

**“Breaking News”:
An Analysis of Canadian Media’s use of
“Terrorism” and “Human Rights” Frames in the Coverage of the
First Year of the Second Intifada**

by

Emma Sydora

Supervised by

Dr. Martin Bunton

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Introduction

Media narratives of the Israel-Palestine conflict do not lack in villains; even a preliminary search through media headlines demonstrates that all actors are portrayed as culpable. However, the media's moralization of the conflict has been in flux and lacks clear dichotomies between images of the victim, and the villain. Rather, phases of vilification usually occur, often as a response to the latest eruption of violence or incursion. This is especially so of the Palestinian

does rest on the assumption that violent acts resulting in the death or injury of non-combatants have been committed by all actors.

Extent analysis of media coverage of the Middle East tends to take 9/11 as its starting point. On the morning of September 11th, 2001, nineteen members of the Islamist extremist group al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial airplanes, flying them into targets such as the World Trade centre in New York, and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., causing the death of over 3,000 people.² More than a decade later, people are still attempting to make sense of the images they witnessed live on their television screens. It is widely recognized that 9/11 changed Western news media. Analysts argue that coverage of “terrorism” significantly increased, the frames used shifted, and media coverage became more pejorative, racist, and fear-driven.³ Yet, less scholarship exists on the nature of “terrorism” reporting prior to 9/11. The “terrorism” frame existed prior to 9/11. However, the term was used differently. For example, prior to 9/11 “terrorism” was used to refer to activities of the radical left and European separatists movements,

shaped Canadian media's interpretations and framing of terrorism. By identifying instances of "terrorism" framing in Canadian media prior to 9/11, this thesis aims to situate post-9/11 framing within a broader history.

This thesis takes issue with the fundamental structure of narrative representation, highlighting how the conventions of a genre, such as news media, can distort understandings of events that cannot simply fit into traditional narrative structures. I am acutely aware that my criticism of narrative is organized in a narrative format, and despite my efforts, may very well reproduce the faults I have critiqued. I am far from ready to discount narrative as a form entirely, but rather aim to illustrate, as scholars such as Hayden White and Frank Ankersmit have, that narratives and frames are constructed, and are reflective of the environment and time in which they are produced.⁴ Further, deconstruction of the underlying assumptions surrounding Hamas and the conflict in Israel-Palestine may help us to understand and question our own assumptions about the media, and the people it portrays. This narrative does not claim to be inclusive or representative of all aspects of the discourses circulating before 9/11. At best, this thesis represents a small sliver how of *The Globe and Mail* and the *National Post* framed the events in Israel-Palestine before 9/11. This sliver is a dominant narrative, not because it was the most pervasive or widely held, but because it was advanced by those who hold power and influence. Ideally, the viewpoints of Canada's Indigenous people, French communities, and the diverse voices of Canadians across the country could be integrated in an effort to better reflect the

and the emerging blog-sphere, would contribute to the inclusiveness of this research. Language barriers, as well as the scope of this project, have limited the narrative.

This thesis is organized into two chapters. Chapter one provides some necessary context through a brief history of the conflict in Israel-Palestine. It details the early Zionist movement

overlap. A.P. Schmid, a UN advisor, studied a variety of definitions, finding 22 similarities that he used to produce the following definition:

Terrorism is an anxiety inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by semi-clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby—in contrast to assassination—the direct ta.712 792 re W n /Cs1ig (c) 0.2 re W n (t) 0.2 (.7

judgment about the validity of the tactics, methods, objectives, and motives of the group or individual to whom the label is applied. For instance, the term can be used ideologically to discredit those who have been branded as “terrorists”, as terms such as “violence” and “terror” are highly politicized, generally embraced by the victim and spurned by the perpetrator.¹² Additionally, like any term, “terrorism” can be manipulated to suit specific political needs, and application of the term can be used to discredit oppositional groups and justify state policies.¹³ “Terrorism” also conjures shadow images of evil and villainy, and a web of highly organized members who relish in committing violent acts. It is typically seen as something “only the bad guys do”, with the further implication that it is never an act committed by a state actor.¹⁴ A further aspect of the discourse of “terrorism” is the implication that it embodies a specific set of values that a group ascribes to, rather than a tactic. The use of the suffix “-ism” also contributes to the perception that “terrorism” is an ideology. This creates a sense that “terrorism,” that is, the use of political violence, is an end in itself rather than a tool to achieve political aims and that a war can be waged legitimately against it.¹⁵

What is said to constitute “terrorism” in Canadian media and academic scholarship has been inconsistent. Rather than any clear-cut difference from similar politically motivated activities such as “extremism,” “insurgency,” or “guerrilla tactics,” the use of the term “terrorism” can be motivated by the emotional reaction triggered by the extent of the violence,

¹² Ibid, 17.

¹³ Halim Rane, Jacqui Ewart and John Martinkus, *Media Framing of the Muslim World: Conflicts, Crises and Contexts* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 32.

¹⁴ Ibid, 33.

¹⁵ Rane, Ewart and Martinkus, *Media Framing of the Muslim World: Conflicts, Crises and Contexts*, 40.

the choice of targets, the unexpectedness of the action, or the radical nature of the actor's message.¹⁶ The blurred boundaries between "terror" and other similar actions have caused some scholars, such as Christina Archetti, to question the validity and usefulness of "terrorism" as an analytical category due to the unbounded nature of the term and the subjectiveness of the defining criteria.¹⁷ However, the wide use of the term as a category and narrative frame makes the term "terrorism" difficult to avoid. I do not wish to engage with attempts to define "terrorism" beyond acknowledgement of the implications behind the use of the term. Rather, my main intention is to analyze how and when the term was employed by Canadian media outlets to frame the activities of Hamas and other Palestinian groups active in the first several months of the Second Intifada.

Use of "terrorism" as a framing device within Canadian media also warrants discussion of what media frames are, how they are used by media, and how they can be identified and analyzed. Robert Entman states that frames identify and define problems, meaning they determine what an involved actor is doing, identify the forces creating the problem, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies.¹⁸ By quickly highlighting and explaining problems, frames can quickly convey a message to audiences. Holli Semetko and Patti Valkenburg identify that media commonly use five different frames when reporting events: an attribution of responsibility frame, a conflict frame, a morality frame, an economic frame and a human-interest frame.¹⁹ For

Archetti,

advanced and explicitly ‘other’ to “Western” society.²⁸ A product of colonial systems of knowledge production in which the colonizers control the narrative of the colonized, Orientalist rhetoric has also been used to justify the act of colonization, subjugation or conquest through systemic and repeated dehumanization or ‘othering’ of the colonized.²⁹ While current media discourse does not explicitly advocate for physical colonization of the ‘East’, themes of conquest through military occupation and victory over the ‘barbaric terrorist’ have dominated headlines and other forms of media for decades.³⁰ Additionally, even when the ‘East’ is not represented as a threatening shadow awaiting a moment to destroy “Western” freedom, it is a place to be consumed. Exotic and fascinating like a fantasy land, the ‘East’ is enticing, but irreconcilable with a shared humanness.³¹ The distorting framework of Orientalism hides the far richer, varied, and complex plurality of experiences, in which the secular and religious, moderate and extreme, and progressive and conservative exist within the same discordant whole, just as all societies contain multitudes of ideologies, viewpoints, and contradictions.³² However, what Said emphasizes is that because the narrative representations of the ‘East’ are so remarkably consistent across multiple platforms, disciplines and over time, these portrayals create the impression that the representations of the ‘East’ are truth, rather than a constructed image.³³

²⁸ Ibid, 35.

²⁹ Ibid, 36.

³⁰ Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*, 14.

³¹ Rane, Ewart and Martinkus, *Media Framing of the Muslim World: Conflicts, Crises and Contexts*, 10.

³² Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*, 27.

³³ Ibid, 28.

Said's theory has been highly influential as it offers an explanation of why and how the constructed image of the 'East' has become embedded in our media and culture.

The years following 9/11 saw a resurgence of interest in and a revitalized relevance of Said's critique of Orientalism. Overt and covert forms of Orientalism were central to America's response to 9/11, particularly the rhetoric and actions of the U.S. "war on terror."³⁴ Much of this "new" Orientalism present in the post-9/11 period was influenced by a "clash of civilizations" narrative. The theory of a "clash of civilizations" was popularized by Samuel Huntington, but the concept was originated by Bernard Lewis.³⁵

Lewis portrays the Middle East as the "other", opposite to "Western civilization", and reads the historic relations between the two to be a 1400-year rivalry.³⁶ By contrast, many historians depict a much richer and complex history with periods of conflict, but also cooperation and coexistence.³⁷ For Lewis, however, the "contemporary clash" began with the Turks' failed siege of Vienna in 1683.³⁸ He views this defeat as causing Muslim empires to lose dominance in the region; eventually the loss of territorial sovereignty spawned anti-Western sentiment and desires to "reassert Muslim greatness."³⁹ Lewis argued that the cause of anti-Western sentiment is imperialism, which he defines as "the invasion and domination of Muslim countries by non-

Muslims.”⁴⁰ This invasion and domination need not necessarily be in physical or military terms, as Lewis also claims that ideas can be a powerful form of domination and control. For example, Lewis states that ideas such as secularism undermine the place of Islam in the social order, thus causing social disruption.

While Lewis originated the concept of the “clash”, the theory is most closely associated with Samuel Huntington. According to Huntington, continued conflict between Islam and the West is inevitable because of irreconcilable differences. Huntington presents the two “civilizations” of Islam and the West as defined by their respective cultural ideals, but more importantly, religious identities, stating that the “fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.”⁴¹ The “clash of civilizations” theory has been criticized for being overly reductive, yet many tenets of Huntington’s thesis have become integrated into the “terrorism” frame employed by media.

Huntington begins his definition of “civilizations” in an extensive discussion of the philosophical origins of the concept by examining the works of thinkers from a variety of disciplines, such as social scientists Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, Pitirim Sorokin, Immanuel Wallerstein, as well as historians such as Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee.⁴² Despite the varied methodology, focus and concepts used in discussions of what a civilization is, Huntington asserts that “broad agreement” exists on “central propositions concerning the nature, identity, and

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 128.

⁴² Jack F. Matlock Jr., “Can Civilizations Clash?” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 143, no. 3 (1999): 430.

coordination.

what was viewed as the decline and subjugation of Islamic societies following the rise of European modalities of governance and thought.⁵⁴

The Muslim Brotherhood's relationship with Palestine began in 1935. During the Palestinian revolt of 1936-1939, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood carried out propaganda activities on behalf of the Palestinians, and publicized the conflict among Egyptian students, thus raising the profile of the Palestinian cause among the greater Arab world.⁵⁵ But the revolts and attacks against governmental institutions and Jewish settlements launched by Palestinian resistors were suppressed by the British administration, eventually leading to imposition of military administration and the banning of Islamic bodies such as the the Supreme Muslim Council.⁵⁶

From the late 1930s, British attitudes towards Palestine shifted, hoping to win over Arab support for the impending war with Germany. So, the 1939 White Paper restricted Zionist immigration and land purchases.⁵⁷ Following the horrors of the Holocaust, however, mounting pressures to allow unrestricted immigration of Jewish refugees from the international community caused Britain to eventually surrender control of mandatory Palestine to the newly created United Nations, which proposed partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish, one Palestinian-Arab, in 1947.⁵⁸ The war that followed resulted in the destruction of hundreds of

⁵⁴ Abu-Amr, *Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza*, 4.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 5.

⁵⁶ Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 601.

⁵⁷ Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 55.

Palestinian villages and caused hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to flee their homes to nearby countries seeking refuge. Called the *nakba*, or 'catastrophe', by Palestinians, thousands of Palestinians were placed in refugee camps, many of which still remain.⁵⁹

In the post-war period, the Muslim Brotherhood continued to be active within Palestinian

or Pan-Arabism.⁶⁴ Al-Fatah also affirmed the necessity of armed resistance. The militancy of the PLO ostracized some of the Palestinian cause's allies. States such as Jordan, saw the Palestinian activists as a threat to existing Arab regimes, and Arab leaders were hesitant to offer sanctuary to the organization.⁶⁵ However, despite challenges the PLO helped to build a concept of Palestinian identity.⁶⁶

The main response to the PLO's use of armed violence and the organization's growing international profile was increased suppression of opposition activities by Israel, as well as other states. For example, in 1970 Jordanian troops, backed by the United States, crushed the PLO in Amman and other cities. Offensives against Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon by the Lebanese army also occurred.⁶⁷ The first of these attacks was launched in 1973, and following multiple subsequent incursions, concluded with major invasions of Lebanon by the Israeli army in 1978 and 1982.⁶⁸ During this period, Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory also increased. In 1977, Likud, a centre-right political alliance led by Menachem Begin, was elected. Begin's electoral victory coincided with the rise of a religious settlers' movement. Publicly committed to the annexations of the territories occupied in 1967, the central pillar of Begin's strategy was the establishment of Jewish settlements throughout the West Bank and Gaza.⁶⁹ This settlement policy was designed to break-up predominantly Arab areas with the intention of limiting the

⁶⁴ Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 335.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 336.

⁶⁶ Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*, 200.

⁶⁷ Rashid Khalidi, "Historical Landmarks in the Hundred Years' War on Palestine," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 47, no. 1 (2017): 11.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 12.

⁶⁹ Amir Goldstein, "Half-heartedly: Menachem Begin and the Establishment of the Likud Party," *Middle Eastern Studies* 53, no. 6, (2017): 919.

emergence of a collective Palestinian identity.⁷⁰ Repressive government policy towards Palestinians in the occupied territories, such as imprisonment, deportation and house arrest, were compounded by aggressive actions by some settlers. The PLO remained the primary representative and advocate for the Palestinian people, and Arafat maintained widespread support.

However, under the pressure of increasing Israeli settlement and repression, questions around the secular PLO as an effective agent of resistance began to grow. Amidst mounting tension and frustration towards the lack of tangible change, and the larger wave of Islamic resistance building in nearby nations, Hamas emerged as an Islamic alternative to the PLO.⁷¹ On December 9, 1987 an Israeli military vehicle collided with a civilian car, killing four Palestinians and injuring others. In the wake of the accident, a protest movement arose, consisting of civil disobedience led by the Unified National Leadership.⁷² The Unified National Leadership (UNL) initially contained members from the major factions of the PLO, but coalesced into a distinct movement. As the movement gained momentum, and the rising number of stabbings and shootings gained greater media recognition, challengers to the UNL's dominance sprang up. Among them was the Islamic Resistance Movement, more commonly known by its Arabic acronym, Hamas. Defining itself through Islamic terms, the Intifada launched Hamas onto the world stage as a significant player and a viable alternative to the PLO.⁷³ Offering an alternative

⁷⁰ Ibid, 920.

⁷¹ Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence* (New York: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 16.

⁷² Ibid, 21.

⁷³ Ibid, 37.

to the strategy of compromise advocated for by their opponents, Hamas reinvigorated Islamic resistance against Israel. Hamas organized welfare agencies, agricultural relief societies and the apparatus of an increasingly organized, integrated Palestinian society and became a key leader of the first Intifada.⁷⁴ Additionally, Hamas promised action. In the face of stalling negotiations and increasingly aggressive settlement policies, many were drawn to the promise of progress.⁷⁵

The first Intifada was launched by the initiative of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, rather than the PLO leadership based in Tunis. The creation of a grass-roots protest movement signalled a weakening of the PLO within Palestinian politics, which was now being shaped by local Palestinians, and especially Hamas.⁷⁶ The PLO lost further support after entering into negotitli

accords were plagued by problems and delays, taking two years to be initially concluded. The Oslo Accords shaped the future of Palestinian state building, but also highlighted the shortcomings of the formal peace process and further divided the Palestinian opposition. Many saw the PLO and Fatah's support of the Oslo Accords as a betrayal of Palestinian interests.⁸⁴ Hamas had been gaining support in within the occupied territories, and threatened to displace Fatah as the primary political power. Fatah's subsequent support of the Oslo peace process cemented Hamas' status as the leading agent of resistance to Israel for a growing number of Palestinians.

Additionally, political candidates linked to Hamas saw significant electoral success, sweeping a number of chamber of commerce elections. In student body elections at Palestinian universities, Hamas also won a number of seats.⁸⁵ This is not to say that Fatah and the PLO had become irrelevant. Rather, the perception that the PLO and Fatah had failed to secure tangible progress for Palestine through diplomacy had led to growing dissatisfaction with the Palestinian leadership. This dissatisfaction manifested in increased support for Hamas. This was especially so following the PLO and Fatah's support for Oslo. With Fatah relinquishing its role as the primary opposition to Israel, Hamas became the political home for disenfranchised members of the Islamist resistance.⁸⁶

However, Hamas' growth following the Oslo Accords was not solely attributed to the failures of their opponents. Hamas attempted to create public space in which they could operate

⁸⁴ Hassan, "Oslo Accords: The Genesis and Consequences for Palestine," *Social Scientist* 39, no. 7/8 (2011): 68.

⁸⁵ Sara Roy, "Religious Nationalism and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: Examining Hamas and the Possibility of Reform." *Chicago Journal of International Law* 5, no. 1 (2004): 259.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 260.

Chapter Two: **Media Analysis September 2000-September 2001**

Before beginning the analysis of Canadian media coverage between September 2000 and September 2001, clear definitions of the terms used must be reviewed. As previously noted, the “terrorism” frame is a macro-frame. Macro-frames, like the “Cold-War” frame that was frequently used to describe the protracted conflict between the United States and Soviet Union, often present local events as tied solely to larger international conflicts.⁸⁹ In the “terrorism” frame, this manifests as portraying an event that is domestic in nature, as part of a larger network, or a coalition of “terrorists” that is diametrically opposed to Western values. When the focus of a news story is on situating an event on macro-scale, domestic repercussions, or rescue missions are of lesser importance than potential foreign policy relations or military implications.⁹⁰ In the media discussion of the specific event, focus is primarily on the perpetrator

present in the “clash of civilizations” narrative presented by Huntington, and links specific events to a larger image of the “Muslim war against the West.”⁹²

In contrast, the “human rights” frame presents violent acts as criminal acts in similar fashion to domestic or local crime and focuses primarily on the suffering of the victim or victims.⁹³ Unlike the “terrorism” frame, the “human rights” frame does not engage in macro-framing, meaning that violent attacks are not portrayed as connected to any larger transnational terrorist organization. Rather, an event is framed similarly to domestic crime. Attackers are portrayed as deviant individuals who have violated social norms, rather than members of an enemy faction.⁹⁴ It is also often emphasized that these deviant individuals are not representative of their ethnic or religious background. Discussion of the political motives of the perpetrators is also less frequent.⁹⁵

This chapter analyzes the frames used by *The Globe and Mail* and the *National Post* to describe Hamas and the early months of the Second Intifada. The publications analyzed were chosen because they were English language mass media outlets with national distribution. As part of the Canadian mass media, *The Globe and Mail* and the *National Post* helped to set the agenda, meaning they dictated what events would be discussed during the new cycle, for other

⁹² Gerhards and Schafer, “International Terrorism, Domestic Coverage? How Terrorist Attacks are Presented in the News of CNN, Al Jazeera, the BBC, and ARD,” *International Communication Gazette* 76, no. 1, (2014): 15.

⁹³ Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira, “News Frames Terrorism: A Comparative Analysis of Frames Employed in Terrorism Coverage in U.S. and U.K. Newspapers,” *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 13, no. 1 (2008): 58.

⁹⁴ Gerhards and Schafer, “International Terrorism, Domestic Coverage? How Terrorist Attacks are Presented in the News of CNN, Al Jazeera, the BBC, and ARD,” *International Communication Gazette* 76, no. 1, (2014): 15.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 16.

the continued individual suffering that would be prolonged by the lack of a mutually supported peace agreement, and largely refrains from using a “terrorism” frame. Discussion of Hamas and their rejection of the peace process is not framed as connected to a larger spectre of “terror”, but rather as a reaction to a domestic issue. From mid-October 2000 to December 2000 it is found that “human rights” framing and “terrorism” framing are applied in an oscillating fashion as the Second Intifada began in earnest. In October 2000 the coverage of the violence in the *Globe and Mail* and *The National Post* was centred around the victims, both Palestinian and Israeli. As the conflict continued and escalated, “terrorism” framing was increasingly used to depict the actions of Hamas and the Palestinian opposition, but was not yet dominant. Third, from January 2001 to early September 2001, *The Globe and Mail* and the *National Post* began to focus increasingly on how the Canadian government should respond to the bombings and violence in Israel-Palestine. International developments, such as United Nations resolutions, and declarations of support or opposition by other countries, had created pressure on the Canadian government to make a statement. In this period both frames were applied, however, the “terrorism” frame was becoming increasingly dominant, and the “human rights” frame became a counter frame. This trajectory applies broadly to both newspapers. However, the move towards the dominance of the “terrorism” frame is both earlier, and more pronounced in the *National Post*, than in *The Globe and Mail*. Consideration of editorials or “letters to the editor” have been excluded in this analysis.

was predominant, as the negative implications of the failed peace process were not framed on a

populace.¹⁰³ Palestinian disappointment is also framed as a legitimate reaction to a situation with few positives. Secondly, references to Hamas rarely placed motivation on a potential “clash of civilization” or link the group to any wider narratives of “terror.” Rather, Hamas was most often portrayed as an exception, not as representative of the Muslim Palestinian experience.¹⁰⁴ Finally, the failure to reach an acceptable peace agreement is primarily framed as a

opposition as a whole. Second, irreconcilable differences with, or fundamental hatred of, the 'West' is cited as the motivation or cause of the violence, rather than an examination of the domestic and historical factors that could have motivated the behaviour.¹⁰⁶

The Second Intifada Begins

Palestinian frustration towards the increasing network of Israeli settlements and military checkpoints, combined with the disappointment with the lack of progress made via formal negotiation channels erupted in late September 2000. Ariel Sharon, leader of the Likud party, visited the Haram al-Sharif, also known as the Temple Mount, in Jerusalem. With the intent of demonstrating the right of any Jew to visit holy sites, Sharon's visit was seen by many Palestinians as an affront to Islam.¹⁰⁷ Protests broke out, and what began as series of localized demonstrations morphed into a popular uprising. Israel responded with harsh repression, with eighteen Palestinians killed within the first two days of the protests. As the movement, which

coverage in both *The Globe and Mail* and the *National Post* focused on the victims of violence, rather than the attackers. Those injured are referred to as “youth” or as “unarmed,” portraying the victims as either unjust targets of violence, or as collateral victims and offered greater depth into the effects on the daily lives of the victims. Instances of Palestinian armed resistance were frequently called “uprisings” or simply “crowds” as opposed to the harsher “revolts” or “riots.”¹⁰⁹ Terms such as “riot” or “revolt” implies certain kinds of chaotic or aggressive behaviour, while “uprising” or “crowd” are more ambiguous references to the nature of the demonstration. When there is not verifiable evidence to indicate the motive of the protestors, there is little to no speculation of the motives of the protesters. When motivation is discussed, it is referenced in relation to the local issues driving the demonstrations, rather than as part of a global war between “civilizations.”¹¹⁰

However, the focus on the hardships and trauma experienced by the Palestinian peoples was contrasted with increasingly frequent applications of the “terrorism” frame. Hamas and those involved in active revolt were framed as fanatical, beyond rationality, or as driven by a “suicidal passion.”¹¹¹ Consistent with the “terrorism” frame, such rhetoric connects a local issue to an imagined “clash of civilizations” in which the Palestinian opposition is part of a larger affront to Western values and culture. The local context, such as the increasing rate of Israeli settlement or the failure of the PA to secure tangible progress for Palestine, are ignored in favour

For example, “Mideast Teeters on Brink.”

of ascribing the Second Intifada to widespread hate throughout the Palestinian population. There was also an increasing shift in the portrayal of victims. Rather than utilizing a “human rights”

the “terrorism” frame. Clearly, the initial oscillation between a “terrorism” and “human rights” frame that was present in the early months of the Second Intifada had shifted, and a “terrorism” frame had become increasingly dominant. The “human rights” frame persisted, but as a counter frame rather than the dominant narrative.

There were two main challenges encountered in writing this thesis. First, representativeness. There is an immense volume of primary sources related to this topic, even within the narrowed perimeters I have set. A project of this length required significant culling of sources, meaning I was forced to draw boundaries around what sources would be included and what would be excluded. These boundaries are ultimately arbitrary delineations, but I have attempted to be diligent in my selection of sources. Media as a medium also presents challenges for the representativeness. The voices highlighted in mass media are often little more than a sliver of the varied opinions held by the public, and unfortunately, this sliver frequently excludes minorities, and can be influenced by factors such as money and power.

Second, is generalization. Much of what I have critiqued in this paper is the inherent challenges that narrative mediums like news media present, most predominantly, the tendency of news frames to create generalizations that can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and biases. Yet, I have produced a narrative which ultimately relies on, and creates, its own set of generalizations. Historical narratives such as this thesis, are, as Hayden White states, “invented as much as found.”¹²⁰ This is not to say that the historian sets out to bend or manipulate the evidence to a preconceived structure. Rather, White’s statement highlights that historical narratives are *created* entities. The efficacy of historical narrative lies in the transformation of mere chronicles into narrative stories. Yet the structure of narrative is woefully inadequate to capture the evidence available. Despite criticism, the narrative remains the primary genre for historians, not because it claims to create objective accounts or chronologies, but because it is immensely effective at

¹²⁰ Hayden White, “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact,” *Tropics of Discourse* (1978): 83.

persuasion. Thus, it is vital to be cognizant of the shortcomings of narrative as a medium, both in history and in journalism.

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Appendix

The image shows a large rectangular area filled with horizontal lines, which is a common way to represent redacted content in a document. The lines are evenly spaced and cover most of the page's width and height, leaving only the header and footer areas visible.

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