

INSPECTING THE RHETORICAL ARSENAL: THE WAR FRAME IN NAZI GERMANY'S *DER KAMPF* AND AMERICA'S WAR ON TERROR

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Herbert Hirsch (1995) apocalyptically predicted: "If the twentieth century is any indication, the end may result from words used to motivate, justify, and rationalize murder on a scale unprecedented in human history. Words can kill — or at least motivate a person to kill" (p. 97). In this study I examine rhetorical maneuvers that reinforce the war frame, defined as patterns and logic of discourse that configure social policy and attitudes according to the model of warfare. Ammunition for this martial mentality derives from an arsenal of rhetorical techniques revolving around the central concept of war. Two specific instances illustrate the war frame's deployment: Nazi Germany's framing of social policies as a constant struggle or battle (*der Kampf*) and the "War on Terror" adopted by the United States after 9/11. While *der Kampf* exemplified a rhetorically successful application of a war frame to social issues, specifically persecution of Jews, the War on Terror demonstrated how overextending a frame ultimately can undermine its own logical and affective grounds for support. Both cases call for ways to reflect more critically on the choice of frames to adopt, since once a frame gains momentum it may become naturalized as the default way to conceive of an issue. Faced with questions that sheer data could not answer, the frames that guide discussion can influence the possible choices of social policy. These frames help draw the boundaries of what qualifies as a legitimate or even thinkable option (Lakoff, 2002).

A frame may be conceived as an amalgamation of rhetorical devices that

establish logical and normative patterns for thought and action. Frames are observable as patterns of discourse that mutually reinforce a shared interpretive schema, converging on themes that make sense of social issues (Eilders & Lüter, 2000; Scheufele, 1999). The terminology of "frame" itself helps pinpoint its role as a container or boundary designating what counts as legitimate argumentative *topoi*. Although most research on framing has concentrated on media effects (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007), in this essay I examine the more philosophical issue of how the construction and deployment of a specific frame in public discourse establishes the bounds of logically allowable responses and extensions to the frame's implications. One might consider this line of research as establishing the conditions for audience response rather than empirically measuring those responses.

Analysis of the war frame proceeds by examining discourse from several sources. Frames are understood best as sustained by a convergence of discourse rather than as a simple imposition of a view from a single or aggregate source such as "the media" (Scheufele, 1999). With that understanding, discursive evidence of the war frame's operation emerges from representative examples from popular newspapers, speeches and public writings of major governmental figures, and research on the social issues pertinent to the war frame.

Illustrations of how *der Kampf* operated in Nazi Germany were selected from materials appearing prior to World War II, which assured that the war terminology was not simply transferred from a literal battlefield. Items were gleaned from materials published or presented in Nazi Germany from January 30, 1933 (Hitler's accession to Chancellor) to September 1, 1939 (the onset of World War II). Every issue of *Völkischer Beobachter*, the widest circulated national daily newspaper, and *Das Schwarze Korps*, the general circulation newspaper targeted to SS members, was examined for titles that included the term *der Kampf* and its variants (such as plurals and verb forms), or terms referring to war (soldier and synonyms, weapon, names of weapons or military equipment). In addition, books and periodical articles written by so-called racial scientists, those who promulgated the theoretical grounds for anti-Semitism, were examined. Finally, the speeches and writings of Adolf Hitler and government administrators during the designated time period were included. Representative governmental discourse regarding the War on Terror derived from three major speeches President George W. Bush delivered on September 2001, as these addresses set in motion the direction public policy would take in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and the USA PATRIOT Act. Additional examples were gleaned from a LexisNexis Academic search using the search strings "war on terror" and "war on terrorism" within major U.S. and world publications from September 11, 2001 to October 7, 2001 (the invasion of Afghanistan).

Der Kampf: Destiny's Modus Operandi

The noun *der Kampf* and the verb *kämpfen* usually are translated as "struggle" or "battle." The terms served as "ordering concepts for the analysis of National Socialism," articulating a process that lent rationality to events (Mason, 1981, p. 39). On the personal level, struggle explained the nature of life. The process of living amounted to a process of facing and overcoming the obstacles placed in one's path. On the cosmic level, struggle operated as a law of nature. This law not only described the competition for existence, but also treated the natural world as a site where humans could assist nature by improving their ability to resist any forces that threatened their survival. The human world of struggle extended the struggle observable in nature. As Hitler (1941) proclaimed, "[W]e believe that by our struggle we are but carrying out the will of the Creator, who imbued all creatures with the instinct for self-preservation" (p. 197).

It might appear that struggle formed the central explanatory principle, a god-term worthy of worship, during the Nazi era (Gamm, 1962). This conclusion sounds plausible, but it misses the mark. Struggle itself offered little or nothing in the way of final explanations. Struggle represented the modus operandi for working out racial differences and the inevitable conflicts that would arise among races with "absolutely different" ancestry, such as Jews, and Italians or Germans ("Grundsätzliches Bekenntnis," 1938, p. 2). Any struggle remained meaningless if the battle had no wellsprings that generated conflict or objectives that justified it. The reason "struggle lay like a block of granite in the center of Hitler's *Weltanschauung*" (Blackburn, 1985, p. 67) was its importance in linking racial theories with (1) the justification of force; (2) a universally operating principle for differentiating ideas, people, and nations by quality; and (3) channeling thought along the lines of victory or defeat, which encouraged all-out effort to conquer overwhelming odds.

Once the language and concepts of warfare became commonplace, the extension to actual force would not seem drastic or unwarranted. While the discourse of struggle filled publications and speeches by prominent Nazi political figures and racial scientists, the newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* added sections on aerial weaponry and military equipment. Beginning in January 1933, the features "Wehrpolitik und Landesverteidigung" [military policy and national defense] and "Luftfahrt, Luftschutz" [aviation and civil air defense] appeared weekly as supplements to the national edition. The focus on armaments fed the transition from symbolic to actual warfare. The following sections explain how *der Kampf* provided an important ingredient not only for the Nazi anti-Semitic agenda but also for furnishing rhetorical resources for fueling increasingly repressive social policies.

An Ongoing State of Emergency

Repressive measures became justifiable as necessary during an ongoing emergency. The emphasis on *der Kampf* helped maintain a crisis mentality, a sense of urgency that compelled action. A year before he became Chancellor, Hitler (1941) declared that "we have reached a state of general crisis" (p. 93). In effect, Hitler's pronouncement suggested that events should be interpreted in terms of struggle, so that perpetual, difficult struggle acted as a controlling metaphor through which experience would be understood. Recurrent references to struggle reinforced allied medical terminology. The "rhetoric of medical emergency: 'dangerous patients' and 'urgent cases'" (Lifton, 1986, pp. 26-27) tended to group all hereditary conditions without qualification into a single category of severe illness and, therefore, a threat to the nation's prosperity or survival. As a result, no distinction was made between those who suffered from severe physical diseases and those who were deemed less valuable [*Minderwertig*] members of society solely because of their racial characteristics.

Maintaining a "permanent state of emergency" also served a practical political function: external threats discouraged attempts to probe too deeply into the failure of Nazism to offer a definite political program (Giles, 1985). Constant struggle thus served as a palliative. If human existence consisted of endless, arduous struggle, little opportunity remained for reflecting on the miseries of life. If people had no time to think about their situation, and could not detach themselves from the "immediate struggle" to survive, they remained "untroubled by questions as to the value and interest of action" (Teilhard de Chardin, 1987, p. 151). The immediate exigency of survival took precedence over the luxury of intellectual analysis. Therefore, the ongoing need for struggle made the protection of Germany a duty for every citizen instead of a task assigned to a cadre of technical experts (Kandel, 1935).

The persistence of crises did not lessen their severity. Each year was hailed not as the year of victory, but as another year of struggle that would bring victory a bit closer. A caption to a photo of Adolf Hitler in the February 2, 1936, issue of *Das Schwarze Korps* labeled him "Adolf Hitler, the master-builder of greater Germany, the *Führer* in the new year of the German *Kampf*" (p. 13). The traditional German chant of "*Sieg heil!*" [Hail Victory] simply reaffirmed acquiescence with the goals of Nazism framed in terms of battle; it did not hail the arrival of victory itself.

War imagery and metaphors proved especially useful in the context of racial issues. Far from detached contemplation, the discourse of struggle called for action to advance the cause of racial quality. All endeavors fell within the compass of struggle. As the first two lines of an anonymous poem titled "Strug-

gle is Life" stated, "Life amounts to struggle!—/Struggle for everything!" ("Kampf ist das Leben," 1933, n. pag.) The call to struggle placed important demands on researchers and policymakers. Political participation in struggle imitated military tactics. As an article in *Völkischer Beobachter* affirmed, the model for political action became the loyal soldier: "Alongside the armed soldier strides the political soldier" ("Neben den Soldat," 1939, p. 1). This juxtaposition highlighted a shared tactical orientation. The political soldier had to act decisively to protect the Nordic race against decay. In a similar vein *Das Schwarze Korps* included a regular section titled "The Political Soldier," which allowed readers to become part of the army of citizens struggling for the survival and prosperity of the Reich. Hitler (1941) described himself as "the soldier of my people," because he justified his actions as necessarily drastic means taken to serve the populace [*Volk*] (p. 531).

The objectives and methods of scientific investigation also were cast in military terms. Academic journals declared institutes of physics were "sites of struggle [*Kampfstätten*] for National Socialism" (Becker, 1937–1938, p. 48). Maintenance of good health fit within the militaristic framework. Hitler Youth director Baldur von Schirach (1939) stated, "You have the duty to be healthy!" (p. 135). According to von Schirach (1939), the Hitler Youth should not succumb to the temptations of alcohol and tobacco, since any poisons to the body endangered "the entire painstaking work" of cultivating the health of the nation as a whole (p. 135). Personal hygiene helped encourage proper racial hygiene, because citizens as soldiers of the Reich shouldered the responsibility to do their part in preventing any damage to national health. If other races, especially Jews, were defined as a threat, then the researcher should combat those elements just as one would combat a disease. As May (1942) noted, the "genuine researcher is also simultaneously a fighter, and, so to speak, lays the sword on the desk alongside the experimenter's tools" (p. 154).

The Receding Horizon of Victory

For the concept of struggle to spur action, victory always had to remain imminent, looming just around the next corner. Because ultimate victory never quite materialized, the extreme measures required during crisis became embedded as permanent norms. Once a struggle was won, it lost its rhetorical force. Struggle, therefore, had to continue perpetually to preserve its rhetorical value (Nelson, 1991). Failure to reach the ultimate goal of racial purity was due to lack of effort or an external force such as the pernicious influence of alien racial elements. In any case, the goal lay just ahead, reachable but never quite within grasp. Nazi educational theorist Ernst Kriek (1936) intoned, "We are the becoming which is never perfected, we are those who constantly struggle for perfection, who are wrestling for a higher goal

and a final destination, again and again starting, never at the goal" (p. 34). Despite the elusiveness of perfection, hope for its attainment could not wane, because surrender to its inaccessibility would halt the struggle and make the future of a glorious Germany merely an unachievable wish. The lack of a temporally realizable terminus for struggle lends credence to the description of *der Kampf* as directed against specific enemies but not toward specific objectives (Mason, 1981). Put more pithily, "It was more important to travel hopefully than to arrive" (Peukert, 1987, p. 245).

If beauty was the aggregate essence of beautiful individuals, the scapegoat was the idealization of undesirable individuals. Jews were consistently referred to in the singular: *der Jude*. Once the unitary ideal of the Jew was concretized through the identification of inherent racial traits, each individual Jew became a more or less perfect manifestation of a racial stereotype.

Struggle could persist not for its own sake, but for the sake of promoting a single, racially unified culture [*Kultur*]. According to Kantian aesthetics, recognition of one's individual insignificance in the face of a grand totality (e.g., when faced with natural forces beyond human control) was sublime. Kant (1989) also found the process of struggle, the "ability to meet with fortitude" (p. 113) seemingly insurmountable obstacles, a sublime experience. Kant contended: "War itself ... has something sublime about it" because it demanded surrender of one's self to a greater ideal of order (pp. 112–113). Struggle carried a flexible but identifiable vision of an ultimate goal, an overarching cause that justified any sacrifice. Phrased innocuously, it could be called "Struggle for the Sake of Nordic Culture [*Kultur*]" (Almquist, 1934, n. pag.). "Nordic culture," however, elaborated into a more pernicious aspect: the imperative of reasserting the supremacy of Aryan qualities and dispositions in the face of threats to racial quality. The connection between Kantian aesthetics and Nazi racial theory appears in the work of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, a crucial precursor of Nazi ideology. Chamberlain (1912) appropriated Social Darwinism to describe the role of struggle in improving racial quality:

The struggle which means destruction of the fundamentally weak race steels the strong; the same struggle, moreover, by eliminating the weaker elements, tends still further to strengthen the strong. Around the childhood of great races, as we observe, even in the case of the metaphysical Indians, the storm of war always rages [vol. 1, p. 276].

Kant's aesthetic devolved to the grand competition among races—a universal, unalterable, awe-inspiring process that strengthened a race by dooming others to extinction.

Hitler's struggle (*Mein Kampf*) symbolized the struggle of all Germany: to become "more and more aware of the profoundest essence of its struggle"

by realizing "itself to be the purest embodiment of the value of race and personality" (Hitler, trans. 1971, p. 688). Hitler concluded the sentence with the proviso that racial doctrines called for action, not cogitation. The urgent situation demanded a *Blitzkrieg* instead of a *Sitzkrieg*. If Germany understood its racial essence and mission "and conducts itself accordingly, it will with almost mathematical certainty some day emerge victorious from its struggle" (p. 688). Only the combination of knowledge with decisive action promised the victory hailed in the salute "*Sieg heil!*"

Partially because of its purported difficulty, struggle had to continue in order to succeed. Struggle also had to persist because its cessation would shrink enthusiasm for the National Socialist movement and for racial ideas. One attractive feature Nazism offered audiences was its constant presentation of reasons to dedicate oneself to positive action (Peukert, 1987). Even if victory was declared on one front, another would emerge to fuel new enthusiasm. Hans Schemm (1934), the Bavarian minister of education, praised this attribute:

Adolf Hitler sets up goals continuously. When one goal is reached, he sets up the next, and when the next is reached, a still more beautiful one comes, and this establishment of goals will never cease. Never will Adolf Hitler stand before his people and say: "Now we are finished. Now we have everything that we need, no more struggle and strife, now begins an easy, stagnant life." National Socialism will never be finished with struggle; it will always want to strive after something new [pp. 4-5].

National Socialism represented more a dynamic process than a static doctrine. *Bewegung* [movement], a common descriptor of Nazism, indicates its dynamism because the word is associated with physical movement as well as with a political cause. The fanatical enthusiasm Hitler frequently endorsed and sought to kindle could be sustained only if new struggles constantly loomed ahead. The masthead of *Völkischer Beobachter* included its self-portrayal as the "Battle Paper of the National Socialist Cause in Greater Germany" [*Kampfblatt der national-sozialistischen Bewegung Grossdeutschlands*]. As an article in *Das Schwarze Korps* noted, this ever-present need to face new challenges lest support for Hitler or the Nazi regime dwindle made struggle the "watchword under which men voluntarily pledge to die for their *Volk*" ("Der Kampf ist nie zu Ende," 1936, p. 11).

The call to devote everything to the struggle for national survival was justified by the ultimate goal: for "the German soul" [*Seele*] to conquer "entirely and absolutely" ("Der Kampf ist nie zu Ende," 1936, p. 11). The continuity of struggle paralleled and supported the call for all necessary measures to combat threats to national health. If the struggle had to continue until absolute victory, then actions to protect and restore racial quality should not

cease until every conceivable source of danger had been eliminated permanently.

Defensive Warfare to Deflect Internal Dissent

Discriminatory and violent acts became defensive measures attributable to enemy aggression, further fueling rationale for repressive action. Internal dissent was deflected toward animosity against a common foe, thereby focusing the regime's opponents on the looming enemy instead of on the regime's repressive policies. The identification of a common foe unified audiences, so when the Jew was targeted as the enemy, the protagonists could set aside their differences (Burke, 1973). The more precisely identified the enemy was, the greater its value for rallying the populace as a whole for the sake of a "fighting movement" (Mosse, 1966, p. xxvii). The struggle against a specific opponent lent identity to the protagonist as well as the opponent. Far from defining the German as simply the antipode of the Jew, a struggle motivated audiences to seek a collective identity that would offer stability in confronting adversity. Portraying the struggle as a defensive measure struck a note of pathos, because Germany was cast in the role of victim against the unjustified aggressions of Jewry [*Judentum*].

The process of *der Kampf* was understood as a way to underscore traits associated with the Nordic soul. Racial scientists had concluded that the "Jewish spirit ... above everything else ... is focused upon its own ego," in contrast to the Nordic spirit that would sacrifice the individual for the sake of the whole (Stark, 1934, p. 207). "True" Germans had no choice as to whether they wanted to join the struggle for the sake of national existence and racial health. The Nordic racial soul demanded that individuals act according to their predispositions, and a self-centered refusal to partake in struggle would stamp the dissenter with the Jewish characteristic of egocentrism. In the Nazi mindset, victory lay in united action, not isolated and uncoordinated effort. "Struggle teaches the value of community above the interests of the ego" (von Werder, 1938, p. 4).

Members of the same race, because of their innate and unalterable linkage through shared blood-ries, offered the best potential for banding together to face forthcoming struggles. Racial comrades had an "individual character of body and soul [that] agree with each other," so dissent would be less likely in the face of a common danger (Staemmler, 1933, p. 15). Besides, since the interval or degree of difference between inferior and superior races was so great, alliances with alien races appeared impossible as well as undesirable.

The war against racial contamination maintained a defensive complexion as long as the potential for racial mixture or spreading racial influence bore the marks of a health issue. Fostering a healthy race amounted to "defen-

sive warfare against mind and blood contamination by the Jews," so racial hygiene lived up to its name as a "cleansing process" (*Nazi Primer*, 1938, p. 78). The linkage between health and race extended a vocabulary associated with combating disease to defending against the incursions of alien races.

The War on Terror: A Fractured Frame

Martial language alone does not necessarily marshal ongoing popular support. The post-9/11 "War on Terror" demonstrated how a militaristic frame also can prove problematic for social cohesion. Several rhetorical factors enabled *der Kampf* to contribute to rallying the populace while the War on Terror fueled outrage without an outlet.

Following September 11, 2001 (9/11), the language of war was quickly and uncritically adopted throughout mainstream media, emerging as the dominant discursive frame (Levenson, 2004). Third-party commentators such as former government officials and ex-military personnel overwhelmingly urged warfare and began strategizing how to conduct it. Specific strategies were debated, but the legitimacy of the war frame received little critical attention. Logos declaring war appeared on news programs. Mainstream media "circulated discourses that assumed that the United States was at war and that only a military response was appropriate" (Kellner, 2007, p. 625). By September 16, 2001, the *Toronto Star* accepted the war as inevitable, focusing on its economic effects rather than questioning the choice of the framing itself: "Like it or not, the United States and the Western democracies are at war against international terrorism" (Carrigan, 2001, p. C2). On September 17, 2001, the *Birmingham* (England) *Evening Mail* had inaugurated a "War on Terror" category of stories.

No Sacrifice, Vague Victory

The President's public speeches after 9/11 immediately set the nation on a war footing, an agenda the news media quickly adopted and facilitated by failing to question or critically examine the frame (Levenson, 2004). Military terminology infused the President's first depiction of the attacks, which he said "were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat" (Bush, 2001a). Just before quoting the 23rd Psalm, implying a righteous cause, Bush (2001a) shifted from talking about helping the victims and bringing terrorists to justice, to seeking victory, declaring that "we stand together to win the war against terrorism."

Only 16 days later, Bush's rhetoric began to reveal some of the problems in the war frame. Instead of a war that required dedication and sacrifice, Bush recommended traveling, shopping, and essentially spending away the nation's

sorrows by reinvigorating commercial activity. Speaking at O'Hare International Airport amid scores of other government officials who had just completed their flights, Bush cheerily announced: "We've got quite a crowd traveling today, all of whom — all of whom are here to say as clearly as we can to the American public, get on the airlines, get about the business of America. That's got a nice ring to it, doesn't it?" (Bush, 2001c). He continued: "And one of the great goals of this nation's war is to restore public confidence in the airline industry. It's to tell the traveling public: Get on board. Do your business around the country. Fly and enjoy America's great destination spots. Get down to Disney World in Florida" (Bush, 2001c).

These remarks came while armed National Guard troops still patrolled major airports throughout the nation. Already the first fractures in the war framework crept into view. How serious could the war be if everyone simply went about their business?

The U.S. declaration of war, unlike *der Kampf*, focused on the martial mentality but not its mechanism. The War on Terror explicitly distanced Americans from any sense of sacrifice or obligation aside from the discomforts attendant to military service. The martial framework was invoked as a rallying cry, but the means to wage the war remained nebulous despite bellicose, posse-like threats to retrieve terrorist leaders dead or alive. *Der Kampf* engaged the populace in a struggle that demanded everything. The War on Terror demanded nothing outright except faith in America's ultimate righteousness. The repeated deployments of National Guard troops, for example, became objectionable not because of unwillingness to serve but because the definition of the War on Terror never set the terms of the everyday citizen's contribution to the struggle. When no sacrifices had been asked, every sacrifice seemed burdensome.

Bush's repeated calls during his September 27 speech to bring the terrorists to justice — a judicial frame — quickly gave way to war as the instrument of justice. But he also acknowledged "a new type of war" and the need for "a campaign that will have to reflect the new enemy" (Bush, 2001c). The War on Terror, however, offered neither hope nor method of achieving the "win" that President Bush promised in his speech the day of the attacks. A leading risk perception researcher wrote shortly after 9/11 that terrorism represented the most challenging risk to combat because it shattered existing models for crisis management (Slovic, 2002). Unlike environmental hazards or natural disasters, terrorist events offered no boundaries. The constant possibility of another attack warranted continual vigilance, placing everyone on a war footing with no potential for furlough. To remind viewers never to let down their guard, *Fox News* immediately and continually included a screen graphic showing the color-coded Homeland Security advisory system's ter-

rorism threat level. Constant reminders of the threat from terrorism went beyond mere fear appeals. They signified the war must continue and may justify ever more drastic tactics.

By contrast, *der Kampf* tied ever-intensifying anti-Semitic actions and policies to observable progress in the conflict between Jews and the rest of society. Anti-Semitic measures escalated in ways that made progress seem palpable. Early legal restrictions such as the Nuremberg Laws in 1935 reduced the professional presence of Jews (Snyder, 1981). Quantifiable reductions in the numbers of Jewish professionals demonstrated that the struggle was yielding results. The persistence of the Jewish threat, however, then demanded the battle expand to additional fronts. Physical separation into ghettos would add restricted social mobility to professional restrictions already imposed. Again, escalation of the battle produced observable results: no more Jews in non-Jewish neighborhoods. Ultimately the physical eradication of Jews generated a measurable result identical to literal warfare: body counts. The terminus of *der Kampf* was approached as areas got closer to becoming totally free, or "purified," of Jews (*Judenrein*).

The War on Terror has not lent itself to benchmarks of any kind. It has remained difficult to determine the criteria for victory, much less ultimate victory itself. The War on Terror has lacked observable indicators of progress. Absent any terms of victory, no currency measured success or failure. A lull in terrorist attacks may have represented a calculated hiatus to cultivate a false sense of security. The continuing need for war without a vision for victory invites shifting the front of battle to meet the ever-changing threat. This, of course, is exactly what has happened since 9/11. The first front was Afghanistan. Then Iraq became the frontline in the War on Terror. Without consistent, tangible objectives or enemies, the War on Terror became an assault on phantoms.

Elusive Enemies

The War on Terror faced a challenge of ambiguity beyond what *der Kampf* encountered. By declaring war against the Jew, anti-Semitism could personify the aggregate of all Jews into visual and verbal images that directed hatred, fear, and dread toward a singular personification: "the eternal Jew" that would exist until exterminated. Rendering "the Jew" [*der Jude*] as singular concentrated negative imagery rather than inviting individualization of particular Jews [plural: *die Juden*] as exceptions or counterexamples. The War on Terror, however, confronted an absence of an identifiable object. Terrorism itself could be known only retroactively, after a terrorist act occurred. As for identifying terrorists, the personification of the enemy could not focus hostility if the threat itself constantly shifted.

The Nazi regime devoted substantial time, resources, and personnel to assess the so-called "ancestral proof" that established a person's genealogy and thereby one's degree of "Jewishness" (Ehrenreich, 2007). In the War on Terror, no criteria mark identity as a terrorist, thus generating generalized suspicion rather than targeted fear and hatred. If anyone could be a terrorist, none of the public health analogues employed by Nazi Germany could apply. To quarantine a population in a ghetto, for example, first required designating them, a task accomplished by rituals of physical marking such as wearing the yellow star of David.

In the War on Terror, the enemy acquired the paradoxical qualities of both invisibility and radical difference. The enemy could infiltrate anywhere, yet remained externalized as a radical "Other," utterly alien to democratic values but unrecognizable. The elusiveness of this alien, deceptive creature could justify warfare on any front with no apologies (Ivie, 2007). The amorphous nature of terrorism thwarted rhetorical iconography that could channel anger, fear, or other emotions toward "the Terrorist" as the Nazis did toward "the Jew." As Aristotle (trans. 1924) recognized in Book II of the *Rhetoric*, an emotion can be aroused only if it has an object. One cannot feel love, anger, fear, or any other emotion in the abstract; it must be directed toward someone or something.

Deflecting Dissent: Abridging Names and Rights

The War on Terror, unlike *der Kampf*, invoked an entire war frame rather than contributing a metaphor to a network of rhetorical devices. This frame generated narratives and implications that proved internally inconsistent and unsustainable. One rhetorical device that failed to buttress the frame was the strategic naming of key legislation with acronyms.

The USA PATRIOT Act illustrates the rhetorical challenges of the War on Terror. Swiftly passed on October 26, 2001, the Act bears a title that positions opponents as enemies of the state. The Act's title is an acronym for "Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism" Act (2001). Marcuse (1964) uncovered an ideological aspect of condensing such names into neologistic acronyms, a process he termed abridgement. Marcuse observed that abridgement concretizes complex concepts, with the foreshortened names suppressing undesired connotations. Abridged names reduce the incongruity of oxymoronic verbal juxtaposition, so that the connotations of the names' constituent terms are minimized by using acronymic shorthand. The bearer of an abridged name appears as a unified whole, so questions about the contradictory aspects of the name are less likely to arise.

Visual condensation of names into acronyms parallels a semiotic change. The original name, which has several distinct words with potentially conflicting connotations, visually reduces to a single morpheme. The visual impression of terminological unity makes the tensions between terms comprising the acronym less visible. The acronym gives the impression of verbal elements juxtaposed in complete harmony without drawing attention to the “transcending connotation” (Marcuse, 1964, p. 94) of non-institutionalized meanings that might emerge with greater emphasis on conceptuality than on mellifluous slogans. An acronym such as USA PATRIOT creates an added impression of harmony. The constituent letters blend together comfortably, their proximity uninterrupted by spacing or by periods. Other than capitalization, the acronym possesses no visual cues that it might have meanings transcending its visual unity. The acronym was presented throughout media coverage as simply the name of the bill and later the law. The popular acronym contributes to the militaristic framing of responses to terrorism. Alignment seems clarified by the name itself: patriots versus traitors. Furthermore, patriots should obediently and unconditionally support their government’s initiatives.

Deconstructing the USA PATRIOT Act reveals the turmoil its name elides. The name conjures images of a new-age Minuteman (the Revolutionary War soldier, and perhaps the anthropomorphized missile), ready to respond instantly to any terrorist threat. The name of the Act also invites conflating its supporters with patriots. Since the Act was passed, especially in the Congressional debates attendant to its March 2006 renewal, almost every word of its complete title has indexed controversy. Instead of uniting the country, the Act has been a lightning rod for civil libertarians to challenge anti-terrorism practices. Clearly no acronym presents a monolithic front immune to critique. The uncritical adoption of the acronym throughout media coverage offers another example of reluctance to question frames that lay the ground for discourse.

Susan Sontag (2002b) pounced on the connection between militaristic language and expansion of government powers that could erode civil liberties. Her observations appeared only five days after the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, notably in an Australian rather than an American newspaper. Sontag (2002a, 2002b) recognized that the endless nature of the war on terrorism marked a sharp break from other wars. Because there could be no post-war return to normalcy, any attempts to rescind emergency government powers — warrantless wiretapping comes to mind — got discounted as a retreat, a perilous act of negligence that invited further terrorist attacks. Within the frame of war, individual liberties succumbed to more expansive government powers exercised in the name of collective security.

Reframing War

Lakoff’s (2002) claims about certain kinds of frames being embedded in the mind notwithstanding, a frame requires consistent rhetorical reinforcement to become the dominant mode of reference. Frames can sustain public policy only as long as they can maintain their capacity to generate affective and cognitive associations that reinforce the frame (Schön, 1993). This generative capacity operates synchronically and diachronically, much as McGee (1980) noted with respect to ideologically charged language.

Synchronically, a rhetorically sustainable frame should comport with established conceptual vocabulary, such as prevalent metaphors and the historical context. Diachronically, a frame should draw from past cultural experiences and generate narratives that energize the force of the frame’s logic. The entailments of a frame must play out consistently in the stories and metaphors operant within the frame (Kövecses, 2007).

Why the War Frame After 9/11?

Why did a war frame offer an especially attractive initial choice after 9/11? Absent a clear decision-making algorithm, people turn to heuristics, modes of rationalization that do not always obey the laws of logic or probability (Tversky & Kahneman, 1982). A heuristic is a shortcut in reasoning that enables people to arrive at conclusions or render decisions in the face of uncertainty. The war frame offered several compelling heuristics that lent simplicity and a form of logic amid uncertainty.

Shortly after 9/11, Bush activated what could be called the agonistic heuristic, simplifying intergroup relations into mutually exclusive categories of friend or foe. In his address to a joint session of Congress on September 20, 2001, Bush pronounced: “Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists” (Bush, 2001b). This simplistic choice eased the burden of trying to determine complex, nuanced relationships by invoking intuitively obvious principles. The law of the excluded middle affirms that something is either one thing or another. In logical notation:

A or B
 ~ A
 B

The agonistic heuristic also appeals to the virtue of firmness, offering no equivocation in the assignment of categories. The unequivocal categorical distinction lends clarity to a situation that seemed rife with uncertainty. The agonistic heuristic necessitated clear distinctions between “us” and “them.” As attention shifted from bin Laden to any potential terrorist threat, “the ter-

rorists" became an ever murkier entity, a "them" that never acquired a stable identity to contrast with "us."

A war frame also offered the heuristic of agency, the sense of fulfillment attendant to taking action. The agency heuristic had particular attractiveness in a situation such as 9/11, when it was unclear what anyone could do aside from observe and be afraid. War metaphors offered the potential to mobilize, to invest energy in a task that might aid the war effort. This sense of personal agency could enable one to claim, "I'm doing my part." The wake of 9/11, however, offered few concrete options for positive action. The Homeland Security color codes (Department of Homeland Security, 2008) came with no clear action guides that distinguished one level of threat from another. By contrast, the Nazis treated even personal hygiene as a way to guard against alien racial incursions (von Schirach, 1939).

Finally, a powerful sense of collectivity accompanied the war footing as individual differences dissolved in the common quest to conquer the enemy. As a heuristic, collectivity used logic akin to the rule of division: whatever was right for the collective as a whole was right for the individual within that collective. The collectivity heuristic also abated the sense of isolation that could accompany a perceived threat. Reinforcing collective identity served an important role in quelling dissent, because personal disagreements waned as patriotic fervor bound individuals together for a common cause.

Alternatives to the War Frame

Reddy (1993) suggested that frames, deeply embedded, become resistant to argument because they appear necessary to the structure of thought itself. To correct a frame's pernicious influence, Reddy (1993) urged replacing one frame with another, a process that begins by finding fruitful metaphors which provide conceptual anchors as useful as those offered by the previous frame.

Richard Haass, a former State Department policy planning director and current president of the Council on Foreign Relations, recognized the disanalogies between a war on terror and a conventional war. Haass (2005, 2006) expressed concern that the war metaphor did little to counteract the recruitment of terrorists, because it provides a rather blunt policy instrument of violent and uncompromising retribution. Violence tends to beget violence, and the cycle of violence continues with each terrorist act generating a military response that often kills and maims innocent people, which fuels further anger that stimulates further terrorist attacks.

At least two alternative metaphoric frameworks could supplant the war on terror. Haass (2005, 2006) suggested using the metaphor of a disease. Like a disease, terrorism can be deadly, it seems woven into the fabric of life, and

it requires care to prevent and treat. Unlike war, most disease does not invite identification of a final victory. As the resurgence of polio, malaria, and other diseases demonstrate, preventing the conditions for disease — rather than seeking utter eradication — guides policy. As a guide for policy, disease offers more nuanced options than warfare. While the terminology of war invites question only concerning its type or degree (overt, covert, total, limited, nuclear, chemical, biological, etc.), disease permits many reactions, including preventive measures. To prevent terrorism through military deterrence alone has incurred high economic and human costs — and it perpetuates the message that violence or its threat serves as the ultimate persuader. To prevent the disease of terrorism includes activating the means to "persuade young men and women throughout the world to choose an alternative career path" (Haass, 2006). The disease metaphor already contains provisions for creating conditions that would prevent its occurrence or intensification. The war metaphor invites strategizing the ways to achieve victory, not ways to avoid or minimize the war itself.

Another metaphoric alternative to a war on terror could be a quest for justice in response to the crime of terrorism. This reframing strategy parallels the move made during the war crimes tribunals after World War II, shifting from a militaristic to a judicial framing for wrongdoing. As early as September 12, 2001, a few commentators identified the terrorist attacks as international crimes against humanity that should prompt a systematic identification of responsible parties rather than a bloodlust-driven search for vengeance (Barry & Honey, 2001). These voices were drowned by rallying cries for war. After all, if the perpetrators killed themselves in the attack, who could be prosecuted?

The crime/justice frame lacks power only if it remains restricted to retributive justice. At least three other components of the crime/justice frame enable responses unaccounted for in a war frame. First, criminal justice has a wider array of proactive measures than pre-emptive military strikes. Crime-fighting, unlike war-fighting, acknowledges the crucial role of proactive measures to prevent crime. Although preventive strategies could include harsh deterrents — a point stressed within the war frame — they also include building alternative ways of expressing dissent. A crime prevention approach permits consideration of what causes violence rather than focusing mainly on the scale of reactions to violence.

Second, the criminal justice frame employs an explicit process. Warfare, at least as defended by its practitioners, does involve rules of engagement. But these rules are not publicly scrutinized or clear. Asked whether the rules of engagement would change after U.S. troops accidentally killed an Italian intelligence agent in March 2005, a military spokesperson gave the standard

answer: "I can't discuss rules of engagement for operational security" (quoted in Rageh & Pitman, 2005). Furthermore, intuitively egregious violations of the rules of warfare occur often, with accompanying suitably evasive, euphemistic terminology (e.g., "friendly fire," "collateral damage"). When high-profile military blunders occur, such as the 2004 "friendly fire" killing of pro football player Pat Tillman in Afghanistan or the Blackwater Security killing of eight Iraqi civilians in September 2007, they call into question the connection between war and justice. Replacing the war frame with the frame of criminal justice automatically includes procedures for maintaining accountability. Although the fairness of criminal justice systems might invite question, the legal framework offers definite guidelines for what constitutes acceptable procedures.

Third, criminal justice can operate as a reformative as well as a retributive mechanism. While criminal justice can employ deterrence through harsh, swift, and certain punishment, it has other techniques at its disposal. A reformative approach to justice could stress intense diversionary programs to realign terrorist training programs toward other, more pro-social activities. Victim restitution offers another avenue for action, because it would align the United States with humanitarian aid programs. As these examples demonstrate, the criminal justice framework authorizes a wide array of policy options directly implied by the frame itself.

Beyond Symbolic Warfare

This study has explored how frames operate epistemologically and rhetorically, establishing the parameters for lines of thought and courses of action. Rather than focusing on how frames affect what audiences think, this analysis has concentrated on how frames can delimit the realm of the thinkable. Regarding social policy, frames set the conditions for rhetorical engagement, prioritizing certain discursive choices such as metaphors and *topoi* of discussion over others.

As their name indicates, frames are not infinitely malleable. Analysis of the war frame's modus operandi in the context of *der Kampf* in Nazi Germany and the War on Terror in post-9/11 Bush administration discourse illustrates the rhetorical resources a frame can provide for justifying social policies. The two cases demonstrate both the malleability and rigidity of frames. The terminology of *der Kampf* and its logical extensions formed a crucial component of the agonistic Nazi *Weltanschauung* that positioned an idealized icon of "the Jew" as a constant threat, enabling ever more extreme persecution to pass as necessary defensive measures. *Der Kampf* illustrated the malleable

aspect of frames, their ability to integrate with families of other rhetorical devices — such as metaphoric equivalence of Jews with pestilence and disease — to provide engines for their continued usage and extension. The War on Terror, on the other hand, demonstrated that frames need not generate logical implications and metaphoric associations that sustain the frame. In this case, cross-applying the frame of warfare to a situation that admittedly violated the conditions for declaring war, muddled identification of the enemy, and lacked strategies for sustaining the struggle, stretched the credibility of the frame beyond the limits of plausibility. Unlike *der Kampf*, the War on Terror did not integrate comfortably into (1) existing cultural traditions (such as the German history of anti-Semitism), (2) entrenched metaphors that bolstered the cause (such as metaphors of pestilence and disease), or (3) historical precedents from previous armed conflicts (disanalogies with Pearl Harbor were too apparent). Boisterous bellicosity alone cannot assure a war frame's survival. At some level, the linguistically constructed context for deliberation and policy represents a choice — one that has consequences for what will count as allowable moves in thought, discourse, and action.

The war frame will continue to provide a perilous scaffold for perception and policy until replaced by other frames that can accommodate a wider range of responses to events. The Nazi inculcation of a siege mentality cast the Jewish threat as so desperate that the struggle to curb Jewish influence had to intensify. As Jews were objectified into a collective enemy, it became less plausible to do things *with* them (such as negotiate) rather than *to* them (such as relocate or eventually kill them). As for the response to 9/11, the immediate implementation of a war footing disqualified many judicial, foreign policy, and non-governmental responses as non-starters because of their presumed incompatibility with a nation-state at war.

Successful critique of any frame depends on revealing the conditionality of its core assumptions and the limits of its root metaphors. As Pinker (2007) argued in response to Lakoff (2002), frames reflect voluntary linguistic choices more than hard-wired neurolinguistic structures. The first step in preventing frames from justifying repressive or unjust social practices is to render any particular frame visible *as* a frame, as constructing discursive choices rather than as the necessary underpinning of thought itself. This revelation of conditionality, however, also requires making more visible a menu of alternative frames. Reframing the War on Terror suggests one way the task might begin. Recasting the thirst for revenge as the quest for justice or as the amelioration of a disease could activate some of the same processes of struggle that *der Kampf* sustained, but hopefully for far more morally sustainable purposes.

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