

MESSAGES OF FEAR DURING THE UNITED STATES  
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 2004

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council  
of Texas State University-San Marcos  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of ARTS

by

David L. Day, B.L S.

San Marcos, Texas  
May 2005

**COPYRIGHT**

by

David Lee Day

2005

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank my mother, Delores Day, my father, James F. Day, and my sister, Aleene Evans, all deceased, for always encouraging me to do my best and loving me no matter what I did. I would like also to acknowledge how proud they would be of this work. Each of them is a part of it.

I would also like to thank my newer family, Joel Hueske, for his constant support, encouragement, and unending faith in me.

I have a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Rao, who has patiently guided me through the hurdles of graduate school and this thesis, always encouraging quality and achievement. I will forever be equally grateful to Dr. Peirce, who has given me a deep appreciation for research and taught me that statistics may make sense after all. Dr. Nelson has been quite kind to agree to be my Thesis Committee Chair when that position became vacant. He has selflessly given of his time and his genius to guide me in crafting this work and to help me learn much in the process. I highly value the advice, friendship, and integrity of all three of these dedicated professional academicians.

This manuscript was submitted on March 21, 2005.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
Objectives	
Background	
Organization of Thesis	
II LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATION.....	16
Literature Review	
Theoretical Foundation	
Framing	
Agenda Setting	
Cognitive Dissonance and Collective Efficacy	
Protection Motivation	
Propaganda	
III. METHODOLOGY.....	30
Coders	
Analysis	

IV	RESULTS .. .	39
V	CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION. ..	46
	Conclusions	
	Discussion	
	Cognitive Dissonance and Perceptions of Safety	
	Collective Efficacy	
	Protection Motivation	
	Fear Induced by Exposure to Violence	
	Propaganda Techniques	
	APPENDIX .. .	58
	Coder Package Sample	
	Code Sheets – Speeches	
	Code Sheets – Editorials	
	Coder Reliability Test Speech	
	REFERENCES.....	65

## LIST OF TABLES

### TABLE 1

Test Statistics – Comparison of Republican and Democratic Speeches ..... 41

### TABLE 2

Test Statistics – Comparison of Republican Speeches  
and Bush Endorsements..... 42

### TABLE 3

Test Statistics – Comparison of Democratic Speeches  
and Kerry Endorsements..... 43

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

### **FIGURE 1**

Adaptation of Rogers' Protection Motivation Model to Events of 9/11.....51

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

In 1937 Franklin Roosevelt told Americans: “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself - nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.” Some thirty years later, Richard Nixon had a different view of fear: “People react to fear, not love. They don’t teach that in Sunday School, but it’s true” (as cited in Glassner, 2004, p xxviii) Perhaps these two quotes represent some shift or evolution in the place fear plays in the American political system. Is fear a barrier to be surmounted in our society, or is fear a means to an end? It is a goal of this study that examination of the role fear-based messages played in the 2004 presidential elections in the United States may provide some understanding of how contemporary political leadership utilizes fear-based communication.

The election of 2004 took place in troubled times in America. The country was at war in Iraq. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York and Washington, threats of terrorism were still very much on the minds of the citizenry (Argyrides 2004). The national conventions of the nation’s political parties came at a time when the media was filled with stories of uncertainty and conflict. Against this background of anxiety there was even a threat that terrorists might strike at the conventions and their participants



(Kelly, 2004)

It would be very difficult to isolate all of the variables that contributed to the outcome of the presidential election. One area that deserves close scrutiny by communication researchers is the extent to which messages of fear were present in media agenda setting and in political party framing of issues. This is of particular interest when one considers these issues were fed to a public whose outlooks had been altered by new anxieties. This study examines some use of fear in the 2004 election campaign.

As Cognitive Linguistics Scholar George Lakoff (2000) observed:

The World Trade Center was a potent symbol, tied into our understanding of our country and ourselves in myriad ways. All of what we know is physically embedded in our brains. To incorporate the new knowledge requires a physical change in the synapses of our brains, a physical reshaping of our neural system. The physical violence was not only in New York and Washington. Physical changes -violent ones - have been made to the brains of all Americans” (p.56).

Work by Argyrides (2004) and others suggests the events of September 11, 2001, had lingering consequences for the American public which included increased aggression. Schlenger, et al. (2002) reported high, nonspecific stress and Post Traumatic Stress syndrome in segments of the population after the 9/11 attacks.

If, in fact, the brains of Americans were changed by the events preceding the election of 2004, how might fear have played a part in motivating the 2004 vote?

Summer 2004 saw the premiere of a controversial movie by Director Michael Moore that accused the Bush administration of spreading fear about terrorists to distract

Americans from a disturbing foreign and domestic policy (Czarnecki 2004).

In the atmosphere of increased public anxiety and mistrust, in an election year when the electorate appeared split almost down the middle in their selection of a President (Webber, 2004), both of the major parties may have been tempted to look for political advantage by using fear to sway voters. Clarke and Hoggett (2004) suggest there is, “. . . a narcissistic and fearful character of contemporary American power . . . a power based in a paranoid style of politics and expressed from a seemingly omnipotent position” (p.104).

If there was a paranoid style of politics in 2004, a look at how the two leading parties decided to position their messages for an election win could be quite informative in determining potentials of future framing for political motivation.

Jerit (2004) suggests that the party in power could have more incentive to use fear messages. “Rhetoric that highlights the frightening consequences of a particular course of action can be used to block political change, if it makes the electorate risk averse” (p. 566).

The circumstance of post-terror attack U.S. culture made it difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish in 2004 between a government that was setting different color codes of terrorist threat levels for public warning, and a party that could be perceived as courting political advantage through emphasizing risks to a risk-averse public. It is possible to examine, in some level of detail, what differences may have existed in the way major political parties implemented fear framing during the election.

Sociologist Cory Robin (2004) suggests political fear can be used to “teach us the worth of specific political values,” to confirm what a society believes and to mobilize a

society against threat to those beliefs. He observes. "Unlike natural disaster, political disaster forces a society to discover and pursue the political ideals that under less threatening circumstances might simply bore it" (pp 4-5). Given the potential for fear to shape society in the aftermath of the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks of September 11, 2001, much may be learned from examining the packaging of fear content and context; framing which may have been intended to shape the public choice and pursuit of political ideals.

## OBJECTIVES

One key to determining how each political party intends to frame the issues for an election is to examine the political conventions. Additionally one might track some of these issues through the election process by examining endorsement editorials and the winning President's first State of the Union Address of a new term in office. This study will explore some questions concerning messages of fear in the 2004 presidential election year:

- (a) To what extent were messages of fear used in the major speeches of the conventions of the Republican and Democratic parties?
- (b) What were the differences between the two parties in the subject of the fear messages selected?
- (c) How closely did the editorial endorsement selection of fear messages match the fear messages found in the major convention speeches of the party endorsed?
- (d) After a win in the election, what level of the fear messages did President Bush retain when he gave the first State of the Union address of his new term?

In a presidential election year in the United States, political convention themes are an American ritual. The convention establishes or underscores a theme for the party and the election and anoints the persons who will enact, condense, and symbolize the theme. The themes play out against the backdrop of the latest news in America and evolve such that they portray a battle of good and evil in which the host party never quite acknowledges, nor dismisses, any part it may have played in whatever may be America's current ills (Farrell, 1978). Since the convention of 1952, television networks have been able to bring the sights and sounds of a political convention to a national audience. Television coverage of each national convention must differ based on the politics, personalities, conflicts, and political and economic context of that convention (Waltzer, 1966). The heavy coverage by television provides the party with an enormous opportunity for a maximum of free, national, and possibly favorable public exposure. If one political context of the campaign is, for example, public anxiety, the free, prime media time during the conventions represents an excellent opportunity to reinforce the message.

One of the goals of the party is to stage a convention that will reach and hold a large viewing audience (Waltzer, 1966). In this context, the conventions can be seen as a media event and have a place in examination of mass communication practices. The developers of the convention messages must participate in media framing to secure public acceptance of the party agenda. Work by Jerit (2004) supports a view that candidates have incentive to use arguments that evoke emotions including fear and anger: "Emotional appeals allow candidates to emphasize consensual values, which make it easier to mobilize their party's base while simultaneously attracting the support of the

uncommitted” (p 563).

Both parties may have had an opportunity to step beyond the obvious fear of terrorism and influence voters through touching the deeper fears of a drifting society. There is historical precedent for campaigns addressing these anxieties. Petrocik’s (1996) research found that traditionally there has been an “issue ownership” by political parties. For example, Democrats have been considered more competent at education issues and Republicans have been seen by voters as better crime fighters. Petrocik suggests that a winning party rhetoric is that which gets the major arguments into the issue area in which the party is perceived as strong.

If Republicans, for example, are seen as strong on family values and Democrats strong on education, GOP candidates are advantaged by linking any education arguments to a perception of a family values struggle. Hernson (2000) observes there is traditionally a three percent vote advantage for candidates who run on issues which the voters generally associate with that candidate’s party. If Republicans were viewed as tougher on terrorists, one might question what Democrats may have gained from strong campaign emphasis on terrorism.

Traditionally Democrats have been perceived to be stronger on some domestic issues including poverty and unemployment, and Republicans on others, including crime (Petrocik, 1996). If, as Jerit (2004) suggests, the party in power has more incentive to use fear-based messages, the Republicans might have been expected to make more frequent reference to issues that resounded with voter fears stimulated by 9/11 and related developments. This could create a voter reluctance to change.

If, in the minds of Americans, framing of perceptions of safety and security had

been shaken by the events of 9/11, to what extent did the political parties seek to reinforce fear frames? This study seeks to determine if there was a difference between political parties in the numbers, or the subject matter, of those fear frame messages? Additionally, this study seeks to observe at what level those same fear frames may have found their way into editorial endorsements and survived in President Bush's post-election rhetoric in the 2005 State of the Union address. It is also an objective to examine the outcomes in the appropriate perspective of post-9/11 America by providing historical and theoretical investigation that brings additional context to the findings. To do so, this study will utilize the foundation of previous research which examined the fear frame background against which the 2004 presidential election took place. The goal of the study is to make a small, but rather specific, contribution to the body of knowledge of the extent to which, and the forums in which, some messages of fear may have added to that framing.

## BACKGROUND

To further understand the 2004, post-9/11 context in which fear messages may have been presented in a presidential campaign to impact public thinking, one must look at the backdrop of fear agenda setting which had taken place in the media for some time prior. Richard Altheide (2004) conducted extensive qualitative content analysis of news reports and advertising post 9/11. He points to news report and advertising promotion of a "discourse of fear" in which there was pervasive communication creating a symbolic awareness and expectation that a central figure of everyday American life was danger and risk.

News media reports after 9/11 enabled elite decision makers to construct terrorism as the object of fear and to cast all Americans as victims.

Citizens were asked to not only give blood and money, but to grant elites and formal agents of social control (FASC) all authority to deploy whatever measures they deemed necessary to protect citizens, take revenge, and prevent such a deed from reoccurring (p.295).

Clarke and Hoggett (2004) observed that Americans experienced a new vulnerability as a result of the 2001 attacks:

It is now commonplace to say that the USA lost its innocence on September 11th. But what it really lost was its embrace of the imaginary. Until that day the American psyche had been consumed by a helpless fascination with a fictional threat, or rather a series of fictional threats; on September 11th they received the shock of the real. 'Welcome to the world,' some people said. Suddenly Americans became as vulnerable as the rest of us. The immediate response to September 11th was bewilderment and incredulity (p.99).

It seemed the attacks transformed everything for Americans. Whether convincing themselves that security could be obtained through attacking the external evil or achieving internal integration and successfully managing our borders, Americans' most important question had to do with how secure they now were. (Shapiro,2002).

Messages of attack, threat and terrorism did not just reach Americans through news and commentary media reports. A study by Castonguay (2004) found that the government was soliciting terrorist themes and scenarios from entertainment program

producers. This included CIA script consultation on the CBS series *The Agency*.

Consultants from the Department of Defense and Congress were used for the ABC series *Threat Matrix*, and a pedagogical website on the struggle in Afghanistan was designed for adults and children by Warner Brothers to accompany its program *7th Heaven*'s efforts to "put a real face on the war on terrorism." Castonguay cites a media report that government intelligence specialists were attempting to influence Hollywood to produce programs with terrorist scenarios (pp103-104).

It appears that both political parties sought to underscore an agenda of fear in the 2004 presidential election, contributing by some measure to fear-based agenda building. The fear focus in the campaigns prompted the MSNBC network to run a story entitled, "The Science of Scare Tactics." In the story writer Jonathan Alter (2004) points to a Bush campaign denouncing "Scary Kerry." The title/label suggests an attempt to reinforce secondary agenda setting which would depict Kerry as unfit for the presidency. Alter points to Bush campaign claims that Kerry would not attack terrorists until after they attacked America, and that he would raise taxes. He also pointed to the Kerry camp warnings that President Bush would endanger social security and would appoint biased Supreme Court Justices. The suggestions included claims Bush had sold out to the chemical industry and misspent Homeland Security funds such that chemical plants, ports, and air cargo were unsecured from terrorism. The Republican National Committee (2004) web site headlined one of its stories, "Desperate Dems Draft Scare" and scolds Senator Kerry for suggesting that President Bush would reinstate the draft.

On October 25th, 2004 a Democratic National Committee (2004) web site headline declared, "Bush's Failure to Secure Iraqi Explosives Has Made the World Less



Safe.”

So obvious was the fear theme in the campaigns that some news reporters made reference to it in lead lines for campaign stories. MSNBC’s Jonathan Alter (2004), for example, led a story. “It’s fright night in the 2004 presidential campaign, Halloween come early. President Bush says you’ll be taxed into poverty, then blown up by a terrorist if you vote for John Kerry, while Kerry says that voting for Bush means retiring on cat food, if you survive a back-alley abortion, and being drafted to fight in the Middle East.”.

Cox News Service’s Jay Bookman (2004) led his story entitled, “Is it really fear of terror? Or fear of change?” with the observation that, “Democrats and Republicans don’t agree about a lot, but they do agree that fear played a major role in the 2004 election.”.

Perhaps one of the most poignant of the political framing and agenda setting symbols of the campaign was a televised ad the GOP simply titled “Wolves.” The ad depicted a shadowy forest in which ominously threatening wolves lurked nervously. A voice described an increasingly dangerous world and implied that terrorists would use a Kerry presidency as an opportunity to take advantage of signs of weakness in America (Sidoti, 2004).

These examples seem to suggest that the campaigns were seeking to utilize both primary and secondary agenda setting, to reinforce orientation, and even to make an obscure concept of terrorism more concrete by attaching it to symbolism such as prowling wolves.

The wolf ad had similarity to a television spot run in 1984 by the Reagan

campaign. The ad showed a huge bear moving through the forest

There is a bear in the woods. For some people the bear is easy to see.

Others don't see it at all. Some people say the bear is tame. Some say the

bear is vicious and dangerous. Since no one can really be sure who is

right, isn't it smart to be as strong as the bear; if there is a bear?

(Republican National Committee, 1984)

Noam Chomsky (2002) in his book *9/11* claimed "hysteria over international terrorism peaked in the mid-80's." Chomsky noted that a former Republican administration had vowed to dedicate itself to the "cancer" and "plague" of terrorism which was said to be threatening civilization

The 'war on terror' is neither new nor a 'war on terror'. We should recall that the Reagan administration came to office 20 years ago proclaiming that 'international terrorism' (sponsored worldwide by the Soviet Union) is the greatest threat faced by the U.S., which is the main target of terrorism, and its allies and friends (p. 68)

Consideration of a 1980 television ad by the Ronald Reagan campaign may provide some support for Chomsky's claim that instilling fear of radical Arab Moslem terrorism is not new in campaigning: "Ayatollah Khomeini and his men prefer a weak and manageable U.S. President and have determined to do everything in their power to determine our election results" (GOP Ad, 1980).

Certainly Republicans have not been alone in the use of fear in campaigns.

Perhaps the most famous fear based campaign ad is a stark, black and white television

commercial from the 1964 presidential race. The scene begins with a small girl counting down as she picks petals from a daisy. Next there is the sound of a military countdown and a view of an atomic explosion. Lyndon Johnson's voice is heard saying, "These are the stakes. To make a world in which all of God's children can live, or to go into the darkness. We must either love each other, or we must die." The solemn voice of an announcer follows, "Vote for President Johnson on November 3rd. The stakes are too high for you to stay home" (Democratic National Committee, 1964).

This history of use of fear in campaigns raises the possibility political parties possess more professional campaign experience in predicting the outcomes of fear themes in political rhetoric than many Americans realize.

In the Fall of 2004 the country was sharply divided. Cable News Network reported the results of voter exit polls it had commissioned showed that terrorism was the third top issue, and the war in Iraq was the fourth top issue, compelling voters. Bush carried by a significant margin those voters who listed terrorism as a priority. According to the poll, moral values and the economy vied for the number one issue of concern to voters. CNN reported that Kerry supporters emphasized, "jobs, intelligence, empathy and desire for change." According to the report Bush supporters stressed "terrorism, faith, clarity, and trust" (Botelho, 2004). Americans wanted change, but there seemed not to be an agreement on what should be changed.

Shapiro (2003) suggests the attacks of 2001 brought to a crisis point a dichotomy in America's national psyche:

If America was struggling with a developmental internal split with fundamental values held internally and differences projected to our outer

boundaries, the terrorist attack evoked a crisis. Americans, as articulated by our president, were stunned that outside ethnic groups hated us. We faced a manifest identity crisis between our narcissistic self idealization (our president called us a 'good and kind people'), and a vicious external retaliation for our foreign policies that had contributed to the marginalization of ethnic subgroups (p.127)

Some observers of the 2004 election suggested that there was, under the surface of voter anxiety, something more than just fear of terrorism. Journalist Jay Bookman (2004) of Cox news service observed:

That fear - that sense of being under assault in your own country - is a powerful thing. And it no doubt grows every time people see a TV commercial talk of four hour erections, every time they go to the ATM machine and are asked whether they want to conduct business in Spanish or English, every time a business announces mass layoffs and a tax-subsidized move overseas."

A 2004 GOP campaign ad for George W. Bush captured the sense of anxiety with these words:

"The world is changing. Sometimes in ways that astound, and others that terrify. We depend more than ever on our values - family, faith, the freedom we celebrate. In today's changing world the answers aren't easy. We need a sense of purpose, a vision for the future, the conviction to do what's right " (Republican National Committee, 2004)

Hofstadter (1979) references this fear when he observes that Americans perceive

themselves as “. ..always manning the barricades of civilization” (p 29)

Some argue that it is not traditional moral values, but a way of life based on runaway consumerism which Americans find threatened. Eagleton (1983) writes that the US society tends to defend a form of life for which there is “no rational justification” by seeking to disable or disallow any form of critique, branding American life as necessarily “metaphysical,” “absolute,” or “foundational” (p.203) Burch (2004) observes that, “...the creature comforts of the ultimate consumer society constitute an inestimable cultural cement in which even its severest critics are mired ...Any administration, from whichever faction of the conservative coalition, which speaks out in the name of the American way of life is bound to have broad tacit support for interventions covert and overt” (p. 134).

Psychiatry scholar Edward Shapiro (2003) cites findings in a study of American identity and elections as evidence there has been a national uneasiness; a perception that values and national identity have been under attack in America dating back at least as far as the Presidential election of 1996:

“These voters, from all ethnic groups, were feeling a loss of shared values in this country, and talked passionately about the loss of a sense of community, a breakdown of rules, and a view of America as ‘rudderless,’ without clear goals, direction, or a sense of vision” (p.123).

There may never be a mechanism of knowing how much impact fear had on the 2004 Presidential vote. Given the public anxiety and background against which campaign messages were played, one could suggest that fear-based messages had a number of communication implications and impacts which these messages might not

have carried under more normal circumstances. Did the Republicans seek to validate a foreign policy through the use of fear messages, while the Democrats sought to use fear to erode confidence in the Bush administration's international efforts? The next chapters of this study will examine some elements of the extent to which fear-based campaigning may have been used by both parties against a backdrop of fear framing that already existed in the country

### ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

This paper is organized into five chapters

Chapter 1 introduces the subject, the objectives of the study, and background on the political and social context in which messages of fear appeared in the American presidential election of 2004.

Chapter 2 looks at past literature written on the topic of campaign rhetoric and fear messages and examines the theories which provide foundation for the study.

Chapter 3 details the methodology of the study, including the collection of data, methods for coding the data, and an examination of the validity of the data.

Chapter 4 is a presentation of the outcomes of the statistical analysis of the data.

Chapter 5 provides a summary overview of the study, a discussion of conclusions which may be drawn from the analysis, possible weaknesses of the study, and makes suggestions for what further research may be found valuable.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Examination of fear messages in a political campaign calls for a review of research on campaign rhetoric, political convention communication, and fear-based communication for motivation. Given the unusual post-9/11 environment in which the 2004 United States presidential elections took place, efforts to more completely study the topic require an additional review of research covering the use of fear messages, fear-based framing, and fear-related agenda setting in the aftermath of the terrorists' attacks on the country.

Jerit (2004) has examined content of campaign rhetoric. Her work provides insight into the inclusion of negative messages in campaigns. She found that in a Canadian national election she studied the most frequently used arguments were those intended to evoke fear and anger.

Perceptions among voters that specific issues are "owned" by a political party during a campaign were examined by Abbf, Goodliff, Herrnson, and Patterson (2003).

Their research suggests that voter identification associating an issue with a traditionally held position of a political party enhances the potential for the voter to agree

with the party candidate positions on the issue. In a campaign such as that in 2004, where there were new fears associated with old and new issues, vying for party ownership of an issue may have become paramount in directing focus of convention speeches.

Political convention ritual and rhetoric has been examined by a number of scholars. Farrell (1978) found political conventions to be “legitimation ritual.” He pointed out that convention speakers tend to articulate a central theme through ceremonial discourse, displaying a cluster of role archetypes, and lending a sense of historical continuity in which the event takes place. The speakers attempt to confront social evil as conventions explore themes of conflict and dramatic tension. He confirmed in his observation the responsibility of a keynote speaker to set the theme of the convention.

Separate studies by Brown (1968) and Waltzer (2001) examined television coverage of national conventions and are helpful in recognition of the extent to which the forums are media and message driven. Waltzer refers to the conventions as, “...an unparalleled opportunity for the party to obtain a maximum, free, national, and , it is hoped, favorable exposure” (p.43)

Specific study of fear as a force in American society has been made by a number of researchers (Young ,2003, Clarke and Hoggett, Altheide, 2002, and Glassner, 1999). Investigating what Americans fear, Glassner cites concerns ranging from over-estimation of an individual’s potential for being a crime victim, to a media overstatement of the dangers of encountering road rage. He observes that Americans are filled with fears which are unfounded in fact.



One major national study included a focus on the matter of understanding public fear expressed when there is uncertainty as to the magnitude of the threat. Examining public fears as a part of a study of risk communication, the National Research Council (1989) concluded that, "...even though good risk communication cannot always improve a situation, poor risk communication will nearly always make it worse" (p.3). The study asserted:

For highly uncertain risks it is difficult to refute extreme estimates of their magnitude. Concerns may persist precisely because of the uncertainty. An example is the concern that AIDS may be transmitted by mosquitoes. While technical experts agree that mosquito transmission is too improbable to worry about, a skeptic can maintain that it has not been proven impossible. Additionally, highly uncertain risks generate special conflicts about their management with decision makers disagreeing widely about how large a margin of safety should be allowed to protect against occurrence of disastrous consequences that they agree are unlikely (p.61).

In his work entitled *Creating Fear-News and the Creation of Crisis*, Altheide (2002) reports that fear has become progressively more pervasive in the lives of Americans and documents how the media frames many news making events as problems to be feared.

Clarke and Hoggett (2004) offer that fear is, "... now an abiding, pervasive and dominant affect in American life and has been since the Second World War" (p 91).

Public reaction to media and public official originated fear-based messages since the attacks of 9/11, include a study of reactions of middle aged women in context of

terror management theory conducted by Thomas in 2003. She observed increased vigilance for the whereabouts of family members, a need to monitor international news, and mistrust of strangers as reactions the age group studied had experienced since the 9/11 crisis.

Agryrides and Downey (2004) cite studies which seem to substantiate a recorded increase in immediate, and potential for long term, effects of the 9/11 attacks on measures of aggression, prejudice and public perception: "Perhaps, exhaustive, intensive, and relentless media coverage helps to make victims of us all" (p.183).

In a paper entitled *Consuming Terrorism* Altheide (2004) observes that the 9/11 acts of terrorism were given meaning by propaganda: "The terrorism discourse was not limited to a specific situation but referred to a general world view"(p.290). Conducting a qualitative content analysis of news accounts and advertising campaigns post 9/11, Altheide found that fear played an important role in the social construction of terrorism:

The meaning of the attacks was framed in the context of previous domestic and international events and especially of well established narratives surrounding fear, justifying it, and the place of fear in the lives of many citizens. ...history of numerous 'crisis' and fears involving crime, violence, and uncertainty was important for public definitions of the situation after 9/11 (pp. 294-295).

One study of fear frames found they may also create some measure of stand-alone impact associated simply with the nature of the message. Young (2003) points to evidence that there is an automatic tendency of fear-induced stimuli to attract attention. He cites "rubber necking" in traffic accident situations, in which drivers tend to slow

down to view the scene, as an example. Young asserts humans may be somehow wired to attend to fear inducing stimuli precisely because it is perceived (if even at a subconscious level) to be informative and relevant to survival. His study of audience response to fear messages concluded that fear prompts a sense of increased importance of, and attention to, a subject

Where do campaign issues originate? Scholars have sought to answer the question of whether the media or politicians set the agenda for messages during a political campaign. A study by Tedesco (2001) examines differences between candidates and parties who are more likely to set the media agenda, and campaigns and parties who are more likely to follow the media's agenda of the moment. His research of the presidential primary elections in 2000 suggested a closer alignment between the Republican candidates' articulation of an agenda of issues and the issues agenda of the major media in the country. Research by Evatt and Bell (1995) found that in the 1994 Texas gubernatorial election, Democratic candidate Ann Richards was more likely to set the media agenda and Republican candidate George W. Bush was more likely to follow the media agenda of the time. A 1998 study by McKinnon and Tedesco (as cited in Tedesco, 2001) revealed a similar comparison of Democratic and Republican candidacies. They presented evidence that, in the latter part of the 1996 presidential campaign, Democrat Bill Clinton appeared to be more adept at setting the media's agenda and Republican Robert Dole appeared to be following the agendas set by the media. It is unclear, however, how one makes such distinctions in 2004. This is particularly true when post-September 11 fear in the United States was so integrated into the national psyche and linked so soundly to the actions and proclamations of the party in power.

No research was found which specifically examined fear-based messages in political convention speeches. Although fear in election messaging, and fear as a communication element has been studied, the events preceding the 2004 elections created such a unique environment in the country that any study of how fear may have been the subject of political rhetoric could be of interest and academic value. A search found no study which looked specifically at post-9/11 fear messaging in the context of a political campaign.

## THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The theoretical foundation of this study is based primarily on framing and agenda setting theories. Given the complex existence of the fear framing and fear-based agenda setting in the country during the 2004 election campaign, consideration of other theories, including Cognitive Dissonance, Collective Efficacy, Protection Motivation, and Propaganda Devices also contribute to a better understanding of the research results

### Framing

This study will explore whether there is evidence the election of 2004 took place in an environment of fear-based framing.

Cognitive Linguist George Lakoff (2003) says of frames that they are:

...mental structures that shape the way we see the world. As a result, they shape the goals we seek, the plans we make, the way we act, and what counts as a good or bad outcome of our actions. In politics our frames shape our social policies and the institutions we form to carry out policies.

To change our frames is to change all of this. Reframing is social change

(p.xv).

Framing has been variously defined by other researchers. Gamson and Modigliani (1987) defined media framing as: "...a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events .the essence of the issue" (p 143). Some have suggested that framing is operationalized in combination with agenda setting or priming (Iyenger&Kinder, 1987).

Altheide (2002) writes that by treating complex events as problems, the media have created what he refers to as the "Problem Frame " He asserts that this framing promotes fear on a routine basis, and promotes victimization as a widely read and viewed status.

McCombs, Shaw & Weaver (1997) observed that framing is simply an extension of agenda setting. Kahnreman and Tversky (1984) found evidence that even what seems to be trivial change in the framing of a subject can alter decision making. According to their research, individuals may be more likely to take risks when choices emphasize losses, but to be risk averse when they emphasize gains. This could suggest that the party in the White House may win more votes by the offer of gains and the party not in the Presidency may be more likely to win while pointing out potentials for loss. The framing of issues by a political party may well seek to tell the individual citizen what to think about, and even the meaning or essence of the issue as it relates to their anxieties

The temptation for the politician could certainly be to link public anxieties and their associated problems in some way to the opposing party. Ferrell (1978) refers to a conflict theme established at national conventions which "seeks catharsis through combat, to atone for evil in victimage, to overcome evil by undergoing its costs" (p. 293).

Caragee and Roefs (2004) point out the importance of what they refer to as “frame sponsorship” and suggest that framing may be sponsored, not only by politicians and the elites, but by social movements and marginalized communities (p.216). Political and social power are key players in how Gamson (1992) has examined collective action frames which he says can be seen as: a perception of harm as a result of human action (an injustice component), a belief in the potential to change conditions through collective action (an agency component), and the identify of a specific adversary (an identity component). Certainly the attack on New York and Washington on September 11 could be seen as an injustice. The various proposals for conducting a war on terror could be viewed as an agency component, and there is little doubt that both political parties targeted “terrorist” as adversary. Collective action framing of terror and fear in the post September 11 environment suggests the incorporation of a great many contributors to the framing process.

### Agenda Setting

Closely related to framing, agenda setting refers to the media’s capability to repeatedly report on an issue in such a way that it raises the importance of the issue in the public’s mind (McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 1997 and Severin & Tankard, 2001). In 1972 researchers McCombs and Shaw reported the results of the first systematic study of agenda setting. They had examined the 1968 presidential election campaign in a study that focused on undecided voters in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. For the undecided voters questioned, the study found there was a correlation between media emphasis on a major issue and voter perception of that issue. This first of its kind study suggested a very strong relationship between what these voters saw the media emphasizing and what the

voters judged to be important

McCombs and Shaw later undertook research related to the 1972 presidential election. They sought to become more programmatic and systematic in their approach. The researchers noted a sequence of the way in which the media generated influence on their audience. It provoked awareness of issues and provided information on those issues. The information provided the basis for attitude change, and the attitude change shaped behavior

They observed that much of the earlier research had placed little emphasis, if any, on the first two items in the sequence, focusing primarily on attitude change and behavior. They sought to examine to what extent the causal change prompted by mass communication included the gatekeepers who made the decisions about what story should be emphasized over another.

Their 1972 study findings suggested there was a correlation, in the months between June and October of the election year, between the agenda set forth by the media and perceptions of those issues by television viewers. The correspondence between those items was mixed for newspaper readers. There was a correspondence between media agenda and consumer agenda in newspaper readers, but the effect was opposite that of television viewers. They were seen to maintain a tendency to have a stronger correlation with increased exposure to the medium (as cited in Lowery & DeFleur, 1995).

Additionally, in 1990 Yagade and Dozier examined a hypothesis that agenda setting was less likely to take place on abstract issues than on issues for which the public could have more concrete perceptions. That suggestion could cause one to question the effectiveness of agenda setting in an atmosphere where the nation has been attacked by

terrorists and the attack was followed by several years of warnings that another attack could follow. The Department of Homeland Security designed, color coded threat level rose to “high” or “orange” five times between March, 2003 and March, 2004. Americans were warned by federal authorities that there was a likelihood of more attacks (Altheide, 2004). Certainly one could question just how obscure the fear might be in that circumstance.

It is suggested by some research that agenda setting may also involve a process over time such that agenda building takes place. Lang and Lang’s (1983) concept of agenda building is that it is a process of putting an issue on the public agenda that takes time and involves several stages: (a) The issues or events are highlighted, (b) increasing amounts and types of news coverage occur, (c) the public perceptions are “framed” or given a field of meaning or secondary level of context in which they can be understood, (d) labels or powerful tags or language are added, (e) the ideas are linked to secondary symbols, circumstances or issues, and (f) credible individuals speak out on related topics.

This agenda building would be accompanied by orientation such that the message relevance to the individual is solidified, and the degree of certainty about the subject is established for the consumer. In the collective process of agenda building, media, government, and the public all influence each other in establishing the importance of an issue. It is difficult to identify all of the variables at play in determining to what extent government, media, and public originated fear concepts fed each other in 2004 as a part of agenda building.

Agenda setting may be especially influenced by the obtrusiveness of issues. Zucker concluded in a study in 1978 that agenda setting takes place only on unobtrusive



issues. The hypothesis was that the public opinion importance of an unobtrusive issue increased as the media brought the issue to attention.

### Cognitive Dissonance and Collective Efficacy

Any examination of messages of fear in the aftermath of national disaster may do well to explore the potential implications of the presence of cognitive dissonance. Severin and Tankard (2001) hold that presentation of issues via the media may impact the manner in which the public undertakes its cognitive problem solving function as it relates to an individual's fundamental evaluations of circumstances which range beyond specific issues.

Festinger's (1957) Theory of Cognitive Dissonance maintains that individuals attempt to reduce unpleasant states of mental inconsistency. According to the theory, there is an attempt to make adjustments such that there are consistent relations between one's attitudes, what one believes, an individual's opinions, and behavior. To the extent that Americans believed they lived in a safe and secure country prior to September 11, 2001, the events of that day may have introduced various levels of safety-perception cognitive dissonance into the minds of citizens and compelled them to seek to resolve that dissonance..

### Protection Motivation

Rogers (1975) proposes a "Theory of Protection Motivation." In this theory, response to perceptions of fear are impacted by three components: (a) the perceived magnitude of the noxiousness of the threat, (b) the probability that the event will occur, and (c) the perceived level of probability that one will be personally affected by the threat. He proposes that assessment by the receiver that these dimensions are high will

result in a larger fearful reaction and a greater desire for self protection.

So complex was the circumstance of the anxious, collective American psyche when the 2004 election took place that scholars may never know to what extent a large number of communication theories may have been verified by the public response to messages which soothed or fanned their fears.

### Propaganda

Some correlation with the fear that resided in the country in 2004 and the potential for propaganda to be powerful in an environment of fear may be found in studies by Lee and Lee (1979) which were conducted in the troubled time of the late 1930's. They proposed the possibility of seven propaganda devices. Those devices included "Name Calling, Bandwagon, Glittering Generality, Transfer, Testimonial, Plain Folks, and Card Stacking" In using "Name Calling" one simply gives an idea or entity a bad label designed to prompt rejection without deep examination. "Bandwagon" propaganda device is a suggestion for an individual in an audience to think as everyone else is purported to be thinking. "Glittering Generality" can make what appears to be a gem of a less than valuable concept by speaking generically. "Transfer" masks an idea, making it appear to be either more positive or negative than it is. "Plain Folks" is a method in which an audience becomes convinced the speaker can be trusted because he or she is one of them. "Card Stacking" is the selection of certain facts or representations in a way that supports a position while ignoring other representations which may not support the position (p. 23). Propaganda Devices theory may provide an important tool for better understanding of the impacts of 2004 fear-associated campaign

messages.

The literature review conducted for this paper found no research specifically dealing with messages of fear in American political campaigning. More specifically, no literature was found which sought to examine national convention rhetoric in the context of disaster and public anxiety.

This study will examine fear-associated references primarily in the context of framing and agenda setting. If an agenda of fear-based reporting and a prevailing anxiety permeated the environment going into the national conventions of 2004, what was the extent to which either, or both, parties perpetuated that agenda and those fear frames? A review of academic literature and examination of historical background will also be provided to bring some additional understanding of the post-9/11 public environment and context in which fear-associated messages may have been aired during the 2004 campaign.

If anxiety plays to the advantage of the party in power, as is observed by Jerit (2004), one might expect the Republican administration would have had more incentive to stress messages of fear in their campaign rhetoric. If, as suggested by Petrocik, (1996) Democrats thought themselves to have an issue ownership of certain domestic and social issues, wouldn't it have been to their advantage to make certain that Americans were appropriately warned and anxious about unemployment, poverty, and other social shortcomings? The study will provide some data that follows fear-associated references from the national conventions, to the opinions of newspaper endorsement editorials, and through the 2005 State of the Union Address.

Given that 2004 was the first presidential election since the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, it is the intent of the study author to provide additional context for the understanding of potential impacts of fear-associated messaging through academic review and discussion of other applicable communication theories. Any agenda setting and framing did not take place in isolation from the circumstance and attitude of the audience. Discussion of Cognitive Dissonance, Collective Efficacy, Protection Motivation, Fear Induced by Exposure to Violence, and Propaganda are all included for the purpose of providing context through consideration of the potential condition of the public which received the messages of 2004.

Although the study is not designed to discover intent in the crafting of the convention, endorsement, and State of the Union messages, it is believed that patterns will emerge in the analysis that provide some insight into the focus and frequency of fear-associated messages. These references may have served a purpose of framing and agenda setting which had far reaching consequences for a public plagued by post-9/11 anxiety. The study is designed to add to the body of data which could help future researchers reach informed conclusions concerning what rhetoric, if any, may have motivated Americans to vote as they did in 2004.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

A content analysis examined 14 prime-time speeches at the first post-9/11 Democratic and Republican national conventions. The Democratic convention occurred July 26 through 29, 2004 in Boston. The Republicans held their convention in New York August 30 through September 2, 2004. Content analysis was also conducted examining newspaper editorial endorsements of Presidential candidates. These analyses concentrated on the number of fear references made, the subject matter of those fear references, and whether there were any differences or similarities between Democrats and Republicans. Additionally, a comparison was made between George W. Bush's speech at the 2004 Republican National Convention and his 2005 State of the Union Address

Utilizing the same approach as the convention speech analysis, an examination of the editorial endorsements and the 2005 State of the Union Address with comparison to convention speeches allowed some conclusions to be drawn about how fear messages were transmitted over time from campaigns to media, and whether they were modified by the beginning of the Presidential term

Fear-associated references were derived from Altheide's (2002) study of "The Discourse of Fear" in America. Since Altheide's work was in production when the

September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon occurred in the United States, he acknowledges in his preface the contribution of this event to perceptions of fear, but it is not accounted for in the body of his text. In an effort to encompass perceptions of fear in a post-2001 environment, additional terms with the potential to generate fear in the American public since September 11, 2001, “evil,” “terrorism” (in its various forms), and the category, “name associated with a terrorist organization” were added to the list compiled from Altheide’s work. The resulting list is:

Fear	Destroy
Afraid	Poverty
Violence	Unemployment
Weapons	Pathetic/Forgotten
Gangs	Evil
Terrorism (terrorists, terror)	Crime/Criminals
Threats	Name Associated with a Terrorist
Helplessness/Loss of Control	Organization
Struggle	War
Injury/Death	Fighting
Risk	Disease/Sickness
Abuse	Cancer
Attack	

The same list (as shown above) was used to examine the editorial endorsements of a

selection of American newspapers and the 2005 State of the Union Address.

Transcripts of the convention speeches were downloaded from the official convention web site of each political party

A random check of the speech transcripts was made against video of the speeches to cross-match context and content consistency. No context and content inconsistencies were found. The convention speakers selected for the study are listed below.

<b>Republican Convention Speakers</b>	<b>Democratic Convention Speakers</b>
George Bush - President	John Kerry - Presidential Candidate
Richard Cheney - Vice President	John Edwards - Vice Presidential
Laura Bush - First Lady	Candidate
Arnold Schwarzenegger - Governor of California	Teressa Heinz Kerry - Wife of Presidential Candidate
Rudy Giuliani - Former Mayor of New York	Barak Obama - State Senator
Zell Miller - Senator	Jimmy Carter - Former President
John McCain - Senator	Bill Clinton - Former President
	Al Gore - Former Vice President

The speakers were selected from the convention schedules published by the internet home pages of the national committees of the parties (GOP.org (2004), and DEMS2004.org). Each speaker appeared after 9:00 o'clock at night in prime time for television. This timing of the placement of speakers was seen to suggest that the speaker was important to the campaign's framing of issues. For each party the Presidential and

Vice Presidential candidate speeches were selected, along with the speeches of the presidential candidates' wives. In the Democratic convention two former Presidents and a former Vice President were prime time speakers.

Three speakers who were local politicians included California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Senator Barak Obama, and former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani. All were selected for the study list because they appeared for a significant period of time in a television prime time period of 9 00 PM to 11.00 PM, and the agendas listed them as keynote speakers for the evening.

The editorial endorsements examined in the study were selected by referencing a list compiled by *Editor & Publisher* magazine. The list, published on the organization's internet site, lists the Presidential endorsements of all the major newspapers in the country as of November 1, 2004. The list included 396 newspapers, of which 208 endorsed John Kerry and 108 endorsed George Bush (Mitchell, 2004). From this list, twelve editorials were selected. The editorials used for the study are listed below.

#### **Endorsing George Bush**

The Denver Post

Salt Lake Tribune

Houston Chronicle

Columbus Dispatch

Austin American Statesman

The Arizona Republic

#### **Endorsing John Kerry**

Kansas City Star

Minneapolis Star Tribune

New York Times

Las Vegas Sun

Boston Globe

Seattle Post Intelligencer



An attempt was made to select geographically representative papers, but the search was somewhat restricted by the inability to retrieve some editorial text. This was because a wide variability in the timing of the publishing of newspaper endorsement editorials, and the wording of headlines and text in the endorsements made the items difficult to discover on search engines.

After the election, the same list of fear-associated references derived from Altheide's work was used to examine the first State of the Union Address of President Bush's second term in office. That outcome was compared with the Bush speech in the Republican National Convention. This was done as a measurement of any similarity or difference in fear-associated message content in a speech by the President at the convention and one delivered near the start of his second term in office. The study explored whether the fear-associated messages that were present in the conventions survive through editorial endorsements and into the rhetoric of the next presidency.

### CODERS

Each of ten coders was given a coding packet. A copy of the packet is provided in Appendix A. Each coder had a set of coder sheets for each speech and editorial they were coding. It was suggested to coders that, even though they may know whose speech they were evaluating, they should remain as objective as possible.

Coders were asked to count in each speech and editorial provided in their packet each of the fear-references listed on the coder sheets. They were given instructions to look for meaning. For example, they could count an occurrence of the term "Armed conflict" as "war," but could count each reference as only one occurrence. They were

given the example that “Armed conflict” could not be counted as “War” and also as “struggle.”

The coders included three females and seven males. Each of their coding packets included both speeches and editorials

Democratic and Republican speeches and editorials were mixed in the content of packets for each coder. Additionally, the mix of speeches and editorials was conducted to attempt to assure that coders each received a similar amount of text to examine. The references counted in each coder sheet were entered into *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* software data base.

As a method of assessment of inter-coder reliability, each of the coders was given a copy of a short speech , which was constructed to include a number of fear references. The speech was described to the coders as being from a speaker that they may not know as well as the others and was not labeled as being Democratic or Republican The test speech was fabricated by the study designer. A correlation with the outcomes of other coders of greater than 90 percent on the coding of this speech was required to deem the coder reliable The work of one coder was excluded as a result of this test and another coder was used as a replacement. A copy of the coder reliability test speech is included with the coder packet in Appendix B This (test) speech was evaluated by the coder(s) using the same code sheets which were used for the other speeches in the study

In a separate session, a coder was given a packet containing coding sheets and the State of the Union Address. This person received the same instructions as the other coders

## ANALYSIS

An analysis was conducted for each of the 23 fear-associated references which were included in the study. Chi-Square statistical analysis was used to determine if there were significant differences between Republican and Democratic convention speakers in each subject variable. A similar calculation was conducted for a comparison of Democratic convention speeches with editorials endorsing John Kerry, and for Republican convention speeches compared with editorials endorsing George Bush

Next, the coder content analysis of the George W. Bush convention speech and the coder content analysis of the George W. Bush State of the Union speech were subjected in the same way to statistical analysis for similarities or differences. The goal was to determine how many reference and what kind of references to fear appeared in the major speeches at each convention, to what extent the same themes found their way into the editorial endorsements over the next months, and how the fear framing may have, or have not, been consistent in the State of the Union address after the election was won by the Republicans.

For each of the comparisons measured, the potential for similarity or statistically significant differences in frequency of use of the 23 fear-based references selected was examined by subjecting the comparisons to a one-sample Chi-Square test. This Chi-Square statistical analysis tests for differences which may exist in the frequency of occurrence between different categories. For convention speeches, the test was calculated to compare the frequency of Democratic occurrence of a fear-associated reference as compared to the frequency of a Republican occurrence of a fear-associated reference. Likewise the test was calculated to compare the frequency of a speech

occurrence of a fear-associated reference with an editorial occurrence of such a reference. An additional Chi-Square test was conducted to compare a George Bush State of the Union speech occurrence of a reference with a George Bush convention speech occurrence of a fear-associated reference.

Thus, the final data set consisted of an observation of frequency of fear references:

- Comparing the Democratic with the Republican convention speakers
- Comparing the Republican convention speakers with the editorials endorsing George Bush for President
- Comparing the Democratic convention speakers with the editorials endorsing John Kerry for President
- Comparing George Bush's convention speech with his subsequent State of the Union Address.

There was some imbalance in the total number of words in the selected speeches. The word count in the Democratic speeches was 20082 and in the Republican speeches 22491. Adjustment was made by multiplying each of the GOP frequency outcomes by .89 before entering them into the statistical program for comparison with the Democratic speeches. This was also compared with conducting the analysis without making the adjustments. The comparison revealed the adjustment did not change the outcomes as to which of the specific references were statistically significantly different or which were statistically similar. There was simply some, slight change in the "p" values. The adjusted outcomes are the ones which are reported in this study.

There was also some imbalance found when the study examined potential

differences or similarities between use of fear references by convention speakers and later use by endorsement editorials. References were examined separately for Democrats compared to editorials endorsing John Kerry and for Republicans compared to editorials endorsing George Bush. The speeches contained more words than did the editorials. The Republican speeches used in the study contained 22,491 words, and the editorials endorsing George Bush which were included for study contained 6853 words. An adjustment was made by multiplying the number of speech references counted by .305. The Democratic speeches used in the study contained 20082 words and the editorials which endorsed John Kerry and were used in the study contained 6081 words. The Democratic speech reference counts were adjusted by multiplying them by .302.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS**

There was marked use of fear-associated messages in the 2004 national political conventions. Study question (a) addresses the extent to which messages of fear were used in the Republican and Democratic conventions. In the fourteen speeches analyzed war was mentioned a total of a hundred and seven times. There were also frequent references to terrorism, and to weapons. In the total of fourteen combined Democratic and Republican speeches studied, there were 585 uses of the fear associated references included in the analysis. That is an average of one every 72 words, or about one per paragraph of the speech. Study question (b) asks about the differences between the two parties in the use of fear messaging in their national conventions. In only a few instances were statistically different frequency of use of the messages found in the speeches. In response to study question (c), it was found that there was also some consistency in the frequency of the messages in the speeches of each party as compared to the numbers of the fear-associated messages used by editors endorsing each party's candidate.

It can also be noted that President Bush demonstrated quite a lot of consistency between his convention nomination acceptance speech and his State of the Union Address in his use of fear references. Study question (d) can be answered with an

observation that the fear-associated messages did carry over, to some extent, from the campaign to one of the first major speeches in the second term of the Bush administration

### Comparison of Speeches

A comparison of Democratic and Republican convention speeches indicated that the Republican speakers made a statistically significant more frequent use for five of the fear-based references selected for study. Democratic speakers recorded a statistically significant more frequent use for three of the references studied. For twelve of the fear-based words studied there was no statistically significant difference between the speeches of the two parties in frequency of use.

Democrats made more frequent use of references to unemployment by a count of ten mentions to two for the GOP speakers  $\chi^2(1, N = 5.33, p = .021)$ .

There was no significant difference in references to poverty, abuse, disease, and struggle. One particularly interesting observation was the almost identical number of references to war with 55 mentions in the Democratic convention speeches and 52 in the Republican  $\chi^2(1, N = .084, p = .772)$ .

Democratic speakers made significantly more references to weapons  $\chi^2(1, N = 11.364, p = .001)$  and risk  $\chi^2(1, N = 4.455, p = .035)$ . Republican speakers referred more frequently to destruction  $\chi^2(1, N = 5.40, p = .020)$ , terror  $\chi^2(1, N = 6.898, p = .009)$ , attack  $\chi^2(1, N = 4.167, p = .041)$ , evil  $\chi^2(1) = 8.895, p < .003$ , and control  $\chi^2(1, N = 4.50, p = .034)$ . The Democratic references to weapons numbered more than twice that of the Republican. The frequency of the Republican references to terror numbered almost twice that of the Democratic.

**Table 1**

Test Statistics – Comparison of Republican and Democratic Speeches

<b>Convention Speech References</b>	<b>Chi- Square</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig</b>
Fear/Afraid	1.976	1	.160
Violence	.360	1	.549
Weapons*	11.364	1	.001
Destroy*	5.400	1	.020
Terror*	6.898	1	.009
Gangs	2.667	1	.102
Poverty	.571	1	.450
Unemployment*	5.333	1	.021
Attack*	4.167	1	.041
Pathetic	.000	1	1.00
Evil*	8.895	1	.003
Injury	2.286	1	.131
Disease	2.286	1	.257
Risk*	4.455	1	.035
Abuse	1.286	1	.257
War	.084	1	.772
Control*	4.500	1	.034
Fight	2.000	1	.157
Struggle	3.125	1	.077
Extremists**	-	-	-
Threats	2.333	1	.127
Crime	.000	1	1.000

\* p value = &lt; .05. \*\* no occurrences



**Table 2**

Test Statistics – Comparison of Republican Speeches and Bush Endorsements

<b>GOP – Speech/ Editorial References</b>	<b>Chi- Square</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig</b>
Fear/Afraid	.222	1	.637
Violence	.111	1	.739
Weapons	.500	1	.480
Destroy	1.800	1	.180
Terror	.421	1	.516
Gangs	2.000	1	.157
Poverty	.400	1	.527
Unemployment	.000	1	1 000
Attack	.091	1	.763
Pathetic	.333	1	.564
Evil*	5.000	1	.025
Injury	2 000	1	.157
Disease**	-	-	-
Risk	.333	1	.564
Abuse	2.000	1	.157
War*	11 267	1	.001
Control	2.000	1	.157
Fight*	4.500	1	.034
Struggle	3.267	1	.071
Threats	.111	1	.739
Crime	1 000	1	.317
Extremists	3 000	1	.083

\* p value = &lt; .05. \*\* no occurrences

**Table 3**

Test Statistics – Comparison of Democratic Speeches and Kerry Endorsements

<b>Democratic – Speech/Editorial References</b>	<b>Chi- Square</b>	<b>Degrees of Freedom</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig</b>
Fear/Afraid*	26.273	1	.000
Violence*	7.200	1	.007
Weapons	.182	1	.670
Destroy	2.667	1	.102
Terror	1.690	1	.194
Gangs	3.000	1	.083
Poverty	.250	1	.617
Unemployment	1.000	1	.317
Attack*	9.000	1	.003
Pathetic	1.800	1	.180
Evil	1.800	1	.180
Injury	.500	1	.480
Disease	.333	1	.564
Risk	.500	1	.480
Abuse	2.667	1	.102
War	.111	1	.739
Control**	-	-	-
Fight*	4.000	1	.046
Struggle	1.000	1	.317
Threats*	9.941	1	.002
Crime*	10.000	1	.002
Extremists	-	-	-

\* p value &lt; .05. \*\* no occurrences

### Comparison of Speeches and Editorials

In a comparison of Republican convention speeches and the selected group of newspaper editorials endorsing George Bush for President, there were three of the 23 references examined for which there was a statistically significant difference in the frequency of occurrences between the two groups measured. In two of these three occurrences of difference, the fear-based references were mentioned more frequently in the convention speeches than in the newspaper editorials.

References mentioned more frequently by the convention speakers were “fight,” for which there were seven mentions in the Republican convention speeches compared with one in the editorial endorsements,  $\chi^2 (1, N= 4.50, p=.034)$  Reference to “Evil” appeared five times in the speeches and not at all in the endorsements,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 5.00, p=.025)$ . Editorials which were examined in the study made more frequent use of “war” than the GOP convention speakers by a comparison of 43 to 17,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 11.267, p = <.001)$ .

There was a similar correlation between the number of fear-based references between the Democratic convention speeches and the selected newspaper editorials endorsing John Kerry for President. Of the 23 words studied, there were 4 for which there was a statistically significant difference in frequency of use, when comparing the speeches and editorials. Among these references where there was a statistically significant difference in frequency of use, all were used more frequently by the editorial writers. Of the references used more frequently by the editorials the reference to violence was used 16 times, compared to 4 in the speeches,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 7.20, p = .00)$ . Attack references were used 14 times in the editorials compared with 2 in the speeches,  $\chi^2 (1, N$

= 9.00,  $p = .003$ ). References to Crime were used 10 times in the editorials and 0 in the speeches,  $\chi^2 (1, N=10.00, p = .002)$ . References to fight or fighting were used 12 times in the editorials compared to 4 in the speeches,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 4.000, p = .046)$ .

#### Convention Speech and State of the Union Address

Comparison of the George W. Bush Republican National Convention speech in 2004 and his State of the Union Address in 2005 revealed numerous similarities and some differences in the use of fear references. The convention speech was 5005 words and the State of the Union Address was 5105 words long. Statistically significant difference in frequency of use was found for four of the fear references coded. Those were: “struggle,” “crime,” “gangs,” and “threats.”

References to struggle,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 8.333, p = .004)$ , crime,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 7.00, p = .008)$ , and gangs,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 4.00, p = .046)$ , occurred more frequently in the State of the Union Address. References to threats,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 3.57, p = .059)$  occurred more frequently in the convention speech.

The variable “any specific name related to a terrorist organization” was excluded from the analysis after coders expressed some confusion and disagreement over what a “terrorist organization” might be. For example, some thought Iran and Saddam Hussein fit this category, and others did not. One questioned whether any mention of the state of Israel would qualify for inclusion. It was determined that the term was too ambiguous.

Also, the coder sheets asked for certain qualitative information from the coders, including writing comments about any fear references which were linked to patriotism, children, or religion. Those comments were too varied and confusing to be of use and were excluded from discussion of the outcomes.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

Prior research suggests emphasis on messages of fear in the 2004 Presidential election occurred in an atmosphere of framing, agenda setting, and priming built on the developing American anxiety following the September 11, 2001 attacks. Evidence also suggests fear-based agenda building as a result of the campaign rhetoric. There is certainly no clear evidence of the part fear may have played in the election outcomes.

In about half of the fear-associated references studied there was no difference in the frequency of use by the two parties. Speakers for both parties made frequent references to war, but the Republicans appeared to seize the framing agenda related to terrorism by making more frequent reference to terrorist, attack and injury. Many of the more frequent Democratic references to weapons and risks appeared to be associated with the Bush administration decision to enter Iraq to search for weapons of mass destruction. There was a substantial use of fear-related messages by speakers for both parties.

Later in the campaign, editorial endorsements seemed to track rather closely with the messages which had been previously established by, or reflected in, the convention speeches. The few exceptions included the fact that editorials endorsing George Bush

seemed to focus more on war than did Republican convention speakers. This could have reflected Republican administration defense of a war in which more American soldiers were being killed as election day in the United States and election day in Iraq neared.

The editorials supporting John Kerry focused more than did the Democratic convention speeches on violence, fighting, and crime. Later in the campaign the Democrats seemed to begin to distance themselves from earlier negative focus. This may account in part for the editorial differences between the Republican endorsement increased mention of war and the Democratic endorsements turning more to a domestic agenda like crime.

Crime and gangs later showed up as topics of more frequent use in George Bush's State of the Union Address than appeared in his convention speech. Otherwise, there was a striking similarity between the convention and State of the Union speeches in frequency of use of a large majority (17 of 23) of the references studied. Whatever the purpose, if there was one, of fear-frame messages, they persisted into the second George W. Bush administration.

One can conclude from this study that fear-frame references were used by both the Republican and Democratic campaigns. If discussion of war, terrorism, and the potential for attack had the power to enhance reluctance to change in favor of the Republican candidate, the Democrats may have participated too heavily in those frames of fear to assure a win. Fear-associated frames related to bad outcomes in domestic issues were not in the primary political convention messages of either party. References to unemployment, crime, poverty, and disease were significantly less frequent than the

war and terrorism frames.

The historical and theoretical review conducted as a part of the study suggests that the post 9/11 environment of fear in America and the vast amount of media impact on the populace was of such complexity that there may not be any mass communication theories that do not apply in some way to an examination of the fear messages in the election.

Examined herein are theories that appear to be particularly applicable in light of previous research that has been done on fear frames.

## DISCUSSION

Amid reminders of their fears, a majority of American voters in 2004 cast their ballots for the Republicans. Some late campaign messages from Democrats may have hinted they were getting an indication a fear-based campaign would not work in their favor. On Saturday October 22, 2004 Senator John Kerry (2004) appeared on CNN headline news proclaiming: “Over the next week you are going to be pounded with ads trying to scare you, and I want you to stand up and understand that what we need to do is not go to the polls and vote our fears. We need to go and vote our hopes, and our dreams, and our aspirations” The Democrats also began airing a television ad in which the voice of John Kerry can be heard proclaiming, “The future doesn’t belong to fear, it belongs to freedom.” (Democratic National Committee, 2004). If an emphasis on fear in the Democratic conventions helped set the discourse for the Summer, this later direction to counter fear may have come too late for a Democratic win.

Terrorism warnings of 2004 may have helped to re-elect George W. Bush, but the

approval ratings in October, 2004 did not correspond with the election results. The voter thinking seemed quite convoluted. In a poll by The Pew Research Center (2004), 44% of Americans approved of the President's job overall, while 48% disapproved. Only 49% approved of the way in which the President was handling terrorist threats, and 56% disapproved of the way he was handling Iraq. At the same time, 77% of voters mentioned terrorism as very important to their vote. Education was cited as a priority by 75% of the voters and employment by 76%. Americans may not have had a strong belief in the effectiveness of at least one response to the 9/11 attacks. 36% said the war in Iraq increased the risk of terrorism in the country, 32% said it lessened the risk, and 28% saw no difference.

#### Cognitive Dissonance and Perceptions of Safety

Much could be gained by further examination of a question of whether Americans may have been the objects of a community cognitive dissonance in the rapid disruption of perceptions of safety and of the national perception of collective efficacy. Cognitive Dissonance Theory would suggest that one could reduce the dissonance by changing the troubling cognition, qualifying the discrepant cognition, downgrading its importance, or altering behavior to achieve better cognitive harmony (Schunk, 2004, p.336)

In the case of attempting to win a presidential election such a short time after the World Trade Center and Pentagon bombings of September 11, downgrading the importance of, qualifying, or changing the troubling cognition creating dissonance in the American mind may not have appeared to be very viable options for any political party. It could be suggested that the viable option for political campaigners in 2004 was to seek to reduce public cognitive dissonance associated with threats from terrorism by



underscoring alterations in behavior toward terrorists and America's own security.

Thus, one would be suggesting a behavior aimed at achieving better cognitive harmony.

Examples could be found in the Republican rhetoric connecting safety from terrorism with the war in Iraq, or touting the enhancements in security measures in our country.

The Democrats' messages, which sought to suggest the war in Iraq had made the country less, rather than more, safe and that the Bush administration's approach to enhancing security had been wholly inadequate may have fallen short of being appealing to anxiety-ridden Americans. Given Shunk's (2004) perceptions of the ways in which dissonance is resolved, those messages may have missed the mark for a national psyche longing to move toward safety and resolution. The extent to which a body of voters seeks to resolve a public cognitive dissonance is certainly a potential topic for more discovery in another discipline of research.

### Collective Efficacy

Motivation for a society to resolve cognitive dissonance existing on such a scale as that found in the September 11th attacks may reflect a public need to be collectively efficacious. Bandura (2000) observes that the type of future people may seek, their effectiveness at using resources, their staying power against odds, and their own perception of individual efficacy is linked to the perception of collective efficacy on the part of the society in which they reside. "People's success in shaping their social and economic lives lies partly in a shared sense of efficacy to bring their collective influence to bear over matters over which they can have some command" (pp.76-78). To whatever extent the 2001 attacks challenged the efficacy of U.S. society, each American could have found individual motivation to restore the perceptions of power in collective

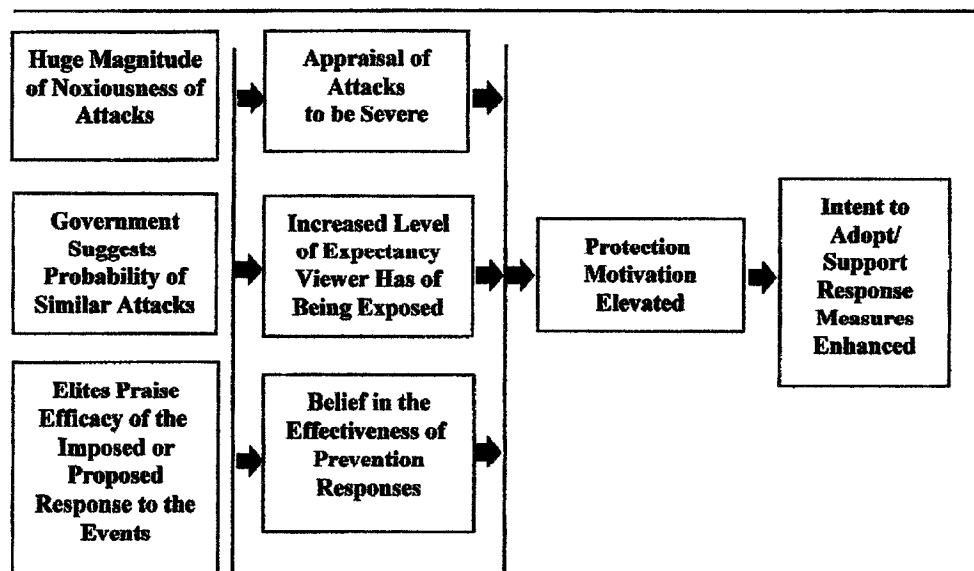
efficacy. This could be true, even if that demonstration of collective efficacy came in the form of a war

### Protection Motivation

Rogers (1975) asserts that the attitude change related to anxiety is not the result of an emotional state of fear, but a function of the level of protection incentive aroused by the perceived levels of the three components listed in his theory. Those are: (a) the perceived magnitude of the noxiousness of the threat, (b) the probability that the event will occur, and (c) the perceived level of probability that one will be personally affected by the threat. Adapted from Rogers' graphic depiction of the Protection Motivation model, potential response to the attacks of 9/11 appears in the diagram shown below (p 99)

**Figure 1**

Adaptation of Rogers' Protection Motivation Model to Events of 9/11



The diagram suggests the path by which the huge magnitude and perceived noxiousness of the 9/11 attacks, the probability of similar attacks, and the praise by elites of the Republican administration's solutions may have led to a greater protection motivation among voters. This would have enhanced the intent to adopt a proposed solution which, as a result of this evolution of thought, appeared particularly attractive. On the other hand, it would not seem, given Rogers' model, that messages suggesting the country had not been efficacious in efforts to become more safe would be terribly motivating, unless they very clearly and specifically spelled out a path to safety.

#### Fear Induced by Exposure to Violence

An important key to understanding the potential impact of fear messages in the context of 9/11 could be the susceptibility of the American public to ideas that depictions of violence suggest they are personally in danger. This measure of level of expectancy of being a victim is integral to Rogers' Protection Motivation Model

There is specific evidence that the increased level of expectancy an average American has of being exposed to personal harm is influenced by our massive exposure to violence in the media. In 1997 the National Television Violence Study determined that the amount of violence has increased through the years. They found that from 1995 through 1997, 61% of the programming in television portrayed violence (University of California, 1998)

Although most examination of the impacts of depictions of violence in the media have focused on stimulation of aggression in children, research has also associated media depictions of violence with fear, depression, nightmares, and sleep disorders (Committee on Public Education, 2001).

There has been a significant amount of research which concludes that the public's fear of crime is disproportionate to both the actual incidence of crime in the viewer's or reader's area and the likelihood that they will individually be a victim (Williams & Dickinson, 1983; Glassner, 1990; Liska & Baccaglini, 1990; Ditton & Farrall, 2000; Young, 2003). It is also argued that this phenomenon is encouraged by the high percentage of media time devoted to crime (Gans, 1979).

Weaknesses of this study included the inability of the methodology to measure any evidence of impacts of fear messaging on voting. Further study could utilize historic voter exit poll information to make such a measurement. Future researchers would do well to also make some comparisons to campaigning in other times of national crisis and fear to determine to what extent an enormous need by media for audience share may be accelerating anxiety-based rhetoric.

A stronger baseline for additional research could be established with a content analysis of the 2000 presidential election year convention speeches in comparison with this study to gain a pre-9/11 and post-9/11 assessment of rhetoric in campaigning.

One suggestion for more research could certainly be an examination of how election year media messages might facilitate resolution of community cognitive dissonance in times of national crisis. Americans may simply have wanted to be told they were safe, rather than that they would be safe some day

It would be very difficult to determine the origination of the fear-associated messages which surfaced in the 2004 campaign. Did the framing and agenda setting find its way from the media, or did the campaigns initiate messaging that set the issues for media coverage? This study has cited academic literature which suggests there was

agenda building which incorporated messages of fear from long before the 9/11 disaster

It is important to point out that the fear-frame references cited in the study may have been used at times in what was intended to be a positive and peaceful context. For example, consider the possibility of a speaker using a phrase announcing: “Everyone in the world has put down their guns and will declare an end to all war.” That would be a phrase for which coders in the study would have counted guns (a weapon) and “war” as fear-frame references. The study also did not examine any efforts at message balance which may have been made by introducing convention themes of inspiration, optimism, and hope.

#### Propaganda Techniques

Future research might explore whether anxiety in the country created an atmosphere in which voters were particularly vulnerable to propaganda approaches. Lee and Lee’s (1979) seven propaganda techniques included “Name calling, bandwagon, and card stacking.” Name calling is identified as simply the matter of giving an idea or entity a bad label designed to prompt rejection without deep examination. Card stacking is the selection of certain facts or representations in a way that support a position while ignoring other representations which may not support the position. The bandwagon propaganda device is a suggestion to follow the crowd because everyone is doing a certain thing or thinking a certain way.

Terrorist and Terrorism are cited by Severin and Tankard (2001) as two good current examples of the name calling propaganda device. They point out that terrorism and terror are difficult to define and rely on a definition dependent upon one’s political or

nationalistic views. Labeling certain activities as associated with terrorists or terrorism could certainly add to voter fear and anxiety, even with little proof of the association.

Card stacking may have figured in public perceptions of Iraq having been involved in some way with the terrorists attacks of 9/11, and perceptions that the war in Iraq was justified because the country had weapons of mass destruction. A Harris interactive poll conducted in April, 2004 found that a 51% to 38 % majority of Americans believed Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, despite a barrage of media reports on evidence to the contrary. The numbers were virtually unchanged since an earlier poll was taken in February of that year. A 49% to 36% plurality of Americans continued to believe Americans had found specific evidence that Iraq was supporting Al-Qaeda, again despite evidence presented in the media to the contrary. The Harris Interactive (2004) report on the results questioned whether this was a “case of cognitive dissonance.” The pollster observed: “The remarkable stability of these numbers suggest that people have made up their minds on so many of the key issues relating to weapons of mass destruction and links to Al-Qaeda that it would take something very big to change them. It seems that people believe media reports which fit with their opinions and reject those which do not.”

There appeared also to be a potential for card stacking in the compiling of moral issues such as abortion, gay marriage, and stem cell research to suggest the country was facing a challenge to its moral values. Occurring late in the campaign, a poll of white Evangelical Protestant and white Catholic voters showed a high percentage of each considering moral values very important in the race with a corresponding interest in the importance of abortion, gay marriage, and stem cell research. In the poll, 81% of white

Evangelical Protestants and 58% of white Catholics polled believed that moral values were very important considerations in the election (Pew Research Center, 2004).

### Significance of the Study

Within a context of fear-related framing and agenda setting the 2004 election played to a national audience which may have experienced a blow to their collective efficacy to such an extent that the voters were highly vulnerable to messages which prompted protection motivation. This would have occurred in a societal atmosphere in which there is a basis for believing there was already a hyper-anxiety brought on by repeated exposure to violent imagery.

The findings of this study can provide some additional academic insight into the presence of fear-associated messages in the 2004 presidential election. Further assessment of the context, origins, and intent of the framing and agenda setting of fear based messages can bring additional understanding of fear as a tool for motivation. This is particularly important in times of war or disaster. It is hoped that any added ability for the academic community to specifically chronicle the use of fear for political gain in times of national crisis and anxiety may provide a growing ability to call such activities to accountability and public awareness. The details of this study, and others which may draw from the data, may be used to help create an environment in which the public is more conscious of fear-based motivation and less vulnerable to its impacts.

As Political Scientist Robin Corey (2004) suggests in his work, *Fear the History of a Political Idea*: "...one day, the war on terrorism will come to an end. All wars do. And when it does, we will find ourselves still living in fear: not of terrorism or radical Islam, but domestic rulers that fear has left behind" (p.25).

Perhaps further study of post 9/11 fear-based framing and its impacts will create more awareness that fear, despite any potential it has to recruit voters to one's ideology, comes at the cost of a protection motivation too limiting on society's freedom to explore its most ambitious synergistic goals.



## APPENDIX

### CODE PACKAGE SAMPLE

#### Code Sheets – Speeches

Coder # \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker # \_\_\_\_\_

You are being asked to participate in a content analysis of speeches from a 2004 political convention. The speeches are not necessarily from the same convention. It is important that you be as objective as possible. This is NOT a partisan evaluation. The greater your objectivity, the greater the scientific value of the study.

Suggestions: It may be easier to scan terms referenced in the coding sheet then go to scan the speech. Highlight words and phrases in the speech which you believe match the code items, then go back to compare with the code items and tabulate. You may also want to highlight certain phrases containing key words to help you tabulate the count.

You are looking for the words or concepts listed below, or a word or concept which has the same meaning. If you are not citing the actual word, please write the word with the same meaning or the concept description to the right of the space where you list your count.

- A. Number of mentions of **Fear** \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Number of mentions of **Afraid** \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Number of mentions of **Violence(Violent)** \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Number of mentions of **Weapons** \_\_\_\_\_
- E. Number of mentions of **Destroy** \_\_\_\_\_
- F. Number of mentions of **Terror(ist)(ism)** \_\_\_\_\_

- G. Number of mentions of **Gang(s)** \_\_\_\_\_
- H. Number of mentions of **Felony(felons)** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Coder # \_\_\_\_\_ Speaker# \_\_\_\_\_
- I. Number of mentions of **Poverty** \_\_\_\_\_
- J. Number of mentions of **Unemployment** \_\_\_\_\_
- K. Number of mentions of **Attack(s)(ed)** \_\_\_\_\_
- L. Number of mentions of **Pathetic/Forgotten** \_\_\_\_\_
- M. Number of mentions of **Evil** \_\_\_\_\_
- N. Number of mentions of **Injury/Death** \_\_\_\_\_
- O. Number of mentions of **Disease/Sickness** \_\_\_\_\_
- P. Number of mentions of **Risk(ed)(y)** \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. Number of mentions of **Abuse** \_\_\_\_\_
- R. Number of mentions of **War** \_\_\_\_\_
- S. Number of mentions of **Loss of Control** \_\_\_\_\_
- T. Number of mentions of **Cancer** \_\_\_\_\_
- U. Number of mentions of **Fight(ing)(er)** \_\_\_\_\_
- V. Number of mentions of **Struggle** \_\_\_\_\_
- W. Number of mentions of **Criminals/Crime** \_\_\_\_\_
- X. Number of mentions of **Extremist(s)** \_\_\_\_\_
- Y. Number of mentions of **Threats/  
Threaten(ed)** \_\_\_\_\_
- Z. Number of mentions of **Any specific name  
associated with a  
terrorists org.** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make an additional note in the space below concerning any of the above references

which were particularly linked to schools or children and the numbers of those references

Coder # \_\_\_\_\_ Speaker# \_\_\_\_\_

Please make an additional note in the space below of any of the above references which were particularly linked to any specific and overt mention of religion:

Please make an additional note in the space below of any of the above references which were particularly linked to any specific and overt mention of patriotism:

## Code Sheets – Editorials

Coder # \_\_\_\_\_

Editorial # \_\_\_\_\_

You are being asked to participate in a content analysis of speeches from a 2004 political convention. The speeches are not necessarily from the same convention. It is important that you be as objective as possible. This is NOT a partisan evaluation. The greater your objectivity, the greater the scientific value of the study

Suggestions: It may be easier to scan terms referenced in the coding sheet then go to scan the speech. Highlight words and phrases in the speech which you believe match the code items, then go back to compare with the code items and tabulate. You may also want to highlight certain phrases containing key words to help you tabulate the count.

You are looking for the words or concepts listed below, or a word or concept which has the same meaning. If you are not citing the actual word, please write the word with the same meaning or the concept description to the right of the space where you list your count.

A. Number of mentions of **Fear** \_\_\_\_\_B. Number of mentions of **Afraid** \_\_\_\_\_C. Number of mentions of **Violence(Violent)** \_\_\_\_\_D. Number of mentions of **Weapons** \_\_\_\_\_E. Number of mentions of **Destroy** \_\_\_\_\_F. Number of mentions of **Terror(ist)(ism)** \_\_\_\_\_G. Number of mentions of **Gang(s)** \_\_\_\_\_H. Number of mentions of **Felony(felons)** \_\_\_\_\_

Coder # \_\_\_\_\_ Editorial# \_\_\_\_\_

I. Number of mentions of **Poverty** \_\_\_\_\_J. Number of mentions of **Unemployment** \_\_\_\_\_K. Number of mentions of **Attack(s)(ed)** \_\_\_\_\_

- L. Number of mentions of **Pathetic/Forgotten** \_\_\_\_\_
- M. Number of mentions of **Evil** \_\_\_\_\_
- N. Number of mentions of **Injury/Death** \_\_\_\_\_
- O. Number of mentions of **Disease/Sickness** \_\_\_\_\_
- P. Number of mentions of **Risk(ed)(y)** \_\_\_\_\_
- Q. Number of mentions of **Abuse** \_\_\_\_\_
- R. Number of mentions of **War** \_\_\_\_\_
- S. Number of mentions of **Loss of Control** \_\_\_\_\_
- T. Number of mentions of **Cancer** \_\_\_\_\_
- U. Number of mentions of **Fight(ing)(er)** \_\_\_\_\_
- V. Number of mentions of **Struggle** \_\_\_\_\_
- W. Number of mentions of **Criminals/Crime** \_\_\_\_\_
- X. Number of mentions of **Extremist(s)** \_\_\_\_\_
- Y. Number of mentions of **Threats/  
Threaten(ed)** \_\_\_\_\_
- Z. Number of mentions of **Any specific name  
associated with a  
terrorists org.** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make an additional note in the space below concerning any of the above references which were particularly linked to schools or children and the numbers of those references

Coder # \_\_\_\_\_ Editorial# \_\_\_\_\_

Please make an additional note in the space below of any of the above references which were particularly linked to any specific and overt mention of religion:

Please make an additional note in the space below of any of the above references which were particularly linked to any specific and overt mention of patriotism:

## CODER RELIABILITY TEST SPEECH

(This bogus speech was given to coders as a method of testing inter-coder reliability. They were not told which political party was represented by the speaker. The speech was simply labeled with the speaker's name.)

### **Delegate Chair Phil Winsalow**

Good evening my friends in this great hall and all across America.

It is very clear that we are living in a time when our country is under attack. Every day Americans must face the potential that we may once again be targets in our own land.

There is an international war on terror. Make no mistake about it, the enemies of America will not rest until their goals of destroying civilization as we know it have been accomplished.

I am here tonight to remind us all that we as a people have not bowed to fear. We have not cowered to the terrorism and the bombings and the constant barrage of video tapes by self-appointed terror chiefs threatening murder of our peoples wherever they may be.

Since the horrible bombings of that fateful September 11 we all remember America has not just stood in our grief, waiting for another attack. We have taken action to seek out the war mongers in the countries that shielded them as they prepared their vicious terrorist plots.

We have sought to secure against their procurement of weapons of mass destruction. We have routed them out of their hiding places around the world. Still there is more to do. We as Americans have never shirked our responsibility in time of war.

We have taken up guns when we must. We have risen to the call to arms and to duty. We have determined to discover the enemy where they hide and run them from their weapon-laden caves. The battle must be continued.

We must vow that never again will thousands of Americans be ambushed and slain where they live and work. We are here tonight to bring the full weight of our support to a secure America and a world which is freed from the grip of terror.

Thank you, and God Bless America!

## REFERENCES

- Abff, O., Goodliff, J., Herrnson, P., & Patterson, K. (December, 2003). Agenda Setting in Congressional Elections: The Impact of Issues and Campaigns on Voting Behavior. *Political Research Quarterly*, 56(4), 419-430.
- Altheide, D. (2002). *Creating Fear - News and the Construction of Crisis*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Altheide, D. (2004). Consuming Terrorism. *Symbolic Interaction*, 27(3), 289-308.
- Alter, J. (2004). The Science of Scare Tactics, MSNBC News. Found 10/23-04 at: <http://www.msnbc.com/id/3672516>.
- Committee on Public Education of the American Academy of Pediatrics. (November, 2001). Media Violence. *Pediatrics*, 108(5), 1222-1226.
- Argyrides, M., & Downey, J.L. ( 2004). September 11: Immediate and Long Term Effects on Measures of Aggression, Prejudice, and Person Perception. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 6(1), 175-188.
- Bandura, A. (June, 2000). Exercise of Human Agency Through Collective Efficacy. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9(3), 75-78.
- Bookman, J.(2004, November 16). Is it really fear of terror? Or fear of change? *Austin American Statesman*, A12.



- Botelho, Greg. (2004). Exit Polls: Electorate is Sharply Divided. *CNN.Com*  
 Found 11/4/04 at: <http://www.cnn.com/2004/ALLPOLITICS/11/02/prez.analysis/index.html>.
- Castonguay, J. (Summer, 2004). Conglomeration, New Media, and the Cultural Production of the "War on Terror." *Cinema Journal*, 43(4), 102-108
- Chomsky, N. (2002) *9-11*. New York. Seven Stories Press
- Clarke, S., & Hoggett, P. (February, 2004). The Empire of Fear. The American Political Psyche and the Culture of Paranoia *Psychodynamic Practice*, 10(1), 89-106
- Carragee, Kevin M., & Roefs, W. (June, 2004). The Neglect of Power in Recent Framing Research. *Journal of Communication*, 54(2), 214-233.
- Czarnecki, J., & Glynn, K. (Producers) & Moore, M. (Director). (2004) *Fahrenheit 9/11* [Motion Picture]. United States. Lions Gate Film
- Democratic National Committee. (1964). *The Daisy*. Found 1/28/05 at: <http://livingroomcandidate.movingimage.us/index.php>
- Democratic National Committee (2004) *The Future Belongs to Freedom*. Found 1/28/05 at: <http://livingroomcandidate.movingimage.us/index.php>.
- Ditton, J., & Farrall, S. (Eds.). (2000) *The Fear of Crime*. Burlington, Vt: Ashgate/Dartmouth
- Eagleton, T. (1983). *Literary Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ferrell, T. B. (November, 1978). Political Conventions As Legitimation Ritual *Communication Monographs*, 43, 293
- Festinger, L. (1957) *Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press

- Gamson, W., & Modigliani, A. (1989). Media Discourse as a Symbolic Contest: A Constructionist Approach *American Journal of Sociology*, 95, 1-37.
- Gerbner, G. (Spring, 1994). Reclaiming Our Cultural Mythology. *The Ecology of Justice*, IC 38, 40-44.
- Glassner, B. (1999) *The Culture of Fear Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things*. New York: Basic Books
- Harris Interactive. (April, 2004). In Spite of Media Coverage, Widespread belief in Weapons of Mass Destruction and Iraqi Links to Al Qaeda Remain Virtually Unchanged. Found 1/31/05 at: [http://harrisinteractive.com/harris\\_poll/printerfriend/index.asp?PID=456](http://harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/printerfriend/index.asp?PID=456)
- Hernson, P. (2000). *Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and in Washington*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Hofstadter, R. (1979). *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays*, Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Iyengar, S., Peters, M., & Kinder, D. (1982). Experimental Demonstrations of the "Not-So-Minimal" Consequences of Television News Programs. *American Political Science Review*, 76, 848-858.
- Iyenger, S., & Kinder, D.R. (1987). *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion* Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Jerit, J. (September, 2004). Survival of the Fittest: Rhetoric During the Course of an Election Campaign. *Political Psychology*, 25(4), Issue 4, 563-576.
- Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1984). Choice, Values, and Frames. *American Psychologist*, 39, 341-350.

- Kelly, R. (New York Police Commissioner) (July 08, 2004). Quoted by: *Fox News.Com*. Found 7/18/04 at:  
<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,125065,00.html>.
- Kerry, J. (October, 2004). Appearing on *CNN Headline News*, Found 10/22/04 on Cable News Network.
- Lakoff, G. (2004). *Don't Think of An Elephant! Know your Values and Frame the Debate*. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.
- Lang, G.E., & Lang, K. (1983). *The Battle for Public Opinion: The President and the Press, and the Polls During Watergate*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Lee, A. & Lee, E. (1979). *The Fine Art of Propaganda*. San Francisco: International Society for General Semantics.
- Liska, A., & Baccaglini, W. (August, 1990). Feeling Safe by Comparison-Crime in the Newspapers. *Social Problems*, 37, 360-374.
- Lowery, S. A., & DeFleur, M.L. (1995). *Milestones in Mass Communication Research*. White Plains, N.Y.: Longman.
- McCombs, M., Shaw, D. (Summer, 1972). The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2), 176-187.
- McCombs, M., Shaw, D., & Weaver, D. (1997). *Communication and Democracy: Exploring the Intellectual Frontiers in Agenda Setting Theory*. Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum.
- Mitchel, Greg. (November, 2004). Daily Endorsement Talley: Bush Has a Big Day, But Kerry is Still Eking Out a Win. *Editor & Publisher*, found 11/2/04 at:  
<http://www.editorandpublisher.com>.

National Research Council.(1989) *Improving Risk Communication*. Washington:

National Academy Press.

Petrocik, J (August, 1996).Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a

1980 Case Study *American Journal of Political Science*, 40, 825-850

Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. (October, 2004). Democrats, Blacks

Less Confident in Accurate Vote Count - Race Tightens Again, Kerry's Image

Improves. *Pew Research Center News Release*. Washington, D.C

Porteus, L. (July 08, 2004).Officials Warn of Summer Terror Threats *Fox News.Com*.

Found 7/18/04 at: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,125064,00.html>.

Robin, Corey. (2004). *Fear - The History of a Political Idea*. New York:

Oxford University Press.

Rogers, R. W. (1975). A Protection Motivation Theory of Fear Appeals and Attitude

Change. *Journal of Psychology*, 91, 93-114

Roosevelt, F.(1937). *First Inaugural Address* Found 01/21/05 at: [http://odur.](http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/P/fr32/speeches/fdr1.htm)

[let.rug.nl/~usa/P/fr32/speeches/fdr1.htm](http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/P/fr32/speeches/fdr1.htm).

Republican National Committee . (1984) *The Bear* Found 1/31/05 at.

<http://www.livingroomcandidate.movingimage.us/index.php>

Republican National Committee. (2004) Desperate Dems Draft Scare. GOP.com. Found

10/24/04 at: [http //www.gop.com/RNCRsearch/read](http://www.gop.com/RNCRsearch/read)

[aspx?ID=4895](http://www.gop.com/RNCRsearch/read.aspx?ID=4895).

Rotter, J. (1966) Generalized Expectancies for Interval Versus External Control

Reinforcement. *Psychology Monographs*, 30, 609-689

Scheufele, D A (1999) Framing as a Theory of Media Effects *Journal of*

*Communication*, 49(1)103-122.

Schlenger, W., Caldwell, J.M., Ebert, L., Jordan, B.K., Rourke, K.M., Wilson, D., Thalji, L., Dennis, J.M., Fairbank, J.A., & Kulka, R.A. (August, 2002). Psychological

Reactions to Terrorist Attacks: Findings from the National Study of Americans' Reactions to September 11. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 288(5),581-588.

Schunk, D.H. (2004). *Learning Theories an Educational Perspective* Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson.

Severin, W.J., & Tankard, J.W., Jr. (2001). *Communication Theories*. New York Longman.

Shah, D V, Kwak, N., Schierbach, M, Zubric, J. (January, 2004). The Interplay of News Frames on Cognitive Complexity, *Human Communication Research*, 30(1), 102-120

Shapiro, E.(June, 003). The Maturation of American Identity: A Study of the Elections of 1996 and 2000 and the War against Terrorism. *Journal of Organisational and Social Dynamics*, 3(1), 121-133.

Sidoti, L. (October 22, 2004). New Bush Campaign Ad Uses Wolves to Suggest Terror Would Seize On Kerry Presidency. *Associated Press*. Found 10/24/2004 at: <http://www.startribune.com>

Tedesco, J. C. (August, 2001). Issue and Strategy Agenda-Setting in the 2000 Presidential Primaries. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 44(12),2048-2067.

Thomas, S.(2003). "None of Us Will Ever be the Same Again". Reactions of American Midlife Women to 9/11. *Health Care for Women International*.

24:853-867.

Waltzer, H. (Spring, 1966). In the Magic Lantern: Television Coverage of the 1964

National Conventions. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 30(1), 33-54.

Webber, J. (Publisher). (July 11, 2004). USA Today/CNN/Gallop Poll Results. *USA*

*Today.Com*. Found 7/18/04 at: <http://www.usatoday.com/>

[news/politicselections/nation/polls/usatodaypolls.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/politicselections/nation/polls/usatodaypolls.htm)

Wilkinson, J.S. & Fletcher, J.E. (1995). Bloody News and Vulnerable Populations: An

Ethical Question. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 10(3), 169-174.

Williams, P. & Dickinson, J. (1993). Fear of Crime. Read All About It. *British*

*Journal of Criminology*, 33,33-53.

Young, J R. (August, 2003). The Role of Fear in Agenda Setting by Television

News. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 46(12),1673-1695

Yagade, A.,& DozierD.(1990). The Media Agenda-Setting Effect of Concrete

Versus Abstract Issues. *Journalism Quarterly*, 67, 3-10

## VITA

David Day was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on June 30, 1945, the son of James Day and Delores Day. He graduated from Pascal High School in Fort Worth, Texas. David holds a Bachelor of Liberal Studies degree from St. Edward's University where his major was Communication and his minor was Gender Studies.

He is self-employed as a Communication Consultant and prepares witnesses for regulatory hearings. David is a member of the Society of Professional Journalists.

In January 2003 he entered the Graduate College of Texas State University-San Marcos. As a student at Texas State he wrote, video taped, and edited a video documentary entitled *Creating Wiley*. Produced in cooperation with Professor Tom Grimes in the Texas State Creative Writing Program and with the College for Texans Campaign, the documentary encourages young Texans to consider going to college. More than two thousand copies of the video were produced and distributed to schools in Texas.

In 2004 David's academic paper on concentration of media ownership in the United States was presented at the Southwest Symposium in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Permanent Address: 10603 Lockerbie Drive

Austin, Texas 78750

This thesis was typed by David Day.