

Framing the Tenth Anniversary of 9/11:  
A Comparison of CNN and Phoenix TV commemorative websites

Yuxi Zhuang

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John C. Tedesco  
Jenn B. Mackay  
Robert G. Magee

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ABSTRACT

It has been more than ten years since the 9/11 attacks in 2001, but the events related to the attacks are still a focus for the whole world. This study examined the news coverage of the 9/11 tenth anniversary from Phoenix TV and CNN, which are among the most influential news media in China and the U.S., respectively. A systematic content analysis was performed using latest news, opinion articles, photographs, and videos as classified by CNN and Phoenix TV on their commemorative 9/11 tenth anniversary websites. Framing theory guided this thesis project. The results offer some evidence regarding differences in the selection and use of frames in the U.S. and Chinese media. Results also suggest that global media share news resources for global events.

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## Framing the Tenth Anniversary of 9/11:

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#### **Chapter 1**

#### **Introduction**

Research on framing typically examines the relationships between media, audiences, and cultures. As a theory of communication, framing involves the selection and presentation of information, involving ways media select and organize the information. Mass media, especially global media, offer researchers a universal sight for framing research. By comparing frames of media from different cultures, scholars are able to discover the relationships between media and culture.

As a long historical process, globalization has influenced changes to the political map, the world economic order, and understanding and awareness of cultures throughout the world. The era of a “global village,” which was articulated by Marshall McLuhan more than five decades ago, is now realized. According to McLuhan (1962), “the new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village” (p. 31). The conception of a global village suggests that, “after more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned” (McLuhan, 1964, p. 3). Media globalization brings information exchange around the world and theorists argue that information circulation accelerates the process of globalization. In this process, mass media play a crucial role, especially global media. The emergence of global media offers researchers a pluralistic media and cultural environment.

“Media are central to the provision of cultural or symbolic resources globally, and therefore integral to the exercise of cultural or symbolic power” (Flew, 2007, p. 18). Advances in mass media, which enable audiences around the world to have exposure to remote cultures and civilizations, increased cultural awareness. Events, like earthquakes and other natural disasters, that once were not available for the world to witness are now broadcast on televisions and streamed to computers throughout the world in a matter of minutes, which spreads cultural information at unprecedented speed. It is widely agreed within the communication discipline that media frames exert significant influence on how audiences view the world (e.g., Goffman, 1974; Gitlin, 1980). In the modern society, mass media are the main information source. As Lippmann (1922) stated *Public Opinion*, “the real environment is altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting for direct acquaintance. We are not equipped to deal with so much subtlety, so much variety, so many permutations and combinations” (p. 16). Through all kinds of mass media, people are able to access information and news from all over the world. How media frame an event affects how their audience understands the world, even how their audience may respond or act. As members of the “pseudo-environment” that is created by the media, people see what the media want them to see. How an event takes shape in the audience largely depends on the interpretation of, and by, media. For example, as Kellner (1995) asserts, “media images help shape our view of the world and our deepest moral values: what we consider good or bad, positive or negative, moral or evil” (p. 5). On the other hand, how media frame the news reflects the shared value and culture environment of the community or society upon which the media is based. Different concerns or themes presented on the same issue may reflect ideological and

embedded values of the information source. Thus, exploration of framing by media from different cultures is worth exploring to identify similarities and differences in media framing of a specific event with international implications.

Review of previous framing studies indicates many researchers share concern about the framing of international events by media from different cultures. Most researchers exploring international media framing selected print news coverage as the content for study (e.g., Archetti, 2008; Zhou, 2008; Dai & Hyun, 2010) and analyzed the textual content only. With the development of technology and the expansion in information sources available to the public, audiences are accessing information on a broad range of media in textual and visual forms. Multimedia news is more powerful and offers more details to the audience than traditional print media (Domke, Perlmutter, & Spratt, 2002). “While scholars in recent years have begun to devote increasing attention to people's use of core values and mental categories to sift through news messages ... the role of visual images is virtually unexamined” (Domke, Perlmutter, & Spratt, 2002, p. 133). This thesis project aims to explore textual and visual framing, with the goal to address research limitations identified by Domke and his colleagues (2002).

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, also referred to as 9/11, and their aftermath, “rank with slavery and the Civil War, World War II and the Holocaust, the Civil Rights movement and Vietnam among the historic cataclysms lodged like thorns in the American consciousness” (Nance, 2011, p. 44). This disaster altered the experience of almost all contemporary American citizens, even people all around the world. It has a worldwide, long-term powerful impact on different aspects of social life. Anti-terrorism increased in salience among



politicians and governments, societies and citizens, and media throughout much of the world.

The 10-year anniversary of 9/11 put this terrorist act back at the top of media agendas as media organizations explored the political, social, and economic changes that resulted in the aftermath of 9/11. As planned special programs and information sites, the anniversary coverage provides a good resource to explore media frames from different sources.

As two of the most influential economic and political powers in the world, China and the United States are dominant representatives of eastern and western culture, respectively. The organization and operation of media in these two countries have their own characteristics, which are influenced by social, economic and political differences. The objective of this study is to start to fill in the gap in the literature by analyzing the news stories, photographs and videos on 9/11 tenth anniversary special webpages of CNN (United States) and Phoenix TV (China). This thesis will explore the framing similarities and differences between multimedia news from China and the United States through analysis of the 9/11 tenth anniversary webpages. Moreover, this study will also explore the relationship between media frames and cultural ideology.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Context**

In the morning of September 11, 2001, nineteen Saudi Arabian terrorists from the Islamist militant group al-Qaeda hijacked four American passenger jets. The hijackers flew two of these jets separately into the north and south tower, the “twin towers,” of the World Trade Center in New York City while another crashed into the Pentagon building in Arlington, Virginia.

The final plane crashed into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Both twin towers collapsed from the impact and resulting fires, and 23 surrounding buildings partially or completely collapsed. Nearly 3000 people died in the attacks. The 9/11 attacks are second only to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II as the deadliest attack on U. S. soil. The 9/11 attacks shocked the world and resulted in significant changes, particularly in the areas of security, safety, and anti-terrorism.

Former United States vice-president Dick Cheney, during an interview aired on NBC's "Meet the Press," proclaimed that 9/11 changed everything. "It changed the way we think about threats to the United States. It changed about our recognition of our vulnerabilities. It changed in terms of the kind of national security strategy we need to pursue" (Cheney, 2003). The impact of the 9/11 terrorist attacks extends to all aspects of American social life. In fact, the United States government began to review its policies and security systems while governments around the world were forced to reevaluate the security measures in place to keep their citizens safe. "The 9/11 attacks exposed the vulnerability of the United States homeland, and the United States responded with a demonstration of overwhelming military strength. This forced other countries to reconsider their relationship with the United States and its unparalleled military might" (Kakihara, 2003, p. 2). It triggered almost every country to re-examine their domestic and foreign policy, as well as reevaluate the power distribution. The attacks had a significant impact on the U. S. and global economies. The direct and indirect personal and economic losses are immeasurable.

The 9/11 attacks also led to a global economic recession. The world was forced to

consider a new political and economic order. The United States, European Union, China, and Japan are now the major polities and economies. “The 9/11 attacks combine both a rupture - showing the end of an historical period - and a beginning - opening a new period” (Lamy, 2011, p. 287). Media labeled this new era the “post 9/11 era.”

**Post 9/11 era - United States.** In the post 9/11 era, Americans encountered a series of changes in domestic and foreign policies, including the United States Patriot Act, the National Security Entry-Exit Registration Systems, the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security, as well as the military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Taken together, these changes signify some of the most important and encompassing policy changes in American history.

On October 26, 2001, the United States Patriot Act was signed into Law by then President George W. Bush. The Patriot Act expanded the definition of terrorism and enlarged the power of law enforcement agencies to search telephone, e-mail communication, medical, financial, and other personal records. The first Office of Homeland Security was established 11 days after the 9/11 attacks. In early 2003, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was established. The DHS was created through the integration of 22 different government agencies such as the Secret Service, the U. S. Coast Guard, the National Communications System, and the United States Customs, Immigration and Naturalization Service. According to the U. S. Government Accountability Office, the creation of the DHS constituted the largest United States government reorganization in the prior 50 years. On October 7, 2001, in response to the 9/11 attacks, the United States declared its first anti-terror war on Afghanistan. On May 2, 2012, on an

unannounced trip to Afghanistan for the first anniversary of Osama bin Laden's death, United States President Barack Obama signed the United States - Afghanistan strategic partnership agreement, which ended the war. The war with Afghanistan, which lasted 11 years, cost more than 2,000 lives of American soldiers and more than \$600 billion dollars.

On March 20, 2003, one year and a half following the start of the war with Afghanistan, United States went to war with Iraq. According to the Bush administration, the war on terror was a long-term war. The Bush administration was holding firm to “its intention to widen the war in its next stage to include the eradication of the threat of weapons of mass destruction from countries which support terrorism” (Kakihara, 2003, p. 7). War with Iraq lasted for seven years. The expenditure was more than 6,000 American military deaths and more than \$800 billion. The war with Iraq resulted in global criticism of the United States, and British intelligence, when weapons of mass destruction could not be located on Iraqi soil.

The post 9/11 era also influenced media content. The 93 hours of uninterrupted on-air news reporting immediately following the attacks are not the only significant media reactions resulting from the attacks. The post 9/11 era also witnessed cancelation or change to many films that were in production. “In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Hollywood has experienced a new refurbishment of popular genres, especially of the traditional master plots of invasion and catastrophe in action, science fiction, and fantasy” (Sánchez-Escalonilla, 2010, p. 11). Many documentaries and relevant films and programs about the 9/11 attacks were made in following years. The films depicted greater focus on family life and humanistic care. There is also a great increase in church attendance and expressions of patriotism (Carducci, 2009). The attack also

created program changes in American universities. According to Scott Gold's (2001) article published on the *Los Angeles Times*' webpage, domestic security has become a fast-growing area of study.

**Post 9/11 era - China.** BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China), which were first labeled by Jim O'Neill of Goldman Sachs (2001), retained strong economic growth in the decade following 9/11. Until 2011, BRICS countries (the "S" was added to symbolize the addition of South Africa in 2010) represented more than 20% of the global economy. "In the current financial crisis, the BRICS countries are stabilizing the global economy" (Schrooten, 2011, p. 22). In early 2011, China surpassed Japan to become the world's second largest economy. "China threat" and the "rise of China" have become the key phrases of the news coverage of China in the western world. The *Global Trends 2015* released under the direction of the United States National Intelligence Council argues that the rise of China "pose[s] the greatest uncertainty" in the world. As America switched its focus away from East Asia, many economic scholars regard the post 9/11 era as an opportunity for the Chinese economy. Prior to 9/11, the main focus of the United States was the rise of China. However, after 9/11, "all problems in Asia are viewed through the lens of the war on terrorism" (Kakihara, 2003, p. 11). The primary concern on al-Qaeda and the war in Afghanistan and Iraq distracted America's attention, at least temporarily, from China issues and the United States-China relationship.

The 9/11 attacks also significantly changed the view of Chinese on terrorism and national security. Though China's anti-terrorism campaign can be traced back to the 1980s, it became an increasingly important part of the government's agenda after 9/11. Shortly after 9/11,

China established the National Anti-Terrorism Coordination Group (NATCG), which was created under the anti-terror bureau of the National Ministry of Public Security. To counter the emerging threats in the post-9/11 environment, the following measures have been taken by the NATCG and the National Ministry of Public Security: First, they have set up early warning and prevention systems; Second, perfected the quick response mechanisms; Third, established a crisis control and management system; Fourth, initiated a mass education and mobilization system. A series of education and training programs among citizens were carried out to reinforce their awareness against terrorism. Schools have added anti-terrorism to their curriculum, while some research institutes and universities have set up anti-terror research centers (Guang, 2006, p. 21-22). Government, social organizations, and citizens are all involved in the anti-terrorism efforts. According to some media, China has entered an era of national anti-terrorism (e.g., Sohu, NetEase).

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Ideology and Media Organization**

“Every culture carries a series of key beliefs, notions and concepts, which are defined as the cultural values that people share in a particular culture” (Zhu, 2008, p. 7). Dominant ideology refers to “views and ideas shared by the majority of people in a given society” (Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad, 1998, p. 134), which typically represents a combination of traditional culture and contemporary culture. Within a society, dominant ideology has both discrepancies and shared values from time to time with non-dominant ideologies. In the discussion of cultural values,

Hofstede's (1991) recognizes the dominance of cultural values over behaviors. Informing and sustaining particular norms of interaction and interpretation, cultural values are reflected in the communicative behaviors of individuals. Cultural values contain cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (Mooij, 2004) that exert influence on how people think, feel and behave.

Within Chinese society, communism and collectivism are considered as examples of dominant ideology. Traditional Chinese values are primarily built on Confucianism. Confucianism, which has dominated Chinese society for thousands of years, still remains as the core value of Chinese society. It emphasizes harmony, balance, and "the emotional dependence of members on their organizations" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 212). The relationship between people is tight. Family is regarded as a basic unit of the community. In contrast, with the emphasis on individual value, the pursuit of democracy and freedom, the love for competition, and the insistence on rationalism and pragmatism, capitalism and individualism represent the dominant ideology of U. S. society. The ties between members are relatively loose. The ability and achievement of the individual is emphasized.

As important societal institutions, mass media are regarded as distributors of ideology (Gitlin, 1980). "The media were held to be largely reflective or expressive of an achieved consensus" (Hall, 1982, p. 61). As the communication tool of the society, they interact with other social systems. Government, organizations and cooperatives, even individuals release information through mass media. The operation of the media reflects the value, ideology, and norms of the society. Media stories provide the "symbols, myths and resources through which we constitute a common culture and through the appropriation of which we insert ourselves into this

culture” (Kellner, 1995, p. 5). Mass media constitute the principal means through which audiences are informed and entertained. In the mass communication process, media generally reinforce those shared values and norms within the community. Meanwhile, media also play a crucial role in shaping the social culture. In fact, Berkowitz and Ismail (2009) conclude three main functions of media: contributing to agenda-setting (McCombs, 1997), influencing public opinion (Mutz & Soss, 1997), and participating in foreign policy-making (Dauber, 2001; Larson, 1990). As an information source, even reference, media are influencing audience cognitions, attitudes and behaviors.

Journalism value, national and organizational interests, cultural traditions, and political constraints are all exerting effects on the operation of the media. Within a society that emphasizes collectivism and harmony, like China, the journalistic ideology demonstrates “a strong issue orientation in reporting and an emphasis on ideological indoctrination of the masses” (Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad, 1998, p. 135). The main role of the media is informing and educating. While in a society that stresses the value and right of individuals, like the United States, the journalistic value emphasizes events, unusual and deviant, and reinforces elite ideology. In the United States, the "journalistic ideology tends to reinforce the elite ideology" (Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad, 1998, p. 134). According to Hachten (1999), “the differing perceptions about the nature and role of journalism and mass communication are rooted in divergent political systems and historical traditions” (p. 16). Hachten classified the media systems in the world today into five categories: authoritarian, western, communist, revolutionary, and developmental. He categorized China as the nation under Authoritarian press control, which



means the press is always “subject to direct or implied control by the state or sovereign” (Hachten, 1999, p. 17). The media organizations function from the top down: the ruler decides what shall be published as authority monopolizes truth (and information). The government holds the power of speech. The key roles of the media are the Party's mouthpiece and populaces' informer. The media organizations of the United States were categorized as Western. The Western concept holds the belief that government “should not interfere in the process of collecting and disseminating news” (Hachten, 1999, p. 21). The media organizations, in theory, must be independent of government authority.

The United States media system is highly commercialized and “principal players in the media industry have always been profit oriented” (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001, p. 32). The private media organizations occupy the largest market share, while the public service media is limited. A “market model” dominates over a “public sphere model” (Croteau & Hoynes, 2001). Since the 1980s, with the social reformation and development of its economy, the media system in China has changed considerably. Marketing has become an increasing concern of China's news media. Two types of media have been identified: party media and marketed-oriented media. To understand the change of Chinese media, Yang (2012) compared the coverage of two crises, SARS in 2003 and Sichuan Earthquake in 2008. Comparisons were conducted between different time points and different media types. The study indicated that party media remained to serve as propaganda that speaks for the government, while marketed-oriented media demonstrated considerable unique features. This suggests that “more diverse discourses are tolerated in the Chinese social and political system” (p. 74) in recent years.

Given the importance and significance of mass media as a reflection of society, this current study investigates two news media, CNN and Phoenix TV, from the United States and China, respectively, to assess similarities and differences in news framing for a specific event: the tenth anniversary of September 11. The following paragraphs describe aspects of these two media sources.

**CNN & Phoenix TV.** Founded in 1980 by Ted Turner, Cable News Network (CNN) is the first all-news television channel that provides 24-hour television news coverage in the United States. CNN primarily broadcasts from its headquarters at the CNN Center in Atlanta, the Time Warner Center in New York City, and studios in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles. CNN now is available in more than 100 million U. S. households, and an estimated 890,000 hotel rooms (CNN.com). Through 13 satellites and countless cable television systems, CNN International coverage extends to 212 countries and territories and more than 260 million households. CNN International is divided into five regions: Europe/Middle East/Africa, Asia Pacific, South Asia, Latin America and North America.

Commonly referred to as the Chinese CNN, Phoenix Television (TV) is a Hong Kong-based Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese (Yue Chinese) television broadcaster that aims to promote a free flow of information and entertainment within the Greater China region. It is one of the few non-government owned television broadcasters available to audiences in Mainland China. The predecessor of Phoenix TV is the Chinese Channel under STAR TV, which launched in August 1991. The Chinese channel under STAR was purchased by Rupert Murdoch in July 1993, and reorganized into Phoenix Satellite Television Company in early 1996. Phoenix TV

currently operates 5 different television channels: Phoenix Chinese Channel, Phoenix InfoNews Channel, Phoenix Chinese News and Entertainment Channel, Phoenix Movie Channel, and Phoenix North America Chinese Channel. Distributed via satellite AsiaSat-3, Eurobird, Telsat-12, Directv, Echostar, G3-C, Satmex-6, and Bell ExpressVU, Phoenix TV now spans Asia Pacific, Europe, America, Latin America, Middle East, and Africa and reaches more than 150 countries and regions.

Phoenix TV and CNN are both 24-hour news channels targeting the elite audiences. Under different social and political systems, CNN and Phoenix TV have totally different operation mechanism. CNN owns a complete and detailed division of labor mechanism. In one program, there typically includes chief editor, anchor, director, producer, executive producer, supervising producer, editor, journalist, writer, reservation clerk, camera operator, and data processor. Employees have clear responsibilities and job descriptions. These job divisions constitute the self-checking system of CNN. While at Phoenix TV the “core editorial group” consists of the executive level program chief directors of the TV channel as the main decision makers. They play the role of “gatekeeper” in the process of news selection. Chief editors are responsible for the content of the programs. The operation of the “core editorial group” keeps the integrity of the whole organization. Within the “core editorial group” system, information flows from top to bottom. With the highly concentrated news resource, the process of news selection becomes more controllable (Zhong & Yu, 2004).

The live television coverage on first Gulf War in 1991 was a watershed event for CNN. In the initial hours, CNN was the only news agency to communicate from inside Iraq. CNN's

coverage of those initial hours of the Gulf War were broadcast by TV stations and networks around the world. Over a billion viewers worldwide became a foundation of the subsequent creation of CNN International. CNN's first report on the 9/11 attacks was on Breaking News at 8:49 with the title of “World Trade Center Disaster”(CNN.com). During the first 24 hours, CNN distributed 657 news stories on the 9/11 attacks (Li, 2007). Phoenix InfoNews Channel was the first Chinese language channel to break the news of attacks. After broadcasting the first piece of Chinese language news on the attack, combined with Phoenix Chinese Channel, Phoenix North America Channel and Phoenix Entertainment Channel, Phoenix TV conducted 36 hours of continuous in-depth reports from the aspects of attack scene, event background and future direction. Because of their fast, vivid, and deep presentation of the event, Phoenix TV achieved great influence for its 9/11 news coverage. “For most of China, it become the only television channel people could turn to for 9/11 news, so many television stations simply replayed its programs” (Li, 2002, p. 226). Phoenix TV improved its influence significantly in this period. Thus, CNN and Phoenix TV both had significant recognition and growth following their coverage of significant global events.

As identified previously, the post 9/11 era was marked by rapid growth and transformation of new media. For example, CNN.com, the official CNN website, debuted on August 30, 1995. However, the website grew into four editions: United States, International, Mexican, and Arabic. Each edition has its special columns with different target audiences. CNN.com relies heavily on CNN's global team. The content on CNN.com is now available through mobile devices. According to Nielsen's NetRatings (2009), CNN.com ranked third place

among online global news sites in unique users in the United States. Similarly, the website of Phoenix TV was released on March 25, 1996. Besides the normal news columns of politics, economy, technology, sports, and entertainment, the website also contains special columns for each TV channel, discussion forums and a web blog. In 2006, Phoenix new media was reorganized. Now, Phoenix new media has developed into three platforms: Phoenix Net ([www.ifeng.com](http://www.ifeng.com)), Phoenix Mobile ([3g.ifeng.com](http://3g.ifeng.com)), and Phoenix Video ([v.ifeng.com](http://v.ifeng.com)). According to the report released by Alexa in 2012, the page view of ifeng.com ranked first among online global news sites in unique users in China (Alexa, 2012).

By discussing the functions and operation of media under different social and political systems, this section contextualizes the relation between media and ideology, and also briefly introduces the two news media, CNN and Phoenix TV, which will be used in this study. The following section will provide a theoretical foundation for examining the news framing. Besides the basic theories, it will also review the previous framing studies with special attention to those addressing visual framing and terrorism, and features of news framing relevant to Internet or web media in particular. As this study will make a comparison between the media frames in China and the United States, the following section will present the framing studies that adopted an international comparison perspective as well.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Theoretical Foundation**

This review of existing literature aims to provide theoretical support and justification for

this study. The most frequently used definition and typology of framing theory will be discussed. After talking about the relevant theories, an overview of the study on visual framing and the framing of terrorism events will be presented. This chapter will conclude with a brief discussion on the new features and challenges of framing brought about by expansion and application of framing theory to new media.

### **Framing Theory**

Bateson (1972) and Goffman (1974) introduced the framing concept. Framing theory has roots in a number of disciplines. While framing is conceptualized similarly across academic disciplines, there is no agreement on a single definition of framing. Based on the concerns of their studies, different scholars approached and defined the concept from different levels.

“Understanding mass communications through the concept of framing has become increasingly common, whether in the fields of social psychology, public opinion, or media studies (Norris, Kern, & Just, 2003, p. 10). The understanding of framing contributes to the understanding of the relation among individuals, groups, and media. The research on framing also helps reveal and illuminate cultural and political factors influencing the communication process.

**Definitions.** For the purpose of this study, Entman's (1993) framing definition will be used. According to Entman, the study of mass communication in audience autonomy, journalistic objectivity, content analysis, and public opinion and normative democratic theory would benefit from an explicit understanding of framing. Entman suggested that to frame is to “select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or

treatment recommendation for the item described” (p. 52). Framing involves selection and salience. According to Entman, frames have different functions, such as to define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies. In addition, Entman stated that frames have four basic locations in the communication process: communicators, text, receiver and culture. Entman's definition is widely accepted by the research community and frequently used, particularly among communication researchers.

Nevertheless, other definitions are also informative and instructive. Similar to Entman, many scholars defined framing as information processing procedures involving selection and interpretation. According to Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss, and Ghanem (1991), a media frame is “the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration” (p. 3). A frame organizes the reality of people's daily lives. It provides “meaning to an unfolding strip of events” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1978, p. 143) and promotes “particular definitions and interpretations of political issues” (Shah, Watts, & Fan, 2002, p. 343). These above definitions consider frames from the perspective of media.

However, other definition include frames as “cultural structures with central ideas and more peripheral concepts” (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, p. 141), or “organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world” (Reese, Gandy, & Grant, 2001, p. 11). These definitions view frames on a relatively macro level. These scholars defined framing under the context of social culture. The framing process involves the shared norms and values within the community. Additionally, news

frames are described as “conceptual tools which media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret and evaluate information” (Neuman, Just, & Crigler, 1992, p. 60). Both journalistic value and social culture affect reporting style and news story construction within a news agency. News framing is an interpretation process that is based on a set of “organizing principles.” “These organizing ideas or values are not only issue-specific but also consistent with the values embedded in a community, society or a nation on a macro level” (Kwon & Moon, 2009, p. 271). Similarly, Scheufele (1999) suggested that at least five factors potentially influence framing: social norms and values, organizational pressures and constraints, pressures of interest groups, journalistic routines, and ideological or political orientations of journalists (p. 109).

Although there is no single definition, many scholars employ similar characteristics in their definitions and reinforce the understanding of framing as defined by Entman. Some scholars examine frames to figure out the definitions of issues, and compare news coverage across media (e.g., Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000), and some track frames to identify variations among different types of media (Yang, 2012). The diversity of theoretical perspective offers a comprehensive and broad understanding of the framing process.

Following Entman's viewpoint of regarding framing as “a scattered conceptualization” (Entman, 1993, p. 51), Scheufele (1999) classified previous approaches to framing along two dimensions: the type of frame examined and the way frames are operationalized. The next section builds on the basic definitions of framing by discussing the types of media frames.

**Framing Typology.** Like a guiding definition, typologies are also crucial elements in theory building. A typology offers the decision rules and definitions for researchers to classify



the media frames in ways consistent with previous studies. For example, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) synthesized the frames identified in previous studies into an index of five generic news frames: conflict frame, human-interest frame, economic consequences frame, morality frame, and responsibility frames (pp. 95-96). The adoption of news frames depends on the type of outlet and the type of topics. Conflict frames emphasize “conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions as a means of capturing audience interest,” (p. 95) whereas human-interest frames bring “a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem” (p. 95). In terms of economic consequences frames, the economic impact or consequences of an event, problem or issue on an individual, group, institution, region, or country are stressed. Morality frames highlight the “religious tenets or moral prescriptions,” (p. 96) while responsibility frames “attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group” (p. 96). Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) found that conflict frames dominate economic and political news. Luther and Zhou (2005) identified a new generic frame, the leadership frame, in which the news stories are concentrated on the activities, actions or speech of a leader of a nation, group, government agency or an institution. This typology classified the media frames into six categories that cover most of the ways issues are framed in news reports. Such generic frames help researchers understand the interpretation of the media on specific issues. They also offer an organizing typology to help generalize or classify news coverage under different contexts, and make the cross-cultural comparison possible. The generic news frame is one of the most widely used framing typologies, and will also serve as the typology standard applied in this study.

Additionally, Iyengar (1991) identified two types of news formats in his theoretical work: episodic and thematic formats. Episodic news refers to specific events, and thematic news refers to more analytical, contextual, or historical coverage. Episodic frames focus on the specifics of a particular event, while the thematic frames place public issues in a relatively general or abstract context. “Episodic framing tends to elicit individualistic rather than societal attributions of responsibility, while thematic framing has the opposite effect” (p. 15-16). Similar to Iyengar’s classification, de Vreese (2003) suggested a more general typology to organize previous studies focusing on different types of frames: issue-specific frames and generic frames. Generic frames transcend thematic limitations and can be identified from news coverage of different topics and issues across time and under different cultural contexts, while issue-specific frames are closely related to specific topics or themes of the news content by examining them in detail. In addition, de Vreese and Boomgaarden (2003) suggested that some frames are inherently valenced while others are more neutral. Valence frames are typically evaluated based on positive or negative features reported. As the issue-specific and generic frames is the only typology standard for this study, the additional typologies mentioned above are not investigated in this study, but it is important to recognize that they exist in the literature.

This section briefly reviewed previous discussions on defining and classifying media frames. These studies contribute to the theory construction. Just as mentioned above, Entman’s definition, along with several framing typologies, will guide this study. However, it is important to note that framing theory is not developing independently. The study on framing incorporates, even converges, with other communication concepts and theories. In the following section,

related theories of agenda setting and gatekeeping will be discussed.

**Framing and Relevant Theories.** No discussion about framing would be complete without mentioning the relationship between framing and agenda setting. Agenda-setting theory was introduced in 1972 by McCombs and Shaw (1972) in their study of the role of mass media in Chapel Hill, North Carolina during the 1968 presidential campaign. Agenda setting describes the media's ability to transmit their salient issues through their news agenda. In a later study, McCombs, Shaw, and Weaver (1997) suggested that framing is an extension of agenda setting. They regarded it as second-level agenda setting. "The first level of agenda setting is ... the transmission of object salience. The second level of agenda setting is the transmission of attribute salience" (McCombs, Shaw & Weaver, 1997, p. 704). Framing and agenda setting share the same ground. Both of them examine issues described in the news stories and offer researchers the flexibility to study the relationships between media and audience. However, framing analysis "expands beyond agenda-setting research into what people talk or think about by examining how they think and talk about issues in the news" (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 70). The concept of framing directs our attention to how communicated text exerts its power, while agenda-setting focus on the rank of the issue. According to Scheufele (1999), the process model of framing contains four key processes: frame building, frame setting, individual level process of framing, and a feedback loop from audiences to journalists. Framing comes into effect through this interactive process. It is a kind of applicability effect in which the meaning, cause, implication, or treatment of an issue is identified. Some scholars stated that the primary effects of frames are to offer specific information, images, or ideas applicable to an issue (e.g., Price & Tewksbury,

1997; Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley, 1997). While agenda setting occurs through a cognitive process, namely “accessibility” (Iyengar, 1990). The accessibility is raised through audience exposure to the events or issues. Issues that received the most attention may be regarded as the most important (e.g., McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

Besides agenda setting, gatekeeping is another media theory worthy of mention when discussing framing studies. Gatekeeping theory is the prelude of framing. Both framing and gatekeeping are influenced by cultural and political factors. They share a similar research background. “Gatekeeping has long provided a solid conceptual ground for understanding how news frames are created” (Fahmy, Kelly, & Kim, 2007, p. 546). The concept of “gatekeeping” was initiated by Kurt Lewin, which he used to describe a wife or mother as the person who decides which foods end up on the family's dinner table (Lewin, 1947). The gatekeeper is the person who decides what should pass through each gate section. Lewin added that the gatekeeping process can include study of news item circulation through communication channels in a group. Many scholars started their studies from this point. One of the classic studies of this theory was conducted by David Manning White (1950), whose research explored the news selection process. White's research revealed the following equation: News Received - News Used = News Rejected. Cooperating with an editor, White examined the amount of news they received and finally used. He also analyzed how the editor selected the news. White treated this process as a highly subjective one that relies on the value judgments of the “gatekeeper.” Scholars identified the gatekeeping process as the “overall process through which the social reality transmitted by the news media is constructed...not just a series of *in* and *out* decisions”

(Shoemaker et al., 2001, p. 233). The variables that may influence the gatekeeping process (e.g., ideology, newsworthiness, news organizations, resource availabilities, and subjective judgments) were examined in numerous studies (e.g., Shoemaker, 1991; Wanta & Roark, 1994; Bissell, 2000; Messaris & Abraham, 2001; Griffin, 2004). In the news coverage of violence and tragedy, once the images are captured, the editors typically face the ethical challenges of deciding which photos to choose. The process of gatekeeping combined with framing decides what and how a news story will be presented, both textually and visually.

The previous sections in this chapter took an overview on the theory construction of framing. The definition and classification that will be used in this study were presented. Two relevant theories, agenda-setting and gatekeeping, were discussed. The following sections will review additional applications of framing that employ tools used for this thesis project.

**Visual Framing.** As this study aims to examine both textual and visual frames of multimedia news, this section will review some studies on visual framing. Previous framing studies typically focused on textual content rather than visual content. The neglect of visuals is one of the current problems in framing research (Domke, Perlmutter, & Spratt, 2002; Matthes, 2009). The development of information technology brought about multimedia news platforms (e.g., web). The visual elements are impressive and attractive. Visual images are always regarded as powerful framing tools. They help readers and audience recall memories of an event and shorten their perceived distance from that event (e.g., Fahmy, et al., 2006; Fahmy & Johnson, 2007; Pfau, et al., 2006; Potter & Smith, 2000; Zelizer, 2004). Visual frames are used to elicit emotions. “Their capacity to shock exceeds that of language” (Goodwin, 1983, p. 190). The key

factors, size, and location of the pictures could all influence the view of the audience (e.g., Borah, 2009). A slight change on the angle of view or lenses may lead to a quite different presentation and interpretation of the scene. Parry (2010) argued that “photographs can give salience to particular framing(s) of news events” (p. 68) and that visual content makes the news event more intuitive. Messaris and Abraham (2001) identified the central critical role of visual images in framing studies. “The special qualities of visuals - their iconicity, their indexicality, and especially their syntactic implicitness - makes them very effective tools for framing and articulating ideological messages” (p. 220). With these features, in the multimedia news, visual frames are as important as verbal frames, and perhaps even more important.

Many studies on visual framing analyzed visual content of news coverage from natural and man-made disasters. Visuals used after the Indian Ocean tsunami and Hurricane Katrina gathered discussions on visual framing. Fahmy, Kelly, and Kim (2007) compared front-page photographs in U. S. newspapers on Hurricane Katrina coverage. The visual frames changed from aerial depiction to human emotion portrayal during the first six days. According to the authors, this change reflected the U. S. news coverage routine, telling huge, impersonal event stories through individuals' personal experiences. In a later study, Fahmy and Roedl (2010) examined the content of 2,079 photos in U. S. newspapers during the first three days following the Virginia Tech shootings in 2007. The largest percentage of published photos contained the variables of killer, weapon, victim(s), emotional suffering and mourning. Fahmy and Roedl also interviewed a few victims' family members to examine their perceptions on these photos. In both of these studies of tragedy, the ethical challenges of photojournalists were discussed because of

the significant potential of visuals to make lasting impressions on an audience. In these big social events, photographs in the news coverage are always more persuasive than the texts. These images are good resources that indicate the valence of the media on certain issues.

Compared to the coding of verbal content, visual framing still lacks effective and universally accepted tools for analysis. Some recent studies began to pay attention to the theory building of visual framing. Through the examination of the photographs of the 2006 Israel-Lebanon conflict in two British newspapers - *The Times* and *The Guardian*, Parry (2010) tested a model of visual framing analysis. Using the photographic image as the primary unit, the relevant headline, caption, graphic nature, distance for central subject focus, and photo subject/theme were coded. This model takes both visual elements and verbal context of the photographs into consideration. The method for this thesis will borrow Parry's model in the image coding procedure. Except for following the content analysis procedure of verbal news, additional categories for visuals are offered to guide the interpretation of photographs and videos. These categories contain the descriptive information like video setting, camera shots, and image representation. More importantly, the cultural values contained in the visual elements are concerned here.

Rodriguez and Dimitrova (2011) reviewed the techniques and methods employed by other researcher explorations of visual framing and they identified four levels of visual framing. At the first level, visuals as denotative systems, images are regarded as the stimuli that activate the optic nerves. Frames result from organizing visual elements into "themes." At the second level, which visuals are considered as stylistic-semiotic systems, pictorial conventions and

shared styles are used as framing devices. Among the pictorial conventions, social distance, visual modality and subject behavior are the most common variables under analysis. At the third level, visuals as connotative systems, persons and objects in images are attached to meanings or concepts. Visuals are interpreted as symbols that are closely related to the cultural contexts. At the last level, visuals are regarded as ideological representations. To analyze frames at this level is to “ascertain those underlying principles which reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion” (Panofsky, 1970, p. 55). With the development of multimedia, visual frames have received more attention from researchers. Both theory and methods of visual frames are still open for research exploration and revision. This study will examine the frames of both textual and visual content and try to reveal the relation between textual frames and visual frames and whether they reinforce each other.

### **Framing and Terrorism**

Framing studies typically focus on events and conflicts with significant social implications or impact. Terrorism is understood as “the systematic use of coercive intimidation against civilians for political goals” (Norris, Kern, & Just, 2003, p. 6). Since terrorism, by definition, targets and impacts civilians, it draws media attention. Among the most serious terrorism attacks, the 9/11 attacks headlined almost all global media immediately following the event.

According to Miller (1982), “terrorism and the media are entwined in an almost inexorable, symbolic relationship” (p. 1). To some extent, media play a promoting role in expanding the impact of an act of terrorism and creating a climate of fear. Some scholars focus



on the relation between media, government, and military in times of conflict (e.g., Brown, 2003; Liebes & First, 2003). The scholars indicated that the way media cover and report the crisis contributes to the crisis instead of mitigating it. The media's framing played an important role in shaping the political environment, and public opinion towards the act of terrorism and the military. Some studies compared the framing of incidents of terrorism in different contexts, always the two sides involved in the conflict. By comparing the framing of African and United States newspapers on U. S. embassy bombings in 1998 and 9/11 attacks in 2001, Schaefer (2003) concluded that “geographic proximity and the 'local angle' influenced the prominence and amount of coverage of the terrorist events under comparison” (p. 93). Jaspersen and El-Kikhia (2003) examined the coverage of CNN and al Jazeera on America's war in Afghanistan. Three types of frames were compared: governance frames which concerned the government and leaders in each country, military frames which depicted the strategy and technology used by each side in the war, and humanitarian frames which focused on victims that suffered in the war. The comparison revealed differences and similarities in how these media influence the perception of the war. Both CNN and Al Jazeera presented each other's perspective in their coverage. The frames on terrorism can always reflect the political stands of the media and affect the policy making.

In the months after the 9/11 attacks, the media were dominated by coverage of the acts of terrorism and war on terror. Massive news stories highlighted the grief and suffering of the victims, and the action of the Bush administration. “Events of 9/11 can best be understood as symbolizing a critical culture shift in the dominant news frame used by the American mass

media for understanding issues of national security, altering perception of risk at home and threats abroad” (Norris, Kern, & Just, 2003, p. 4). Based on a national telephone survey conducted between October 2001 and March 2002 with 1,549 adults, Huddy, Feldman, Lahav, and Taber (2003) examined the fear and perceived risk of terrorism after 9/11. High levels of TV viewing led to higher levels of fear and anxiety. The study confirmed the influence of TV news on viewers' psychological reactions to terrorist events. In Powell's (2011) study, the author observed the news coverage of 11 terrorist events that happened on U. S. soil after the 9/11 attacks. These reports highlighted differences in religions and created a culture of fear toward Islam. The Muslims were framed as “them” among “us.” These reports also revealed a pattern of “media coverage of terrorism that feeds Orientalism...while heightening the United States as a good Christian nation” (p. 105). The discussion on the effects of terrorism frames on audience was the most recognizable subject in previous studies.

### **International Perspectives**

The framing studies that adopt international perspectives generally compare the media frames under different cultural contexts. These studies generally focus on international affairs topics with multi-national or international relations implications. The coverage of global crisis, conflict or wars, provide an interesting lens for understanding media framing in different countries or types of systems (e.g., political, economic, social). The development of global media offers audiences multiple perspectives on news stories. The comparison of coverage about the same event from media sources operating in different countries or under different systems, such as China's Authoritarian system and U. S. 's Western system (Hachten, 1999), will likely produce

some similar and some disparate framing. Understanding what the differences mean or what they reflect may require understanding of cultural differences. Nevertheless, this type of research helps reveal the role and mechanism of media organizations in different societies. Global media are the window of their host countries or regions, and reflect the ideology and social morphology. They also shape the society and cultivate the audiences' cognition of the world. The term “glocalization” was proposed to describe the integration of localization and globalization. Ritzer (2004) defines glocalization as “the interpenetration of the global and local resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas” (p. 77). In another study, Lee et al. (2002) observed glocalization in media coverage by reviewing the handover of Hong Kong. They demonstrated that the notion of glocalization “captures the global media production of the local and the local media productions of the global” (p. 53). Social norms, ideological and political orientation, news values, pressure, constraints from organizations, economic relations, cultural similarity, political affiliation, social distance, and geographic proximity are all the factors relevant to news production (Chang et al., 1987; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Besides these factors, according to Scheufele’s (1999) framing process model, the globalized resources and localized target audience could be the most directly influencing factors involved in the global media frames.

Some studies compared media frames to find out the cultural and political variables involved in the framing process under the globalization trend. For example, Peng (2008) compared the coverage of anti-war protests on newspapers from United States, Britain, and China. Focusing on the selection bias and description bias of media under different systems, the author selected three representative newspapers, *The New York Times* of the United States, *The*

*Times* of Britain, and the *People's Daily* of China. Story type, prominence, sourcing pattern, event location, frames of protests, themes, and favorability toward the protestors were coded in the study. The results indicated that the coverage of the three newspapers reflected the policies and stands of their respective government. The study reinforced the notion that media performances are generally confined within its political and social systems, especially toward the news on social movements. In order to observe the differences and similarities of news frames across nations, Camaj (2010) compared the coverage of Kosovo's status negotiation in four international news agencies: *Associated Press*, *Reuters*, *Agence France Presse*, and *ITAR-TASS*. Through content analysis, the results indicated that international news agencies predominantly used the “episodic” frame when reporting political news. The conflict frame was the most common frame employed by the western news agencies. The findings suggested that the international news agencies' frames are mostly event-oriented, driven by journalistic values and the characteristics of the issues covered in the news. These studies offered evidence that media speak for the community they serve. The political and cultural background are not only the matrix of the media, but also guide the operation of media.

Yet other framing studies focused on macro-level analyses. By comparing the media frames, these studies aimed at figuring out the media flow under globalization and how the local angle and global angle interact with each other. Archetti (2008) compared the framing of 9/11 attacks in elite press from United States, Italy, France, and Pakistan. Three hypotheses on media flow (Americanization of news), globalization (news homogenization), and localization (offering national perspectives) were tested. Contrary to expectations, the findings neither support the

existence of international news flow nor the idea that globalization lead to news homogenization. While in Dai and Hyun's (2009) study, which compared the coverage of the North Korean nuclear test by United States, Chinese, and South Korean news agencies, shows that the three news agencies shared a common "threat" frame. Interestingly, the results also showed that the frames also reflected the national perspectives as *Associate Press* connected the nuclear test to a broader "War on Terror" framework, *Xinhua* promoted a negotiation principle in solving the conflict, and *Yonhap* described it as a reemergence of old ideological and military rivalry established during the Cold War. In Ruigrok and van Atteveldt's (2007) study, the coverage from three countries (United States, Great Britain, and Netherlands) and four events (the 9/11 attacks, 2001; the bombing on the Madrid subway on March 11, 2003; the murder of the film producer Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands on November 2, 2004; and the bombing on the London subway on July 7, 2005) were examined. Two newspapers were selected from each of these countries. They found that, on the news selection level, the graphic proximity is still dominant. While looking at the frames, it was more affected by the global event than by local consideration. Though it is hard to get to the conclusion that globalization brings homogenized media frames or there exists a certain media flow direction, the previous studies indicated that media have began to take a global perspective in the framing process. Based on the comparison of two global news media, this thesis will also discuss the effects of globalization on global media frames.

## **Summary**

The ultimate goal of this study is to complement the existing framing studies on multimedia news. This study also aims to reveal the relationship between ideology and news

media frames within a society under the globalization trend.

The brief overview on definition and typology discussion on framing theory, and news media frames studies relevant to this project founded the theoretical ground for this study, and offered the research tool for the coding of the frames. However, with the development of information technology and new media, the research on framing should also extend with the new features of the media and the news formant. With the advent of the World Wide Web in the early 1990s, the dominant role of traditional media was weakened. Internet provides new channels of communication, and also alters the media and information order. Many traditional news media have gone online and become popular news providers. Both of the two news media examined in this study are traditional TV media that developed an online platform. On one hand, the online version mirrors the traditional version. They should keep consistent. On the other hand, the online version has to face the necessities of the users from a variety of political and cultural background. These are all the new challenges for the framing study in the new media environment. This study will try to build a bridge between media frames employed in traditional media and those that emerge in new media.

### **Research Questions**

The literature review outlined so far provided theoretical and methodological support for the study. Based on previous relevant studies presented earlier, and considering the limited research dealing with the combination of textual and visual frames from an international perspective, the following questions have been formulated:

RQ 1a: Which issue-specific frames related to the 9/11 tenth anniversary appeared most

frequently on CNN and Phoenix TV websites?

RQ 1b: Which issue-specific frame was most frequently taken as the primary subject of a given news story/opinion/photograph/video within CNN and Phoenix TV?

RQ 2a: Are the dominant generic frames consistent across media format (latest news, opinion article, photograph, video) on the CNN or Phoenix TV sites?

RQ 2b: What are the similarities and differences in dominant generic frames across media format (news, photographs, video) and source (Phoenix TV and CNN)?

## **Chapter 5**

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Methodology**

A content analysis was completed using the special 9/11 tenth anniversary webpages of CNN and Phoenix TV. Content analysis is a quantitative technique that uses categorical classification of content from a wide range of artifact types. While there are several definitions for content analysis, Berelson's definition of content analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of manifest content of communication" (p. 55) is widely used. This definition captures the key facts that content analysis is an objective, methodically implemented, and evaluative exploration of the manifest, not latent or intended, content. Content analysis is a research tool focused on the actual content and specific features of media.

Content analysis has a rich tradition in framing research. As the typology classifications

demonstrate, researchers have created a range of content classification types for media. Framing studies employing the content analysis method include inductive and deductive approaches. The inductive approach involves “analyzing a news story with an open view to attempt to reveal the array of possible frames, beginning with very loosely defined preconceptions of frames” (p. 94). A deductive approach involves “predefining certain frames as content analytic variables to verify the extent to which these frames occur in the news” (p. 94).

Inductive approaches aim to detect the range of possible frames used by media to report about a particular event or issue and sometimes start with loosely defined theme topics. Since the goals in inductive content analyses include classifying and labeling the array of possible frames, such an approach typically results in study-specific, unique sets of frame categories. So, while an advantage of inductive content analysis is that it can “detect the many possible ways in which an issue can be framed” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 94), drawbacks to the inductive approach include that it is “labor intensive, often based on small samples, and can be difficult to replicate” (p. 94). Deductive approaches to content analysis employ predefined frames to establish or verify the prevalence of the predetermined frames in media. One requirement for rich deductive content analyses is the necessity to have, *a priori*, a clear set of predefined frames capable of representing the large majority of media content (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Since many research studies of U.S. and European media support the existence, and prevalence, of five generic frames (e.g., Semetko, Blumler, Gurevitch, & Weaver, 1991; Semetko & Schoenbach, 1994), the deductive approach is possible in this study. Therefore, the existing generic classifications will be employed in the deductive content analysis. In addition to the



generic frames, a series of 20 pre-determined issue-specific frame topics also were identified. The researcher read or watched the content on the CNN and Phoenix TV webpages to create a comprehensive list of issue topics. To ensure the issues list was exhaustive, an “other” category was created to allow coders to report an issue that is not captured by the predetermined issue list. One significant disadvantage to issue-specific framing is that comparison across studies, topics and media becomes a challenge when each research study employs a unique set of issue categories.

Frame typologies, as described in the literature review, will serve as the coding categories provided to coders. In some cases, an "other" option will be provided to coders to capture the possibility that the previously established coding classifications do not account for all possible frames found by coders. Although the large majority of framing studies focus on content in U.S. and European media, there have been numerous framing studies analyzing media from the United States and China. For the most part, prior research suggests that the general frame categories will account for the overwhelming majority of coder decisions. Since cultural differences exist between the United States and China, the inductive opportunity will be available for coders to add explanation of circumstances where the previously established deductive categories do not capture the subtleties of the news content. Operational definitions for the generic and issue-specific coding categories are provided under the *variables* section of this chapter.

### **Source – Media Selection**

CNN and Phoenix TV tenth anniversary webpages commemorating the terrorist attacks

of 9/11 were used in this thesis project. CNN is a global news leader and is accessible in more than 200 countries around the globe. Although newer than CNN to the global media marketplace, Phoenix TV is now available in more than 150 countries throughout the world thanks to advances in satellite technology. While CNN's audience and reach remains significantly larger, Phoenix TV is very prominent in Asia and Southeast Asia. In fact, half of Phoenix TV's 300 million viewers are from China. In addition to their broadcast reach, these two media have a significant online presence. These two media were purposively selected based on three considerations: 1) the influence of the two media in the Chinese-speaking and English-speaking areas, 2) the availability and accessibility of an online news version, and 3) the existence of special webpages dedicated to the 9/11 tenth anniversary. In fact, both of the websites of CNN and Phoenix TV have a special webpage to mark the 9/11 tenth anniversary.

Interestingly, the webpages dedicated to the 9/11 tenth anniversary provided the researcher with two sites that were uniquely similar in structure. Both CNN and Phoenix TV sites had four specific sections on their sites with headings for "latest news," "opinion," "photos" (or photo gallery) and "videos." These four categories provided by CNN and Phoenix TV are important classification criteria in the analysis.

### **Unit(s) of Analysis**

Identifying the unit of analysis proved to be a challenging consideration for this project. Identifying frames, Shah et al. (2002, p. 367) refer to "choices about language, quotations, and relevant information." Others (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989) identify "'framing devices' that condense information and offer a 'media package' of an issue. They identify 1) metaphors, 2)

exemplars, 3) catch-phrases, 4) definitions, and 5) visual images as framing devices. The most comprehensive empirical approach is offered by Tankard (2001, p. 106) who suggests a list of 11 framing mechanisms or focal points for identifying and measuring news frames: headlines, subheads, photos, photo captions, leads, source selection, quotes selection, pull quotes, logos, statistics and charts, and concluding statements and paragraphs” (de Vreese, 2005, p. 54).

The idea of a media package as a unit of analysis was implemented in this thesis. The CNN and Phoenix TV websites are similar in that they identify four unique types of news formats on their sites: latest news, opinion articles, photos and videos. While the latest news articles sometimes contain photos, these photos are typically presented in smaller sizes than the photos in the photo gallery (once clicked). Furthermore, the photos associated with latest news stories pop up along with the news story text and appear either on top of the article text or embedded in the article text in a photo box. Thus, since the news articles and the accompanying photo are linked together by the website, pop up together, and are displayed together when a visitor clicks on one of the latest news links, the story and any accompanying photo were treated as one unit of analysis to represent the latest news. Thus, the photos accompanying latest news stories are coded along with the story text, treating the news story and accompanying photo as a media package. Photos appearing along with a news story were treated as part of the latest news package since the photos function to support the content of the text. For example, one story about how lifestyles have changed in the ten years since the attack on September 11, 2001 focused on food and alcohol consumption habits during the 10-year span. Included in the news story is a photo of a glass of iced whisky. So, to code this picture in isolation, as a single unit, out of

context with the news story, would not be helpful. It is a glass of iced whisky and it only has meaning on the site when combined with the story about eating and drinking changes in society as a result of 9/11. Another example, from the story “New Yorkers Defiant in Face of Terrorism” is an article about the resolve of New York residents. The photo accompanying this article is an aerial view of ground zero/downtown Manhattan. The photo alone, showing ground zero with the caption, “ground zero ten years after the terrorist attacks,” shows the progress of the new building at ground zero. While a stand-alone photo like this could be interpreted in many ways, when accompanying the text, its caption supports the theme from the story that ground zero is making progress and that the residents are resolved to rebuild. Thus, the decision was made to treat the latest news content as a news media package when a photo accompanied a written story. In addition to the argument that the photos would not have much significance if treated as an independent unit, this decision supports the way a viewer is likely to experience the websites. In both the CNN and Phoenix TV case, when a site visitor clicks a link to one of the news stories under the latest news heading, the news story and any accompanying photo(s) appear on the linked page as a package. Since the latest news articles and any accompanying photo are displayed together, treating them as one unit of analysis was consistent with the way they are displayed to the user and the way they are linked by the news organization.

The photographs and opinion articles, while also treated as media packages, were less likely to have packaged materials (e.g., photos and texts accompanying each other as one unit). However, the media package considerations with the photographs extend to ensure consideration of the photograph captions. As mentioned previously, captions are an important framing device

for helping to interpret photographs. Opinion articles were treated the same as news articles were treated in that any accompanying photographs were included as part of the media package that defined the unit of analysis. However, far fewer opinion articles contained an accompanying photograph.

Videos were also treated as one unit of analysis in this study. Despite the fact the video footage sometimes shifted between settings, topics, and reporters, each video was treated as a single unit of analysis or media package. Similar to the rationale for latest news, the videos are presented on the site through specific links. Each link represents a unit of analysis for each of the other three formats (latest news, opinion, photos), so similar consideration was given to the videos. In each case, the videos are provided under the videos heading as specific videos around a topical theme, depending on their title. Since the viewer is likely to watch each video as a coherent whole, and this is how the videos are presented, the coherent topics and the likely user experience seemed to support the treatment of videos as a single unit of analysis similar to the “package” consideration presented for the latest news. Thus, any text that appears on screen in the form of a caption or quote is considered part of the media package and these items are framing devices that help the coder interpret the issues or frames. The videos are labeled on each site in such a way as to suggest a coherent topic or theme for the video, making it comparable to the other forms in its ability to be treated as a single packaged unit around a coherent theme. Based on the operational definition of unit of analysis representing one media package for each linked latest news story, opinion article, photo gallery photo, or video, 158 units were included in this thesis project. The content within each of those sub sections was treated as an individual unit

of analysis. Each photo in the photos section was a unit of analysis as was each story in the opinion article section.

The number of units was similar for CNN (n = 78) and Phoenix TV (n = 80). Table 1 shows the number of units for CNN and Phoenix TV based on media format.

Table 1

*Units of Analysis for Latest News, Opinion, Photos, and Video for CNN and Phoenix TV*

	Latest News (n = 52)	Opinion Article (n = 25)	Photo (n = 48)	Video (n = 33)	Total (N=158)
Phoenix TV	30	13	21	16	80
CNN	22	12	27	17	78

The researcher created a printed codebook and an electronic code sheet containing operational definitions for each coding category (see Appendix). As mentioned previously, a deductive approach was used for the content analysis.

### **Generic and Issue-Specific Frames**

Researchers have distinguished between issue-specific and generic frames (e.g., de Vreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001). Prior research identified the existence of five generic frames that account for a large amount of all frames found in the news (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Although Semetko and Valkenburg are credited with consolidating the generic frames, other researchers have focused on the conflict frame (e.g., Cappella & Jamieson, 1997), responsibility frame (e.g., Iyengar, 1991), and economic, human interest, and morality frames (e.g., Neuman, Just & Crigler, 1992) specifically. The five generic frames are the responsibility, human interest,

conflict, morality, and economic (consequences) frame.

Consistent with prior applications, specific questions were used to guide the coder in making determination about the existence of one of the generic frames. For example, five questions guided the coder to determine the presence of the human-interest frame. If the coder answered yes to one of the five questions (Does the story provide a human example or “human face” on the issue? Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion? Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem? Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors? Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?) established by prior research (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 100), then the frame was coded as present.

The conflict frame emphasizes discord between individuals, parties, groups or institutions, while the economic consequences frames, also known as economic reductionism frame, focuses on the economic implications for the individual, party, group, institution, or geographic area (e.g., state, country). The morality frame focuses on religious or cultural tenets related to the news event and the implications. For example, a story on the 9/11 attacks discussed through the lens of different religious teachings and the moral justifications, however skewed or fringe, that may have motivated the terrorists would likely fall within the morality frame. Finally, the responsibility frame focuses on the attribution of blame or praise, depending on the event outcome.

Since the large majority of studies employing the generic frame classifications were U.S.

and European-based, the researcher investigated the possibility that these generic frames may not capture the generic reporting styles for Chinese media. In fact, leadership was identified as a possible generic frame worthy of addition to the five generic frames previously discussed.

In a comparison of U.S. and Chinese media coverage of the SARS epidemic, Luther and Zhou report the existence of a generic *leadership* frame that is standard among journalists, particularly those in China. According to Luther and Zhou, *leadership* is presented generically when it addresses the general actions or activities of national, group, government, institution or party leaders. If a specific leader is mentioned, and specific leadership decision, such as President Bush or President Obama, leadership is likely referring to specific actions and activities of a leader and is more likely coded as an issue-specific example of a leadership frame. Perhaps it is the nature of the collectivist culture in China, which puts emphasis on the group or collective (e.g., family, party, government, nation), that results in the prevalence of a leadership frame. Nevertheless, leadership was added to the generic list of frames to capture the prevalence of this generic frame when used to report on the tenth anniversary of 9/11.

**Issue-Specific Frames.** As mentioned above, an issue may be reported specifically or generically. Issue-specific frames differ from generic frames in that issue-specific presentation identifies details about actors (e.g., specific leaders, presidents, personalities), actions (e.g., policy decisions), and events. For example, an issue-specific story about terrorism would likely identify the type of terrorism, the name(s) of specific terrorist groups, actions of the terrorists, and perhaps specific actions the terrorist have articulated or taken in the past. More generic presentation of the issue of terrorism may refer more broadly to types of terrorism, types of



terrorist groups, or terrorist activities without specifying them to a particular action or event. One problem with issue-specific frames is that each research study is likely to develop its own set of issue labels, which scholars (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, p. 150) have identified as one of the most “frustrating tendencies” of researchers. Studies that generate unique sets of issue-specific frames make comparison across studies difficult. However, the goal of this study was to capture the prevalence and type of issues that were presented specifically and to do the same for generically presented frames. As such, generic frames and issue-specific frames were treated as mutually exclusive.

The issue category for issue-specific frames included a predetermined list of 20 possible issues based on previous related studies. Among the 20 issues were “President Barack Obama/Previous President George W. Bush,” “Political/Military/Government officials,” “Policy change (United States government),” “Policy change (United States society),” “Economic impact/loss,” “Cultural impact (cultural products & education program),” “Military actions,” “al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist,” “Osama Bin Laden,” “International reaction,” “Islam world/Muslims,” “Mass media,” “Citizen/Citizen reaction,” “American Patriotism,” “Victims/Victims’ family,” “Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders,” “Health issue (physical and psychological),” “Rebuilding/Construction,” or “Commemorative activities.” In case the predetermined list may miss any issue contained in the news content, the “Other” category was offered. After coding the presence or absence of each of the 20 issues, the dominant issue was designated for each coding unit by considering the salience of the issue overall. The complexities and subtleties of the September 11 terrorist attacks make it difficult to create issues that are

mutually exclusive. For example, a story about specific victims and their families may have aspects that relate to cultural impact or health issues (psychological or physiological). In such cases, the coder was instructed to code for the presence of these aspects, but to identify in the dominant issue category that issue which is most prevalent in the unit.

### **Coding Procedure**

A codebook and code sheet were created to instruct the coders with coding decisions. Categories included whether the unit contained issue-specific or generic content. In this thesis, issue-specific frames and generic frames were treated as mutually exclusive. The coders were instructed to make a determination about whether the units were issue-specific or generic. If issue-specific, coders then selected the issues from the a priori list of 20 issues. If generic, coders then selected the presence of the six generic frames. In cases where the unit was a media package, coders were instructed to consider headlines, photos, captions, leads, and quotes when making determination about the existence of issue-specific or generically presented content.

Two coders were recruited to evaluate a sample of the population of units appearing on either the CNN or Phoenix TV websites. The coder for CNN was a native English speaker and the coder for Phoenix TV was a native Chinese speaker. Since the researcher served as the primary coder, the coders served as a reliability check on the researcher. Coders were given a sample of 10 random news or opinion texts, 5 photographs, and 3 videos. Thus, the coders assessed for reliability a sample of units (18 of 80 for Phoenix TV, 23%; 18 of 78 for CNN, 23%) from both websites.

After familiarizing herself with the coding instrument, the coder used 1s and 0s to code

the presence and absence of the variables on the coding sheets. Each coding sheet included descriptive information about the story number, news sources (1. Phoenix TV or 2. CNN), date, and type of news story (1. Latest news, 2. Opinion article, 3. Photograph, 4. Video). After finishing coding, all the data will be put into one file and analyzed with statistical software program.

To test the intercoder reliability, the results from each coder were put into an Excel spreadsheet. Using the website [dfreelon.org](http://dfreelon.org), which was created by an American University School of Communication faculty member, Cohen's kappa and Krippendorff's alpha were assessed following the procedures of the ReCal. Coders' data files were entered into Excel, inverted and saved as a .csv file, then submitted to the ReCal software. Since the coding for this thesis was largely assessing presence or absence (0 and 1 codes), intercoder reliability formulas that account for chance agreement were used. Both Cohen's kappa and Krippendorff's alpha correct for the chance agreement, possibly as high as 50% in binary coding. Cohen's kappa ranged from .79 to .98 and Krippendorff's alpha ranged from .80 to .98. In both cases, the low category was camera angle. In fact, camera angle is the only category that dropped below .90 for intercoder reliability. The camera angle category was removed from the study as it is not part of the guiding research questions and did not reach the .85 threshold of intercoder reliability.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **Results**

The four research questions that guided this thesis addressed three major areas of investigation: prevalence and dominance of issues, prevalence and dominance of frames (generic

and issue-specific) by news type and source.

As the method discussed (see Table 1), Phoenix TV's website had 80 units for analysis (30 Latest news, 13 Opinion articles, 21 Photographs, and 16 Videos) and CNN's website contained 78 units (22 Latest news, 12 Opinion articles, 27 Photographs, and 17 Videos). The results are based on the entire population of units ( $N = 158$ ) unless otherwise specified. In Phoenix TV, 53 coding units were assigned as issue-specific frames, while 27 were generic frames. In CNN, 54 coding units were distinguished as issues-specific frames and 24 were generic frames.

## **Issues**

Research Question 1a (RQ1a) asked which issue related to the 9/11 Tenth Anniversary appeared most frequently. In order to answer RQ1a, twenty pre-determined issues were coded for presence and absence for each media type and each source. If the *a priori* list of issues did not capture the full range of issues, coders were instructed to provide a description of the added issue in the "other" category. A frequency analysis was performed to identify the most frequently presented issue. As Table 2 shows, "Commemorative activities" had the most mentions in both Phoenix TV and CNN (40.0% and 48.7%, respectively). For Phoenix TV, the second most frequently appearing issue was "Citizen/Citizen action" (30.0%). "Victims/Victims family" and "Political/Military/Government officials" were tied for the third most frequently mentioned issue (27.5%), while "al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist" (26.3%) was the fifth issue received most mentions in Phoenix TV, while "President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush" (20.0%) was the sixth ranked issue for frequency. In CNN, the issue with the second most

frequency was “Political/Military/Government officials” (28.2%), followed by “Citizen/Citizen action” (25.6%), “American Patriotism” (20.5%), and “Victims/Victims family” (19.2%).

Table 2

*Frequency of Issues for Phoenix TV and CNN and Overall*

Issues	Phoenix TV n = 80		CNN n = 78		Overall N = 158	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush	16	20.0	11	14.1	27	17.1
2. Political/Military/Government officials	22	27.5	22	28.2	44	27.8
3. Policy change (U.S. government)	0	0.0	3	3.8	3	1.9
4. Policy change (U.S. society)	1	1.3	3	3.8	4	2.5
5. Economic impact/loss	1	1.3	1	1.3	2	1.3
6. Cultural impact (cultural products & education program)	0	0.0	8	10.3	8	5.1
7. Military actions	7	8.8	3	3.8	10	6.3
8. al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist	21	26.3	10	12.8	31	19.6
9. Osama Bin Laden	4	5.0	2	2.6	6	3.8
10. International reaction	6	7.5	7	9.0	13	8.2
11. Islam world/Muslims	2	2.5	2	2.6	4	2.5
12. Mass media	5	6.3	4	5.1	9	5.7
13. Citizen/Citizen reaction	24	30.0	20	25.6	44	27.8
14. American Patriotism	10	12.5	16	20.5	26	16.5
15. Victims/Victims' family	22	27.5	15	19.2	37	23.4
16. Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders	9	11.3	8	10.3	17	10.8
17. Health issue (physical and psychological)	0	0.0	2	2.6	2	1.3
18. Rebuilding/Construction	9	11.3	12	15.4	21	13.3
19. Commemorative activities	32	40.0	38	48.7	70	44.3

20. Other	5	6.3	1	1.3	6	3.8
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Despite a few differences in issue prevalence between CNN and Phoenix, a Pearson chi-square test comparing issue frequencies showed that differences between the two sources were not statistically different,  $\chi^2(9) = 8.55, p = 0.479$ . Thus, the issues were not statistically different between these two important global news leaders.

Research Question 1b (RQ1b) asked which issues were prevalent for each source and across each type of media format (news, opinion, photos, video). Another frequency analysis was performed to identify the dominant issues of different news formats within each society. As

shows, in Phoenix TV, “al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist” had the most mentions as dominant issue in Latest News (37.5%), while “International reaction,” “Rebuilding/Construction” and “Commemorative activities” (12.5%) all tied for the next most frequently presented issue. In Opinion Articles of Phoenix TV, the only one article identified as an issue-specific frame was about “Military action” as the dominant issue. In Photographs, “Victims/Victims family” (33.3%) was the first dominant issue, followed by “President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush” and “Commemorative activities” tied as the second most dominant issue with 23.8%. In Videos, “Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders” (33.3%) got the most attention. The second dominant issue was “Mass media” (26.7%). “al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist” and “Commemorative activities” (13.3%) tied for the third most frequent issue. What is important to note in this result is the large number of issues that were not addressed at all through various media formats. For example, there were 16 issues across the news stories, only 1 issue in the opinion pieces, 21 issues depicted through photographs, and 16

issues presented through the website's videos. Based on the sample size, the chi-square test is not reliable. Fisher's exact test was conducted here to compare the dominant issue frequencies. As the table used here is larger than 2 by 2, the test is based on the network algorithm, so the exact  $p$  value is the only output of this test. The result showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the dominant issues among the media formats within Phoenix TV,  $p \leq .001$  ( $p = 2.92 \times 10^{-6}$ ).

In CNN (see Table 4), "Cultural impact (cultural products & education program)" and "Commemorative activities" were both assigned as the most frequent issue of Latest News, appearing in 27.3% of latest news units, followed by "Military actions" (18.2%). "International reaction," "Islam world/Muslims" and "Citizen/Citizen reaction" were presented in nearly 10% (9.1%) of CNN news stories. It is important to note that only 11 issues were presented through the news stories on CNN's commemorative website. Four opinion articles were identified as issues-specific for CNN. Two of the issue-specific units were about "Policy change" as the dominant issue and the other two were about "al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist" or "Mass media" as the dominant issue. "Commemorative activities" and "Victims/Victims family" were the first and second dominant issues of photographs. In the Videos category, 11 videos were identified as issue-specific. Two videos were concentrated on "Rebuilding/Construction" (16.7%). The other nine videos each focused on different issues, which included: "President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush," "Policy change (U.S. government)," "Cultural impact (cultural products & education program)," "al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist," "Mass media," "American Patriotism," "Victims/Victims' family," "Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders,"

“Health issue (physical and psychological),” and “ Commemorative activities.” Similar to the Phoenix case, Fisher’s exact test was also conducted to compare the dominant issue frequencies in CNN across media formats. The result showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the dominant issues among the media formats,  $p \leq .001$  ( $p = 3.279 \times 10^{-5}$ ).

Another finding (see Tables 3 and 4) is the frequency distribution of the dominant issues across the news types within each media. For example, in Phoenix TV, eight of 20 pre-determined issues appeared as dominant issues in Latest News, while only six issues appeared as dominant issues in Latest News of CNN. Overall, 11 issues dominated the Latest News, not the full 20 established *a priori*. More specifically, while Latest News was led by “al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist,” “International reaction,” “Rebuilding/Construction” and “Commemorative activities,” photos and videos were more likely to focus on “President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush,” “American patriotism” and “Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders.” Other differences emerged among the dominant issues within CNN and Phoenix TV. For example, issues such as “Political/Military/Government officials,” “Policy change (U.S. society)” and “Rebuilding/Construction” were only present in Phoenix TV, while “Policy change (U.S. government),” “Cultural impact (cultural products & education program),” “Islam world/Muslims,” and “Health issue (physical and psychological)” were only mentioned in the news content of CNN. “Economic impact/loss” and “Osama Bin Laden” were not mentioned as dominant issues in any of the two media sources.

Table 3

*Dominant issue of Phoenix TV across media formats and Overall*



	News		Opinion		Photo		Video		Total	
	(n = 30)		(n = 13)		(n = 21)		(n = 16)		(N = 80)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	23.8	1	6.7	6	11.3
2. Political/Military/Government officials	1	6.3	0	0.0	1	4.8	0	0.0	2	3.8
3. Policy change (U.S. government)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
4. Policy change (U.S. society)	1	6.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.9
5. Economic impact/loss	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
6. Cultural impact (cultural products & education program)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
7. Military actions	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.9
8. al-Qaeda/Terrorism[ists]	6	37.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	13.3	8	15.1
9. Osama Bin Laden	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
10. International reaction	2	12.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.8
11. Islam world/Muslims	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
12. Mass media	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	26.7	4	7.5
13. Citizen/Citizen reaction	1	6.3	0	0.0	1	4.8	1	6.7	3	5.7
14. American Patriotism	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	4.8	0	0.0	1	1.9
15. Victims/Victims' family	1	6.3	0	0.0	7	33.3	0	0.0	8	15.1
16. Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	33.3	5	9.4
17. Health issue (physical and psychological)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
18. Rebuilding/Construction	2	12.5	0	0.0	1	4.8	0	0.0	3	5.7
19. Commemorative activities	2	12.5	0	0.0	5	23.8	2	13.3	9	17.0
20. Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Table 4

*Dominant issue of CNN across media formats and Overall*

	News (n = 22)		Opinion (n = 12)		Photos (n = 27)		Videos (n = 17)		Total (N = 78)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	7.4	1	8.3	3	5.6
2. Political/Military/Governm ent officials	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
3. Policy change (U.S. government)	0	0.0	2	50.0	0	0.0	1	8.3	3	5.6
4. Policy change (U.S. society)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5. Economic impact/loss	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
6. Cultural impact (cultural products & education program)	3	27.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	8.3	4	7.4
7. Military actions	2	18.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.7
8. al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	8.3	2	3.7
9. Osama Bin Laden	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
10. International reaction	1	9.1	0	0.0	1	3.7	0	0.0	2	3.7
11. Islam world/Muslims	1	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.9
12. Mass media	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	1	8.3	2	3.7
13. Citizen/Citizen reaction	1	9.1	0	0.0	1	3.7	0	0.0	2	3.7
14. American Patriotism	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	8.3	1	1.9
15. Victims/Victims' family	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	22.2	1	8.3	7	13.0
16. Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	8.3	1	1.9
17. Health issue (physical and psychological)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	8.3	1	1.9
18. Rebuilding/Construction	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.7	2	16.7	3	5.6
19. Commemorative activities	3	27.3	0	0.0	16	59.3	1	8.3	20	37.0
20. Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

## Frames

The second set of questions (RQ2a and RQ2b) focused on presence of Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) identification of five generic frames ("conflict," "human interest," "economic consequence," "morality," and "responsibility"). Additionally, the "leadership" frame, in which the news stories are concentrated on the activities, actions or speech of a leader of a nation, group, government agency or an institution, was added as a potentially important generic frame (Luther & Zhou, 2005).

Research Question 2a asked whether the dominant generic frames appearing in the media were consistent across formats within a source. Table 5 illustrated that "Leadership" (35.7%) was the most frequently present frame in Latest News within Phoenix TV's website coverage. "Conflict" (28.6%) was the second most frequently used frame in latest news. In Opinion articles, both "Conflict" and "Responsibility" ranked first with 33.3%. Only one video was coded as containing generic frames, and the dominant one was "Human interest." Overall, "Conflict" (29.6%) appeared most frequently as the dominant frame followed by "Human interest" (22.0%) and "Leadership" (also, 22.0%). According to the Fisher's exact test ( $p = 0.459$ ), there was no statistically significant difference across the Phoenix TV media formats in the use of generic frames.

As Table 6 shows, in the Latest News of CNN, the dominant generic frame was "Human interest" (63.6%), followed by "Leadership" (27.3%). In Opinion articles, eight articles were recognized as containing generic frames. Four of them were dominated by "Human interest" (50%). "Morality" (25%) and "Responsibility" (25%) dominated the rest of the four Opinion

articles. In Videos, five videos were identified as containing generic frames. Four were dominated by “Human interest,” and the other one was dominated by the “Conflict.” The most frequently employed generic frame, “Human interest,” was used fairly consistently across media formats within CNN. According to the Fisher’s exact test ( $p = 0.633$ ), there was no statistically significant difference across the media formats in the frames adopted in CNN. The result showed that the dominant frames were consistent across the media formats.

Research Question 2b asked the similarities and differences of generic frames within and across the two media sources. As Table 5 and Table 6 indicate, in Phoenix TV, “Leadership” and “Conflict” received most attention, while in CNN, “Human interest” was the consistent theme across media formats. Table 5 showed that all the generic were dominant in one form or another on Phoenix TV except for “Morality.” Similarly, in CNN, five of six generic frames appeared as a dominant frame. However, for CNN, the “Economic consequences” generic frame was not dominant in any of the units analyzed.

Table 5

*Dominant generic frames of Phoenix TV across media formats and Overall*

News (n = 14)		Opinion (n = 12)		Video (n = 1)		Total (N = 27)	
f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<hr/>							

Conflict	4	28.6	4	33.3	0	0.0	8	29.6
Human interest	2	14.3	3	25.0	1	100.0	6	22.2
Morality	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Economic consequences	2	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	7.4
Responsibility	1	7.1	4	33.3	0	0.0	5	18.5
Leadership	5	35.7	1	8.3	0	0.0	6	22.2

Table 6

*Dominant generic frame of CNN and overall*

Generic Frame	News (n = 11)		Opinion (n = 8)		Video (n = 5)		Total (N = 24)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Conflict	1	9.1	0	0.0	1	20.0	2	8.3
Human interest	7	63.6	4	50.0	4	80.0	15	62.5
Economic consequence	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Morality	0	0.0	2	25.0	0	0.0	2	8.3
Responsibility	0	0.0	2	25.0	0	0.0	2	8.3
Leadership	3	27.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	12.5

Another finding in the comparison of the dominant frames across media format was related to the distribution of frame types. All the photographs in this sample were coded as issue-specific. In Videos, only one video unit in Phoenix TV and seven video units in CNN were recognized as dominated by a generic frame.

## Chapter 7

### Discussion

The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States occupied the headlines and significant space within many international media. This thesis employed a content analysis of CNN and Phoenix TV commemorative webpage coverage of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The latest news (n=52), opinion articles (n=25), photographs (n=48) and videos (n=33) from two influential global media were used as the basis of comparison between two important media sources from the US (CNN) and China (Phoenix TV). The goals of the study were: 1) to identify the main issues in different types of media formats (news, opinion, photo, video); 2) to compare issues and frames within media formats and across sources; 3) to determine the use of issue-specific and generic frames (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Luther & Zhou, 2005); and 4) to determine the similarities and differences in coverage. It is also argued that similarities in coverage may result from shared or convergence in the news resources used to report this commemorative event.

## **Issues**

RQ1 asked which issues related to the September 11<sup>th</sup> tenth anniversary appeared most frequently in the media. The overall frequency results showed that “Commemorative activities” appeared most frequently in both Phoenix TV and CNN. As the two webpages were created specifically for the 9/11 tenth anniversary it is not surprising that commemorative activities received the most coverage. The top five issues from these sources, while containing different ranks, were also very similar. For example, “Citizen/Citizen action,” “Victims/Victims family,” “Political/Military/Government officials,” “al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist” and “President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush” were ranked second through sixth on Phoenix

TV's website ("Victims/Victims family" and "Political/Military/Government officials" were tied as the third issues) while "Commemorative activities" was followed by "Political/Military/Government officials" (28.2%), "Citizen/Citizen action" (25.6%), "American Patriotism" (20.5%), and "Victims/Victims family" (19.2%) for CNN. Interestingly, in the top five issues within Phoenix TV and CNN, there were four exactly same issues. This result indicated a great similarity in the issues presented in the two media for their 9/11 tenth anniversary coverage. In fact, as the results revealed, the issue frequencies were not statistically different for CNN and Phoenix coverage.

Hachten (1999) identifies five types of media, from which the US is classified as "Western" and China is classified as "Authoritarian." According to Hachten (1999), the "Authoritarian" media are under the control of the government, where the ruler decides what shall be published as authority monopolizes truth (and information), while the "Western" media are theoretically independent of government authority. In the coverage of this commemorative event, the issue rankings and frequencies did not offer strong evidence on the effects of political systems on the journalism and media coverage as Hachten discussed in his study.

However, there still remain some differences among the top issues. In contrast, Phoenix TV paid more attention to "al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist" and "President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush," while CNN reported about "American patriotism" as an important issue. Phoenix TV appeared to place more emphasis on the U.S. president and presidency than CNN. This finding reinforces the decision to add "leadership" (Luther & Zhou, 2005) as a generic frame when considering media outside the western hemisphere, which

dominates much of the framing research.

Similarities in issue content from CNN and Phoenix TV support prior research (e.g., Peng, 2008). Peng's (2008) study compared the coverage of anti-war protests on newspapers from US, Britain, and China. By comparing the story types, prominence, sourcing patterns, event location, frames of protests, themes, and a range of other variables, Peng reinforced the notion that media performances are generally confined within a political and social system. However there is additional evidence that some aspects of news transcend culture and demonstrate a more "global" culture -- or perhaps a global news value. In the case of terrorism, it may be that global media -- and the cultural values that drive media -- are similar in their anti-terrorism stance. The results also showed that the 20 pre-determined issues were all present in CNN's news content, although not all issues were present in all formats. In Phoenix TV's website, 18 of the 20 issues were addressed. "Cultural impact" and "Health issue (physical and psychological)" did not appear in any form of Phoenix TV's commemorative coverage.

RQ1b asked which issues were dominant across the four news formats used by CNN and Phoenix. The frequency analysis showed that "al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist" was the most dominant issue in Latest News in Phoenix TV. The only latest news unit coded as issue-specific from Phoenix TV focused on "Military action." In the visual part, "Victims/Victims family" and "Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders" were the most dominant issues of photographs and videos, respectively. The visual medium, arguably, is better able to represent emotional content. In this regard, it is not surprising that photos and videos contained emotional images of victims and victims' families and first responders.



Overall, “Commemorative activities” appeared as the most dominant issue in Phoenix TV. When issues within the textual and visual are compared, the textual formats of Phoenix TV focused more on the event itself and the following military actions, while the visual focus on the portrayal of people, like victims’ families and fireman, involved in the event. Thus, text and visual content appeared to focus on different aspects of the 9/11 commemorative aspects.

In CNN, both “Cultural impact (cultural products & education program)” and “Commemorative activities” appeared as the most dominant issues in Latest news. “Policy change” was the primary subject of Opinion articles, which is not too surprising. The literature review presents a number of policy changes that resulted following the terrorist attacks and these policy changes, and more, are the frequent topic of opinion articles. In the ten years since September 11, 2001, “terrorist incidents” or “terrorism scares” would routinely result in discussions about whether the U.S. was doing enough to protect its borders. Thus, it is surprising that the opinion articles were where discussion about policy change occurred.

“Commemorative activities” was the most dominant issue in photographs, and “Victims/Victims’ family” and “Rebuilding/Construction” appeared most frequently as the dominant issues in Videos. Interestingly, in the eleven videos coded as issue-specific, ten different issues were dominant. Although a wide range of issues was represented in the videos, a theme that transcended the issues was one focused on changes (to the specific issue) that occurred since the terrorist attacks. Results, showed that CNN covered a broader range of issues specifically. Again, this is not too surprising considering that the terrorist acts occurred in the US and CNN is a US-based media source. The broader range of issues addressed by CNN’s coverage

likely speaks to the broader range of concerns of its audience.

To compare across the media source, “Victims/Victims’ family” got the most mentions in the photographs for both Phoenix TV and CNN. Issues related to citizens, rescue actions and construction served as the dominant issues of the visual news. An explanation for this difference might be the features contained in different news formats. Visuals showed an advantage in the portrayal of people and people’s actions, which the visual medium is effective at portraying. Additionally, the visual elements help readers and audience recall memories of an event and shorten their perceived distance from that event (e.g., Fahmy, et al., 2006; Fahmy & Johnson, 2007; Pfau, et al., 2006; Potter & Smith, 2000; Zelizer, 2004).

The results also showed that only 13 of the 20 pre-determined issues were classified as dominant issues in Phoenix TV. Across media formats, for example, eight issues appeared as dominant in Latest news, seven in photographs, and six in videos. More specifically, issues such as “Policy change,” “Military action” or “International reaction” appeared as dominant issues only in textual news (opinions or latest news articles), while “Mass media,” “American patriotism,” and “Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders” were only dominant in visual parts. In contrast, 15 issues were assigned as dominant issues in CNN. A variety of six different issues were dominant in at least one latest news story, six different issues dominated across photographs, four in opinion articles, and ten different issues dominated the videos. Again, it appears that victims’ families and first responders involved in 9/11 attacks were more vivid in the visual format. The appearance of symbolic items, like a recovered flag from ground zero, may be more powerful than words. This difference across the media format may support Messaris and

Abraham's (2001) idea that "the special qualities of visuals - their iconicity, their indexicality, and especially their syntactic implicitness - makes them very effective tools for framing and articulating ideological messages" (p. 220). There is support for Messaris and Abraham's (2001) conclusion when one considers the type of content found to dominate the photographs and videos on CNN and Phoenix TV sites.

### **Frames**

Research Question 2a and 2b asked about the distribution of dominant generic frames (conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality, responsibility, and leadership) across media format and source. The frequency analysis showed that, in the case of Phoenix TV, "Leadership" was the most dominant generic frame in Latest News. "Conflict" and "Leadership" were both the top dominant frames in Opinion articles. This result showed a conflict with Camaj's (2010) study. For example, Camaj compared the coverage of Kosovo's status negotiation in four international news agencies: *Associated Press*, *Reuters*, *Agence France Presse*, and *ITAR-TASS*. One of the findings was that the conflict frame was the most common frame employed by the western news agencies in news report. Results from this study indicate that "Conflict" dominated the Opinion articles in Chinese media. This discrepancy raises the question about differences in dominant frames within different media formats. This finding supports the notion that the media from China and US have unique features and functions, or roles, within their society. As such, the selection of particular types of frames may vary. As the main function of news report is informing, frames that demonstrate or reflect conflict may be more likely to appear in opinion articles. This may also support the idea that dominant ideology exerts effects

on news framing.

In the whole visual sample in Phoenix TV, only one coding unit was assigned as the generic frame, and the dominant frame was “Human interest.” However, “human interest” was more widely represented in the textual units (latest news and opinions). Both Latest news and Opinion articles took the “Leadership” as the dominant frame. In CNN, “Human interest” was the most dominant frame in all four formats of news content. The dominant frame is highly consistent across media formats within CNN. While this thesis cannot support Camaj’s (2010) assertion regarding the dominance of the conflict frame, the fact that this news event is unlike many others since news organizations had several years to plan a strategy for their commemorative coverage, the focus on human interest may be an result of the different nature of this news event.

“Conflict” and “Human interest” were separately the most dominant frames in Phoenix TV and CNN. These differences seem to offer support to the idea of media function within different social systems. As mentioned in the literature review, Chinese media belong to the Authoritarian model of media, in which the main function is speaking for the government. The media always adopt a political perspective in news coverage, especially with international issues and events. In contrast, belonging to the Western press, American media are relatively more independent and market oriented. This could help explain the discrepancy between the dominant frames in Phoenix TV and CNN. On the other hand, considering the harm and influence of the attacks on the large population of people, from survivors to first responders, from the victims’ families to the new generation, it would not be hard to understand why American media pay

much attention to human issues like the change of people's lives, individual views and emotions and other aspects of human interest. Another difference resides in the absence of the frames.

Among the six generic frames, "Morality" never appeared as a dominant frame in Phoenix TV, while "Economic consequences" was not dominant in any formats of news on CNN's website.

Considering the major economic fallout following the terrorist attacks, it is somewhat surprising that economic considerations did not dominate, or register highly, among some of the formats.

But, it is also understandable that the news organizations did not want to emphasize economic considerations on a commemorative website.

The discussion so far about the dominant frames in different news formats and overall within each media revealed an important point. Even though both of the media sources present five of the six frames in the news content, Phoenix TV seemed to have placed similar weight and importance on each of the five frames, while in CNN the majority of generic frame (57.7%) news stories were "human interest." This finding supports previous research (Fahmy, Kelly, and Kim's, 2007). Comparing the front-page photographs in U.S. newspapers following Hurricane Katrina, researchers found a change in the visual frames, from aerial depiction of devastation to human emotion portrayal, during the first six days. This change reflected a U.S. news coverage routine to report major news events through individuals' personal experiences. In the news coverage of 9/11 tenth anniversary, the distribution of dominant frames in CNN also suggests this routine. Thus, the finding that "human interest" stories are prevalent in U.S. media is consistent with prior research (Fahmy, Kelly, & Kim, 2007). One example of the human-interest coverage from CNN involved a news story where the journalist focused on parents and children

visiting ground zero so that children could learn about this important event in U.S. history. One of the more emotional videos showed children who lost a parent in the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. The children, many of whom are shown crying on camera, try to share their memories of a deceased parent. This human-interest angle shows how lasting the effects of the terrorist act will be on generations of U.S. citizens directly impacted by the attacks.

On the other hand, the function of media within different societies may be an explanation to the framing differences between Phoenix TV and CNN. Moreover, the different perspectives towards this event may also lead to different news frames. After all, 9/11 and the activities of the tenth anniversary were important events to American people and the whole world. However, it is understandable that the impact of the terrorism is different in the US than it is other nations.

Compared to previous studies which applied Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) five generic frames (conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality, and responsibility), this study added one more frame based on Luther and Zhou's (2005) study in which the "Leadership" frame was identified in the news stories that concentrated on the activities, actions or speech of a leader of a nation, group, government agency or an institution. As showed in the results, "Leadership" was one of the most salient frames in the study and argued to work like the generic frames. An example of the leadership frame is evident in the following quote from a news story:

"Bush, who served as commander in chief when the United States went to war in Iraq and Afghanistan, said 9/11 proved that conditions in other countries could have an impact in American streets.

‘It may be tempting to think it doesn’t matter what happens to a villager in Afghanistan or a child in Africa, but the temptation of isolation is deadly wrong,’ Bush said.

He also told stories of unity in the days that followed the September 11 attacks and spoke to the intense political debates that have shaped Washington over much of the past decade.

‘But Americans have never been defined by our disagreements,’ Bush said. ‘Whatever challenges we face in the future ... we must never allow our differences to harden into divisions.’

After ending his speech, Bush quickly walked back to his chair and sat down, while the audience gave him a standing ovation.”

As the most dominant frames in “Latest news” from Phoenix TV, leadership is associated with, and consistent with, the cultural values within Chinese society. To some extent, this study reinforced the importance of this newly added frame, especially when exploring media beyond Europe and the United States. Specifically, under the context of the issues related to the international relations or the global situation, “Leadership” may become a significant frame of news coverage. Thus, the inclusion of leadership as a generic frame is supported by the high frequency of this type of coverage. Luther and Zhou’s (2005) finding that leadership is an important generic frame was supported by the results from both CNN and Phoenix TV’s commemorative websites. Thus, it may be that leadership offers generic representation of a common practice among global media.

One more finding worthy of discussion here addresses the ranking of the frames.

Though it has been demonstrated in this study that dominant frames were related to the function of the media and rooted in the system of that society, the ranking of the frames may also highly depend on the event under examination. The proximity and relevance of the event can also be the

critical factors. In this case, as terrorism attacks, 9/11 is relevant to the security of the countries all over the world. So both of the media pay much attention to anti-terrorism and security issues. As an international affair, 9/11 was closer to the US. With higher level of involvement, the U.S. media tend to report about the issue in ways related to the citizens' daily lives. Camaj (2010) also reached this conclusion in his study. He suggested that the international news agencies' frames are mostly event-oriented, driven by journalistic values and the characteristics of the issues covered in the news. Since the event in this study is a commemorative, or anniversary event, it is unlike a breaking or unfolding news event. Some of the typical journalistic routines may not be at practice.

### **Globalization**

Many previous studies discussed about the media flow under the trend of globalization (e.g., Ruigrok & van Atteveldt, 2007; Archetti, 2008; Dai & Hyun, 2009). Comparing the news resources contained in the two webpages, it was easy to find the same news items or visual elements depicted. In the photo gallery, there were several photos with the same image but different camera shot or image representation. For example, both of the picture galleries contained a photo of a U.S. flag recovered from the 9/11 attacks. The photo in Phoenix TV contained more elements of the surroundings, while the one on CNN showed more details of the damaged flag recovered from ground zero. These types of similarities are found in other pictures as well. In the textual news, it is easy to find articles that were borrowed or translated from other international media resources. The convergence of the news resources was indicated in this study. As the events occurred in the US, the U.S. media became the main news resource. While only



Phoenix TV was compared in this thesis, it is understandable that other international media may take the US media as a reference or source of information. The context of the study might also be an explanation of the convergence of news resources. As terrorism has become a threat all over the world, anti-terrorism is now one of the shared themes to emerge from media throughout the world. The policies and strategies related to anti-terrorism can be shared across countries. The shared images and news content reveals a sharing of news resources for global events. However, in this case, as only two media were examined, it is hard to make a conclusion on the general direction of the media flow.

### **Limitations**

Results of this study need to be viewed in light of several limitations. In this study, the researcher was the primary coder that coded the whole population of the sample. Two additional native-speaking (Chinese and English) coders were recruited to analyze a random sub-sample of the total units from CNN or Phoenix, depending on their native language, so that a reliability check on the primary coder was possible. While this intercoder reliability check demonstrated only a few times where the researcher and coders differed on their coding classifications, having a native coder – other than the researcher – code the sample would have been ideal.

In this study, issue-specific frames and generic frames were treated as mutually exclusive. Although there is research precedent for such a classification distinction (e.g., de Vreese, 2005), coding for the presence of generic frames in issue-specific articles and issues in generically-framed articles would have enabled for a more-complete understanding of the issues and frames employed by CNN and Phoenix TV. An additional classification consideration that

suggests a limitation is the reliance of website classification of news and opinion articles. Since both CNN and Phoenix TV websites classified the units into latest news, opinion, photos, or videos, those classification differences were adapted for this study. Although the researcher verified that the opinion articles were, in fact, opinion or editorial in nature, classification of the videos as either opinion or news would have enabled a richer understanding of “news” and “editorial” content on the site. It is possible that interesting differences, or similarities, were not reported due to the adoption of the classification system used by CNN and Phoenix TV.

The 9/11 attacks and the tenth anniversary were indeed an international affair with long-term effects for both the US and China. However, since 9/11 represents the most significant act of terrorism on U. S. soil and the largest attack since the Japanese bombing at Pearl Harbor, the topic may be more sensitive than other similar kinds of international events. As such, the news released by the U. S. media may utilize more emotional material than media sources outside the U.S. Another problematic aspect was related to the sample selection. Only two media were examined in this study. Two media sources may not be enough to examine, or to make definitive conclusions, about the direction of the media flow under the globalization trend.

Another limitation stems from the relatively small number of units and the limited frequencies of issues across units. As a results of the small sample size and limited frequencies for issues and frames, statistical comparisons were either not possible or not particularly robust. Identification of more media sources, or a consolidation of the *a priori* issues used in the deductive content analysis, may have enabled more powerful statistical comparisons and perhaps more powerful conclusions.

It was originally a goal of this thesis to evaluate ways ideology or culture influence news media content. However, coding classifications for cultural variables were not established clearly before the coding process began. As a result, the cultural variable codes could not be employed systematically or reliably in this thesis.

### **Suggestion for Future Research**

This study examined the framing of news in multiple formats. Typically, research involves analysis of either textual (print) or broadcast (television and radio) media, but rarely all three (television, radio, print). So, expansion of this study and relevant studies of major international events could benefit from a rich analysis across major print and broadcast media. While this thesis was unable to make assessment of cultural values represented through visual messages, cultural values represented in broadcast messages offer rich possibilities. Future inquiries may examine the cultural value contained in the textual parts of the news and explore the relationship between culture and frames more accurately. Additionally, the way cultural values are reflected in different formats of news content is worth examining. For example, researchers could ask whether certain issues or frames translate more easily or get employed more frequently in any particular media format.

While a few studies have examined the comment features on newspaper websites (e.g., Constantinescu & Tedesco, 2007), there are many opportunities to include participant or audience messages in the analysis to complement media reporting. In examining the news on the webpage, the feedback and discussion of the netizens may also be a good resource to study, especially regarding the ways issues or frames employed by citizens differ from media messages.

Furthermore, future studies could provide researchers with rich examples of specific contexts in which media frames and issues support cultural values and contexts in which the media do not support cultural values. Future studies may take a look at the shared value within different societies to examine the effects of shared and divergent values on news frames within different cultural contexts. Scholarly advances in this area could help identify global standards or shared global values in the presentation of news while also investigating and acknowledging differences across cultures or political systems.

Finally, another promising line of research could extend the present study to examine issues and frames under a broader theoretical view. Such an approach could combine in the agenda setting theory since it allows the ranking of international issues and broader media agenda in a certain period of time. Effects of the frame similarities and differences could be teased out experimentally to help researchers better understand how framing influences culture.

While hard to accomplish in the United States due to the limited number of students fluent in Mandarin Chinese or simplified Chinese, employing an experiment to measure differences in coverage effects would be an interesting extension of this research.

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## **Appendix**

### **Codebook for Content Analysis**

**Unit Number:** Each news story will have a unique number. The researcher will assign this number. If the number is only one or two digits, place a zero or zeros in the spaces not occupied by the number.

**News Source:** The coders will assign the following codes for the news source:

- 1) For any news story from the webpage of Phoenix TV
- 2) For any news story from the webpage of CNN

**Unit Date:** The coders will enter the date of the story, using the format of mm/dd

**Unit Type:** The coders will assign the following code for each of the news story

- 1) Latest news
- 2) Opinion article
- 3) Photograph
- 4) Video

If it is a news story or opinion article, are there any visual content along with the story? If no, mark (0) absent. If yes, mark (1) present, and code the supplemental categories for visual content contained in stories.

**Frame Type:** The coders are asked to identify the frame type by assigning the following codes.

If the news story is identified as issue-specific, it will be coded by using the issue list. If the news story is identified as generic, the coder will skip the issue part, and code by referring to the following generic frame categories:

1) Issue-specific

2) Generic

**Issues:** The coders are asked to identify the presence of the issues in the following predetermined list based on prior studies:

1. President Barack Obama / Previous President George W. Bush

This issue refers to stories where the issue is focused on the U. S. president, either Barack Obama or George W. Bush.

2. Political/Military/Government officials

This issue refers to stories where the issue is focused on the political, military, or government officials.

3. Policy change (U. S. government)

This issue refers to the policy changes on legislative aspects or judicial changes in administrative-level aspects.

4. Policy change (U. S. society)

Social changes are not judicial or legal, but refer to changes in social aspects, such as media deciding to limit image of airplane hitting the twin towers, or individuals being aware of their surroundings.

5. Economic impact/loss

This issue refers to stories focused on the economic impact or loss caused by the event and its aftermath.

6. Cultural impact (cultural products & education program)

This issue refers to the stories on the production of cultural products like films, literatures, etc., the creation of academic programs at schools or universities, or international exchange programs.

#### 7. Military actions

This issue refers to the stories focused on the U. S. military actions, such as the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, or the military actions toward terrorists.

#### 8. al-Qaeda/Terrorism/Terrorist

This issue refers to stories where the issue is focused on al-Qaeda or other terrorist groups and their actions.

#### 9. Osama Bin Laden

This issue refers to stories where the issue is focused on Osama Bin Laden.

#### 10. International reaction

This issue refers to both the reactions of the United States towards the international relation and the reaction of other countries toward the event and its aftermath.

#### 11. Islam world/Muslims

This issue refers to the change of the living situations of Muslims in the United States after the event, and reaction or attitude of Muslims toward the event.

#### 12. Mass media

This issue refers to the reaction of media towards the event, such as non-stop programming following attacks, or interview with military, political or social leaders regarding their response to ten-year anniversary, including media preoccupation with the story.

#### 13. Citizen/Citizen reaction

This issue refers to stories focus on citizens, or their reactions toward the event or in commemorative activities.

#### 14. American Patriotism

This issue refers to the stories focus on the action of American patriotism. As visual elements, they represented by important American symbols, such as flag, monuments.

#### 15. Victims/Victims' family

This issue refers to stories where the issue is focused on the reaction of the victims and their families during and right after the event.

#### 16. Fireman/Rescue actions/First Responders

This issues refers to the stories which reviews the rescue actions during the attacks, and the fireman and first responders involved in the rescue actions.

#### 17. Health issue (physical and psychological)

This issue refers to the stories concern on the health issues of the victims and people involved in the rescue actions, on both physical and psychological levels.

#### 18. Rebuilding/Construction

This issue refers to stories where the issue is focused on the rebuilding on the debris, and the construction of the memorial building or museum related to the event.

#### 19. Commemorative activities

This issue refers to stories where the issue is focused on the commemorative activities during the past ten years.

#### 20. Other

**Dominant Issue:** After reading each article and listing all the issues present, the coder will select which is the most dominant issue by considering the salience or the importance of the issue in the news story. The dominant issue will be coded by assigning the number of the issue from the above list. In case where the dominant issue is only one digit, coders are instructed to enter a zero before the first digit. For example, issue 3 as dominant issue would be coded as 03.

**Generic Frames:** The coders are asked to determine the presence of the following frames:

*1. Conflict frame*

Does this news story mention any disagreement between parties, individuals, groups, countries?

Does this news story refer to two sides or more than two sides of problems or issues?

*2. Human interest frame*

Does this news story discuss individuals who have been directly affected by 9/11 attacks?

Does this news story mention 9/11 attacks affect people's daily lives?

Does this news story provide a human example on this issue?

Does this news story use images or adjectives that can generate emotions?

*3. Economic consequences frame*

Does this news story mention economic losses caused by 9/11 attacks?

Does this news story mention financial problem relate to 9/11 attacks and the aftermath?

Does this news story mention any economic consequences for the U. S. economy?

*4. Morality frame*

Does this news story mention any moral issues?

Does this news story mention any religious issues?

Does this news story make reference to morality?

Does this news story provide any specific prescription or solution on behavior?

*5. Responsibility frames*

Does this news story suggest that the U. S. government has the ability to alleviate the problem?

Does this news story mention the government or other institutions are responsible for the event or the problems existing in the following actions?

Does this news story mention any other social problem caused by 9/11 attacks and the aftermath (like two wars on terror, reorganization of the government, policy and international relation change etc.) ?

Does this story suggest any problems require urgent action?

*6. Leadership frame*

Does this news story mention the president or other leaders' activities?

Does this news story quote or make reference to the president's or other leaders' opinions?

**Dominant generic frame:** After reading each story and listing all the frames present, the coder will select which is the most dominant frames by considering the salience or the importance of the frames. The dominant frame will be coded by assigning the number from the generic frame list.