

Media Interference: The Effects of Framing the “Toronto 18” Terrorists Arrests

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Carpe diem!

Abstract

The mass media function as an adjudicator of information, however the manner in which the content and context of the news is crafted may affect public perception. This study explores the media's potential to influence one's perception through the process of framing news content. Specifically, can media frames regarding the "Toronto 18" arrests in 2006 shape public perception of terrorism and influence expectations of legislative policies? The "Toronto 18" terrorists arrests serves as a case study, wherein a two-prong research approach was undertaken. First, a content analysis of *The Toronto Star's* and *Toronto Sun's* coverage of the "Toronto 18" arrests was conducted. This spanned the period from the first day of the arrests to one week later, examining any divergences between the two newspapers, as well as examining ideological differences in styles of news frames surrounding the case as the days progressed. Results revealed the two newspapers did in fact differ in emphasis. *The Toronto Star* was inclined to downplay the threat of terrorism and focused upon possible human and civil rights infringements, while *The Toronto Sun* pushed the need for stricter laws due to terrorism being a dominant and immediate threat. The primary question arising from this result is: does it really matter if the two newspapers produced different frames regarding the same topic?

This question was tested through an experiment, whereby a sample of 245 respondents was randomly assigned one of three articles. The first article from *The Toronto Sun* primed the threat of terrorism as a dominant concern and focused on the need for stricter security laws. The second article from *The Toronto Star* downplayed the threat of terrorism and focused on civil liberties being violated due to stricter security laws. The third article, also from *The Toronto Sun*, served as the control and had no relevance to the issue of terrorism; it focused on poverty. Effects from the two "treatment" articles were measured against the control. Respondents were

also given a questionnaire to measure their views and reactions to the article. Statistically significant results were found. For example, those who read the *Sun*'s "threat" frame were significantly more fearful of terrorism, less pleased with security legislation in place to protect against terrorism and less likely to believe in civil and human rights protection compared to those who read the placebo. These results confirm media frames can affect public perception of terrorism and expectations of legislative policies.

I- Introduction

Some citizens live their lives unaware of the subliminal effects of the media. The media do not sleep and are with us more often than we think. Typically, mornings begin with a cup of coffee while reading the newspaper or listening to familiar radio morning-show voices delivering the “news.” A drive to work is accompanied by voices of broadcasters spitting “newsworthy” information to the masses while the citizen subconsciously absorbs that “information.” The monotonous drive home from work is lessened by listening to the radio and hearing the media amass the day’s events through their sensationalized discourse. The “mass media do not simply ‘cover’ observable events and report facts, they animate them by turning them into narratives with plots and actors” (Street, 2001: 36). Mundane news cannot compete.

For some, the day concludes by turning back their sheets and listening to the media emit any last “newsworthy” information of the day. Once tucked into bed some fall asleep while reading the carefully selected discourse newspaper gatekeepers have selected. These cyclical events may in fact be causing more media interference than the average citizen is aware of. Media content has an insidious way of reaching and affecting citizens.

Information is being transmitted at an unprecedented speed, leaving citizens subject to information overload. For example, due to the internet citizens can learn of breaking news worldwide with the click of a mouse. In addition to the internet, satellite transmissions also allow citizens to learn of groundbreaking news 24/7. It has become a media-saturated world with the media being the primary tool in providing political information. The transparency of this provision of information is called into question, in that, every news story has a target audience and the way in which stories are written implies a presupposed set of values (Street, 2001: 53). For example, the media caters to consumers’ wants and needs. Tampering of news content

prevents citizens from receiving accurate representations of reality, in that “truth” is interrupted by media interference. This interference refers to the techniques and tools the media use when crafting news content which has the capacity to skew citizens’ perceptions of reality.

The media are powerful conduits of delivering information to the masses and their very survival depends on spewing “newsworthy” information. The delivery, however, is often compromised due to subtle techniques and tools utilized when crafting news content. Journalists are expected to report the news as a mirror image of reality (Taras, 1990). This, however, rarely occurs. The result is distortion. The *distorted mirror* model illustrates how journalists “are not passive, neutral reflectors of reality but active agents that change the reflection in some way” (Taras, 1990: 7). Journalist objectivity “is a nice goal; but in practice, the values held by journalists and related judgments about what the world is like are primary determiners of decisions on which news items run and what each means” (Alger, 1989: 101).

The distorted mirror image works in conjunction with the process of framing. Framing relates to “subtle alterations in the statement or presentation of judgment” (Iyengar, 1991: 11) in a manner that calls “attention to some aspects of reality while obscuring other elements, which might lead audiences to have different reactions” (Entman, 1993: 55). A frame therefore refers to a distinct “angle” of a news story. For example, if a news story focuses on the threat of terrorism and the need for stricter laws to combat this threat, a threat-reassurance frame is created.

Framing achieves its effects through a plethora of techniques, which can include, “metaphors, historical examples, catchphrases, depictions and visual images” (Street, 2001: 37). The effects of frames are significant as they become “an implicit part of discourse and help determine what viewers eventually understand” (Mendelsohn, 1996: 9). This technique has the potential to impact public perception or opinion of the particular topic being reported due to

tampered selection of information.

Particular newspapers generating news may hold a bias that could consequently affect the content being delivered to the masses. Furthermore, examination of the *who* (communicator) and *what* (the message) factors of media delivery is an important component in examining media effects. The effect of framing in conjunction with the distorted mirror model will be explored in order to discover how susceptible public perception is to media tampered content.

In order to test the effects of these models a two-prong research approach will be followed. The case study of the arrests of “Toronto 18” serves as the basis of determining whether varying media frames surrounding this event affect public opinion of terrorism and post 9-11 security legislation, such as the Anti-Terrorism Act. On June 2 and 3, 2006, police and security officials conducted counter-terrorism raids in the Greater Toronto Area. These raids resulted in the arrests of 18 alleged members of a terrorist cell. The terrorists allegedly sought to “behead” Prime Minister Stephen Harper, as well as other government officials. They allegedly conspired to invade the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Parliament buildings, as well as planned a series of terrorist attacks in Southern Ontario. Flashing three years forward, the accused are being tried under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

First, a content analysis of *The Toronto Star* and *The Toronto Sun* will be conducted covering the period from the first day of the “Toronto 18” arrests to one week after the arrests to examine any divergences between the two newspapers. Ideological differences in styles of news frames surrounding the case as the days progressed will be examined. Results from this content analysis will lay the foundation for subsequent exploration of how different media frames affect public perception.

Second, the effects of varying frames will be examined through an experiment. Different

articles, each with a distinct “angle” on an issue, will be randomly assigned to participants, and their responses to a series of questions will be used to determine if different frames have any effect on individuals’ perceptions towards a position on public policy. The two frames utilized for this project are: 1) the framing of terrorism as a dominant and immediate threat and the need for stricter laws, known as the “threat” frame; and 2) the downplay of the threat of terrorism and the focus on civil liberties being violated due to stricter security laws, known as the “reassurance” frame. It is important to note that it is not just the media’s impact on opinions that is being examined, but also how those opinions lead to a particular position on important public policy matters. For instance, is a “threat” frame likely to move a person to desire stricter security laws, even at the cost of civil liberties?

The event of the “Toronto 18” arrests was selected as a case study due to the relatively little media attention it has received since the initial events over three years ago, ensuring respondents would not be primed. Terrorism has become a prominent issue worldwide and it is therefore beneficial to examine individuals’ perceptions and attitudes regarding this issue. Determining whether different media sources produce diverse frames regarding the coverage of the arrests of the “Toronto 18” will lay the foundation for the further examination of whether media frames can alter individuals’ attitudes and perceptions of terrorism.

In order to examine how media frames affect public opinion, examination of relevant theories will be explored, as they are seminal in understanding the multitudinous effects of the media.

II- The Effects of the Media

The accumulated literature herein offers insight into media effects and the way media content can affect individuals’ perceptions or attitudes. The two main areas of media effects

explored in this section include the “strong” and “limited” effects of the media on public perception. Strong effects literature assumes the media has a powerful and direct effect on shaping public perception, while limited effects literature assumes the media do not directly influence public opinion but rather have a minimal effect on individuals’ perceptions. The following review will examine where these two theories reach a compromise.

A- Strong Effects

Lippmann’s (1922) seminal research launched the investigation of media effects on the masses, and his research remains a primary source in understanding the effects of the media today. His book, *Public Opinion*, concludes that the media has direct effects upon society and shapes individuals’ reality. These effects, frequently referred to as the “magic bullet” or the “hypodermic needle” model, assert that media messages are directly injected into the minds of the masses and they consequently digest the content as their own.

Lippmann revealed the media has the capacity to create a “pseudo-environment,” (1922: 25) and implant “pictures inside people’s heads,” (1922: 31) which individuals use to respond to political issues. He believed individuals do not first see and then define, rather, due to the media implanting “images” in the heads of citizens, they already have socially defined perceptions of the object of attention which skews their reality. The media is therefore directly responsible for affecting the lens through which citizens assess and perceive the world.

Lasswell (1927, 1928, 1948) also examined the “powerful effects” of the media, specifically the theory of propaganda, adhering to a psychological approach. The theory of propaganda was developed during the First World War to illustrate how citizens were manipulated by the media. Lasswell asserted that propaganda is “one of the most powerful

instrumentalities in the modern world” (1927: 220) and citizens’ receptivity to political issues is affected by the manipulation of political meanings. He believed the media functions as: 1) surveyors of world events; 2) interpreters of events; and 3) agents of political socialization of individuals. Graber (2006) expands upon these functions and adds a fourth function of the media, that being a manipulator of politics. Lasswell (1948) also created a five part question which continues to be relevant and cited today: “Who says what to whom via which channels and with what effect” (1948: 37)? He felt the media played a prominent role in deciding what events made news and what direction citizens’ attention took.

The finding that the media have the ability to directly affect individuals through a “manufactured reality” is also shared by Chomsky and Hermann (1988). They examined the “propaganda model,” whereby news is used as propaganda to keep the elite in power and in control. They question the role of elites’ power and examine how this system manipulates, imposes illusions, and deceives the ignorant. Furthermore, they contend the media have a biased world view where the press in the United States serves to maintain the U.S. government’s foreign policy interests. They examined the manner in which the U.S. media covered the same type of event in different contexts by examining media coverage of the murder of several religious figures. Results revealed excessive attention was given to priest Popieluszko in comparison to other religious figures. Media attention regarding Popieluszko was so intrusive that it not only examined the murderers, but also Popieluszko’s links to communism. This reveals not only a systematic bias in the media, but also one that is propagandist in nature.

Pratkanis and Aronson (1992) also examine the media’s role serving as a source of persuasion and propaganda. They assert that the average American consumes approximately 30 hours a week of television entailing massive amounts of persuasive advertising. This persuasion

operates through the manipulation of symbols and emotions, in that messages must be both appealing and attract attention. Citizens become immersed in a “message-dense environment” (Pratkanis and Aronson, 1992: 11). The persuasion entrenched in citizens’ lives can be defined as a form of propaganda which is “communication of a point with the ultimate goal of having the recipient of the appeals come to “voluntarily” accept this position as if it were his or her own” (Pratkanis and Aronson, 1992: 9).

Pratkanis and Aronson (1992) expand upon Petty and Cacioppo’s (1986) classification of persuasion involving two paths: peripheral and central. Peripheral refers to persuasion that entails little attention to the persuading messages but rather focuses on how citizens are attracted by cues. A cue is a signal that stimulates a response from an individual. For example, the amount of guilt associated with not having your child inoculated due to a message listing all of the health dangers associated with not inoculating, pressures the parent into accepting the message of inoculation. The amount of guilt linked to not accepting the message will determine peripheral persuasion (Pratkanis and Aronson, 1992: 28). Central persuasion entails the amount of consideration and deliberation an individual engages in to discover the transparency of the information they have witnessed. For example, any individual may consult more than one media source to determine if the message they have received is accurate. They believe modern propaganda occurs through the peripheral lens and plays on the conception of dissonance.

Dissonance occurs when an individual holds two conflicting opinions/ideas and due to feelings of discomfort the individual tries to mix these conflicting opinions to create a more comfortable feeling. This concept is developed by Festinger’s (1962) theory of cognitive dissonance, referring to how individuals try to make sense out of their surroundings, beliefs and behaviour in order to live their lives in a reasonable and meaningful manner. Propagandists use

dissonance reduction to create a “*rationalization trap*” (Pratkanis and Aronson, 1991: 36, emphasis in original). This occurs when specific feelings are aroused by the propagandist, such as guilt or shame, and then a solution is offered. For example, by purchasing whitening toothpaste negative feelings associated with yellow teeth are alleviated.

The psychology of this persuasion is hidden “in the guise of entertainment... or news” (Simmons, 2001: 27) whereby transformation of attitudes and values is attempted. Furthermore, product packaging and emotional and message appeals are hidden techniques used by the persuader to influence citizens into buying or believing the product/message the persuader has promoted. Pratkanis and Aronson (1992) stress the importance of citizens being aware of propaganda in society, as well as understanding the psychological dynamics and techniques used to try and persuade the public. In order for democracy to survive in the propagandist age, the use of fair communications must work in tandem with an informed electorate who can decipher between true and false.

Another more subtle effect of the media is its ability to alter feelings through persuasion. Adding to the examination of persuasion and feelings is Simmons et al. (2001) who assert persuasion is a form of “attempted influence in the sense that it seeks to alter the way others think, feel, or act” (Simmons, 2001: 7) in a manner that is different from coercion or material inducements. Persuasion is “*human communication designed to influence autonomous judgments and actions of others,*” (Simmons, 2001: 7, emphasis in original) but is conducted in such a subliminal manner that those being persuaded appear free from any outside interference. For example, if a little boy is playing with a toy car which a little girl wants, she will convince him to give up the car by directing his attention to a toy truck, suggesting the truck would be more fun to play with (Simmons, 2001: 8). Media personnel possess the ability to influence citizens’

judgments and decisions through the selective technique of manipulating media content, known as framing.

The evidence of powerful effects theories reveals the media can be studied as a tool of propaganda as well as a means to influence feelings. Measuring the effects of the propaganda model and the persuasive power of the media will determine if the media is a powerful force capable of injecting ideas into the minds of the masses. From these findings it is hypothesized that media content can directly influence and shape individuals' political attitudes and emotions regarding important political issues.

B- Limited Effects

Contrary to the powerful effects theory, "Columbia School" theorists believe the media do not directly influence public opinion but rather have a limited effect on individuals' perceptions (Lazarsfeld et al., 1948; Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955; Katz, 1957). Lazarsfeld et al. (1948) were among the first to examine the indirect effects of the media. They analyzed the role of the media during the American elections of 1940. They interviewed four sample groups of 600 respondents, where three of the groups were interviewed twice from May to November during the campaign. The fourth group was interviewed monthly during this period in order to measure how they developed their opinions surrounding the campaign. Results revealed the audience formulated beliefs and opinions from friends and family, rather than from media sources. These findings, also found among Smith et al. (2002), illustrate there is no correlation between media content and public perception, substantiating the view that the media do not influence, nor play a direct role in how individuals assess and judge presidential elections.

The "two-step flow of communication" model was subsequently formed, stressing the

societal influence on the transmission of citizens' information, rather than the media. Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) and Katz (1957) developed the two-step flow of communication revealing media influence "opinion leaders" (referring to those who are the most likely to be exposed to media), and how opinion leaders in turn influence the masses. They found opinion leaders have higher levels of exposure to the media than the masses, and the information gained is delivered to the populace by opinion leaders. Individuals who trust opinion leaders come to believe what they preach, hence the title "opinion leaders." This school of thought also reveals personal interaction is more influential than media exposure, illustrating the minimalist effects of the media.

This chain reaction can be further linked to Entman's (2004) "cascading activation model," where he exposes a network association among the government (administration), other elites, the media, and frame creation. Once the information from the government flows through all levels it finally reaches the public. Entman refers to this as "spreading activation," which occurs when the government spreads thoughts which are picked up by the media and the media in turn creates frames which are then transmitted to the public. Entman's conception of framing will be further discussed in the subsequent pages. But in both Entman's and Katz's theories the masses are the last to receive the message which may undermine the validity of the powerful effects theory, and offer more evidence of the "limited effects" of the media.

In order to test the assumptions of the "limited effects" theory, the case of the "Toronto 18" will be used to examine how media content affects attitudes regarding terrorism. This will be examined by comparing the opinions and attitudes of those who are exposed to a stimulus with those who are exposed to a placebo. If there is no substantial difference among these groups the limited effects theory will be validated.

1- Agenda setting

Although the media is perhaps not as “powerful” as Lippmann once believed, and media messages are not directly injected into the minds of citizens, the effects from the techniques of agenda setting, framing and priming will reveal the minimalist influence the media may wield.

The agenda setting theory analyzes how media frames affect individuals’ perceptions. Agenda setting can be broadly defined as how much importance the media attributes to specific issues. Through this process the media can set the agenda for what political issues people think about and what issues they deem legitimate concerns.

Cohen (1963) was among the early agenda setting theorists. He created a launch pad for subsequent scholars to explore how the media affects individuals and the very issues that they have opinions about. His research was focused on examining how the media can shape public opinion with regards to foreign policy. He concluded the media shapes the very issues that are seen as important for individuals to have opinions about. He declared that the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think *about*. And it follows from this that the world looks different to different people, depending not only on their personal interests, but also on the map that is drawn for them by the writers, editors, and publishers of the papers they read” (Cohen, 1963: 13).

McCombs and Shaw (1972) were the first to coin the term “agenda setting” and analyze how agenda setting affects individuals’ issue priorities. It was through their study in Chapel Hill they revealed the media had the ability to tell individuals not what to think, but as Cohen (1963) noted, what to think about. They first conducted a content analysis and investigated newspaper and television coverage regarding the 1968 presidential campaign, paying close attention to the time and space specific issues were given. This was conducted to offer an illustration of the

media's agenda. Secondly, 100 undecided voters during the 1968 presidential campaign were interviewed over a three-week period. Measuring respondents' biggest concerns and comparing them to nine mass media sources in Chapel Hill revealed that during a political campaign, the media decipher what issues or themes to include, setting the campaign's agenda which affects the cognitions of individuals. Their study found a direct correlation between the significance the media attributed to a story and the significance assigned by those individuals who were exposed to a particular media source.

Rogers and Dearing (1996) further examined agenda setting and asserted that the public agenda, once determined by the media agenda, has a direct effect on the policy agenda. They examined the effect of agenda setting in the political sphere and revealed that agenda-setting "offers an explanation of why information about certain issues, and not other issues is available to the public in a democracy; how public opinion is shaped; and why certain issues are addressed through policy actions while others are not" (Dearing and Rogers, 1996: 2).

Analyzing the intricate relationship and competition among the various agendas of the media, as well as public and policy agenda, Rogers and Dearing revealed that it is essentially through the media a social problem becomes a public problem. Rogers and Dearing (1996) also highlight the three research traditions surrounding agenda setting. These include: 1) media agenda-setting, where the dependent variable "is the importance of an issue on the mass agenda" (1996: 6); 2) public agenda-setting, where the dependent variable is the "importance of a set of issues on the public agenda" (1996: 6); and 3) policy agenda-setting, where focus is made upon policy actions due to the media and public agenda. Furthermore, they expose the two forms of investigations that have been analyzed with relation to the public's agenda: those being a hierarchical study (McCombs and Shaw, 1972) whereby all issues on the public agenda are

explored, and a longitudinal study where investigation is given to “the rise and fall of one or a few issues over time” (Dearing and Rogers, 1996: 41). Both studies offer insight into how issues are put on the public agenda, and how further examination of this particular agenda-setting tradition will aid in understanding issues on the public agenda in relation to the media’s agenda and vice versa.

Patterson and McClure (1976) further examined the way in which various media sources have different agendas and produce diverse levels of content. For example, they felt television was not as effective as newspapers in providing in-depth coverage of an event, although broadcast coverage was still effective in the agenda setting process. Their experiment, conducted during the 1972 American election, revealed the contrasts between print and broadcast media. Those who watched excessive amounts of news were not more susceptible to agenda setting effects compared to those who did not watch news frequently; however, newspaper exposure was related to agenda setting effects.

2- Second-Level Agenda Setting

Agenda setting literature illustrates the media can affect what individuals think about. Additional research has revealed the media has a second effect, that being, the media’s ability to also affect how individuals think about the particular issue.

Ghanem (1997), as well Terkildsen and Schnell (1997), expose agenda setting has a further effect, that being “how media coverage affects both what the public thinks about and how the public thinks about it” (Ghanem, 1997: 3). This distinction moves away from first-level agenda setting, exploring what issues are included for the public agenda, to the second level that examines the attributes that affect individuals. The concept of framing works in conjunction with

second-level agenda setting, in that media content is selectively created to promote a specific agenda.

“Second-level of agenda setting” asserts two main hypotheses about the notion of salience. First, the way “an issue or other object is covered in the media (the attributes emphasized in the news) affects the way the public think about that object” (Ghanem, 1997: 4). Second, the way “an issue or other object is covered in the media (the attributes emphasized in the news) affects the salience of that object on the public agenda” (Ghanem, 1997: 4).

First-level agenda setting and second-level agenda setting differ in the way in which the independent and dependent variables are operationalized and conceptualized. The independent variable in first level is the media agenda. The second-level’s independent variable is the same as the first level, however news content is analyzed through particular attributes or perspectives in news coverage. The dependent variable for both levels of agenda setting is the public’s agenda; however, the first level is operationalized by issue salience, and in the second-level “the salience of the attributes of the issue or topic are measured” (Ghanem, 1997: 4).

Second-level agenda setting will be gauged here by assessing how media content can shape one’s perception into believing that the threat of an issue is not only a dominant concern, but also the appropriate response to the threat is the solution advocated in the frame.

The media may also be able to affect individuals’ perceptions of particular people or issues through stereotyping. For example, if the media chooses to portray terrorists as Muslims, those exposed to this frame may consequently link these stereotypes to terrorism, ultimately affecting their perception of Muslims. It is hypothesized that media frames linking an attribute to a specific person will influence individuals’ perceptions of the person.

The theory of second-level agenda setting has been established and the theories of

framing and priming will be examined, as they both work in conjunction with and aid in second-level agenda setting effects. Framing and priming are techniques utilized by the media when creating news content, which have an effect on the way in which individuals perceive the message being delivered by the media. Framing and priming may reveal subtle persuasive powers far more powerful than recognized by the “limited effects” and standard agenda-setting literature.

a) Framing

Framing can best be described as “*selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution*” (Entman, 2004: 5, emphasis in original). For example, if a news story focuses solely on the threat of terrorism and the need for stricter laws to combat this, a threat-reassurance frame is created. The particular framing of content and context of a news article can profoundly effect public perception or opinion of the particular topic being framed.

Entman (1993) asserts that framing research is disjointed and lacks a common “research paradigm” (1993: 56). Scheufele (1999) responds to this dilemma by creating a process of model framing and reveals there are both media and individual frames. Media frames refer to the way in which the media tells a story and creates a reality, while individual frames refer to ideas or beliefs stored in individuals’ cognitions that aid in processing information (Entman, 1993: 53). Furthermore Scheufele classifies framing as either the independent (media effects) or dependent (influences in the creation of a frame) variable and subsequently creates a framing typology. This typology allows researchers to examine comparisons of findings, creating a “common understanding” (Scheufele, 1999: 108) and theory of framing.

His framing model analyzes four processes: 1) frame building, such as exploration as to how frames are created and the various types; 2) framing setting, similar to agenda setting, in that the salience of issues is explored, such as frames accessibility; 3) individuals-level effects of framing, which includes exploration as to why media frames affect individuals' emotions; and lastly, 4) journalists as audiences refers to examining the link between individual-level variables and media frames. For purposes of this research, examination of the empirical relationship between media frames as the independent variable and audience perception as the dependent variable will be explored.

Tversky and Kahneman (1981, 1984) examine the relationship between frames and individuals' cognitions. They analyzed the psychological aspects of framing through the experimentation of decision problems and revealed that the manner in which a decision problem is framed can affect an individual's preference about the problem. The emotional arousal produced in frames can affect the way in which individuals come to receive the frame or make it consistent with their preferences (Just et al., 2007: 238-239; Graber, 2007: 289), revealing the effect frames can have on public perception.

Researchers have examined how media frames impact individuals' political attitudes (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987; Zaller, 1992), as well as how they receive and recall the frame (Valkenburg et al., 1999; Graber, 2007; Iyengar, 1991). Notable among them are Neuman, Just and Crigler (1992) who explore how the electorate is motivated to gather information needed to be an active citizen and how citizens come to understand and learn about world events. They analyze how a frame is central to the development of a citizen's learning and creating meaning about public matters. They classify five dominant frames evident in media coverage and public discourse about politics: 1) the economic frame which stresses profits and losses and values of

the culture; 2) the conflict frame which focuses upon using conflict to attract attention; 3) the powerlessness frame which focuses on influential people or elites, at times as being powerless, such as the Dali Lama; 4) the human impact frame which focuses on individuals who are likely to be affected by an issue; and 5) the morality frame which stresses the moral value in news stories. People can learn information “at every level of cognitive ability, interest, and education” (Neuman et al., 1992: 21), however those with less knowledge rely heavily upon media presentations of events.

Their study further revealed that citizens can accept, ignore, or reinterpret frames (Neuman et al., 1992: 62) and almost everyone can learn something from the media (1992: 120). Citizens and the media use similar frames; however, they differ in the area of their applications and priorities. The media focus on issues concerning the who, what, where, when and why, while citizens use more constructions of the outside world, and filter information in a meaningful way (1992: 76-77). This for Neuman et al. (1992) is the construction of common knowledge.

Neuman et al. (1992) reveal the limited effects of the media on public perception, claiming people can think for themselves and media frames only make up a section of individuals’ schema for public issues. They do, however, reveal that those who watch television are less informed compared to those who consume print news. Television conveys information regarding issues that are of low salience, while print media conveys information about issues with high salience. Based on these findings further exploration will be made into whether exposure to different media sources can affect attitudes and perceptions regarding important political matters.

The constructivist approach utilized to analyze what people know about public affairs is perhaps best described by Gamson (1988, 1989a, 1992), Gamson and Modigliani (1989b) and

McQuail et al. (1994) who reveal frames can create symbolic constructions of reality. Gamson and Modigliani (1989b) further examine the effects of framing by analyzing an “issue frame.” They refer to an “issue frame” as a story with metaphors and catchy phrases which help individuals reason. Individuals however will use their own life histories in the process of constructing meaning. Understanding how individuals frame issues depicted in the news is of central importance to Gamson (1992) as it offers insight into how opinions are formed.

Similar to the constructivist approach is the “appraisal theory” (Step et al., 2002) wherein emotions are the effect from evaluations of events. The amount of emotional involvement regarding an issue determines the amount of media involvement. Based on this theory’s fundamental framework it is hypothesized that the way in which the media frames an issue will affect levels of emotional involvement, hence, create a sharp divide in public perception regarding the issue. For example, if the media frames an issue as a national safety concern and pushes stricter security legislation those exposed to this frame will have higher levels of fear compared to those exposed to a frame that focuses on human rights violations due to heightened security legislation.

The emotional effect of media frames has been extensively studied and correlations between media exposure and stress-related emotions have been found (Snyder and Park, 2002; Riffe and Stovall, 1989; Brown, et al., 2002), especially among children (Hoffner and Haefner, 1993; Smith et al, 2002). Furthermore, framing research has analyzed how media frames affect tolerance. Nelson et al. (1997a) supplied respondents with one of two frames regarding a Ku Klux Klan rally. One framed the rally as a freedom of speech issue, and the other framed the rally as a disturbance of public order. Results reveal those who viewed the freedom of speech frame demonstrated more tolerance for the KKK than those who were exposed to the disturbance

frame.

Domke et al. (1999) found similar results of framing effects through their experimental study, analyzing how an “altered” news frame regarding immigration affects individuals’ political judgments. Results reveal “news coverage influences the considerations that individuals draw on in thinking about political issues” (1999: 590) and secondly, issues in news stories influence which “racial cognitions are activated and how strongly those cognitions are linked to political judgments” (1999: 590). Their study confirms different frames affect individuals’ tolerance “by altering the perceived importance of public order values” (1997: 567).

Furthermore, as previous scholars noted, television is the preferred media outlet for gaining information (Ansolabehere et al., 1993) and if past research has found an effect from televised frames (Nelson et al., 1997a), then similar effects from newspaper-generated frames can be expected.

Research examining correlations between media frames and fear is best described by Altheide (1997) who coins the “problem frame—a *discourse of fear that may be defined as the pervasive communication, symbolic awareness and expectation that danger and risk are a central feature of the effective environment*” (Altheide, 1997: 648, emphasis in original) and discusses its prevalence in society. He conducted a content analysis obtaining data from *Los Angeles Times* and reports from ABC news from 1985-1994 revealing content regarding fear shifts over time and “carried with the message of fear are images and targets of what and who is to be feared” (1997: 665). The effects of Altheide’s “problem frame,” will be explored in this project, and it is hypothesized that those who are exposed to a “problem frame” will be more likely to be fearful of the problem discussed in the frame compared to those who were not exposed to a problem frame.

Further framing research has classified and created types of frames (Neuman et al., 1992; Entman, 1993, 2004; Hallahan, 1999; Altheide, 1997; Lau and Schlesinger, 2005; Domke et al., 1999; Terkildsen and Schnell, 1997), however Iyengar's (1991) distinction between "episodic" and "thematic" frames is perhaps the most well known. Iyengar's (1991) examination of how television represents issues such as crime and poverty reveals differences in frames affects individuals' perceptions of issues and policy preferences. Scholars have further advanced and examined the effects of these frames (Ansolabehere et al., 1993). Episodic frames represent "public issues in terms of concrete instances, or specific events— a homeless person," (Iyengar and Simon, 1993: 369) while thematic frames "places public issues in some general or abstract context" (Iyengar, and Simon, 1993: 369). A story that focuses on the changes of employment opportunity exemplifies a thematic frame.

Iyengar and Simon (1993) further examined the effects of framing through the experiment of analyzing coverage of the Gulf War. They revealed exposure to episodic frames strengthened individuals' support for a military resolution. Terkildsen and Schnell (1997) found similar results adding to Iyengar's (1991) findings, in that, different media frames regarding the women's movement from 1950-1995 produced varied attitudes.

Ansolabehere et al. (1993) expand on the effects of episodic and thematic frames with relation to individuals' assessments of responsibility by analyzing the effects of television frames. They revealed viewers who were exposed to a thematic frame were more inclined to assign responsibility for national issues to societal factors, while those who were exposed to episodic frames assigned responsibility to individuals. For example, when unemployment is presented in a thematic frame, views are held that blame the state. In an episodic frame, the blame shifts to the individual. Their findings confirm the effects of framing, in that, the way in

which television illustrates “national problems has the effect of either shielding or exposing politicians to the public’s attributions of responsibility” (Ansolabehere et al., 1993: 146).

Entman (1993) further expands on the exploration of framing, claiming frames are used to call attention to certain elements while omitting others and differentiates between substantive and procedural frames. He claims the way in which an issue is reported may affect the way in which people evaluate and come to understand the issue. Substantive frames essentially define the effects, identify causes, and produce moral judgments when referring to “political events, issues, or actors” (Entman, 2004: 5). Coverage of September 11 illustrates a substantive frame; the problematic effect was the large death toll; the cause, Osama bin Laden; the moral judgment, blame the evil actors; and the remedy; combat against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan (2004: 6).

Procedural frames, on the other hand are “evaluations of political actors’ legitimacy, based on their technique, success, and representativeness” (Entman, 2004: 6). For example, media coverage regarding the June 12, 1982, nuclear arms freeze rally in the United States focused upon fears displayed by demonstrators, rather than “on the rationally defensible policy proposed by the movement’s leaders, whose substantive expertise equaled that of Reagan’s advisors” (Entman, 2004: 141).

Framing can hence be thought of as a form of persuasion (Entman, 2004; Gamson and Modigliani, 1989b; Iyengar, 1991) in that a frame must convince individuals that something in fact occurred. The effect of this persuasion is measured by the relationship between media frames and individuals’ political preferences.

Nelson et al. (1997b) disagree with this function of media effects and instead argue that framing differs both theoretically and empirically from persuasion, and frames are distinct at the

psychological, as well as the message level. They acknowledge that framing is a tool persuaders utilize, however persuasion involves the presentation of a message regarding an attitude to the audience with the goal of the audience believing and absorbing this attitude, even if contradictory to their initial attitudes. Frames for Nelson et al. as well as Chong (1996) function in such a way that information individuals have stored in their memory becomes activated by the frame.

Nelson et al. (1997b) confirm that framing effects are not caused from new information, but rather from the activation of existing knowledge and that framing can affect balances of considerations that individuals weigh when thinking about political matters. Similarly, Bartels's (1993) research exploring Americans' opinions during the 1980 presidential campaign reveals a limited effect from media frames, as individuals already have strong opinions during presidential elections and media messages are rarely inconsistent with individuals' pre-existing opinions. In addition to Nelson et al.'s (1997b) findings that framing does not have a persuasive function is Wilkinson (1999) who reveals media representations of risk may in fact have little effect on individuals' worries and concerns.

Chong (1996) further investigates public opinion formation and examines how citizens connect the frame of reference to a preference. If an individual adheres to a norm or principle this may limit alternative arguments regarding the same issue. Changing individuals' attitudes does not solely rely on changing the balance of individuals' considerations towards an issue or person (Chong, 1996: 197) but also on the manipulation of priorities people hold. This relates to individuals who are primed to focus on specific beliefs rather than adding new ones. Chong (1996) explores how people reason regarding alternatives and where these alternatives come from. Specifically, he examines how people choose from an array of frames on political issues

and how individuals connect that frame to an opinion. This is furthered through his “framing model.”

The “framing model” outlines how the public “arrives at its evaluations of political issues and how common frames of reference are developed” (Chong, 1996: 200). The model is based on four basic assumptions: a) an issue can be interpreted using a number of frames of reference; b) frames influence one to take different positions on an issue; c) an individuals’ preference on an issue is attributed to the frames of reference selected and the associations between frames; and d) a frame is a specific interpretation of an issue popularized through political discussion. It is the wording of a question that is the largest factor affecting what considerations individuals use to associate a frame of reference to a position and which frame they use to evaluate an issue.

Chong deduces from multiple interviews that individuals with more knowledge will give a higher priority to deliberations that have been highlighted in public conversations of an issue. Furthermore, certain frames of reference are “easier to promote because the public is already predisposed to give priority to some dimensions over others” (Chong, 1996: 222). For example, in Canada the public has been conditioned to accept climate change as a monumental concern and are eager for a solution.¹ Chong’s framing model will be employed to examine whether media frames that link to personal frames can create a higher degree of persuasion.

In adherence to frames and themes generated by the media, Norris (1997) examined framing routines in U.S. television network news (ABC and CBS) at annual intervals from 1973 to 1995. Results confirm there have been major fluctuations over time relating to the total number of international stories. For example, during the Cold War, approximately a third of news stories were classified as international, peaking in 1980 and 1986. From 1989 to 1991

¹ The search for a solution remains elusive. For example, former Liberal leader Stéphane Dion’s “Green Shift” campaign proposal ran into severe opposition.

about 44 percent of all news stories were international peaking in 1991. From 1992 to 1995, 29 percent of all news stories were international on network news. Norris states that this trend may or may not better equip the electorate with knowledge to understand the world (1997: 288).

Exploration of how various media outlets produce different frames, as well as examination of various types of frames has been explored by an array of scholars (Strömbäck and Dimitrova, 2006; Jasperson et al., 2003; Norris, 2003; Traugott and Brader, 2003; Brown, 2003; Nacos, 2003; Fidas, 2008). Notable among them is Jasperson et al. (2003) who compared CNN and al Jazeera's media content surrounding the war in Afghanistan. Their frame analysis examined two differing news sources that reported televised news coverage during the same time period.² They focused on analyzing governance, military, and humanitarian frames from both sources. Evidence reveals a stark difference in content between media sources, as the media in the West are competing with the media in the East. For example, 62 percent of CNN's stories relating to general military activity included coverage regarding military capabilities and the elimination of the concern that lives were being lost in the battle. Conversely, 33 percent of al Jazeera's military frames focused on the "collateral damage" from U.S. bombings and were much more graphic than CNN's. This creates two starkly varying public perception pools. Based on Jasperson et al.'s findings, it is expected that *The Toronto Star* and *Toronto Sun* produced different frames regarding the arrests of the "Toronto 18", which in turn creates a vast array of public opinion regarding terrorism.

b) Priming

Iyengar and Kinder (1987) define priming as giving some attributes more attention than others, thereby making some issues more available. For example, their results revealed that

² The time period was from September 11, 2001, through to July, 2002.

“exposure to stories about unemployment elevates the importance of unemployment in overall evaluations of the president’s performance” (1987: 145). Stories generated by the media can prime the public to attribute more focus to specific issues when formulating evaluations of political figures. For Iyengar and Kinder, priming is related to framing, however priming relates to a more specific technique. They assert individuals possess limited knowledge surrounding decisions regarding political matters and must use whatever information or knowledge that comes most readily to mind.

Iyengar and Kinder analyzed the effects of priming with relation to public perception and opinion and revealed that this process changed the “standards that people use to make political evaluations” (1987: 63). Through the utilization of several experiments it became apparent that citizens judge the president of the United States based on the attributes newscasters decide to cover.

Furthermore, their results reveal “television news powerfully influences which problems viewers regard as the nation’s most serious,” (1987: 4) and that television “news has become an imposing authority, one that shapes the American public’s political conceptions in pervasive ways” (1987: 116). For example, when respondents were shown TV news clips of energy stories featuring the U.S president, their perception of the president’s performance on energy was “roughly twice as important in determining his overall performance ratings” (1987: 84) than those who watched clips that did not feature the president. Television news is therefore a force that can shape citizens’ political views.

Priming can also reveal the dynamics of persuasion through the utilization of specific and prior context on retrieval and interpretation of information. Within “the information processing framework, attitudes, needs, strategies, concepts, and norms are seen as information processing

structures, which function in differentiating the environment and integrating perceptions into beliefs and actions” (McDaniel and Lawrence, 1990: 16). Kahneman and Tversky’s (1982) research offers insight into this psychological examination of people’s judgments and performances. Their theory of cognitive psychology examines “internal processes, mental limitations, and the way in which the processes are shaped by limitations” (Kahneman and Tversky, 1982: xii). It could be argued that the media is therefore responsible for setting these limitations through their control and influence over the content in a news frame.

Miller and Krosnick (1996) also investigate the effects of priming with relation to political persuasion. They define persuasion as occurring when individuals change their “attitude in response to a message advocating a particular position or point of view” (1996: 79). This occurs when citizens find the frame of message compelling or the particular source delivering the message credible. They distinguish between persuasion, which occurs when the media delivers messages with a particular position, and priming, which is a process in which attention is given to an issue, albeit not promoting a particular position. They hypothesized that media content would only affect aspects of “public opinion that were directly implicated by a story and that the priming effect would be moderated by the relevance of the news stories to the judgments being made” (Miller and Krosnick, 1996: 84). For example, individuals who are exposed to a news story on a target issue will weigh that issue more heavily than those who are not exposed. Furthermore, they believed that the media would affect those with the most media exposure and lowest level of political knowledge. Subsequent to completing four separate studies, results confirmed priming effects.

The effects of priming can be examined in terms of the way in which specific attributes regarding terrorism have been promoted. For example, if an article solely emphasizes the

concern of another terrorist attack by promoting the attributes such as threat and fear of terrorism it will prime individuals to feel fearful and want more legislation to protect them from terrorism and furthermore they will evaluate the issue of terrorism as a dominant concern.

C- Cognitive Schema Theory

Given that individuals rely heavily on the media for information to make informed political decisions, their basis of judgment may be affected due to the techniques and tools the media use to create a frame. Media frames can be absorbed by the masses and encoded into their cognitions as their own, affecting the ways in which individuals form their attitudes, judgments, and opinions concerning important matters. If individuals rely solely on one media source the information they receive may be somewhat narrow, therefore affecting their ability to receive balanced news. The following theories offer insight into how frames and messages can become absorbed into the cognitions of citizens.

It can be said that “reporting is a form of rhetoric, it is about persuading us — the readers, the viewers — that something happened” (Street, 2001: 38), and in reality very few people actually witness the political events that are being described to the viewers (Street, 2001). Media effects analyzed through the lens of a psychologist or behaviourist examine the reception and acceptance of media messages; this is known as social cognitive theory.

Social cognitive theory entails the processes by which individuals learn through media content and examines what human qualities come between the stimulus (media message) and the response. This theory explores how cognitions can affect attitudes and behaviours, as well as examines how people survey their environment and learn from observation. Exploration into how individuals learn and process information, as well as how individual behaviour can be

shaped through media exposure, are central propositions cognitive theorists seek to investigate.

A priori to discussing schema and persuasion theories, the concept of encoding requires definition, as it works in conjunction with cognition theories. Encoding refers to “the process by which particular messages come to be represented, both intentionally and unintentionally,” (Nesbitt-Larking, 2007: 15) wherein the media is compliant in transmitting these messages to society. Analyzing the effects of the media’s control over messages and message salience can be said to create a conditioning of public perception or public opinion. This theory adheres to the “social cognitive theory” examining “how behaviour can be shaped through the observation of models in mass media presentations” (Miller, 2002: 242).

For Seiden (1974) the formation of public opinion can be understood in “one of two ways: that the public is malleable because it accepts what it is told; or that it sits in judgment on the information it receives and uses it to form its opinions” (Seiden, 1974: 64). The key to unlocking how public opinion is formulated lies in Hyman’s (1959) “political socialization” whereby values, beliefs and attitudes are learned and the media serves as the ultimate information provider. Children and adolescents are taught cognitive skills of how to reason, evaluate, and so forth, and these skills can consequently affect the way individuals process news.

Graber (1984) expands upon the conception of “political socialization” through the “information processing theory,” also known as “schema theory,” which explores how people receive media transmissions and how they process this information to formulate political opinions. Schemas refer to organized knowledge about scenarios and individuals that have been created from past situations which allow people to choose new information based on personal interests. This is used for processing new information or recovering existing information (Graber, 1984: 23). This process allows individuals to select important information from a story

to comply with their thinking, hence combining new information with existing. For example, if an individual strongly opposes the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, any element of a news story that runs counter to this belief will be flushed out by the individual, who in turn will seek portions of the story that fit their political view.

Graber's study was a year long consisting of a panel of 21 residents in Illinois with different access to and interest in the news. She examined the way people process information to form political opinions. She asserts people deal with flows of information more successfully than one may think and "obtain enough news to function effectively in their particular sociopolitical locations" (Graber, 1984: ix). She feels general understanding is retained through this process and is adequate to create fairly well-informed individuals which are essential for democracy. Results reveal people "tame the information tide quite well" (Graber, 1984: 201) through the schema process and three conclusions regarding schemas responses to news stories are drawn.

First, most individuals have a large array of schemas that are likely to surface in news stories, therefore individuals can relate to news stories and search for similarities. Second, individual schemas are limited in scope. Third, individual schemas in the study reveal a high level of shared stereotypical thinking. Her findings highlight how intelligence is also a factor in story retrieval. Those who were more intellectual were able to process information more systematically than those less intellectual. In sum, a person's mind is organized in particular ways that can lead to unique interpretations.

Adding to the literature surrounding information consumption and retrieval is Zaller (1996) who contends mass communication is a powerful force in influencing citizens who are exposed to it, and people are influenced proportionately by the amount they receive. He analyzes how individuals use the information gained from the mass media to form political preferences

and draws attention to two phenomena regarding public opinion: “how citizens learn about matters that are for the most part beyond their immediate experience and how they convert the information they acquire into opinions” (Zaller, 1992: 40).

He asserts the “interaction between political awareness and political predispositions is fundamental to the process by which citizens use information from the political environment to form opinions” (1992: 308). His “reception-acceptance model” examines the conditions under which political messages influence the public. The model includes axioms³ regarding individuals’ responses to political information they receive. The first axiom is reception, whereby the greater the “level of cognitive engagement with an issue, the more likely he or she is to be exposed to and comprehend- in a word, to receive – political messages concerning that issue” (1992: 58).

Second, the resistance axiom refers to how people resist arguments that contradict their political disposition, but “only to the extent that they possess the contextual information necessary to perceive a relationship between the message and their predisposition” (Zaller, 1992: 44). For example, if an individual is a “liberal” and is exposed to a “conservative” message, they are bound to “resist” that contradictory message. The means to resistance is the information regarding the dynamic between arguments and predispositions. He asserts that awareness can reduce the degree of persuasion, only when the complete significance of the issue is vague, however the resistance axiom still maintains its strength.

The third is the accessibility axiom which relates to the way in which a message is accepted. He asserts that the more recent a consideration has been called to mind, the less time it will take to retrieve considerations from individuals’ memories and “bring them to the top of the

³ Zaller believes the four axioms taken as a whole have empirical implications and although the axioms are not completely true, they are plausible approximations of the actual processes that occur when individuals acquire information and use this information to create statements regarding political preferences (1992: 42).

head for use” (Zaller, 1992: 48). This axiom relates well to research surrounding cognitive psychology (Converse, 1962), in that it shares the basic assumption that a concept recently used is more likely to be reused than if it was not recently mobilized. Terrorism is a good example of this process. For example, it is a “top of mind” concept that is attached to various schemas, each with their own emotional associations (e.g., fear of being attacked, or fear of a super-security state that suppresses civil rights). The stimulation of these schemas depend on what attributes of a story are “primed” and how a story is framed.

Converse (1962) can be credited with introducing the reception-acceptance dynamic. He found political awareness to be an important resistance factor due to it serving as a substitute for stored pre-campaign reflections. Furthermore, by examining the 1952 Presidential election he analyzed how low levels of public information about politics can affect voting behaviour. He revealed those who are the most exposed to the media, as well as those who are the least exposed, are difficult to influence, while those who are moderately exposed are most volatile. This illustrates how short-term partisan change might occur if information reaches the less politically aware.

In sum, Zaller’s “reception-acceptance model” reveals those with the most exposure are the most likely to receive messages, and the least likely to accept these messages, while those with the least exposure to the media are the least likely to receive the messages, but the most likely to accept. It is those in the middle who are the most malleable; they are not entirely tuned out, so they get some of the messages, and not highly sophisticated, so they can be persuaded. Based on Zaller’s “reception acceptance model,” it is expected that the acceptance of a frame is dependent upon media exposure and levels of reception.

In order to test this theory it is expected that those who are most exposed to the media

will be the least influenced by media frames because a) not only do these individuals actively seek out media sources that best suit their particular mindset, but b) more importantly, those most exposed to the media are also those who are most informed, and therefore, most resistant to influence (Zaller, 1996).

D- The Unique Implications of Framing Terrorism

The aforementioned theories reveal the various effects of the media. The application of these theories demonstrates the potential powerful effects media frames can have on individuals' attitudes, beliefs and perceptions regarding political matters, albeit, the effects will vary according to the context of a news story. The theories of framing, agenda setting, persuasion, propaganda and priming illustrate how the creation and salience of the message can affect individuals. Cognitive schema theory explores how and why media frames are received into the cognitions of individuals and reasons for susceptibility and immunity.

The amalgamation of these theories creates a multifaceted and integrated model. This model operates through the theory of second-level agenda setting by examining the ability of the media to influence what and how individuals think about political matters and ostensibly about other areas of life.

In essence this study seeks to explore the assumptions from both the powerful and limited effects theories. Both theories have established the theoretical foundation of media effects. Examining the effects of these two alternative theories will determine the extent of the mass media's influence on political perceptions. The following is a summary of the main lines of argument from both theories. However, the unique effect of terrorism-related frames must be explored, as the salience of this issue has profound implications with respect to media effects.

The powerful effects theory advocates the media's ability to directly influence individuals' perceptions and shape their reality by planting pictures in their heads (Lippmann, 1992). Furthermore, the media can manipulate politics (Lasswell, 1948) and create a manufactured reality (Chomsky and Hermann, 1988).

As previously mentioned, Chomsky and Hermann (1988) examined the manner in which the U.S. media covered the same type of event in different contexts by examining media coverage of the murder of several religious figures. They revealed not only a systematic bias in the media, but also one that is propagandist in nature.

In addition to the propagandist nature of the media, is the media's persuasive power. Pratkanis and Aronson (1992) contend modern propaganda occurs through peripheral persuasion where propagandists use dissonance reduction to create a "*rationalization trap*" (Pratkanis and Aronson, 1991: 36, emphasis in original). This occurs when specific feelings are aroused by the propagandist, such as guilt or shame, and then a solution is offered. As previously mentioned, by purchasing whitening toothpaste negative feelings associated with yellow teeth are alleviated.

Limited effects literature, on the other hand, do not attribute as much power to the media as powerful effects theories do, however the effects of second-level agenda setting along with framing and priming reveal the media can have substantial effects. Examination into whether the media directly influences individuals' attitudes regarding a political issue can be assessed by comparing the opinions and attitudes of those who are exposed to a stimulus, compared to those exposed to a placebo. If there is no substantial difference between these groups the limited effects theory will be validated. The subsequent literature pertains to the assumptions of the "limited effects" school.

The effects from limited effects theories, in particular the second-level agenda setting

effects (Ghanem, 1997; Terkildsen and Schnell, 1997) reveals the media not only affects what the public thinks about, but also how the public thinks about it. This process works in conjunction with the process of framing. Framing is described as “*selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution*” (Entman, 2004: 5, emphasis in original). It is this process that can affect individuals’ perceptions of the issue being discussed. For example, extensive literature has revealed the impact frames have on individuals’ political attitudes, learning mechanisms (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987; Zaller, 1992; Neuman et al., 1992), emotions (Snyder and Park, 2002; Riffe and Stovall, 1989; Brown et al., 2002; Just et al., 2007: 238-239; Graber, 2007: 289; Step et al., 2002), as well as tolerance (Nelson, et al., 1997a). Notable results from the research are the findings from Nelson et al., (1997a) who revealed framing an issue in two distinct ways affects individuals’ assessments of an issue. The ability of the media to influence public perception is also examined by Altheide’s (1997) “problem frame”, where fear is evoked, hence causing more fear among those who are exposed to this frame.

Furthermore, Chong’s framing model (1996), as well as Entman’s (2004) assertion that the way in which an issue is reported may affect the way in which people evaluate and come to understand the issue, in conjunction with McCombs and Shaw’s (1972) findings that the media has the ability to tell individuals what to think about, reveals media content can affect individuals’ judgments. In addition to these results are Iyengar and Kinder’s (1987) findings that media content can prime individuals in their assessments of an issue. For example, by directing attention to some attributes and ignoring others, media frames can influence the way in which individuals perceive political matters.

Zaller (1992) further expanded upon media effects and examined how individuals come

to receive and accept frames. He revealed more sophisticated respondents are less likely to change their opinions, while those with moderate sophistication are often the most susceptible. Furthermore, those with the most exposure are the most likely to receive messages, and the least likely to accept these messages, while those with the least exposure to the media are the least likely to receive the messages, but the most likely to accept.

Based on assumptions of the aforementioned theories one is left to wonder how the topic of terrorism may affect individuals' levels of susceptibility and whether the issue of terrorism yields a unique impact. For example, if different media sources frame the issue of terrorism in various contexts will it create diverse opinions regarding terrorism? Furthermore, will the topic of terrorism accentuate the powerful effects of the media, or highlight the minimal effects of the media?

These theoretical questions seem to be answered by the relatively large collection of literature pertaining to the effects terrorism frames have on public perception. Notable within this collection are Norris et al. (2003) who examined how frames such as "rally around the flag," and "clash of civilizations" have invigorated the United States. The newest frame, however, is the "war on terror." This frame relates to how public cognition is shaped by the constant evaluation of friend versus foe in the media.

Adding to the framing research is Traugott and Brader (2003) who explore the effects of frames by offering an exploration into testing whether media frames generated during September 11 were effective in helping citizens understand what happened during the attacks. Results from a content analysis revealed that citizens were able to learn more about the attacks as the weeks progressed. Results from the survey illustrated how news coverage does affect citizens understanding of the events. In sum, citizens' ability to understand September 11 was influenced

by continued media exposure.

As discussed, media frames can affect an individual's comprehension of political events because the media is a primary source of information. This notion of media influence can be linked to Brown (2003) who analyses the effects of the "political frame."⁴ This frame is centered upon the notion that the media, military and government are interrelated during times of crises, in that the way the media reports an issue can shape the environment in which politicians react. The "political frame" is another model surrounding the theory of propaganda (Chomsky and Herman, 1988; Pratkanis and Aronson, 1991) whereby the propaganda is instigated by the government.

Fidas (2008) also investigates the effects of framing and postulates that a "groupthink" paradigm, referring to the majority of individuals in the United States sharing one belief that terrorism is a severe threat, has dominated the media post 9/11. Fidas feels that September 11 was in fact an "anchoring" event in which perceptions and events were filtered, consequently skewing and continuing to skew Americans' perceptions about the seriousness of terrorism. He questions the dominant frame of groupthink, evoking the new ideology of "Red Cell"—an analysis that the "terrorist threat to the United States and globally is real but exaggerated" (Fidas, 2008: 520). He grounds this theory on substantial evidence,⁵ directing attention to the "threat frames" generated by the media. In sum, he states that treating terrorism as an "endless 'war'" (Fidas, 2008: 528) creates problems. For example, associating all Muslims and Arabs with terrorism will create problems that did not exist before, and evoke the very terrorism that is feared. Therefore the real danger may be the related rhetoric and stereotypes associated with the

⁴The term "political frame" is drawn from Clausewitz's (1976) thesis that war is a continuation of politics.

⁵This is based on Fidas's main points: 1) 9/11 anchoring effect, 2) gauging global terror threat, 3) social support base for "homegrown terror" is lacking, 4) U.S.A legislation enforcement further limits terrorism, 5) suspicion leads to new problems, 6) more terrorists in Europe than U.S.A, and lastly, 7) the U.S.'s main threat is European terrorists, (2008: 520-521).

threat of terrorism. This could fuel an “endless ‘war’” leading to new security threats, restrictions on civil liberties, excessive military spending, and excessive fear.

Research relating to the manner in which terrorism is discussed in the media is also analyzed by Mogensen et al. (2002) who explored effects of agenda setting through a content analysis. The content analysis was utilized to examine any trends or tendencies in media coverage. He examined the first eight hours of news coverage following the September 11 attacks by analyzing the content of CNN, Fox News, ABC, NBC and CBS. Results revealed coverage was centered upon major themes such as the World Trade Centre and terrorist activity verses minor themes such as air traffic and safety. Results indicate NBC, CNN and Fox dedicated more coverage to the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, compared to the other networks. CBS and Fox provided almost twice as much news content surrounding reports of terrorism than the other networks. This supports their hypothesis that the media shift focus of key issues during particular events and time periods. For example, from 8:45 am to 11 am coverage focused mainly on descriptions of the disaster (31%), while from 11 am to 3 pm, descriptions of the incident declined (11%) and government reaction (18%) increased. Coverage after 3 pm consisted of an increased amount of attention to safety concerns (16%) and a decreased amount of attention to government reaction (13%).

Based on the aforementioned literature pertaining to the unique impact framing terrorism can have on perception, the following propositions have been created.

Extending Mogensen et al.’s (2002) findings that the media shift focus on a single day, it is expected that as the days progress from the initial coverage of the arrests of the “Toronto 18,” greater divergences between newspapers will become evident. As the literature has proven (Jasperson, et al., 2003; Norris, 1997) different media sources generate different frames

regarding the same issue, therefore it is predicted The *Toronto Sun* and *Toronto Star* will print diverse frames relating to terrorism. The rationale for this prediction is based upon the assumption that if media sources shift focus on a single day, the ideological biases of each media source will become more pronounced as the days progress from the initial event due to media sources having more latitude to adhere to a particular bias.

The vast array of terrorism related frames creates a point of divergence for further examination of these effects. It is expected, based on the framing literature, that distinct terrorism frames will create different effects. For example, a frame pushing the threat of terrorism will cause higher levels of fear in individuals compared to a frame reassuring the public terrorism is not a concern. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that if the media frames terrorism as a dominant concern and discusses the need for increased security measures, levels of fear will be aroused in individuals who will then feel less satisfied with anti-terrorism legislation.

By examining the literature pertaining to framing, second-level agenda setting, and priming, it is expected that media frames reassuring the public and minimizing the threat of terrorism, as well as focusing on the suspects' civil rights protection will cause individuals to be more in favour of civil rights protection. Conversely, those who read a frame pushing the threat of terrorism will be more willing to sacrifice their civil rights in the name of thwarting terrorism.

Similarly, based on Nelson et al.'s (1997a) findings it is expected those who read a frame advocating human and civil rights protection will be more in favour of having civil liberties and human rights protected by the government compared to those who do not read this frame. Conversely, it is predicted those who read an article pushing the threat of terrorism will be less in favour of having civil liberties and human rights protected.

The ability of the media to influence public perception will also be examined through

Altheide's (1997) "problem frame", where fear is evoked, hence causing more fear among those who are exposed. Based on this theoretical premise it is predicted a frame pushing the threat and fear of terrorism will cause individuals to be more fearful than those who are not exposed to this frame.

An examination of how the different forms of media frame terrorism has been explored concluding television remains a key medium in informing the public about terrorism related issues (Stempel and Hargrove, 2002) and is the preferred media outlet for gaining information (Ansolabehere et al, 1993). Brown et al., (2002) found that a respondent's exposure to television was also significantly associated with their level of fear and sympathy regarding the September 11 terrorist attacks. Television news therefore becomes a force that can shape citizens' political views (Gerbner and Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1982). Furthermore, scholars have determined exposure to different media outlets (Patterson and McClure, 1976, Neuman et al., 1992) as well as the frequency of exposure (Zaller, 1992) can cause diverse effects.

These findings provide support for the prediction that those who watch the most amount of televised national news will exhibit lower levels of susceptibility to media frames than those who watch it the least. In addition, these findings provide support for isolating the frequency of media exposure when examining media effects. As noted earlier, based on previous research regarding television frames having an effect (Nelson et al, 1997a), the effects from newspaper-generated frames will be explored.

Based on the exploration of the effects of framing terrorism, it is fair to state the issue of terrorism falls under the powerful effects school of thought, as the way in which the media report the issue can create diverse reactions. For example, if the media use a "war on terror" frame that increases levels of fear, the media can then offer a solution, i.e., more security.

The limited effects school may have a point with respect to the case of the “Toronto 18”, as few in Canada are unaware of this case. One might speculate that the media no longer has an ability to affect such an audience. In other words, the sensational nature of this issue has made people immune. Zaller (1992) would agree that due to the case of the “Toronto 18” receiving wide attention in 2006 and being a prominent news item, people may have become immune, hence media frames cause no effect. However, powerful effects theorists would challenge this proposition by stating due to this issue having a public profile it would have an effect. The issue being framed in diverse ways consequently affects individuals differently. Whatever a frame advocates will become absorbed into the minds of citizens and from this public opinion is formed. This is the main debate that will be explored in the subsequent pages.

III- Methods

The research design of this study required two processes and both were based upon statistical comparisons of multiple variables. The first method involved a content analysis of *The Toronto Star* and *Toronto Sun* to examine any divergences, as well as ideological differences surrounding coverage of the arrests of the “Toronto 18.” Results of the content analysis set the foundation for the second method of this study, whereby an experimental analysis was completed to examine how media frames affect individuals’ attitudes and perceptions regarding terrorism.

A- Content Analysis

The content analysis consisted of the exploration of the first week’s coverage of the “Toronto 18” terrorist arrests in two Toronto daily metropolitan newspapers, *The Toronto Star* and *The Toronto Sun*. These newspapers were selected in order to examine any divergences or

ideological biases between the two newspapers as the days progressed from the initial arrests.⁶ The articles spanned from June 3 to 9, 2006. Each article was read in its entirety and information such as the section of newspaper, date, length of the article, page number, and whether there was a picture was recorded. In addition, news content was analyzed for key themes and words. The main concepts and themes of exploration in each article included the degree of fear and threat of terrorism generated, attention to civil rights protection and human rights infringement, descriptions of security legislation and religion, as well as analyzing the particular ideological stance of each article.

The variable to measure the concepts of fear and threat was quantitative in nature, in that while reading each article the degree of “fear level” and risk of terrorism, “threat”, was scored on a continuous scale of 1 to 10, where 1 reflects “no fear/threat” and 10 reflects “excessive fear/threat.” “Fear level” and “threat” were subsequently combined into an index, “threat/fear.”⁷ The degree of attention each article attributed to issues regarding civil and human rights protection was scored on a scale from 1, reflecting “no attention to human/civil rights”, to 10, reflecting “excessive mention of human/civil rights.” The amount of attention attributed to discussing possible mistreatment of individuals was the indicator for “human rights,” and the indicator for “civil rights” was the amount of attention given to discussing rights guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Variables “human rights” and “civil rights” were combined into an index “pro-rights”⁸ to measure the manner in which each article discussed human and civil rights in general.

Variables “threat/ fear” and “pro-rights” were then combined into an index “net rights coverage” where this “index” is simply the “pro-rights” variable minus the “threat/fear” variable.

⁶ The articles from both newspapers were accessed using the *Lexis Nexis* search engine.

⁷ The Cronbach alpha is .896.

⁸ The Cronbach alpha is .949.

Positive values suggest coverage was oriented more towards “pro-rights,” while negative values suggest coverage was more oriented towards a “threat/fear” frame. This recoding procedure was executed in order to compare the differences between both newspapers’ treatment of the issue of the “Toronto 18” arrests.

“Security” was measured by how each article discussed security and legislation in place to combat terrorism. The indicator for this variable was the particular angle each article took while discussing security. Each angle was assigned a category, for example category 1 reflects no mention of legislation in an article, 10 reflects an excessive mention of needing security protection, 11 reflects laws and legislation policies in place to thwart off terrorism as too extreme, and 14 reflects laws being described as effective. For a complete list of codes see Appendix C.

The variable “coverage of religion” was measured by analyzing how each article treated Muslims in general. “Coverage of religion” was nominal, wherein a particular angle the article adhered to when addressing religion was assigned a category. For example, category 1 reflects Muslims described as peaceful, 6 reflects the need to withhold judging all Muslims as extreme and as terrorists, and 8 reflects the need to weed out extremists. For a complete list of codes see Appendix C. The indicator for this variable was the way in which religion and terrorism was discussed. “Coverage of religion” was subsequently recoded into variable “Muslim,” wherein any article that discussed Muslims was coded 1 and any article that did not mention Muslims was coded 2.

The variable “frame” referred to what type of ideological standpoint each article adhered to when reporting the arrests. This variable was measured by one of six possible types of frames: 1 reflects “pro-human/civil rights;” 2 reflects “neutral;” 3 reflects “pro-security;” 4 reflects “fear

and threat,” 5 reflects “reassurance;” and 6 reflects “humours.” The indicator was the way in which each article discussed the arrests of the “Toronto 18.”

The frequency of occurrence of the words, *fear*, *terrorism*, *protection* and *extreme* in each article was also examined and recorded in order to assess any relationship between words used and the particular frame or ideological biases the newspaper was trying to project.

For purposes of organization and clarity, each article was also assessed in its level of neutrality. The indicator for selecting an article as “neutral” was based upon how the content in the article described the arrests. If the article appeared free from bias and balanced it was considered neutral. Each article was also classified by a defining feature such as a few words to describe the overall tone of the article. For example, some articles focused on the need to stop judging Muslims, while others centered upon the need for Canada to adapt border controls as in the United States. This was utilized exclusively as a tool to further identify the slant or ideology of each article and was recorded as a string variable.

In order to assess the way in which each article handled the key themes of exploration in this analysis, a systematic set of decision rules for judging each article was created. These rules aided in examining the indicators for each variable. Furthermore, these rules were subject to intercoder reliability.⁹

The amount of fear and threat regarding terrorism, as previously discussed was judged on a scale, where 1 reflected “no fear/threat” and 10 reflected “excessive fear/threat.” For instance, an article taken from *The Toronto Sun* (June 4, 2006) was assigned a 10 for levels of fear and threat due to the language used to describe the “Toronto 18.” Words such as “smash,” “bomb,” “serious threat,” and “attacks” created high levels of fear and phrases such as the “threat is real,”

⁹ The test for intercoder reliability was not formally completed; however, a small sample of articles was coded by three other people yielding similar results.

“[t]errorism is a dangerous ideology and a global phenomenon” and “CSIS and its policing partners are actively investigating others in Canada” (Jenkins, 2006: 2) generated a high degree of threat regarding terrorism.

Articles that did not generate any levels of fear or threat were coded a 1. For example, a June 7 article from *The Toronto Star* focused on the position that if the alleged 18 men are terrorists, they are not very competent and do not pose a threat. Furthermore, the article referred to the arrests of the “Toronto 18” as part of an image the government is trying to paint, which is propagandist in nature. For example, the article states: “[a] rise in the public’s fear quotient could increase popular support” for Harper’s decision to keep Canadian troops stationed in Afghanistan (Walkom, 2006: A01).

Coverage regarding civil and human rights protection was scored on a scale of 1, reflecting “no mention of civil liberty protection/human rights infringements”, to 10, reflecting “excessive mention of civil liberty protection/human rights infringements.” Content relating to civil liberties was judged by the attention each article gave to discussing the suspects’ civil liberties while coverage relating to human rights was judged by possible harassments and mistreatment of those accused and their family members. For example, a June 4 *Toronto Star* article was assigned a score of 10 for excessive coverage regarding civil and human rights infringement. The article focused on questioning whether the suspects were in fact innocent and “not terrorists at all” and perhaps the police and intelligence were wrong (Walkom, 2006: A10). Due to this article solely focusing on the stance that the suspects may have been innocent and police may have violated the accused’s rights, it was coded a 10.

The manner in which each article discusses security legislation in place to protect against terrorism was categorized into a nominal variable where particular angles the article adhered to

were assigned a number to reflect this position. There were a total of 22 different categories. For example, category 1 reflected “no mention of security,” 5 reflected “the need for transparent laws,” 11 reflected “legislations and security as too extreme,” and 22 reflected “the belief Canada is following the United States policies too closely” and so forth.¹⁰ A June 3 *Toronto Star* article was assigned a 20 to reflect the article was about new anti-terrorism legislation, however framed to question the legitimacy of this legislation. The article states there “has been cause for skepticism concerning the ability of Canada’s intelligence and police services to prosecute security cases” due to international blunders, such as the acquittal of suspects such as Maher Arar and those in the Air India bombing case (Shephard et al., 2006: A15).

The way in which each article discussed religion and terrorism was also judged by assigning various scores to particular viewpoints discussed in each article. There was a total of 15 different scores where, for example 0 reflects “no mention of religion,” 7 reflects “the view that society needs to understand why Muslims become extreme,” 9 reflects “the view Muslims are terrorists” and so forth.¹¹ A June 5 *Toronto Star* article was coded a 6 reflecting the need not to judge Muslims as extreme and as terrorists. This score was assigned due to content in this article referring to an interview with a leader from a mosque who expressed his shock that Muslims were suspects in the planned attacks. Furthermore, he states Islam is a very peaceful religion and anyone “who hurts any human being, hurts all human beings” (Bhattacharya, 2006: B05).

Each article was also judged and classified into one of six possible frames. Articles that had content primarily focusing on human and civil rights protection were coded 1 to reflect a pro-human rights frame. For example, any articles that focused on the possible victimization and

¹⁰ Please see Appendix C for complete list of codes.

¹¹ Please see Appendix C for complete list of codes.

mistreatment of the alleged suspects, violation of their civil liberties, and the way in which family members of the accused felt were coded a 1. This is exemplified by a June 4 *Toronto Star* article which discussed the possibility the suspects were innocent (Walkom, 2006: A10).

Articles that solely stated the names of the accused and charges laid were coded 2 to reflect neutrality and an absence of sensationalism. Articles that focused mainly on discussing security and legislation related to the arrests were coded 3 to reflect a pro-security frame. For example, a June 6 *Toronto Sun* article advocated the need for increased security on Parliament Hill due to the recent arrests and was therefore assigned a 3 to reflect a pro-security frame (Harris, 2006: 7). Articles that generated high levels of threat and pushed the fear of terrorism were assigned a 4 to reflect a fear and threat frame. For example, a June 4 *Toronto Sun* article included a direct quotation from a CSIS agent stating: “[t]hat threat is real and when we've spoken about that threat we were not limiting our thoughts to this one group” (Jenkins, 2006: 2). The inclusion of this quotation generated high levels of fear and threat regarding terrorism and was therefore assigned a 4 to reflect this type of frame.

If the articles downplayed the threat of terrorism and instead reassured that terrorism was not a dominant concern they were classified as a reassurance frame and coded 5. For example, a June 8 *Toronto Sun* article minimized the threat of terrorism, maintaining it is only a small school of thought within Islam (Strobel, 2006a: 6). Lastly, if an article generated humorous rhetorical jokes, it was assigned a 6 to reflect a humorous frame. For example, a June 7 *Toronto Sun* article referred to the case of the “Toronto 18” as a circus, the court room as a zoo, and reporters as hungry packs (Strobel, 2006b: 6).

In total 191 articles dedicated to the arrests of the “Toronto 18” were published by both newspapers from June 3 to 9, 2006. *The Star* printed 105 articles and *The Sun* 86.

The following hypotheses will test if different media sources shift focus (Mogensen and Norris) as well as determine if there are differences between media sources and the content produced (Jaspersen et al., 2003).

1. Greater differences and ideological biases will be revealed between the two newspapers as the days progress from the initial arrests of the “Toronto 18.”
2. a) *The Toronto Star*, being a broadsheet, will be less sensational than the tabloid *Toronto Sun*.

b) Given that *The Toronto Star* is a broadsheet it will be less prone to cover sensational and fear oriented news, but rather focus on pro-human rights frames when compared to *The Toronto Sun*. *The Toronto Sun* which is a tabloid will produce sensationalized news generating fear and threat frames.

Analysis of variance was used to determine if the two newspapers differed in their reporting. Cross tabulations were also executed to determine what types of frames were associated with each newspaper.

Confirmation of these hypotheses yield important implications in light of the media’s potential to influence public opinion as the hypotheses will illustrate if diverse media sources adhere to different ideological biases. The second step of this research is to determine what that effect may be.

B- Experimental Design

The second method of this study is an experiment to test whether media-generated frames affect participants’ views of appropriate security legislation and terrorism. The experiment serves to determine if different ways in which the “Toronto 18” arrests were framed can lead to different perceptions regarding terrorism.

The benefits of using an experimental design rest solely on the ability of the researcher to directly manipulate and assess the “causal” impact of the independent variable on the dependent

variable of interest. An experiment allows the researcher to directly control the setting in which the stimulus is introduced and clearly witness the effect of this stimulus on the dependent variable of interest. A control group, which consists of a portion of those in the experiment who do not receive the treatment, allows for researchers to examine the differences between those who received the stimulus and those who did not.

The first step of this experiment required the selection of articles (stimuli) used to test the effect of media frames on public opinion and attitudes. The articles were sought by analyzing news coverage regarding the arrests of the “Toronto 18” from June 3 to 9, 2006. The *Toronto Star* and *Toronto Sun* were selected because they are daily metropolitan papers. An article from each newspaper was selected.

The first article, dated June 4, 2006, was obtained from *The Toronto Star* (Yew, 2006: A9). It downplayed the threat of terrorism and focused on civil liberties being violated due to stricter security laws. This article is structured according to the “reassurance” frame. The second article, also from June 4, 2006, was taken from *The Toronto Sun* (Jenkins, 2006: 2). It elevated the threat of terrorism and focused on the need for stricter security laws. This article is therefore referred to as a “threat” frame. The third article served as the control and had no relevance to the issue of terrorism; it focused on the issue of poverty and was taken from *The Toronto Sun* (Weese, 2008: 9). All three articles were taken from the News section, were equal in length¹² and did not have any identifiable information regarding source, date, journalist and so forth. Since the two “treatment” articles are diverse and they spin the issue of terrorism in two different directions, effects from both stimuli can be compared to the placebo.

¹² The first treatment article extracted from *The Toronto Star* was 527 words, and the second treatment article from *The Toronto Sun* was 611 words. The placebo was 481 words. Each article was edited down to size, but the editing did not affect the general tone of each article. Please see Appendix B for the articles.

In order to determine how media frames affect public perception, an experiment was conducted to determine if individuals are sensitive to different types of frames. A first year introductory political science class consisting of 245 students (130 male, and 115 female) was selected for the sample.¹³ The experiment was conducted on Thursday March 5, 2009, where a sample size of 245 first year Wilfrid Laurier University students¹⁴ was tested. This class was broken into two sections; section A met at 1:00pm and section B met at 4:00pm,¹⁵ wherein each section received the identical experiment.¹⁶

Each student received a questionnaire which was distributed to measure individuals' perceptions of terrorism and security legislation. There were twenty questions created in total,¹⁷ ranging from ranking the importance of civil rights protection, to listing the biggest problem facing Canada. Fourteen questions measured the perceptions of security legislation, fear of terrorism and civil rights protection.

Six questions served as the controls, asking respondents their age, gender, ethnicity, program of study and media exposure per week to both the newspaper (print or online) and national televised news. These controls were utilized to alleviate any significant differences among the respondents. Eight of the twenty questions were continuous variables where respondents assigned a score on a scale from 1 to 10, and twelve were categorical.¹⁸ There were

¹³ The average respondent in the study was between 18 and 19 years of age, covering the age span of 18-31. There was a total of 68% Caucasian respondents. A total of 47% female and 53% male respondents completed the experiment. Furthermore, 48% of the respondents were enrolled in political science as part of their major at university. It should also be noted nearly half of the expected 444 students enrolled in the course did not attend.

¹⁴ This experiment was approved by the Research and Ethics Board at Wilfrid Laurier University.

¹⁵ Due to the differences in time being relatively small, there was limited concern regarding contamination.

¹⁶ Section A comprised of 64% of the total participants, while section B comprised of 37%.

¹⁷ Questions were carefully worded in order to maintain neutrality and unbiased reflections, and to avoid any contamination of priming of misrepresentations of respondents. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of questions.

¹⁸ It should be noted that some variables were combined into an index. Please see Appendix C for complete list of variables.

a total of eight different versions of the questionnaire, where each question was identical, however, the question order was shuffled to control for the effect of priming.

Essentially this experiment sought to explore whether media frames regarding the “Toronto 18” can affect perceptions of terrorism and appropriate security measures. In order to determine if the media can affect perception, the dependent variable must change due to a stimulus. In a typical experimental design one group receives the stimulus and the control receives a placebo. The value of the dependent variable in each group is measured a priori to the stimulus through a pretest, and again after the introduction of the stimulus, the posttest. Changes from the pretest to the posttest allows the researcher to examine the impact of the stimulus and to examine “two conditions that facilitate valid inferences: comparison and manipulation” (Manheim and Rich, 1996:78).

The major concerns regarding experimental designs are external validity and a priori priming. However, the experimental design employed here does control for some external factors. For instance, a student’s sophistication was controlled for through variables that measure media exposure. Participants may also alter their answers to the questions if they know their perceptions and opinions are being tested. The respondents were not briefed at the beginning of the experiment; therefore, the concern of a priori priming was alleviated. In order to feel confident that the effects of the stimulus were causally influencing public perception, free from intervening variables or external effects, the Solomon four-group design was used.

The Solomon four-group design addresses the problem of a test effect. When “experimental subjects are pretested, it is always possible that their score on the posttest will be a result of both their reaction to the stimulus and a reaction to the pretest itself” (Manheim and Rich, 1991: 79). For example, the pretest questions may prime respondents and affect their

perception of the issue, prior to the introduction of the stimulus. If a pretest question asks respondents how fearful they are of terrorism it may cause respondents to become more fearful. This design allows for the effects of the frame on the subjects to be assessed without the concern of the pretest affecting their posttest scores.

This design has four separate groups: 1) “Experimental group,” which receives the pretest, stimulus and posttest; 2) “Control 1,” which receives the pretest and posttest, but no stimulus; 3) “Control 2,” which receives the stimulus and posttest, but no pretest; and 4) “Control 3,” which receives the placebo and posttest, but not the pretest.

Analyzing the changes from pretest to posttest scores reveals the origins of possible effects. The changes from the pretest to posttest scores with the experimental group can be attributed to both pretest priming and the stimulus, while changes from the pretest to posttest scores in “Control 1” can *only* be due to pretest priming and in “Control 2” only to the stimulus. If one assumes that the subjects have reacted to the stimulus in the same way, then the difference in the posttest scores of the “Experimental group” and “Control 2” represents the test effects. This design therefore allows the researcher to assess and rule out the “test effect as an alternative explanation of observed changes in subjects’ scores” (Manheim and Rich, 1991: 79).

There are other explanations for change between the pretest and posttest scores. These include external influences, such as pre-existing biases including personal biases, and pre-existing political attitudes, or beliefs. “Control 3” does not receive a pretest, therefore the concern of test effects is ruled out. Assuming all respondents’ pretest scores are considerably similar, “Control 3” is assigned “a pretest score equal to the average of the scores for the experimental and first control groups” (Manheim, Rich, 1991: 80). Subtracting the pretest score

from the posttest score of “Control 3” will give the measure of the change due to external factors and will provide a clearer illustration to assess the effects of media frames on public perception.

In order to execute this design other steps had to be taken. For instance, the appropriate packages had to be created. The packages consisted of one of the three articles, and twenty questions. However due to the four-group Solomon design some groups received a pretest and some did not, therefore question order within each group differed. Due to the concern that pretesting could prime respondents, two questions measuring fear were worded in a slightly different manner to test for this possible effect. For example, the first question asked: how fearful are you of terrorists? Please rate on a scale from 1 to 10 (1= not fearful at all and 10= extremely fearful), and the second asked: on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = not fearful at all, and 10 = extremely fearful) how fearful are you of Canada being attacked by terrorists? These questions were strategically placed in pre- and posttests. Those in the “Experimental group” received the Canada question in the pretest, and the individual fear question in the posttest. Those in “Control 1” received the Canada question in the posttest and the individual fear question in the pretest, while those in “Control 2” and “Control 3” received both questions in the posttest. Within each of the four groups there were two variations of question order, creating a total of eight questionnaires.

Each group received a proportionate number of questionnaires. For example, the “Experimental group” and “Control 2” received the greatest number of questionnaires due to these groups each receiving one of the two stimuli. Once all packages were stapled and shuffled the experiment was ready for implementation.

Each student was formally invited at the beginning of class to participate. It should be noted that students were not initially given the true purpose of this study; instead they were asked

to answer some questions, read an article and conclude by answering a few more questions.¹⁹ Of the 245 respondents, 80 read the “reassurance” frame, 79 read the “threat” frame and 86 read the placebo. There were 80 respondents in the “Experimental group,” and 79 in “Control group2,” creating a total of 159 respondents who received one of the two stimuli. “Control group1” included 43 respondents, as did “Control group3,” creating a total of 86 respondents who read the placebo.

The experiment took approximately twenty minutes and each student worked independently. Once all questionnaire packages were collected, the class was debriefed and notified of the purpose of the study.

Using student samples is based on the convenience of obtaining a rather homogeneous sample. However, proper controls as mentioned were put in place to avoid contamination of the sample. It must be acknowledged that students are generally similar to each other, in that they have “higher than average cognitive skills” (Basil, 1996: 433). An article’s influence on perceptions is partially determined by one’s susceptibility, which varies greater in the general public than within a sample of educated students. However, if the research hypotheses are confirmed, one can only speculate that the effect would be larger among those who are less educated (and more susceptible). This belief adheres to Zaller (1992) who contends reception of a frame or message is dependent upon media exposure and levels of acceptance. Those with the most exposure are the most likely to receive messages, but the least likely to accept these messages, and those with the least exposure to the media are the least likely to receive the

¹⁹ Students agreeing to participate in the study read and signed a consent form. The consent form included the researcher’s affiliation with the university, the estimated time of completion, estimated number of students to complete the study, and the researcher’s contact information should anyone wish to learn further information regarding the study. Respondents were also informed that they were not required to answer all questions, and that some questions may be upsetting and they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Their confidentiality always remained anonymous and consent forms and questionnaire packages were kept separate at all times. Furthermore the respondents were notified of any risks or benefits their participation may entail. Once all signed consent forms were collected the respondents were randomly assigned one of eight questionnaire packages.

messages, but the most likely to accept. It is those in the middle who are the most malleable. Justification for using student samples is further based on the belief that if university students are to be future leaders and policy makers it is crucial to examine if their perceptions can be influenced by the media. It should be noted that about half of the students were enrolled in a political science class.

As discussed, the three main concepts of this study included agenda-setting, framing and priming and persuasion, as these techniques may affect and shape individuals perceptions. Agenda setting effects are measured by respondents' perceptions of security legislation and protection of civil liberties and human rights. Second-level agenda setting effects are measured by the answers to questions regarding individuals' perceptions of anti-terrorism legislation and what they regard as the biggest issue facing Canada. The indicators of these variables are the similarities between respondents' answers and what has been advocated in a frame.

The variable to measure the effects of framing is the specific content read in one of the two "treatment" articles. The indicator for framing effects is the level of acceptance respondents have towards the message projected in the frame. The similarities between respondents' perceptions and what has been advocated in a frame will reveal the effects of framing. Comparing the answers of questions measuring attitudes and perceptions of terrorism with the two "treatment articles" and placebo, will reveal any similarities between what has been advocated in a frame and perception. The more significant the differences among these three groups, the greater the indication that frames affect public perception.

Priming and persuasion are measured by respondents' answers to the questions regarding views of security legislation, the degree of fear and threat, and attitudes towards civil rights protections. The indicator is the salience between the media's message and individuals'

perceptions regarding the message.

Table 1 lists the hypotheses that have been created in order to measure the effects of the aforementioned concepts.

Hypothesis	
3 a)	Those who read the "threat" frame will be more fearful of terrorists.
3 b)	Those who read the "reassurance" frame will be less fearful.
4	Those who read the newspaper the most will be less fearful of terrorism compared to those who read the newspaper the least.
5 a)	Those who read the "threat" frame will be less in favour of having civil liberties and human rights protected.
5 b)	Those who read the "reassurance" frame will be more in favour of having civil liberties and human rights protected.
6	Those who read the "reassurance" frame will be more in favour of having their civil liberties protected by the government and have a higher mean score than those who read the "threat" frame.
7	It is predicted that those who read the "threat" frame will be less pleased with legislation in place to protect Canada from terrorists when compared to those who read the placebo.
8	Those who watch the most amount of television will be less fearful of terrorism compared to those who watch the least amount of television.

Data was analyzed through cross tabulation, Pearson r correlation, independent-samples *t* tests, one-way analysis of variance, and multiple linear regression. In order to examine the

validity of the aforementioned hypotheses some variables need to be combined into an index, in particular hypotheses 3 and 5.

Due to hypotheses 3a) stating those who read the “threat” frame would be more fearful and 3b) those who read the “reassurance” frame would be less fearful, examination of the two questions measuring fear was required. These questions measuring levels of fear served to examine if pretesting primes respondents. The ability to combine variables “Canada” and “fear” into an index depended upon independent-samples *t* tests.

Independent-samples *t* tests were executed to examine if the mean scores regarding fear of Canada being attacked by terrorists was significantly different from the mean score regarding individual fear of terrorists, and to ensure pre-existing biases and priming did not affect respondent’s answers. Results reveal no significant difference between the post and pretest scores, therefore the two variables could be combined into an index “fear of terrorists.” There was no difference between those in “Control 2,” who did not receive a pretest, and those in the “Experimental group” who did. Justification for asking the similar type of question, but not identical, rests with the fear of the “memory effect,” where respondents may remember what they have previously answered and give no thought to the question if asked a second time; this would therefore contaminate the results of the experiment. Asking the same question in a different manner controlled for this effect.

Hypothesis 5 was the last hypothesis that required variables to be recoded. This hypothesis required the recoding of multiple variables due to the three answers being examined. First, the following variables were recoded: “innocence,” referring to respondents’ views of applying the presumption of “innocent until proven guilty” to suspected terrorists; “death,” referring to views of applying the death penalty to convicted terrorists, and “torture” referring to

perceptions regarding the torture of one convicted terrorist to protect 100 people, where 0 reflects “not in favour of protection of human and civil rights” and 1 reflects “in favour of protection of human and civil rights.” Next, an examination was conducted to estimate the internal consistency of the three variables for civil and human rights, whereby the alpha coefficient was .62 indicating a moderately consistent degree of internal consistency among the variables. The three variables were therefore combined into an index “importance of civil and human rights protection” where 1 reflects “in favour of protection of human and civil rights” and 0 reflects “not in favour of protection of human and civil rights.”

IV- Findings

A- Content Analysis

The first step in determining whether media frames affect public opinion was to discover whether media sources in fact produce different frames. This required a content analysis of *The Toronto Star* and *Toronto Sun*'s coverage regarding the arrests of the “Toronto 18.” Based on the literature regarding media sources shifting focus (Mogensen et al., 2002; Norris, 1997) and producing diverse frames (Jasperson et al., 2003) it was expected that as the days progressed from the initial arrests of the “Toronto 18” greater differences and ideological biases would be revealed between the two newspapers.

In order to determine if there was a divergence between both newspapers index “net rights coverage” was created. This index aided in assessing each newspaper's general tone over time. It was expected that *The Toronto Star*, being a broadsheet would be less sensational and focus on pro-human rights frames, while *The Toronto Sun*, being a tabloid would focus on sensationalized threat and fearful frames. Index “net rights coverage” represents the difference

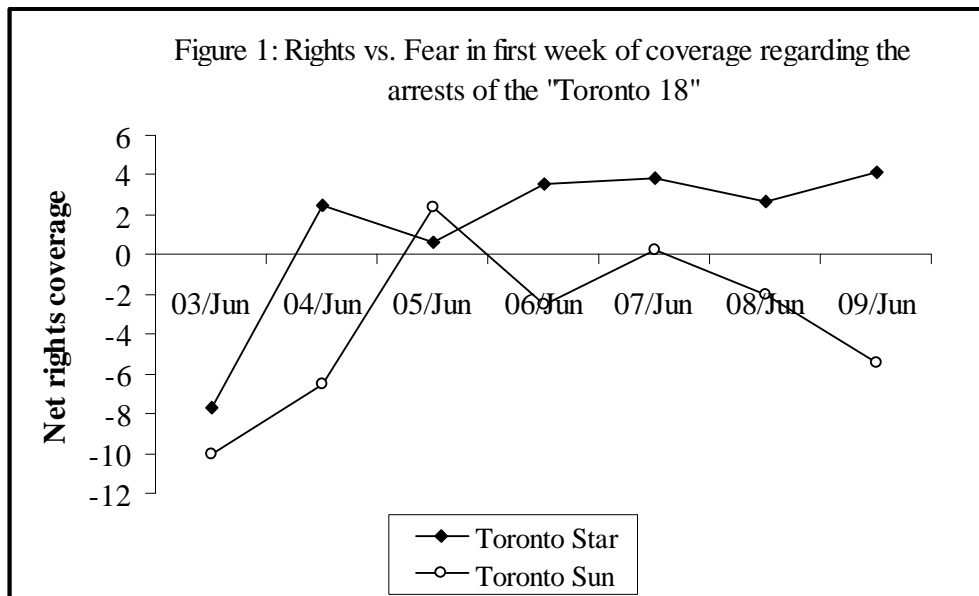
between pro-human rights frames and threat and fear induced frames. Content focusing on human and civil rights is associated with positive numbers, and content focusing on the threat and fear of terrorism is associated with negative numbers.

Results (see Figure 1) reveal a divergence between the two newspapers. On the first day, June 3, 2006, the two newspapers produced levels of fear and threat regarding terrorism; however, in the days following the differences between the two newspapers become more evident. On June 4, 2006, articles from *The Star* shifted focus and instead drew attention to human and civil rights issues resulting from the arrests. Articles from *The Sun*, however, continued to produce fearful frames regarding the threat of terrorism. Only once, on June 5, 2006, did *The Sun* produce more content related to human rights and civil liberty protection than *The Star*. This is visually illustrated in Figure 1 where *The Sun*'s trend line is above *The Star*. After June 5, 2006, the articles had the greatest divergence and the ideological biases of both newspapers became evident. *The Toronto Sun*'s trend line fell and remained associated with threat and fearful frames, while *The Toronto Star* rose and was associated with human and civil rights frames.

These results substantiate the literature pertaining to how different media sources produce different frames, as well as how media sources shift focus during different stages and time periods (Mogensen et al., 2002; Norris, 1997). The results also confirm the stark differences between media sources and the content produced (Jasperson et al., 2003).

Hypothesis 2 expects a) *The Toronto Star*, being a broadsheet, will be less sensational than the tabloid *Toronto Sun*, and b) given that *The Toronto Star* is a broadsheet it will be less prone to cover sensational and fear oriented news, but rather focus on pro-human rights frames

when compared to *The Toronto Sun*. *The Toronto Sun* which is a tabloid will produce sensationalized news generating fear and threat frames. Figure 1 confirms these results.



Furthermore, in order to determine the exact number of frames associated with each newspaper, the variable “frames” was collapsed from six possible ideological stances to three. Pro-human rights and reassurance frames were assigned the score 1, neutral articles were assigned 2, and pro-security and fear and threat frames were assigned 3. The humours frame was excluded because only one article fell into this category. Cross tabulation reveals a marginally significant difference between the distribution of frames and newspaper source (Chi-Sq. = .096, Cramer’s V=.096, $p < .10$).²⁰ Table 2 illustrates these findings.

²⁰ Further cross tabulation results reveal that when the neutral frame was excluded the discrepancy between the actual and expected counts become more significant (Chi-Sq. = .035, Cramer’s V=.035, $p < .05$).

Table 2: Cross tabulation of type of frame and newspaper source

		Newspaper source		
		<i>Toronto Star</i>	<i>Toronto Sun</i>	Total
Frame	Pro-human rights and reassurance	44 46.80%	29 34.50%	73 41.00%
	Neutral	22 23.40%	17 20.20%	39 21.90%
	Pro-security and fear and threat	28 29.80%	38 45.20%	66 37.10%
Total		94 100%	84 100%	178 100%

There were 44 articles in *The Toronto Star* that were centered around a pro-human rights and reassurance frame, when in fact the expected count was only 39. This confirms that *The Star* prints more pro-human rights and reassurance frames. In contrast, *The Toronto Sun* printed 29 articles oriented around a pro-rights and reassurance frame, when the expected count was 34. When examining the expected distribution of neutral frames printed in *The Toronto Star*, 21 frames were estimated and the newspaper printed 22. This reveals *The Toronto Star* is slightly more associated with neutral content than expected, however not one that leads to a solid conclusion. When analyzing the expected distribution of neutral frames printed in *The Toronto Sun* 17 frames were predicted, and 18 were printed. This reveals *The Toronto Sun* is slightly less associated with neutral frames than expected.

Lastly, 28 articles in *The Toronto Star* advocated a pro-security and threat and fear-induced frame, while 35 were expected. Conversely, *The Toronto Sun* printed 38 pro-security and fear and threat frames when only 31 were expected. These results confirm hypothesis 2 as *The Toronto Star* is more associated with pro-human rights and reassurance frames due to being

a broadsheet, and *The Toronto Sun* is more associated with the pro-security and fear and threat frames due to being a tabloid newspaper.

Articles from *The Star* were more pro-human rights and focused upon the possible victimization of the suspects. The descriptions of the events of the “Toronto 18” arrests focused on emphasizing the suspects’ human and civil rights. Furthermore, many articles discussed the possibility the suspects were innocent, as well as focused on the shock and sadness from friends and family members. For example, one article focused on the reaction of a young daughter whose father was arrested. She was described as crying and screaming and “scared to sleep alone,” (Aly, 2006: F01) due to the fear she had accumulated since a previous arrest of her father on terrorism related charges. Furthermore, the article discussed the short phone calls family members had with their father, long road trips they had to take to visit him in prison, and arguments occurring with the guards at the prison over the wife wearing a face-covering niqab. Content such as this evoked sympathy and turned the issue of terrorism into a human rights issue.

The article further questions the effectiveness of terrorism legislation by referring to a “security certificate quashed in court” (Aly, 2006: F01) and drawing attention to the innocence of the family’s father. Content such as this made the article appear pro-civil rights and consequently downplayed the issue of terrorism. The article achieved a soft news reporting style due to the level of empathy created for the suspects, and the focus on human sensitivities. The title of this article also indicates the slant: “Detainees’ Families Hit Hard beyond Courts and Jails Lie Despairing Families who remain Fiercely Loyal” (Aly, 2006: F01). Another article from *The Toronto Star* also took a humanitarian slant, where focus was on members of the Muslim community who expressed “shock and sadness” and “that those charged are innocent until

proven guilty, and that those who hold to violent and extreme religious views are a tiny fraction of the approximately 750,000 Muslims who call this country home” (Yew, 2006: A10).

Conversely, the content in *The Toronto Sun* took a law-and-order approach pushing the fear and threat of terrorism. One article began by stating the “al-Qaida inspired terrorist cell police say they smashed was plotting to bomb ‘hard’ government targets rather than ‘soft’ civilian ones” (Jenkins, 2006: 2). This immediately created a level of concern and fear that was maintained throughout the entire article and intensified as evidenced by the quotation: “I don't want to be alarmist and have people think there are numerous others out there but CSIS and it's [*sic*] policing partners are actively investigating others in Canada” (Jenkins, 2006: 2).

In direct contrast to *The Star* down playing the threat of terrorism and focusing on the alleged terrorists' possible innocence, *The Sun* pushes the threat. For example, a quotation from a terror expert reports “at no time did he say the actions of these two men was frivolous. Quite the contrary. The truth is, he said, TTC is a sitting duck for terrorists. And so are the CN Tower and other landmarks in a democratic society” (Warmington, 2006: 3).

The potential consequences of different media sources producing diverse frames is the effect of diverse public perception pools. Essentially individuals are receiving distorted images and misrepresentations of reality which may affect their judgments regarding important policy matters. For example, if one newspaper advocates the need for stricter laws to fight the threat of terrorism, individuals may be willing to surrender civil rights in the name of combating terrorism, and if another newspaper condemns the government for increased legislation, individuals may feel their civil liberties are at stake. The effect of these distortions of reality may adversely affect the democratic process, leading one to ask what the magnitude of this process could be. If individuals' perceptions are being subliminally molded by the particular media

source they choose to consult, their ability to deliberate and make informed decisions regarding political matters is stunted due to the isolated exposure of a single point of view.

Based on the confirmation of these hypotheses relating to the content analysis it can be stated that media sources produce different frames and hold ideological biases and as the days progress from the initial incidents discussed, the divergences become more pronounced. This evidence supports the literature surrounding the vast array of terrorism frames produced by media sources, as well as the unequal attention some issues are given as compared to others. These results pertain to the theories regarding propaganda, in that different media sources have biased views of reality which is reflected in the content produced. In turn some individuals may voluntarily accept these views which aids in the propagandist potential of the media.

B- Experiment

Having established that *The Sun* and *The Star* produced diverse frames regarding the coverage of the arrests of the “Toronto 18,” the next step is to examine the possible effects these diverse frames have on individuals’ perceptions regarding terrorism.

Hypothesis 3a) stated that those who read the “threat” frame would be more fearful of terrorists and 3b) stated that those who read the “reassurance” frame would be less fearful. Utilizing the Solomon formula²¹ to examine the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable reveals *Toronto Sun* readers become more afraid by a score of .476, and *Toronto Star* readers become more afraid by .016 (hardly moved at all). The net effect of those who read *The Toronto Sun*’s treatment article was an increase in fear by nearly half a point. These effects are further confirmed with other statistical tests.

²¹ Please see Manheim and Rich (1991: 80) for formula.

Results from an independent-samples *t* test indicate a significant difference between those who read the placebo and “threat” frame when measuring “fear of terrorists.” Those who read the “threat” frame (M=4.01, SD=2.48) had a significantly higher level of fear of terrorists than those who read the placebo article (M=3.28, SD=2.34).²² These results indicate the media has the ability to affect respondents’ levels of fear towards terrorism, confirming the direct effects of the media. The second aspect of the hypothesis could not be statistically confirmed as results from the independent-samples *t* test measuring fear levels among those who read a placebo article compared to those who read the reassurance frame did not generate a significant difference. There was no difference between these two groups. See Table 3 for comparison of means.

Variable	<i>Star</i>	<i>Sun</i>	Placebo
Fear of terrorism/terrorists	3.7	4.01	3.28
Importance of civil/human rights	0.63	0.6	0.767
Importance of civil rights protection	8.61	8.48	8.95
Satisfaction with legislation in place to protect Canada from terrorists	5.88	5.54	6.38

Another method of reporting these results is through a regression model, where the three articles were entered as two dummy variables, with the placebo set as the reference group (see Table 4 Model 1). In order to ensure it is in fact primarily the media causing the differences in levels of fear, controls were added. Running regression to control for age and television viewership did not affect respondents’ responses to the “treatment” articles. In addition, a dummy variable was included to identify respondents who majored in political science, as nearly half of the student participants are enrolled in other disciplines. Political science enrollment also

²² $t(157.38) = 1.99, p < .05.$

did not affect respondents' levels of fear. Table 4 illustrates the findings of the above noted controls. However, as shown in Model 2 of Table 4 the significance of *The Sun* moved from $p < .05$ to $p < .10$. This reveals other factors may be getting in the way. When controlling for newspaper readership significant results were found. The amount of newspaper consumption affects the degree of individuals' susceptibility to fearful frames. Results also illustrate females are more fearful than males. The rationale behind gender affecting fear may be due to a plethora of factors, however it is beyond the scope of this study to explain this.

Given that newspaper readership affects respondents' levels of fear, the exact amount of newspaper readership per week was examined. The dataset was narrowed to isolate those who read the newspapers, in particular, those who indicated reading the newspaper less frequently. Regression results (see Model 3 of Table 4) confirm those who read the newspaper less than four days a week are more susceptible to media frames.²³ This therefore changes the relationship between fear and media exposure in that those who read the newspaper less than 4 days a week are significantly more fearful of terrorists than those who read the newspaper more frequently.

These results reveal the less newspaper consumption, the more fearful and more susceptible individuals are to media frames. As described, at four days or more respondents become less affected by the media and are less susceptible to media frames. This relates partially to Zaller's (1992) "receive accept model" whereby those with the most exposure are least susceptible to influence, and those with the least exposure to the media are most susceptible. In this case it was those who read the newspaper more than four days a week who were the least fearful *and* least susceptible to influence from treatment articles. Evidence also confirms Altheide's (1997) findings relating to the effects messages of fear have on public perception.

²³ Regression results also reveal those who read the newspaper four days or more were not fearful.

Table 4: Regression analysis, levels of fear

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	Coef (B).	Std. Err.	Sig.	Coef (B).	Std. Err.	Sig.	Coef (B).	Std. Err.	Sig.
Star	0.421	0.357	0.24	0.217	0.355	0.542	0.568	0.432	0.191
Sun	0.734	0.359	0.042	0.631	0.356	0.085	0.972	0.442	0.029
Age				-0.161	0.1	0.108	-0.125	0.114	0.275
Female				0.675	0.292	0.022	0.783	0.345	0.024
TV news				0.131	0.074	0.078	0.145	0.101	0.15
Newspapers				-0.18	0.075	0.018	-0.15	0.175	0.394
Political Science dummy				0.396	0.294	0.179	0.582	0.355	0.103
Constant	3.28	0.248	0	6.09	1.9	0.002	4.94	2.19	0.025
R	0.131			0.292			0.298		
Adj. R-sq.	0.009			0.058			0.052		
S.E.E.	2.3			2.24			2.32		
N	245			244			182		

Results from hypothesis 3a confirm hypothesis 4 stating those who read the newspaper the most will be less fearful of terrorism compared to those who read the newspaper the least. Running a Pearson r correlation coefficient reveals a significant negative relationship between the variable “fear of terrorists” and newspaper readership ($r = -.164, p < .05, n=245$). The negative coefficient indicates that those with more media consumption are less fearful. It is evident that those more exposed to media frames (reading the newspaper frequently) are less susceptible and less prone to media influence.

The second aspect of hypothesis 3 could not be verified as independent-samples t tests failed to find a significant difference between the “reassurance” frame and the placebo and the “reassurance” frame and “threat” frame on the dependent variable measuring fear. This therefore reflects a null finding. But, as shown in Table 3, the *Star* group is directionally less fearful than the *Sun* group. In addition, Table 3 reveals those who read the two treatment articles do appear to have moved respondents’ attitudes in the expected direction.

The next test concerns Hypothesis 5, which states that a) those who read the “threat” frame will be less in favour of having civil liberties and human rights protected and b) those who read the “reassurance” frame will be more in favour of having civil liberties and human rights protected. Results from ANOVA reveal a significant difference²⁴ among the groups when measuring “importance of civil and human rights protection.” The level of support for human and civil rights protection varied according to the article read. The Least Significance Difference post-hoc procedure indicated that those who read the placebo ($M=.767, SD=.311$) significantly differed from those who read *The Sun* ($M=.604, SD=.348$), whereby those who read the placebo were more in favour of pro-civil and human rights than those who read the “threat” frame.

²⁴ $F=5.192(2, 227), p<.01$.

The Least Significant Difference post hoc procedure also revealed a significant difference between those who read the placebo ($M=.767$, $SD=.311$) and those who read *The Star* ($M=.632$, $SD=.355$), whereby those who read the placebo were more pro-civil and human rights than those who read the “reassurance” frame. An explanation for this finding may be connected to the content of both treatment articles; both were about terrorism, which therefore primed any concerns about human and civil rights. The results still direct attention to media content affecting public opinion regarding civil and human rights protection.

Multiple linear regression comparing the two “treatment articles” with the placebo also confirmed findings of significance among these groups (see Model 1 of Table 5). Results did not change when controlling for the effects of variables such as the political science dummy, age, newspaper readership, television viewership and gender (see Model 2 of Table 5).

The results confirm the media’s ability to affect respondents’ perceptions of human and civil rights through framing. Although those who read the “reassurance” frame were expected to be more in favour of civil and human rights protection compared to those who did not read about terrorism, opposite results were uncovered. These results confirm the literature pertaining to the emotional effect from frames (Snyder and Park, 2002; Riffe and Stovall, 1989; Brown, et al., 2002; Just et al., 2007; Graber, 2007, Step et al., 2002; Hoffner and Haefner, 1993; Smith et al, 2002; Altheide, 1997) as it was revealed the mere subject matter of terrorism affects individuals’ attitudes regarding the protection of human and civil rights. It appears that individuals are willing to sacrifice human and civil rights in the name of thwarting off terrorism when exposed to media content regarding the issue of terrorism.

	Model 1			Model 2		
	Coef (B).	Std. Err.	Sig.	Coef (B).	Std. Err.	Sig.
Star	-0.135	0.054	0.01	-0.143	0.056	0.011
Sun	-0.163	0.055	0	-0.178	0.057	0.002
Age				0.016	0.015	0.285
Female				0.086	0.046	0.06
TV news				-0.006	0.011	0.59
Newspapers				0.001	0.012	0.933
Political Science dummy				0.038	0.046	0.405
Constant	0.676	0.038	0	0.42	0.289	0.148
R	0.209			0.257		
Adj. R-sq.	0.035			0.036		
S.E.E.	0.338			0.338		
N	230			229		

Hypothesis 6 expected those who read the “reassurance” frame would be more in favour of having their civil rights protected by the government and have a higher mean score than those who read the “threat” frame. A comparison of means reveals those who read the “reassurance” frame did in fact score higher (M=8.61) than those who read the “threat” frame (M= 8.48). However, the “reassurance” frame (M=8.61) yielded a lower score than the placebo (M=8.95) (See Table 3). This reveals that perhaps content regarding terrorism affects respondents’ attitudes towards civil rights protection and they are willing to lose levels of protection when faced with the issue of terrorism.

Subsequent independent-samples *t* tests reveal there is a significant difference between

those who read the placebo and those who read the “threat” frame. Those who read the “threat” frame had a significantly lower mean score of wanting civil rights protected than those in the placebo group.²⁵

Although results from independent-samples *t* tests did not confirm a statistical difference between the “reassurance” and the “threat” frame, nor between the “reassurance” frame and placebo, the significant results between the placebo and “threat” frame direct attention to media frames affecting public opinion. Perhaps due to the “threat” frame pushing the fear and threat of terrorism, individuals were primed to be less inclined to want their civil rights protected by the government when compared to those who did not read about terrorism. As stated earlier, possibly the fear evoked from the “threat” frame primed thoughts of security legislation, rather than civil rights protection.

These results lend support to the theory of media frames affecting public perception, as those who read about the threat of terrorism were significantly less inclined to be in favour of civil rights protection, when compared to those who did not read about terrorism. Framing can therefore affect public perception or opinion of the particular topic being discussed in an article. Furthermore, Chong’s (1996) theory of framing being an important aspect of public opinion formation is also validated due to citizens connecting the frame of reference to a preference regarding civil rights protection. These results reveal the effects of priming, as well as agenda setting, in that the media content affects what individuals think about, as well as primes them to be more in favour of civil rights protection.

Hypothesis 7 predicted those who read the “threat” frame would be less pleased with legislation in place to protect Canada from terrorists compared to those who read the placebo. When comparing the means in Table 3 it is evident that those who read the “threat” frame were

²⁵ $t(139.55) = -2.17, p < .05.$

indeed the least pleased with legislation when compared to those who read the “reassurance” frame and placebo. Table 3 illustrates these findings. Furthermore, results from independent-samples t-tests reveal a statistically significant difference between those who read the “threat” frame ($M=5.54$, $SD=1.81$) and those who read the placebo ($M=6.38$, $SD=1.85$).²⁶ An interpretation of these results are respondents who read the “threat” frame were cued to the threat, and then over-reacted by wanting more legislation, thereby assessing the current legislative framework as inadequate. Those who read the placebo, on the other hand, were not primed to fear terrorists, nor were they primed to think about security legislation.

These results confirm the literature surrounding persuasion, priming and second-level agenda setting, in that, due to the content in the “threat” frame pushing the fear of terrorism, respondents were in turn less pleased with legislation. Due to the attributes of extreme fear and threat projected from this frame, individuals were more hesitant to be pleased with legislation for fear of more terrorist attacks looming. In fact the article states, “I don't want to be alarmist and have people think there are numerous others out there but CSIS and it's policing partners are actively investigating others in Canada” (Jenkins, 2006: 2) and concludes by stating “Terrorism is a dangerous ideology and a global phenomenon” (Jenkins, 2006: 2). Perhaps it was language such as this that affected individuals’ perceptions of security legislation.

Hypothesis 8 expected those who watch the most amount of televised national news would be less fearful of terrorism compared to those who watch the least amount of televised national news. Results from linear regression reveals a lack of significance, in that televised national news consumption was not a predictor of fear level scores. The inability to generate statistical significance may be attributed to the wording of the question. If the question had asked how many days a week respondents watch television, or televised news, results may have

²⁶ $t(156) = -2.88$, $p < .05$.

changed, as national news may in fact be less sensationalized than local news.

The inability to gain significant results may also be attributed to the complex system of persuasion. Although respondents who watch television quite frequently may feel less fearful, it may be due to the subject of terrorism being a fearful topic to begin with, that respondents rated their fear somewhat higher than average. These results also relate to McClure and Patterson's (1976) findings that "television news "is not an efficient communicator of everyday political information" (1976: 25) and those who watch news frequently do not differ in agenda setting effects from those who watch it the least.

C- Null Findings

The preceding findings reveal the significant results of this study, however, other hypotheses were tested but non-significant results were found.

For example, it was expected that a) specific frames could shape and influence people's perceptions of terrorism and b) these perceptions can influence individuals' positions on matters related to security legislation and the protection of civil liberties.²⁷ An ANOVA model was generated to compare the mean scores of the three groups regarding their views about security legislation in Canada with respect to protecting citizens from terrorists and with respect to human rights. Results reveal a null finding.

Possible reasons for an inability to draw significant results may be attributed to the articles themselves. Perhaps they were not long enough, or lacked a solid procedural or substantive frame, which affected respondents' perceptions of security legislation regarding

²⁷ Due to this hypothesis measuring the answers from two questions, the variables, "protection" and "human rights" were recoded into scale variables. Variable "protection" was recoded into variable "security protection" whereby 0 reflects "not enough protection," .5 reflects "enough protection" and 1 reflects "too much protection." Variable "human rights" was recoded into variable "human rights protection" whereby 0 reflects "laws do not infringe upon rights at all," .5 reflects "tolerable level of infringement," and 1 reflects "laws infringe too much."

terrorism. Furthermore, the questions measuring this hypothesis may have been ambiguous, and therefore affected the way in which respondents answered the questions. For example, when measuring respondents' perceptions of legislation in place to protect Canada from terrorists, there were only three options from which respondents could choose: a) too much protection, b) enough protection, c) not enough protection. Similarly there were only three options with respect to legislation's impact on rights: a) laws do not infringe human rights at all, b) tolerable level of infringement of human rights, and c) laws infringe human rights too much. Extending the scale selection to a continuous 1 to 10 scale may have provided a less isolated selection for respondents and revealed more subtleties in differences.

When analyzing the mean scores of the question asking respondents their perceptions of security legislation in place in Canada to protect against terrorism, the three groups differed, however the differences were not statistically significant. For example, those who read the placebo article believed there was enough protection (mean score of .50) when asked their views regarding security legislation in Canada protecting citizens from terrorists. Those who read the "threat" article moved somewhat closer to the "not enough protection pole" ($M=.48$), while those who read the "reassurance" article were even closer to believing laws do not provide enough protection ($M=.46$). Directionally these results suggest reading about terrorism affects respondents' perceptions of security protection, however, the differences in these scores are not statistically significant.

Furthermore, when comparing views of security legislation in Canada respecting human rights, a difference in means among the three groups was directionally as expected, although this was not significant. Those who read the placebo scored closest to the "tolerable level of human rights" pole, with a mean score of .51, while those who read the "threat" frame moved closer to

the “laws do not infringe at all” pole ($M=.49$), and those who read the “reassurance” frame ($M=.45$) were the closest to the “laws do not infringe at all” pole. These results reveal the mere reading about the issue of terrorism compared to not reading about terrorism affects individuals’ perceptions of security legislation. As a result, they are more willing to sacrifice civil rights in the name of thwarting terrorism.

It was also predicted that those who read the “reassurance” frame are less likely than those who read the “threat” frame to view Muslims as extreme. An ANOVA model reveals there was no significant difference among the three groups. The inability to generate significant results may be attributed to the wording of the question. Respondents were asked to score ten religions (Pentecostalism, Unitarian, Buddhist, Roman Catholic, Hindu, Orthodox (Russian/Greek, etc.), Muslim, Jewish, Anglicanism, and Lutheran) on a scale of 1 reflecting “least extreme” to 10 reflecting “most extreme.” However “Muslim” was listed as an option when “Islam” would have been a more explicit option. This may have caused some confusion for respondents which could have affected their scoring of the religions. Perhaps having respondents write what religion they believed to be the most extreme would have generated significant results due to respondents having the freedom to write whatever religion they wished.

It was also hypothesized that those who read the “threat” frame would be more likely to list terrorism as the biggest issue facing Canada. Results reveal a null finding, however expanding the sample size may have aided in the ability to generate significant results.

Predictions were made that those who read a “threat” frame would be more likely to believe current security legislation does not infringe upon human rights at all when compared to those who read the “reassurance” frame. But there was no significant difference between the two treatment articles. Again, the small sample size may have stunted the ability to generate

significant results.

The last hypothesis to generate a null finding was the prediction that those who read the “reassurance” frame would be more likely to believe that there is too much security legislation in Canada compared to those who read the “threat” frame, who would believe there is not enough. Results from independent-samples t tests reveal no statistically significant difference between the two “treatment” groups. Furthermore, ANOVA results did not find a significant difference among all three groups. Although individuals may in fact be influenced and primed to feel a specific way due to the content in an article, persuasion over judgments can only occur when attitudes, beliefs, and values are all affected, as they are interconnected. Respondents may have been affected by the content, however, not to the extent where judgments were changed.

V- Discussion

Garnham (2000) acknowledges that studying the mass media entails exploration of issues that have troubled social scientists for decades. These issues encompass questions regarding how human motivation, action and restraint are formed. Although the process of persuasion was discussed in this study, a further psychological exploration of discovering how individuals’ cognitions are shaped and molded by media content could add another layer in the complex system of framing effects.

The results of this study established a series of linkages and causal relationships between media frames and public perception. This confirms the ability of media content to directly affect individuals’ attitudinal and emotional responses to terrorism. Results from the content analysis determined the media do not report the news as mirror images of reality but rather in a multi-dimensional array of distorted images. *The Toronto Star* was strongly associated with human and

civil rights frames with a reassuring content, while frames printed from *The Toronto Sun* were fearful and advocated the need for increased security. Due to *The Star* and *The Sun* being two large newspapers and therefore plausibly representative of how the media function, one can infer all media sources differ in the frames they produce.

It is these distorted images, as proven, that impact and skew public perception regarding terrorism and other important matters. It was revealed those who are exposed to fearful frames are less pleased with anti-terrorism legislation, more fearful of terrorism and are less in favour of civil rights protection compared to those who read the placebo. Furthermore, those who did not read about terrorism were significantly more in favour of civil and human rights protection compared to those who read the two “treatment” articles. These results reveal the impact terrorism related frames have on individuals’ emotions and attitudes towards civil and human rights protection. In addition to finding these results, it was revealed that media exposure affects individuals’ susceptibility to media frames. Those who read the newspaper less than four days a week were significantly more fearful of terrorism, than those who read the newspaper more than four days a week. These effects reveal the powerful force the media plays in individuals’ lives, albeit, this powerful force only works within a particular context.

Utilizing the case study of the “Toronto 18” was effective in that it measured respondents perceptions of the important matter of terrorism and examined if these perceptions were susceptible to change. As the findings reveal, media frames can influence individuals’ attitudes towards terrorism and anti-terrorism legislation.

In sum, seven hypotheses supported the prediction that different news sources may have different ideological biases generating different frames, which in turn can affect public perception. The most intriguing results dealt with the significant difference between those who

read the “threat” frame and those who read the placebo. There was a strong indication that those who read the article pushing the threat of terrorism were significantly more fearful than those who read the placebo. This supports the powerful effects theory whereby fear produced in the media directly impacts individuals’ emotions.

Furthermore those who read the “threat” frame were significantly less pleased with security legislation than those who read the placebo, and those who read the “threat” frame were significantly less inclined to want their civil rights protected by the government than those who read the placebo.

Similarly there was a strong indication that media content affected individual perceptions of being in favour of human and civil rights. Results revealed that those who read *The Star* and *The Sun* differed significantly from those who read the placebo. Those who read the “threat” frame were significantly less likely to be in favour of human and civil rights protection compared to those who read the placebo.

There was also a significant difference between those who read the “reassurance” frame and placebo, in that those who read the placebo were more in favour of human and civil rights protection than those who read the “reassurance” frame. These results indicate that the mere subject of terrorism affects respondents’ perceptions of civil and human rights protection, as well as levels of fear.

It was further revealed that females who read the “threat” frame were more fearful of terrorists than males, which may be attributed to the hard language utilized in this article, or it may be a cultural reflection of gender. Future studies should attempt to better understand the reason for this difference in gender perspective.²⁸

²⁸ This could be undertaken through an Emic, or Etic approach. See Miller (2002) for through description of these approaches.

The insignificant findings of this study reveal the fickle relationship individuals and the media possess. At times media frames can directly affect individuals, however, during other times frames may not have such a strong effect, lending support to the limited effects school of thought.

Human nature is unpredictable which therefore affects the degree of inference one can draw regarding these effects. A person's mood or state of health may affect their response to a survey. Pre-existing biases that one may hold can also affect the way in which respondents answer questions. Utilizing the Solomon four-group experimental design helped control for these pre-existing test effects by measuring answers from pretests to posttests, as well as having eight different versions of the questionnaire. One cannot be completely certain that there were not some external influences at work, as experimental manipulation is always vulnerable to rival hypotheses. Perhaps the inability to generate some statistical significance can be attributed to the mere fact that participants were in a study which could have affected participant's interpretation of what was being measured, hence affecting their reactions to questions asked.

Possible explanations for the inability to find evidence of validation of the predicted hypotheses may be attributed to scale selection, question wording, or the sample size. Further experimentation must include a larger sample size as this will yield results closer to the target population. This will also create smaller margins of error and help reveal more statistically significant results.

A further justification for failing to obtain significant results all round may be attributed to the demography. Due to the sample being all university students implies a greater breadth of intellect than in the average population, which may have created a greater resistance to media

effects.²⁹ Future studies may explore general random samples of the population and compare those to the results of those enrolled in university.

Regardless of whether there were some external factors at play, there is evidence that the media affects individuals' emotions and perceptions regarding terrorism and appropriate legislation. Exposure to different media frames, as well as the frequency of exposure can affect individuals' susceptibility. For example, those who read a "threat" frame were significantly more fearful than those who did read about terrorism, and those who read the newspaper less than four days a week were significantly more fearful of terrorists than those who read the newspaper more than four days a week.

One is therefore left to question where the findings of this research fit within the powerful and limited effects debate. Evidence reveals media frames can affect individuals' perceptions and emotional involvement regarding an issue, which substantiates the powerful effects assumptions. However, insignificant findings reveal individuals may not be as susceptible to the media as Lippmann once thought, but rather may be only slightly affected. More importantly, the findings of this research create a point of divergence from traditional framing effects literature and one is left to ask if a new theory is perhaps emerging.

Due to significant and nonsignificant results directionally validating the ability of the media to affect perception, a more pervasive theory merits further exploration. Media effects, as revealed, are not always limited, nor are they always powerful, but powerful effects are more likely to surface with issues that are framed in a fearful manner. The media can *interfere* in individuals' assessments of an issue by distorting reality and hence stimulating an emotional

²⁹ It is therefore interesting to ask: Are those who "skipped" class more likely to be less politically engaged, and therefore perhaps even more susceptible to media influence? Or, alternatively, are those who did show up more likely to be studious and thus more resistant to media influence?

response. This lends weight to a possible emerging theory, although perhaps still in the embryonic stage there is evidence to suggest that issues of a fearful nature are able to alter individuals' values. The mere fact that individuals values can be tampered with suggests a form of media interference.

The effect of framing terrorism in a sensationalized fearful manner affects levels of fear, civil rights protection, as well as perceptions of security legislation revealing citizens' truths are interrupted by the media's manipulation of content. Furthermore, this study reveals content regarding terrorism can affect individuals' attitudes towards human and civil rights protection, such as the presumption of innocence of suspected terrorists, torturing a convicted terrorist, and applying the death penalty to a convicted terrorist. These results imply the ability of the media to alter individual values. Further exploration is required to examine if the media's effect can change individuals' values in instances other than those deemed fearful.

The ability of the media to interfere with individuals' values merits additional research by examining the effects of issues that are more pedestrian, such as taxation. It may be more difficult to move values deeply ingrained in individuals regarding more mundane issues, than issues that generate high levels of fear and threat. Therefore the gravity of an issue is a variable one must consider when examining the potential of the media to alter values, as it will amplify or attenuate the media's interfering effect.

Due to the media possessing the ability to alter the way in which individuals perceive the issue of terrorism, what can be said for the role of democracy? Is it still as Lincoln once said, "by the people, for the people," (1863, Gettysburg) or is it now by the people with the art of persuasion for the people who are susceptible? Can the populace really trust that the mass media are delivering accurate, fair, and balanced news, or is objectivity sliding down a slippery slope

blurring what is real and what is fabricated? This theoretical question begs to be answered as the media may play a larger role in individuals' lives than most realize.

VI- Conclusion

Due to the media being the vital link in the political system (Alger, 1989: 6) and functioning as the bridge between the public and political actors, media interference is always with us. Citizens must be informed in order to scrutinize and formulate opinions regarding legislation, and media is the vehicle of delivery for this process. The mass media can strategically set the agenda of this linkage which affects message salience. Technology has revolutionized this landscape and created media supremacy, or perhaps even an "aggressive fourth estate" (Nesbitt-Larking, 2007: 353) of government, whereby individuals cannot escape the interfering effects of the media.

Media frames and biases have the ability to directly penetrate the minds of citizens. The ability to accurately assess and deliberate over important matters can therefore be affected. As the findings of this paper reveal the media has the ability to influence individuals' perceptions of terrorism, civil and human rights, and appropriate legislative matters. Due to this influence one may ask how an individual's democratic freedom is affected. Discovering the ways in which media sources tamper with news content may further advance the ideology of democratic violation.

Bennett (2007) acknowledges four reasons why "public information in the United States does not always advance the cause of democracy: personification, dramatization, fragmentation, and the authority-disorder bias" (Bennett, 2007: 40). The personification bias is evident when a journalist downplays the political issues, and draws on human experiences to humanize the

article; the “reassurance” frame in this study exemplifies this form of bias, as the article exaggerates the humanitarian aspect of terrorism. In a dramatization bias, journalists dwell on the dramatic aspect of events to create stories. Examples of this may include pushing the threat of terrorism, such as the “threat” article of this study. Fragmentation is witnessed when journalists cherry-pick and choose content to fit their agenda, omitting information that does not have validity in the journalists’ eyes. Authority-disorder bias has changed somewhat, in that, at one point the press made an attempt to project a sense of order and control during crises, but now the balance has shifted and journalists are creating a mistrust of authority figures. These tactics utilized by the media in tandem with the concept of priming can drastically affect the ways in which society absorbs and processes information. As the content analysis proves, there are a number of ideological differences among media sources at play.

The media once operating as a watch dog and adhering to the golden ethic of “fair and balanced” coverage has undergone a sea-change, and now have a “trained incapacity for the whole truth. Their job is not to inform but disinform, not to advance democratic discourse but to dilute and mute it” (Parenti, 2002: 65). The media filter information at their own whim and discretion and tend to only report on issues and people they deem important. This changes the nature of thinking as to what people want and how they are represented. The media sees citizens as consumers and “must cater to public tastes because they need particular audiences” (Graber et al., 1998: 9). However in order to be active participants of democracy, citizens must have accurate representations of reality, and not the skewed information the media orchestrates and spews to the masses.

Street furthers this theme of possible democratic violation and asks whether “the media in a liberal democracy provide ‘unbiased’ coverage” (Street, 2001: 257)? He distinguishes two

adverse effects biases can have upon democracy, “it can misrepresent the people or it can misinform them” (Street, 2001: 257). He contends that biases lead to misrepresentation of people, causing them to become subverted participants, and misinformation causes citizens to receive inaccurate information leading to misconceived political acts.

In essence democratic countries are faced with a catch-22; on one hand liberal democracies grant freedom of the press and on the other hand, due to the freedom of the press, citizens are not receiving transparent information. This affects the democratic political freedom of the average Joe. Street postulates that in “Western liberal democracies, the mass media have claimed the right to represent the people and to uphold democracy, and the consumers of newspapers and television have come to treat these media sources as the basis on which to think and act in the world” (Street, 2001: 7). This is especially problematic due to the vast divergence among media sources in their reporting of the same issue.

Due to all media sources pushing a vast array of frames, the average citizen is faced with information overload. There is a diversified selection of media sources from which citizens learn about political matters. The twenty-four hour seven-day-a week news generation is the ultimate provider of political information in our media saturated world. The information being fed to the masses may reflect a particular slant, or bias which can affect individual perceptions.

Mendelsohn (1996) postulates that news-makers call the shots on what is real, what is important and what the over arching objective is in their reporting. Due to this role, citizens’ information is somewhat fragmented and fragmented reporting could tamper with democratic freedom.

Alger (2001) acknowledges two elements essential in a democracy. First, “alternative choices must be available to the public,” (Alger, 2001: 6) as choice is vital for democracy; “the absence of choice means that democracy is lessened to one degree or another, depending on the

nature of the lost choice” (Alger, 1989: 7). Secondly, “the public must have “in its hands” what it takes to make a political decision on those choices in a meaningful fashion” (Alger, 1989:7). Citizens must be able to make choices in relation to their own beliefs in such a manner that they can act upon them, however if the media is as powerful as the late Lippmann once believed, citizens do not deliberate because the media function as a “magic bullet” directly influencing the decision making process of citizens.

Results of this study indicate the media does possess the ability to directly affect perceptions which can limit the political deliberation process for citizens. If the media’s choice of frames can influence the positions people take on the security vs. civil rights debate, what does that say about the more general question about the media’s role in a democracy in other policy areas? Is society embroiled in a form of the propaganda model (Chomsky and Hermann, 1988) wherein the media function as the elite, utilizing news stories to try and manipulate individuals into thinking a specific way regarding policy matters?

The results confirm some individuals can be manipulated by media content and there is potential for the media to use their “fair and balanced” voice in an insidious manner. The media is a powerful entity in citizens’ lives, and the ability to downplay, ignore, or skew events at their whim is troublesome. Citizens seek the media as their information providers; however, as revealed the information being delivered is skewed according to the particular media source.

The effect of multiple media sources framing and packaging the news to fit their own agendas can contaminate the process from which citizens gain information required to be participants in a democracy. The very rights protected under the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in Canada could be compromised due to the omnipotent media manipulating citizens into believing what they are receiving is fair and balanced news. As this study illustrates different

news sources can provide different frames of the same topic, which can ultimately shape a citizen's reality. If public opinion is formulated from the realities the media create and individuals use these realities to formulate decisions regarding public policy, and to elect public officials, this could ultimately be conceived as a form of propaganda; hence, violating democracy as we know it.

It is due to the media's control over message salience and layers of nuance that individuals are not receiving accurate representations of reality. This can profoundly affect the way in which they perceive the world. These effects impact individuals' perceptions and attitudes regarding important political matters. Furthermore, it has been revealed the frequency with which individuals consume media affects their levels of susceptibility.

The language used by media sources is a transmitter of meaning (Larking, 2007) and if this language is sensationalized, dramatized, or fragmented it affects the accuracy of citizens' reality. This is to say that the media is much more than an information provider, rather their modus operandi is to sell their particular frame to those with vulnerable receptors and nudge them into acceptance. The process, as subtle as it may appear has not so subtle consequences, as society may fall prey to "media interference."

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Appendix A: Questionnaire

1. How fearful are you of terrorists? Please rate on a scale from 1 to 10 (1= not fearful at all and 10= extremely fearful).

1. Not fearful at all
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
10. Extremely fearful

2. How many days a week do you watch televised national news?

- a) 0 days
- b) 1
- c) 2
- d) 3
- e) 4
- f) 5
- g) 6
- h) 7 days

3. What is your age? _____

4. How many days a week do you read the newspaper (online or print)?

- a) 0 days
- b) 1
- c) 2
- d) 3
- e) 4
- f) 5
- g) 6
- h) 7 days

5. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 =not important at all, and 10 =extremely important) rate how important it is to you to have your civil rights protected?

1. Not important at all
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
10. Extremely important

6. What is your ethnicity? Please write your answer in the space provided.

7. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

8. What is your program of study at university? Please write your answer in the space provided.

9. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 =not fearful at all, and 10 =extremely fearful) how fearful are you of Canada being attacked by terrorists?

1. Not at all fearful
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
10. Extremely fearful

10. What are your views of the current security legislation in Canada with respect to protecting citizens against terrorists?

1. Too much protection
2. Enough protection
3. Not enough protection

11. Do you think protecting 100 people from terrorists justifies the torture of one convicted terrorist?

1. Yes
2. No

12. Do you think we should apply the presumption of “innocent until proven guilty” to suspected terrorists?

1. Yes
2. No

13. Should Canada apply the death penalty to convicted terrorists?

1. Yes
2. No

14. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 =not effective at all, and 10 =extremely effective), how effective do you think post 9/11 security measures have been in thwarting off terrorism?

1. Not effective at all
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
10. Extremely effective

15. What do you regard as the biggest issue or problem facing Canada today? Please write your answer in the space provided.

16. What are your views of the current security legislation in Canada with respect to human rights? Select one of the following.

1. Laws do not infringe human rights at all
2. Tolerable level of infringement of human rights
3. Laws infringe human rights too much

17. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 =not enough attention at all, and 10 =too much attention given to the issue), is there enough focus or attention given by the media on the issue of terrorism?

1. Not enough attention at all
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
10. Too much attention given to the issue

18. All religions have followers that hold extreme views. Out of the following religions, rank them on a scale from 1= least extreme to 10 =most extreme. Each religion must be assigned a ranking, and no ranking may be used twice.

1. Pentecostalism
2. Unitarian
3. Buddhist
4. Roman Catholic
5. Hindu
6. Orthodox (Russian/Greek, etc)
7. Muslim
8. Jewish
9. Anglicanism
10. Lutheran

19. Should Canada apply the death penalty to convicted murderers?

1. Yes
2. No

20. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 =not pleased at all, and 10 =extremely pleased), how pleased are you with legislation currently in place to protect Canada from terrorists?

1. Not pleased at all
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
10. Extremely pleased

Appendix B: Articles

Threat Frame: *The Toronto Sun* (Jenkins, 2006: 2)

The al-Qaida inspired terrorist cell police say they smashed was plotting to bomb “hard” government targets rather than “soft” civilian ones such as shopping malls or nightclubs.

“They were going after institutional targets,” a source said.

Federal agencies such as the CSIS headquarters on Front St. W. and an RCMP building were on the hit list.

Three tons of ammonium nitrate was in the hands of the would-be bombers and was seized in a series of co-ordinated raids across southern Ontario led by CSIS, the RCMP, OPP and several police services including Toronto’s.

The chemical haul is three times the amount white supremacists used to shatter a federal building in Oklahoma City in 1995, killing 168.

“This group posed a real and serious threat,” RCMP Michael McDonell said. “It had the capacity and intent to carry out these attacks.”

“Our investigation and arrests prevented the assembly of any bombs and the attacks from being carried out.”

A cellphone wired to a circuit board seized in the raids was intended “to cause the explosion,” McDonell said.

Police had been watching the group for a “very long time” and

moved in for a specific reason.

“It was at the point when we felt we could no longer let them continue in their actions without a threat to the public,” McDonell said.

“Because of our concern for the public it was stopped.”

The busts, the largest ever in Canada since the war on terror began in 2001, netted 12 adults and five youths, all of whom are charged with participating in or contributing to the activity of a terrorist group, including training and recruitment, committing indictable offences, including firearms and explosives offences, for the benefit of a terrorist group and providing or making available property for terrorist purposes.

Most of the accused appeared in court, where they were held pending bail hearings.

But there were questions about the relationship between the arrests and another case.

Outside court, Mohammed Abdelhaleen, father of suspect Shareef Abdelhaleen, posted bail for Mohammad Mahjoub who is being held in Kingston, Ont., on a national security certificate.

Abdelhaleen also confirmed he worked for Atomic Energy of Canada.

At least two of the accused are related by marriage and several

live close to each other. All are residents of Canada and most are citizens. Police allege they used that most Canadian of summer activities – a trip to cottage country – to train for the attacks.

Luc Portelance, for the CSIS, said they have for some time been warning the public that there are Canadian-born and bred terrorists actively planning attacks.

“That threat is real and when we’ve spoken about that threat we were not limiting our thoughts to this one group,” Portelance said.

“I don’t want to be alarmist and have people think there are numerous others out there but CSIS and it’s policing partners are actively investigating others in Canada.”

And while the men are philosophical comrades of Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaida group, there is no evidence of contact or communication with foreign terror groups.

He also stressed police were not singling out Muslims.

“It’s important to note this operation in no way reflects negatively on any specific community or ethnocultural group,” he said. “Terrorism is a dangerous ideology and a global phenomenon.”

“Reassurance” Frame: *The Toronto Star* (Mdahavi Scharya-Tom, 2006: A10)

Members of the Muslim community expressed shock and sadness – but not surprise – at the arrest of 17 people from the GTA who have been charged with terror-related offences.

Though some leaders worry that Muslims may feel the sting of backlash, others say the community must do more to fight extremist views within its own mosques.

Investigators made a point of saying yesterday that the arrests are not an indictment of any particular faith or national group. Muslim leaders also said they hope Canadians will remember that those charged are innocent until proven guilty, and that those who hold to violent and extreme religious views are a tiny fraction of the approximately 750,000 Muslims who call this country home.

“This is not something new to me or something I did not expect,” said community activist Sohail Raza. “It was just a matter of time where something like this would crop up in Canada.”

Raza said that even prior to the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S., there was a surge of extremist Wahhabi ideology in mosques around the world, including a few in the GTA. Wahhabism is an extreme ver-

sion of Islam that originated in the 18th century and is now the state-sanctioned sect of the faith in Saudi Arabia.

Osama bin Laden, believed to have masterminded the Sept. 11 attacks, is an adherent of this sect.

“There is more hatred spewed out than logic,” Raza said.

The Canadian Islamic Congress has asked provincial and federal governments for funding to study how and why Muslim youth are drawn to these extreme ideologies, but has been turned away, the group's national president said.

“The problem has a social dimension and governments are spending all their money on law enforcement but not on diagnosing this problem and finding solutions, which is short-sighted,” said Mohamed Elmasry.

“We want to send a message to the community, especially youth, that in a liberal democracy, you can have a dissenting voice and you can be part of the political process by voting, running for office, by seeking careers in law, law enforcement, media, professions that the community needs.”

There was a documented increase in hate crimes against

Muslims in Canada following the Sept. 11 attacks. Community members also say they suffered incidents of verbal abuse after the transit bombings in Spain and London, Elmasry said. “We’re expecting the same after this news.”

He added, “The accused are innocent until proven guilty. We hope the media will not find the community guilty by association.”

It is time for the Muslim community to “stop acting as though it is not a big issue,” said Tarek Fatah of the Muslim Canadian Congress.

“These people are taking the name of Islam, these are fascist cult believers and they need to be combated within the Muslim community.

“This is the challenge that we have. We can't just go on behaving as if everything is normal.”

As for the potential for backlash, Fatah said he is not concerned.

“I think by and large Canadians are very sensible people and they know this is not an issue with Muslims. This is a cult within the Muslim community.

“I don't think there would be a backlash, but it can take just one idiot to do that.”

Placebo Article: (The Toronto Sun, 2008, 9)

Poor health is not reserved for people below the poverty line, according to the city's top doctor.

A new Toronto Public Health study, called *The Unequal City*, was released yesterday and shows there is a direct correlation between the amount of money someone makes and how healthy they are -- even upper middle class earners are less healthy than the very rich.

Given the current economic crisis gripping the world, more people are going to rely on less income, and that means all their health will suffer, said Dr. David McKeown, Toronto's medical officer of health.

"The economic trends we're looking at now, they pose a real threat to our health," said McKeown.

"There's a gradient, so that everyone is on a scale of health according to their income," he added. "I think this is particularly a concern given the worrisome economic news we've

had in recent weeks."

The report used 2005 and 2006 figures and when compared to higher income earners, lung cancer rates were 1.5 times higher for low-income males, the gonorrhoea rate was 3.5 times higher among low-income females, and low-income males will die an average of 4.5 years earlier.

There were similar findings in the 12 other health indicators as well.

Councillor Joe Mihevc, who chairs the community development committee, said the health inequality between various income groups "is going to get worse.

"The way I read the report, it's saying, basically, if you're poor, you will die earlier, your babies will have lower birth weights, your children will have a lower readiness to learn, your teenagers will have higher rates of pregnancy, you will more likely smoke, you will more likely struggle with poor diet and obesity and you

will suffer higher rates of lung cancer and heart disease," he said.

McKeown called health inequalities in this city "unacceptable," but the current economic crisis should not force social services program cuts because even in good economic times, things were bad.

"If people slip down that (health and income) scale, whether they're slipping from high income into middle income or from middle income into poverty, there will be an impact on their health."

The Toronto Public Health's study, *The Unequal City: Income and Health Inequalities in Toronto*, released yesterday shows someone's level of health is directly related to their level of income.

When comparing the lowest and highest income earners, rates of various "unhealthy" indicators reveal alarming trends, according to the city's medical officer of health.

Appendix C: Variable Code Book

Content analysis variables:

1. **Newspaper:** newspaper source.

1= The Star

2= The Sun

2. **Section:** what section from the newspaper the article was from.

1= News

2= Planet

3= Editorial

4= Business

5= Letter

6= Opinion

7= Entertainment

8= Ideas

9= Early Edition News

10= Editorial/Opinion

11= Comment

3. **Length:** the length of the newspaper article.

String variable, page length ranged from 43 words to 2294.

4. **Date:** the date of the newspaper article.

5. **Page number:** the page of the newspaper article.

6. **Fear level:** Level of fear of terrorism produced in article, 1 to 10 scale.

1= not fearful

10= extremely fearful

7. **Civil rights:** Amount of attention towards civil liberty protection, 1 to 10 scale.

1= no mention of civil liberty protection

10= excessive mention of civil liberty protection

8. **Security:** the need for security legislation and protection, the way it is discussed in the article.

1= no mention of security of protection

- 2= mention laws briefly
- 5= need transparent laws
- 6= need security
- 7= really need security
- 8= must have security
- 9= string reliance on mentioning needing security
- 10= excessive mention of needing security protection
- 11= laws and security too extreme
- 12= against governmental policies
- 13= not as safe as we think
- 14= laws have been effective
- 15= about foreign policy
- 16= need to be weary of governmental information
- 17= security at court house
- 18= security and arrests described as extreme
- 19= police may have been wrong, suspects innocent
- 20= article about laws, however questions the ability of Canada's intelligence
- 21= Continue bilateral cooperation with States
- 22= Following U.S.A policies too much

9. **Threat:** level of terrorism threat produced in article, 1 to 10 scale.

- 1= no threat
- 10= extreme threat

10. **Human rights:** level of attention attributed to human rights violation, scale 1 to 10.

- 1= no mention of human rights infringement
- 10= excessive mention of human rights infringement

11. **Terrorism:** amount of times the word terrorism is used in each article.

String variable, the frequency of the word ranged from 0-17 times.

12. **Fear:** amount of times the word fear is used in each article.

13. **Neutral:** if the article neutral and reported the facts.

- 1= yes
- 2= no

14. **Image:** was there an image?

- 1= yes
- 2= no

15. **Defining:** the defining characteristic of the article.

String variable, multiple characteristics were listed

16. **Coverage of religion:** how religion discussed.

0= no mention of religion

1= Muslim and peaceful

2= Produce hatred

3= Extreme views

4= Radical views

5= Extreme Islam

6= do not judge Muslims as extreme and as terrorists

7= We need to understand why Muslims become extreme

8= We need to weed out extremists

9= terrorists as Muslim

10= Violent ideology inspired by al Qaida

11= Violent Jihad tearing world apart

12= Jihad is a concern

13= Need to fight racism

14= al-Qaida inspiration

15= not singling out Muslims

17. **Frame:** the ideology of the article.

1= pro human rights

2= neutral

3= pro security measures

4= fear and threat

5= reassurance

6= humorous

18. **Extreme:** the amount of times the word is used in each article, the frequency of the word

19. **Protection:** the amount of times the word is used in each article, the frequency of the

Combined and recoded Variables:

20. Variables “civil rights” and “human rights” were combined into an index “**pro-rights**,” scale 2 to 20.

2= little mention of human rights/ civil liberties

20= excessive mention of human rights/ civil liberties

21. Variables “fear level” and “threat” were combined into an index “**threat/fear**,” scale 0 to 20.

0= no fear or threat at all of terrorism

20= excessive fear and threat of terrorism

22. “**net rights coverage**” was created by combining variables “threat fear” and “pro-rights,” where “pro-rights” was subtracted from “threat/fear,” scale -18 to 18.

-18= excessive fear and threat of terrorism

18= excessive mention of human rights and civil liberties

23. Variable “**Muslims**” was recoded from variable “**coverage of religion**” relating to the amount of coverage concerning Muslims.

1= mention Muslims

2= no mention of Muslims

24. Variable “**frame**” was recoded into “**frame3**”

1=Pro-human rights and reassurance

2=Neutral

3=Pro-security and threat and fear

Experiment Variables:

1. **Article:** which article the respondents read.

1= *The Star*

2= *The Sun*

3= The placebo

2. **Section:** what section in PO 111 the respondent was in.

1= 1:00pm

2=4:00pm

3. **Group:** what group in the Solomon four-group the respondent was in.

1= experimental group a

2= experimental group b

3= control group 1a

4= control group 1b

5= control group 2a

- 6= control group 2b
- 7= control group 3a
- 8= control group 3b

4. **Age:** the age of the respondent

String variable, ages ranged from 18-32.

5. **Ethnicity:** the cultural background of the respondent.

- 1= Caucasian
- 2= Jewish
- 3= Chinese
- 4= Hispanic
- 5= Canadian
- 6= South African
- 7= African American
- 8= Italian
- 9= Japanese
- 10= Palestinian
- 11= French
- 12= Portuguese
- 13= British
- 14= Mixed race
- 15= Indian
- 16= Croatian
- 17= Pilipino
- 18= Guyanese
- 19= Polish
- 20= Irish and Canadian
- 21= Welsh and Sri Lankan
- 22= German
- 23= Korean
- 24= French Canadian
- 25= Asian
- 26= Sri Lankan
- 27= Dutch
- 28= Dutch and Hungarian
- 29= Ukrainian
- 30= Nigerian
- 31= Afghani
- 32= South Asian

6. **Program:** The respondents program of study at university.

- 1= Political Science
- 2= Sociology
- 3= Psychology
- 4= Communications
- 5= Business
- 6= Honors Arts
- 7= Arts
- 8= English
- 9= Political Science and History
- 10= Political Science and Global Studies
- 11= Political Science, Philosophy, and Economics
- 12= Political Science and Business
- 13= Economics
- 14= History and Classics
- 15= Global Studies
- 16= Political Science and Music
- 17= French
- 18= Political Science and Philosophy
- 19= History
- 20= Sociology and Political Science
- 21= History and French
- 22= History and Philosophy
- 23= Archaeology and Political Science
- 24= Music
- 25= Communications and Global Studies
- 26= Kinesiology
- 27= Political Science and Psychology
- 28= Biochemistry and Biotechnology
- 29= Global Studies and French
- 30= Cultural Studies and Film Studies
- 31= Anthropology
- 32= History and Global Studies
- 33= English and Political Science
- 34= Undeclared
- 35= Film and English
- 36= Chemistry
- 37= Environmental Studies
- 38= Biology
- 39= Geography
- 40= Biology and Psychology
- 41= Political Science and Environmental Studies

7. **Newspaper:** how many days per week respondents read the newspaper (print or online), scale 0 to 7.
8. **Television:** how many days per week respondents watch televised national news (print or online), scale 0 to 7.
9. **Canada:** how fearful respondents are of Canada being attacked by terrorists, scale 1 to 10.
- 1= not fearful at all
10= extremely fearful
10. **Media:** Is there enough attention given by the media to the issue of terrorism, scale 1 to 10.
- 1= not enough attention
10= too much attention
11. **Death.** Should Canada apply the death penalty to convicted terrorists?
- 1= yes
2= no
12. **Torture:** Does the protection of 100 people justify the torture of one convicted terrorist?
- 1= yes
2= no
13. **Fear:** How fearful respondents are of terrorists, scale 1 to 10.
- 1= not fearful at all
10= extremely fearful
14. **Protection:** Vies of current security legislation in Canada with respect to protecting citizens from terrorists.
- 1= too much protection
2= enough protection
3= not enough protection
15. **Pleased:** how pleased respondents are of security legislation in place to protect Canada from terrorists, scale 1 to 10.
- 1= not pleased at all
10= extremely pleased

16. **Effective:** how effective post 9/11 security measures have been in thwarting off terrorism, scale 1 to 10.
- 1= not effective at all
10= extremely effective
17. **Innocence:** should we apply the presumption of “innocent until proven guilty” to suspected terrorists?
- 1= yes
2= no
18. **Penalty:** should Canada apply the death penalty to convicted murderers?
- 1= yes
2= no
19. **Human rights:** views of current security legislation in Canada with respect to human rights.
- 1= laws do not infringe human rights at all
2= tolerable level of infringement
3= laws infringe human rights too much
20. **Issue:** biggest issue in Canada.
- 1= terrorism
2= economy
3= crime
4= health care
5= low voter turnout
6= human rights
7= minority rights
8= education about governmental affairs
9= environment
10= government affairs, organization, leaders not accountable, or weak, do not inform enough
11= Canada’s dependency on U.S.A, and becoming too much like the U.S.A
12= education
13= poverty
14= Canadian military (lack of spending, not effective enough)
15= lack of security
16= social welfare
17= immigration policies
18= racism

19= radical Islamic views and reduce anti-Semitism in Arab youths
20= obesity
21= oil prices
22= inequality
23= teen sex
24= ignorance
25= National identity
26= treatment of First Nations People
27= violence
28= democracy
29= Violence
30= radical cultures
31= globalization
32= laws and regulations in Canada
33= Being too politically correct
34= to label people as terrorists
35= U.S.A pressured on public safety
36= media implanting fear in society
37= gap between rich and poor
38= security of Arctic
39= lack of public voting
40= media propaganda
41= propaganda
42= legalization of marijuana
43= propaganda war and media control
44= religion
45= immigrants taking Canadians jobs
46= Muslims discriminated against
47= Canada and U.S.A relations
48= multiculturalism

21. **Civil right protection:** Importance of having civil rights protected, scale 1 to 10.

1= not important at all
10= extremely important

22. **Gender:** the sex of the respondent.

1= female
2= male

23. **Pentecostalism:** how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme
10= most extreme

24. **Unitarian:** how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme
10= most extreme

25. **Buddhist:** how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme
10= most extreme

26. **Catholic:** how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme
10= most extreme

27. **Hindu:** how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme
10= most extreme

28. **Orthodox:** how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme
10= most extreme

29. **Muslim:** how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme
10= most extreme

30. **Jewish:** how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme
10= most extreme

31. **Anglicanism:** how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme
10= most extreme

32. **Lutheran**: how extreme are followers of this religion, scale 1 to 10.

1= least extreme

10= most extreme

Recoded and combined variables:

33. Variable “article” was recoded into a dummy variable “**star**.”

1= read the star

0= did not read the star

34. Variable “article” was recoded into “**sun**.”

1= read the sun

0= did not read the sun

35. Variable “group” was recoded into “**group4**.”

1= experimental group

2= control group 1

3= control group 2

4= control group 3

36. Variables “Canada” and “fear” were divided by 2 and combined into an index “**canfear**,” scale 1 to 10.

1= not fearful at all

10= extremely fearful

37. Variable “innocence” was recoded into “**inno2**.”

1= in favour of protection of human and civil rights

0= not in favour of protection of human and civil rights

38. Variable “death” was recoded into “**death2**.”

1= in favour of protection of human and civil rights

0= not in favour of protection of human and civil rights

39. Variable “torture” was recoded into “**torture2**.”

1= in favour of protection of human and civil rights

0= not in favour of protection of human and civil rights

40. Variable “protection” was recoded into “**security protection.**”

0= not enough protection
.5= enough protection
1= too much protection

41. Variable “human rights” was recoded into “**human rights protection.**”

0= laws do not infringe human rights at all
.5= tolerable level of infringement
1= laws infringe human rights too much

42. Variables “torture2,” “death2 and “inno2” were divided by 3 and combined into an index “**importance of civil and human rights protection**”

0= not in favour of protection of human and civil rights
1= in favour of protection of human and civil rights

43. Variables “Canada” and “fear” were combined into an index “**fear of terrorists**” whereby those who received the post fear question were controlled for, scale 1 to 10.

1= not fearful at all
10= extremely fearful

44. Variable “age” was recoded into “**age2.**”

1= 18-20
2= 21=23
3= 24= 32

45. Variable “issue” was recoded into “**newissues.**”

1= Terrorism
2= Racism, labeling people as terrorists, and discriminating against Muslims
3= Economy
4= Immigration and multiculturalism
5= Human rights issues
6= Education and ignorance
7= Environmental issues
8= Crime and violence
9= Religion and radical cultures
10= Canadian Government
11= Radical Islam
12= Security and military
13= Canada’s lack of independence from the U.S.A

- 14= Media and media propaganda
- 15= Low voting turnout
- 16= Canada and U.S.A relations
- 17= Democracy
- 18= Health issues

46. Variable “program” was recoded into “**polisci.**”

- 0= not enrolled in political science as program of study at university
- 1= enrolled in political science as program of study at university

47. Variable “gender” was recoded into “**female**”

- 1= female
- 0= male

48. Variable “gender” was recoded into “**male.**”

- 1= male
- 0= female

49. Variable “newspaper” was recoded into “**news2.**”

- 0= does not read the newspaper
- 1= reads the newspaper everyday

50. Variable “television” was recoded into “**tv2.**”

- 0= does not watch televised national news
- 1= watches televised national news everyday