

**Strategy Development:
Recognizing
Communication Challenges
Generated by the Media's
Framing of Events**

Overview

- Defining news frames
- News framing in diverse cultures
- How credibility affects news framing
- How news framing affects public opinion
- Mitigating inaccurate news framing of events

Defining News Framing

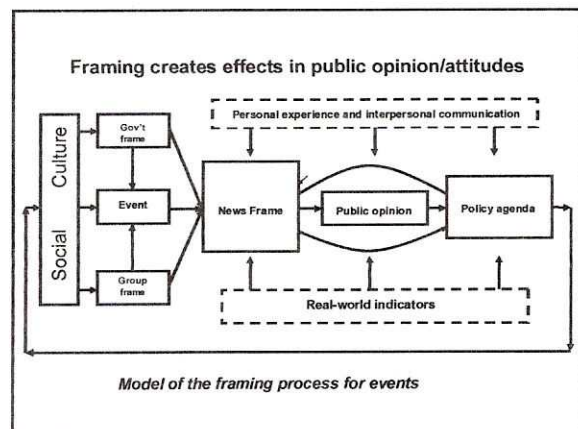
- Framing is how the media portrays an issue/event for public consumption
- Media framing provides a boundary around a news story and determines what is and is not newsworthy or notable.
- “Frames” simplify, prioritize & structure the narrative flow of events.

Defining News Framing

- News frames bundle key concepts, stock phrases, and iconic images to reinforce certain common ways of interpreting developments
- The essence of framing is visual/vocal selection to prioritize facts, images, or developments over others, thereby unconsciously promoting one particular interpretation of events

Defining News Framing

- Framing occurs when media make some aspect of a particular issue more salient in order to promote a certain problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation
- Source credibility affects how influential a news frame will be



(source: Air University course 6236)

News Framing of OEF

CNN:

- Focused on military capabilities, precision technology, “clean language” and euphemisms by military experts

News Framing of OEF

CNN:

- Used al Jazeera coverage; provided video images/commentary in contrast to Pentagon interpretation of events

News Framing of OEF

Al Jazeera:

- Did not focus on military & strategic issues
- Emphasized “collateral damage”
- Focused on the humanitarian tragedy

News Framing of OEF

Al Jazeera:

- Focused on impact of war on ordinary Afghan
- Perceived ineptness & paralysis of Arab regimes to influence events on the ground
- Rallied its viewers; called for a unified Arab response to the war

News Framing of OEF

- *In November 2001, CNN ran a segment claiming that the United States was behind in the “war of words” because of Osama bin Laden’s frequent use of media relative to Rumsfeld’s lack of desire to deal with media on a daily basis*
- *The presence of al Jazeera reporting in CNN coverage of OEF provided a different picture of war than Americans had seen in the past; CNN disdained by US politicians in this regard*

News Framing of OEF

- *The reticence of US leadership to engage more frequently & with less media control essentially created a “news vacuum” that al Jazeera filled with its own “news framing” of events*
- *In that regard, surrendering the information battlespace forced the US into a reactive, less effective information strategy*