destroys cave and bunker complexes.

March 25th and 26th, 2002

Earthquakes strike Baghlan Province, Afghanistan. Thousands of homes are lost and over 1,800 lives.

April 17th, 2002

An aerial bomb is accidentally dropped during a live-fire exercise at Tarnak Farm, a training area about 5 km south of the Kandahar airfield. Four 3 PPCLI soldiers are killed and 8 others wounded. U.S. forces are responsible.

May 4th – 6th, 2002

Operation Torii takes coalition forces to the Tora Bora region of Afghanistan. Conducted by LCol Pat Stogran, the international task force includes 400 Canadian soldiers. Their mission is to find and destroy al-Qaeda and Taliban cave complexes and gather intelligence. Burial sites are discovered.

June 30th – July 4th 2002

Most of the Patricia's are deployed in Zobol Province, 100 km northeast of Kandahar. Their mission is to establish a coalition presence in the region. A sweep operation takes place in Shin Key Valley that produces intelligence information. Rockets are also found. Relations are forged with the province's governor and humanitarian aid is distributed.

July 28th and 30th, 2002

Patricia's are repatriated. Operation Apollo is scaled back.

November 2002

Afghanistan opens an embassy in Ottawa.

March 2003

Canada renews its commitment to development assistance. CIDA pledges \$250 million in new aid over two years, bringing its contribution to Afghanistan since 1990 to \$500 million.

March 20th – May 1st, 2003

U.S. and coalition forces (not including Canada) launch war in Iraq, deposing former President Saddam Hussein and his government. Journalists in research interviews complain that Iraq deflected attention from Afghanistan.

April 2003

Afghanistan opens a consulate in Toronto.

August 2003

Operation Athena begins. Athena, concentrated mainly around Task Force Kabul, is the Canadian Forces' 900 soldier-strong, 24-month contribution to the NATO-led, UN-authorized International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul, Afghanistan. The mission involves assisting the Afghan Transitional Authority in providing a safe and secure environment within Kabul and its surrounding areas. To date, there have been four six-month deployments of Canadian Forces.

September 2003

Canada opens an embassy in Kabul, enhancing diplomatic relations with the Afghanistan transitional authority under President Hamid Karzai. Christopher Alexander is named Canada's Ambassador to Afghanistan.

October 2nd, 2003

Two Canadian soldiers die when their ILTIS jeep hits a landmine.

December 2003

Loyal Jirga approves new constitution.

January 27th, 2004

Corporal Jamie Brendan Murphy dies from an explosion while patrolling near Kabul. Three others are wounded. The explosion is believed to be the result of a suicide bomber.

March 2004

The government announces the March 2004 Federal Budget. CIDA renews its commitment to development investment in Afghanistan, with \$250 million in new funds targeted to four of the priorities identified by the Afghan government in its National Development Framework and budget: rural livelihoods and social protection, security and the rule of law, and agriculture and natural-resource management. In total, Canada's contribution to Afghanistan totals more than \$616 million to be distributed until 2009.

October 9th, 2004

Presidential elections are held. Hamid Karzai wins with 55.4 % of the vote. Over \$1 million Afghans registered to vote.

December 2004

Canada announces \$1 million to fund counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan, in addition to \$15 million in funds for other development projects. Funding is part of March 2004 budget.

Spring 2005

Parliamentary elections, expected to be held in the spring are delayed until the fall, 2005.

May 2005

Military Operations – Canada reaffirms its commitment to the ISAF by extending its 24-month ISAF operations. In August 2005, the fifth deployment of Canadian Forces (Petawawa) will take place, helping to facilitate the Afghan National Assembly and Provincial Council elections. These forces will start off at Camp Julien near Kabul, but prepare for its shut down as they relocate to Kandahar later in 2005. Starting in late July, a Provincial Reconstruction Team will also be sent to Afghanistan. The Reconstruction team will transfer to NATO leadership – from U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom – in 2006. In February 2006, Canada plans to increase its presence in the region by deploying a brigade headquarters and an army task force in Kandahar, for nine and 12 months respectively. In sum, new deployments involving more than 2,000 soldiers signal a renewed focus on the south of Afghanistan – a volatile area with a greater level of insurgency. As well, the increase in Canadian operations comes after an increase in Taliban and militant operations in the region which are expected to continue as preparations continue for fall elections.

Diplomatic Relations and Development Assistance – Afghan Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah visits Canada. Canada reiterates its support of upcoming parliamentary and provincial elections to the tune of \$8 million dollars – part of the \$250 million in new funds announced in March 2004.

July 2005

Military brass announces the JTF2 will hunt al-Qaeda in Afghanistan after terrorist attacks in London shake the international community.

* All funds are in Canadian dollars.

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York, G. (2001, November 1). War on terror: industry thrives on land-mine victims. *Globe & Mail*, p. A16.

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York, G. (2001, December 8). Fall of Kandahar: chaos in Kandahar: dreams of peace shattered: terrified residents take cover as warlords battle for control of ex-Taliban stronghold. *Globe & Mail*, p. A7.

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York, G. (2002, August 7). Holy war engulfs Afghan feminist. *Globe & Mail*, p. A1.

York, G. (2002, August 10). Morning radio show takes Kabul by storm: an Islamic nation awakens to novelty of Western-style press freedoms. *Globe & Mail*, p. A13.

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York, G. (2002, September 10). Year on the edge: photo exhibit a window on Sept. 11 for Afghans: visitors to Kabul gallery finally see what caused war in their homeland. *Globe & Mail*, p. A3.

How long have you been employed/on contract with this organization: _____

Part III – Foreign Correspondent-related work information

1) How many assignments abroad have you worked?

- 1 2 3 4 5+

2) In chronological order beginning with most recent, please list the assignments that were in a zone of conflict, if any:

3) Did you receive any injuries while on assignment in zones of conflict (excluding Afghanistan)? Y/ N

Describe:

4) Did you receive any injuries while on assignment in Afghanistan? Y/ N

Describe:

5) Did you receive conflict zone training in preparation for a zone of conflict assignment (excluding Afghanistan)? Y/N

Name the course(s) and/or instructor(s):

6) Did you receive conflict zone training in preparation for Afghanistan? Y/N

Name the course(s) and/or instructor(s):

7) Did you receive language training in preparation for Afghanistan)? Y/N

List the language(s) studied:

I studied the abovementioned language(s) for:

- 1 day 1-2 wks 2-4 wks other, please specify:

8) Did you receive language training in preparation for a zone of conflict assignment (excluding Afghanistan)? Y/N

List the language(s) studied:

I studied the abovementioned language(s) for:

1 day 1-2 wks 2-4 wks other, please specify: _____

9) Did you prepare for Afghanistan independently? Y/N

If so, please check areas studied:

geography language culture economy history colleagues

current military situation other, please specify: _____

10) Were you satisfied with your total preparation/training for Afghanistan? Y/N

If not, what would you have liked to study, or study more of?

geography language culture economy history

current military situation other, please specify: _____

11) How long in total did you spend in Afghanistan?

1-2 wks 3-4 wks 5-6 wks 7-8 wks 9-10 wks 11-12 wks

13+wks, please specify: _____

12) Please circle the cities/towns you worked from while covering Afghanistan:



13) While in Afghanistan, you stayed with: *(please check the appropriate boxes)*

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CND military | US military | Other military forces, please specify: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Northern Alliance | Eastern Alliance | Warlords |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other journalists | Humanitarian workers | Ex-patriots |
| | | Civilians, [ethnicit(ies)]: _____ |

14) How many stories did you file, approximately, while covering Afghanistan?

- 5-10
 11-20
 21-30
 31-40
 41-50
 51+

15) Did you travel with safety gear while covering Afghanistan? Y/N

List briefly: _____

16) a) List briefly the communications technology you used to cover Afghanistan:

b) Did it help or hinder your ability to get the story you wanted? Helped/Hindered

17) While covering Afghanistan, how many fixers did you rely upon? 1 2 3+

Stringers? 1 2 3+

Freelancers? 1 2 3+

18) Did you receive any post-assignment counseling after Afghanistan? Y/N
If so, for how long?

- 1 wk 1-2 mnths 3-4 mnths 4 mnths+

19) Do you want to take part in any foreign correspondence work involving zones of conflict again? Y/N/Not Sure

20) Is there anything you would like to add to the survey or are there topics you would like to raise further in the interview portion of this research?

(Thank you for your participation in this portion of the research process. Your time is very much appreciated).

Appendix 4 – Journalists and media-related personnel interviewed

Amber, Arnold, Executive member of the International Federation of Journalists and member of the Canadian Media Guild's "Hostile Environment Committee." Interview conducted on March 24th, 2004.04.07

Atkins, Jim, Former Foreign Desk Editor at the Toronto Star. Interview conducted on March 17th, 2004.

DiManno, Rosie, Reporter/Columnist with the *Toronto Star*. Interview conducted on June 29th, 2005.

Donovan, Kevin, Reporter/Editor with the *Toronto Star*. Interview conducted on June 17th, 2005.

Downey, David, Executive Producer of CBC National Radio News, Interview conducted on March 26th, 2004 and March 29th, 2004.

Fisher, Gordon, Corporate Representative for CanWest Global. Interview conducted on March 23rd, 2004.

Fisher, Matthew, Working relationship (reporting) with *CanWest*. Interview conducted on June 18th, 2005.

Freeman, Alan, Foreign Correspondent for the *Globe & Mail*. Interview conducted on June 16th, 2005.

Ghafour, Hamida, Stringer for the *Globe & Mail*. Interview conducted on June 22nd, 2005

Hanafin, Joe, of CEP. Interview conducted on March 22nd, 2004.

Hoff, George Executive Producer for Newsgathering at CBC Television News. Interview conducted on March 31st, 2004.

Hurst, Robert, President of CTV News, Interview conducted on March 1st, 2004

LeBlanc, Richard, Corporate Manager of Benefits, CBC. Interview conducted on March 24th, 2004.

Loong, Paul, World Desk Editor of the Canadian Press. Interview conducted on March 23rd, 2004

MacKenzie, Hilary, Former Washington Bureau Chief for *CanWest*. Interview conducted on June 28th, 2005.

Maskell, Keith, Communications with the Canadian Media Guild. Interview conducted on March 23rd, 2004.

McCabe, Aileen, Foreign Editor at CanWest News Service. Interview conducted on March 5th, 2004.

McParland, Kelly, Foreign Desk Editor of the National Post. Interview conducted on February 27th, 2004.

Potter, Mitch, Former Features' Writer/Reporter, current Foreign Correspondent with the *Toronto Star*. Interview conducted on June 11th, 2005.

Roy, Don, Strategic Planner for Strategic Affairs with the Department of National Defence. Interview Conducted on March 23rd, 2004.

Schiller, Bill, Foreign Desk Editor of the Toronto Star. Interview conducted on March 2nd, and March 17th, 2004.

Sevunts, Levon, Former contract reporter with the Montreal Gazette (currently a freelancer). Interview conducted on June 30th, 2005.

Siddiqui, Haroon, Columnist for the Toronto Star. Interview conducted on March 15th, 2004.

Stackhouse, John, Foreign Desk Editor of the *Globe & Mail*. Interview conducted on March 15th, 2004.

Steel, Darren (Captain), Public Affairs Officer with the Department of National Defence; J5 Public Affairs Operation. Interview conducted on March 23rd, 2004.

Wyatt, Steve, Editor-in-Chief for Global Television Network. Interview conducted on March 17th, 2004.

York, Geoffrey, Foreign Correspondent for the *Globe & Mail*. Interview conducted on June 21st, 2005.

LETTER OF INFORMATION

PERTAINING TO LIVE SUBJECT RESEARCH CONDUCTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRODUCING A MASTER'S THESIS IN THE FIELD OF JOURNALISM STUDIES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM, FACULTY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT, CARLETON UNIVERSITY

Master's Student Researcher:

Michelle French,
master's student,
School of Journalism and Communication,
Carleton University

Supervisor:

Kirsten Kozolanka,
Assistant Professor,
School of Journalism and Communication,
Carleton University
(613) 520-2600 x 6709
kkozolan@connect.carleton.ca

Ethics Committee Contact:

Leslie MacDonald-Hicks, Research Ethics Committee Coordinator,
Carleton University
520-2517
leslie_macdonald-hicks@carleton.ca

To Whom It May Concern,

June, 2005

If you are the recipient of this letter of information, it is because you have traveled to Afghanistan as a journalist or freelancer for a Canadian media outlet sometime between September 11th, 2001 and September 11th, 2002.

I am contacting you as part of a coordinated effort to collect primary research on the experiences of media practitioners who have reported from Afghanistan, with particular focus on post-9/11 media production. As master's student researcher at Carleton University within the journalism studies stream of the School of Journalism and Communication, I hope to glean from research participants their underlying experiences of working in a zone of conflict and interacting with fellow news producers, supervisory staff, other culture groups, and military personnel, etc.

PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY

I will gather the primary research for this study in two ways.

Firstly, participants will be expected to fill out and return a general questionnaire. Participants may refuse to answer certain questions while answering others, without the need for explanation. Participants should be expected to spend about 30 minutes filling out this questionnaire.

Secondly, I will be conducting one open-ended research interview with participants. Participants will be taped (audio) for data collection purposes and will be expected to allocate between 30 minutes to an hour for these purposes. Participants will not be photographed or videotaped. Although follow-up interviews are unlikely, they may be requested, in which case the participant may decide for or against further participation.

BENEFITS/RISKS OF PARTICIPATION AND A STATEMENT ON ANONYMITY

The benefits of participating in this research project are numerous, beginning with directly contributing to the gathering of information on the state of journalism and foreign correspondence from a distinctly Canadian perspective. As well, the gathering of subject-centered research ensures that news producers are at the foreground of the study – not political theory, business considerations or other research foci that treat the producers themselves as secondary to the news produced. Also, by completing the questionnaire and participating in the open-ended interviews, participants have the opportunity to qualify the basic information collected in the questionnaire, and/or information gleaned from news material produced in the field. In terms of psychological impact, a participant might benefit from being able to recount rarely disclosed aspects of the job and experiences from the field. On the other hand, it is my responsibility to warn participants that recounting personal details of their experiences in Afghanistan could prove emotionally distressing. As well, information revealed in the interview – especially personal opinions, experiences, criticisms of people, places or circumstances – is not confidential unless otherwise requested.

Issues of sexual orientation and/or ethnic identity, if reconstructed, could place risk upon producers of news, especially those still living abroad among communities that may not be accepting of either of these identity issues. That said, given the

potentially sensitive nature of these personal issues and or work-related concerns, I am willing to establish anonymity and/or confidentiality for any participant based upon an “off the record” format. In terms of anonymity, participants must state on the tape what identity markers they would like obscured, including name, gender and employer. In terms of confidentiality, participants must state on tape what information they would like struck from the record. I will strike, modify and/or obscure any and all information that participants request, in an effort to gain the most honest, trustworthy, and valuable information possible. However, participants should keep in mind that obfuscation does not guarantee that identities may not be reconstructable, but that I will make every effort to prevent identification where requested.

The participant should know that the contents of this research will appear in a master’s thesis sometime within the next year and will be widely available to the public through the Carleton University Library, the Journalism Resource Centre, and Thesis Canada. Throughout the course of the research process, participants can expect that information disclosed in the questionnaire and interviews will be discussed with my advisor, for the purpose of interpreting the research gathered. Academics outside the journalism department may also be contacted for academic advice. Participants must verbally clarify, on tape, the extent of anonymity desired throughout this stage of the research process (ie, whether anonymity will be required when conversing with academics through the research process). I will once again abide by the wishes of participants regarding this issue. Lastly, information gathered during the research process will be kept for an indefinite period of time, for purposes of potential academic and/or future journalistic work. Anonymity/confidentiality requests will be extended to all potential further academic and journalistic work, should such work arise. Research materials will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. The key will be in my possession only. I will make every effort to contact participants in the case of research information being used in an unforeseen publication.

Research findings will be available upon publishing of the thesis. If participants would like to see my researcher before this date, arrangements can and will be made according to the request and circumstances.

Participants can, at any time during the study, withdraw their agreement to participate and have data withdrawn. Participants are also not required to answer any questions, as participation is voluntary, and signing this form only confirms understanding of the research request and process. It does not oblige the participant to participate in the study.

If participants have questions pertaining to the study or wish to withdraw from the study, they can contact me, Michelle French, at the phone number or email address provided above. Alternately, participants can contact the Ethics Committee Chair of the Carleton University Research Ethics Committee with concerns or questions about their involvement in the study at:

Prof. Antonio Gualtieri, Chair
Carleton University Research Ethics Committee
613-520-2517
ethics@carleton.ca

Best Regards,

_____ Michelle French, Student Researcher

_____ Kirsten Kozolanka, Assistant Professor

_____ Date

This project has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Carleton University Research Ethics Committee.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

PERTAINING TO LIVE SUBJECT RESEARCH CONDUCTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRODUCING A MASTER'S THESIS IN THE FIELD OF JOURNALISM STUDIES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM, FACULTY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT, CARLETON UNIVERSITY

Master's Student

Researcher:

Michelle French,
Master's student,
School of Journalism and
Communication,
Carleton University

Supervisor:

Kirsten Kozolanka,
Assistant Professor,
School of Journalism and
Communication,
Carleton University
(613) 520-2600 x 6709
kkozolan@connect.carleton.ca

Ethics Committee Contact:

Leslie MacDonald-Hicks,
Research Ethics Committee
Coordinator,
Carleton University
520-2517
leslie_macdonald-hicks@carleton.ca

To Whom It May Concern,

June, 2005

As established in the Letter of Information, I understand that Michelle French is conducting research for the purposes of producing a master's thesis. I understand that her intent is to research journalists or freelancers, etc. who covered Afghanistan for a Canadian media outlet sometime on, before or after September 11th, 2001.

As a participant in this study, I understand that I will be contributing to the collection of research on the experiences of media practitioners who have reported from Afghanistan. I understand that Michelle French hopes to glean from me and other participants our underlying experiences of a) working in a conflict zone; b) interacting with fellow producers of news; c) interacting with supervisory staff back in Canada; d) interacting with other culture groups; e) interacting with military personnel; and f) interacting in any other way that either Michelle French, or other participants including myself discover to be relevant in the data collection process.

PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY

I understand that I will be expected to complete a questionnaire that reveals general personal information, and information pertaining to conflict zone experience in Afghanistan. I understand that the time estimated for completion of the questionnaire is 30 minutes.

I also understand that I will be expected to allocate 30 minutes to an hour, for the purposes of a personal, open-ended interview with Michelle French, in which I will be tape recorded unless I request otherwise. I understand that I may be called upon to provide further information through email, phone, or personal interview in the case of unforeseen circumstances, but that I have the right to decline this invitation.

BENEFITS/RISKS OF PARTICIPATION AND A STATEMENT ON ANONYMITY

I understand that I may benefit or suffer personally and/or psychologically from my participation in Michelle French's research – depending on my disposition, experiences, and temperament. I understand that answering questions of sexual orientation and/or ethnic identity could place risk upon me, especially if I'm still living abroad among communities that may not be accepting of either of these identity issues. This said, I understand that as a participant, I have the right to request any level of anonymity, from complete anonymity of name, gender, and employer, etc. throughout the entire process, or in cases of particular discomfort throughout the questionnaire/interview process. I also understand that as a participant, I have the right to request any level of confidentiality, rendering portions of our conversation "off the record." I understand that I must make my degree of anonymity and/or confidentiality clear to Michelle French, on tape, and that she will honor my request in the production of the thesis, and/or in academic communication with her advisor or other academic counselors, and in the case of further utilization of her research at an unforeseen time for academic or journalistic purposes. However, I understand that obfuscation does not guarantee that my identity is not reconstructable, but that Michelle French will make every effort to prevent identification. I understand that she will keep research material pertaining to interviews and questionnaires in a locked filing cabinet to which only she will have sole access. I understand that she will make every effort to contact me in cases where aspects of my research information will be used for purposes other than the thesis (ie. additional publications), and will also make thesis information available to me if possible before the thesis is published if requested. I understand that Michelle French's thesis will be widely available once published through the Carleton University Library, the Resource Centre at the School of Journalism, and through Thesis Canada. I understand that Michelle French will keep her primary research for an undisclosed period of time.

Throughout the research process, I understand that I may a) refuse to answer certain questions, without explanation; b) withdraw completely from the research and have my information removed as long as it is prior to publication, and c) that I may terminate participation during the interview process. Signing this form does not obligate participation.

I understand that should I have questions regarding my participation in the research, I may contact Michelle French at the above phone number or email address. I also understand that questions relating to the research can also be forwarded to the Chair of the Carleton University Research Ethics Committee at:

Prof. Antonio Gualtieri, Chair
Carleton University Research Ethics Committee
613-520-2517
ethics@carleton.ca

Finally, I understand that my signature in no way constitutes a waiver of my rights. It is merely documentation that I have been informed about what the research entails, and, on that basis, I agreed to participate.

Participant

Researcher

Date

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