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Making global news: "Freedom of speech" and "Muslim rage" in U.S. journalism

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Abstract The American press began to take notice of the Danish cartoons after they began to circulate outside of Europe. The press primarily framed the events as a single problem of global interaction: an issue of 'freedom of speech' opposed to 'religious sensitivity.' Much of the coverage permitted, within limits, a plurality of voices. Drawing on a case study of stories about the 'cartoon controversy' in the *Boston Globe*, I argue that U.S. journalism is organized by a logic of objectivity that seeks to produce a 'perspectiveless perspective on all perspectives' (Bourdieu, *On television*. New York: The New Press, 1998), showing voices on 'both sides,' simultaneously masked and contributed to the press's reifying a series of events into a single global 'event,' one that reflected a clash of Western and Islamic values.

Keywords Globalization · Islam · Journalism · Localization · United States

It is a truism of U.S. journalism that all good news stories are local. By this, journalists usually mean one of three things. First, 'local' is a news genre that refers to stories of events taking place in the community – school board meetings and mayoral pronouncements and so forth – which have a direct impact on their readers' lives. Second, it is a way of reflecting the belief many journalists hold that their readers prefer stories that have immediate relevancy to their lives. For example, an informant who worked at a major U.S. daily once reflected bitterly to me that for all his newspaper's top-quality national reporting, surveys showed that the pet column was the single most widely read and influential feature in the newspaper. Third, U.S. editors use this phrase to push their reporters to find local angles for national and international stories. Most news editors love reporters who can 'bring the story home,' as one editor described it to me.

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Interestingly, reporters I've worked with are often resistant to overtly writing for the local, feeling that it gives their news writing a parochial or provincial flavor. Yet even the most 'resistant' of journalists necessarily make their news local because of their need to cast events in terms that their audiences will understand. It is not without reason that journalists call what they do 'reporting' when they write 'stories.' A report, as conversation analyst Livya Polanyi (1989: 16) defines it, is an effort to recount events more or less as we believe they happened. A story, by contrast, is a narrative that makes a point, that expresses a meaning. In journalism, reporting and the processes by which reporting becomes news stories are governed by professional practices. Particularly in the case of foreign news, institutionalized practices of selectivity and style, the organization of international beats, beliefs about the readers 'back home' and the expectations of editors, overdetermine the ways in which news will be constructed.

I want to use this notion of making the story local to discuss some of the ways that events occurring all over the world were localized for U.S. audiences through American journalistic practice into a unified, ongoing story about 'the Muhammed cartoon controversy.' My starting point is the notion that the Muhammed cartoon controversy is a discursive construction. Events taking place at different times in different places, with dissimilar actors and diverse objectives were reified into a single event, a global story about a clash of civilizational values between a rational Western world and an irrational Islamic 'other.' I will argue that this story was produced not so much because it *was* about such a clash, or even that journalists believed in the 'clash of civilizations' trope (although many of them may have) but because standard U.S. journalistic practices, including the need to render the story relevant and true for their local readership, automatically latches on to such tropes as practical framing devices for rendering the world meaningful to local communities.

To make this argument, I employ a case study of stories drawn from the *Boston Globe* using the LexisNexis index and database. My corpus consists of 31 articles comprised of five genres – news stories, features, editorials, op-eds and letters – totaling 23,072 words. I chose to use a case study for a number of reasons. First, an effort to report generally on 'U.S. news stories' about cartoon-related events inevitably involves a significant selection bias. A case study provides a bounded corpus of news stories that can be analyzed systematically and in detail. On the other hand, one can by definition make only limited generalizations on the basis of a case study, so I must leave it to readers to decide the extent to which the patterns I elicit here reflect wider trends in U.S. journalism. I chose the *Globe,* first because of the manageable size of their story corpus; second, because of their solid position as part of the U.S. 'prestige press,' and third because of their decision not to republish any of the cartoons so as not to give unnecessary offense to the Muslim community. [1] My assumption was that because the *Globe* took a generally sympathetic stance

[1] 'Prestige press' is a term coined by G.H. Stempel (1961). It has been widely used by U.S. media scholars to refer to those fifteen to 20 newspapers that continually appear at the top of 'best newspaper' polls and are deemed to influence not only smaller newspapers but also other news media, especially television.

toward the Muslim community, any negative stereotypes are likely to be an effect of the ordinary semiotics of newsmaking rather than editorial bias, an issue I discuss more thoroughly below.

My efforts to contextualize the stories within general U.S. newsmaking practices are not rooted in specific ethnographic study at the *Globe*. Rather, I draw on my own ethnographic work with the U.S. press, as well as my six years experience as a journalist in Washington, DC. I also draw on ethnographies of U.S. news, both the classic sociology of news from the 1970s and 1980s, as well as more recent ethnographies by anthropologists (Altheide 1976; Tuchman 1978a,b; Bantz et al. 1980; Fishman 1980; Gans 1980; Pedelty 1995; Peterson 2001, 2003; Hannerz 2004; Machin and Niblock 2006).

The remainder of this paper is organized into three sections. First, I will describe some of the semiotics of news representations of events relating to the *Jyllands-Posten* cartoons in the *Boston Globe* between February1 and March 19. Second, I will describe some of the professional practices I believe played a key role in constructing these accounts in these particular ways. Finally, I will offer some tentative conclusions about what we can learn about 'globalization' and 'Islam' from this case.

The global according to the *Globe*

Like most news sources in the U.S., the *Globe* constructed its coverage of the dissemination of the *Jyllands-Posten* cartoons in dichotomous terms. By consociation of labels, 'Muslims' were categorized as a cohesive group whose similarities as coreligionists outweighed any differences among the hundreds of millions of people so characterized. By a similar consociation, European and North American nations where the cartoons were published were portrayed as a common group. Although direct quotations from individuals representing various groups are usually carefully articulated and sourced, general phrases like 'Islamic anger' and 'Muslim wrath' (Fig. 1) pepper the articles and headlines, reifying the actions of protesters in a dozen different places into a single global response. Once so constructed, the article can be contextualized as a new skirmish in an ongoing war of values, as in this paragraph:

> The controversy underscored what appears to be growing cultural polarization between Islamic and Western societies felt especially in Europe with its

Fig. 1 Phrases ascribing collective feelings to 'Muslims' as a unit. No comparable constructions exist for 'Danes' or 'Europeans'

Phrase	Index
Muslim outrage	1
Islamic anger	1, 2
Muslim ire	2
wounded Muslim feelings	4
Muslim wrath	4, 11
Muslim fury	5
Islamic furor	11
Muslim anger	21

> swelling populations of Muslim immigrants with perceptions diverging sharply on issues such as freedom of expression and rights for women [1].

Such a paragraph occurs not as part of an editorial nor as a quoted opinion, but as an objective propositional statement about what is happening in the world. In spite of its hedge ('what appears to be'), such a statement has considerable power to define reality for the universe of the text.

What is particularly interesting about this is that the *Globe* throughout its coverage made a strong effort to be sympathetic to the motives (if not the actions) of the protestors as it construed them. The *Globe* chose not to publish the cartoons, and gave considerable space to articles about and letters from local Muslims offering opinions about its stories. Moreover, the *Globe* recognized that *Jyllands-Posten* sought to provoke Danish Muslim leaders in publishing the cartoons, and echoed *The Economist* in characterizing *Jyllands-Posten*'s actions as 'a schoolboy prank' that got out of hand. The clash of civilizations portrayed by the newspaper is thus not a matter of an intentionally anti-Muslim editorial position. The construction of the anti-cartoon protests around the world as part of a single event can therefore be confidently construed as an effect of the ordinary semiotics of newsmaking.

I will organize my semiotic analysis of these news stories using four categories, corresponding roughly to the four classical tropes of metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony (H. White 1985; Fernandez 1986; Chock 1987). At the metaphorical level, the newspaper constructed a narrative in which particular agents are named, placed geographically and have particular actions ascribed to them. At the metonymic level, agents are grouped together in terms of common actions and objectives. At the synecdochic level, particular actants from these metonymic lists come to stand for the others, particularly through a localization process that allows local Muslim actors to stand for, and speak for, all Muslim actors in other parts of the world. Finally, at the ironic level, the newspaper recognizes its own agency as a media institution in the debates, but does so in a way that positions it within locally relevant categories of agency rather than those that may in fact motivate some of the actors in events about which the newspaper is reporting. Taken together, these four semiotic processes construct a clash of civilizations between American values of freedom of speech and Muslim religious values. In constructing the narrative in this way, the *Globe*'s sympathy for tolerance and it's refusal of religiously offensive language and images reinforces the dichotomous us–them construction since it constructs its sympathy within that paradigm.

Metaphor

The process of constructing accounts of events begins through the essentially metaphoric process of naming. Metaphor, in this sense, refers to the process by which meaning is transferred from one domain of meaning to another (Ben-Amos 1999), specifically from a cultural 'source domain' to a situational 'target domain' (Lakoff and Johnson 2003). No longer understood as a poetic embellishment to speech and writing, recent decades have seen renewed attention to the central role of metaphor in the articulation of identity (Fernandez 1986; Chock 1987) and in human cognition generally (Lakoff and Johnson 2003). In particular, Santa Ana (2002) has

exhaustively demonstrated how particular classes of metaphors are expressed in overt and covert ways in objective news stories, framing the ways in which political struggles over immigration tend to be articulated. Lakoff (1995, 1996) has focused on how political rhetoric can set the terms by which public discourse is articulated, particularly in the press. Naming is a quintessential metaphorical process – a very different set of meanings is applied to social actors when a reporter names them 'protestors' rather than 'rioters' or 'Muslims' rather than 'Arabs'.

There are no neutral names, yet naming is a necessary component of description. As any journalism must, the *Globe* stories describe a series of actors who it then associates with particular places and to whom it assigns particular actions and objectives. Figure 2 lists the actors and their associated actions from the first story in the corpus. Note that while European actors are always described as members of nations, and have relatively neutral actions assigned to them, protestors are frequently defined only by their religious identities, and stronger verbs are used to describe their actions. This becomes particularly interesting when the effects of Middle Eastern boycotts are discussed. In addition, Danish workers losing jobs are categorized in contrast to angry Muslims in a way that almost excludes the possibility that some workers affected may themselves be Muslims. The issue here is not, of course, the truth or falsehood of these statements but rather the way in which Muslims are selected out of the nation states of which they are citizens to be construed as a single global category of person acting in common. These patterns of representation remain relatively stable throughout the corpus.

Parity plays a crucial role in establishing a hierarchy between the two categories thus constructed. No effort is made in any news story to discuss how and why actors make use of relevant *shari'a* or *hadith*; yet when French Muslim leaders are reported as suing a newspaper that reprinted the *Jyllands-Posten* cartoons, the French law invoked gets a full paragraph, including examples of successful prior lawsuits by Christian groups [19].[2] A particularly egregious example involves the introduction of Islam as an actor: 'Islam frowns on portrayals of the human form' [1]. The meaning of this construction is clear and unremarkable, but its tendency is to signify Islam anthropomorphically as a single coherent actor on the world stage with intents and actions.

Metonymy

The reification of multiple events into a single clash of civilizations continues through a metonymic shift in which actors are articulated in paradigm lists. One way this is accomplished is through the construction of litanies. For example, lists of European newspapers publishing or failing to publish the *Jyllands-Posten* cartoons become common actants by association. Just as important are lengthy lists often occupying as much as a third of some news stories about groups of actors engaged in protest activities in variety of different places. Only minimal contextual information

[2]The *Globe* did run a news analysis feature on Feb. 8 that explored some of the background on prohibitions against images in Islam [9]. Yet because the French laws were explained within the context of the news story itself, this very act of setting apart discussion of Islamic law opens up the possibility of signifying to some readers the Muslim world set apart as alien, or to other readers as 'pandering' to Muslim culture.

Name	Attributed Action
Denmark's largest newspaper	*Failed* to calm
Morganavisen Jyllands-Posten	Acknowleged
The newspaper	Insisted
editor in chief Carsten Juste	Said
Danish industry groups	Said
Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen of Denmark	*said* ... but *would not condemn* the newspaper... he *told* reporters
Muslim radical groups	*Made* death threats
Muslim political and religious leaders and jihadists	*Added their voices* to the fury... *thundering* from mosques [and] *blaring* from televisions
Some Muslim groups in Denmark	*Said* they were satisfied
A group of interior ministers from Arab nations	*issued* a statement yesterday *demanding*
Palestinian demonstrators	chanted
Nafez Azzam, a leader of the group Islamic Jihad	Told
Iran's Foreign Ministry	*summoned* the Danish ambassador to *issue* a formal complaint and *demand*
Iran's Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari	accused
Sheik Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr al-Thani, foreign minister of the Persian Gulf state [Qatar]	said
Islam	*frowns* on most depictions of the human form.
Saudi Arabia	*recalled* its ambassador from Denmark
Libya	*shuttered* its embassy in Copenhagen
Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade	*faxed* a warning to the Swedish Consulate in Jerusalem on Monday *demanding*
Hamas, the Muslim militant group ...	*issued* a statement

Fig. 2 Actors and associated actions in 'Danish paper's apology fails to calm protests; cartoons trigger muslim outrage,' The *Boston Globe*, Feb. 01, 2006, third edition, national/foreign, p. A8, by Colin Nickerson

is offered. In particular, political and economic explanations for events are excluded, so that the key trope becomes their common Muslim identity. That is, being Muslim becomes the explanation for their actions. These lists thus tend to construct all Muslims on one side, and all Europeans and North Americans on another side. Journalistic canons of accuracy require reporters to list some of the Middle Eastern newspapers that published the cartoons alongside the Europeans, but these are frequently accompanied by hedges like 'even in Jordan.'

Synecdoche

One of the most interesting tropes is that of synecdoche, in which a part comes to stand for the whole. Synecdochic relations are crucial in localizing global stories.

Having reified Muslims as a single global category of protestors, the *Globe* can use local Muslims in its readership community to stand for, and speak for, all Muslims everywhere by virtue of their common membership in the category 'Muslim'. Thus a March 5 story describes an interfaith group criticizing media coverage of the cartoons and urging greater respect and tolerance. One Turkish-American man is described as feeling a need to speak out 'in public about Islam so that people could see he was not 'the monster' some imagined' [31].

Irony

By irony, I mean the reflexive turn by which semiotic actors are forced to address their own positionality in their accounts. Texts become ironic any time the writing shifts from describing specific media institutions like *Jyllands-Posten* as actors and refers instead to general categories of which the *Globe* is a member, like 'media' and 'newspapers.' Stories of *Jyllands-Posten*'s cartoons and their dissemination are not only about the Islamic world and the West but also a story about the media. In reporting on media, the *Globe* itself becomes a player in the story it is reporting. Irony is textually expressed by reflexivity and self-reference. In the former, the *Globe* simply describes categories of actors of which it is a member: 'newspapers', 'Western media organizations', 'mainstream media' and so forth. One third of the stories in my *Globe* corpus contain such a construction. Self-reference refers to stories in which the *Globe* refers to itself within its own story. Occasionally, the *Globe* is part of a story, as when a Massachusetts man decides to 'support Denmark' after reading an editorial in the *Globe* [12]. Most of the stories in which the *Globe* is specifically referred to, however, concern the issue of the *Globe*'s refusal to publish the cartoons. Traditional news practices call for publication of the images about which the stories are written, but because the stories construe the controversy to be about the offensive content of the cartoons, the newspaper must make an ethical decision about whether to reprint any of them. The *Globe* articulated its position by making a distinction between the *right* to publish offensive material and *reasons* for publishing; since no one in power was trying to censor *Jyllands-Posten*, and since the cartoons served to comment on no significant larger story, *Jyllands-Posten* had no compelling 'freedom-of-the-press' reason to publish items it knew would be regarded as religiously offensive by many[3] [13]. Finally, the genre of letters to the editor is an inherently self-referential genre in which the newspaper publishes letters addressed to it by readers concerned with stories in it. Figure 3 lists stories from my corpus that exhibit reflexive or self-referential tendencies.

[3]Ironically, it could be argued that the *Globe*'s rationale is relevant only to *Jyllands-Posten* but does not actually justify the *Globe*'s decision not to publish, since in the *Globe*'s case the cartoons *would* in fact be illustrating a story.

Audience interpretation

I could multiply these examples many times. The point here is that through these textual operations, a particular perspective is overcoded. Readers are invited to see the events following the publication of the cartoons as a single global event in which rational Western actors engaged in a democratic practice are met with a hostile global response by undifferentiated 'Muslims' whose protests are not characterized as forms of democratic expression but as irrational actions. Sympathetic calls for tolerance, while laudable, only operate to reinforce the notion that the protestors are irrational actors whose activities must be treated with patience and forbearance. This

Examples of Irony	
Reflexivity	
Index	Explanation
3	Editorial includes phrase: 'As with the current consensus against publishing racist or violence-inciting material, newspapers ought to refrain from publishing offensive caricatures of Mohammed in the name of the ultimate Enlightenment value: tolerance.'
4	Quotes State Department spokesman Sean McCormack as saying 'Media organizations are going to have to make their own decisions concerning what is printed'
5	'News media in Britain and the United States have not reprinted the cartoons…'
6	Article refers to newspapers in the U.S. that have reprinted the cartoons.
13	Entire article discusses U.S. media decisions to publish or (in most cases) not to publish the cartoons.
15	Op-ed piece on decisions by U.S. media whether or not to publish
19	Op-ed piece on decisions by U.S. media whether or not to publish
21	Article on the Harvard Salient's decision to publish the cartoon contained the quotation: 'Travis R. Kavulla, a junior and the editor of the paper, said the student journalists meant no disrespect to Muslims, and had hoped instead to provoke a debate on campus. 'Now that [the cartoons] have provoked such a firestorm around the world, it's a shame that the mainstream media isn't publishing them because many people don't understand what they look like,' he said.'
22	Article includes the phrase 'The depictions of Mohammed first appeared in a Danish newspaper in September and were reprinted by other Western newspapers.'
26	Editorial on the decision by the Boston Phoenix not to publish the cartoons contains the phrase 'The vast majority of US media outlets have shied away from reproducing the drawings, but to my knowledge only the Phoenix has been honest enough to admit that it is capitulating to fear.'
31	Article on an interfaith group's discussion of the cartoons includes the subhead 'INTERFAITH GROUP CRITIQUES MEDIA' and these phrases: 'But statements like this one have been largely ignored by the mainstream media, she said, while pictures of violent Muslim demonstrators filled the airwaves. 'This fits their fears,' Yasin said.' … 'Moderate responses to the cartoons by Muslims have failed to receive much attention in Western media, agreed Bora Pervane of Hanover, a Turkish-born architect.'

Fig. 3 Ironic tropes in globe coverage

Self-Reference	
7, 10, 28, 30	Letters from reader on the Globe's decision not to publish the cartoons.
8	Op-ed on political cartoons by former Globe editor
12	Article includes 'Stankiewicz said he had closely followed reports of the Islamic protests. But it was a op-ed column written by Jeff Jacoby in Sunday's Boston Globe, headlined 'We Are All Danes Now,' that persuaded him to show his support publicly.'
13	Yesterday, Boston Globe editor Martin Baron said the paper's decision to report on the controversy without showing the cartoons was consistent with established editorial standards. ... 'We decided it did not meet our longstanding policy of not publishing words or imagery that are grossly offensive to religious, racial, or ethnic groups,' Baron said. 'It's a judgment we face daily and have made many times before.'
14	Globe editorial
17	Editorial by the *Globe's* ombusdsman responding to reader letters urging publication of the cartoons.

Fig. 3 (continued)

construction occludes two crucial things. The first is a recognition of the complexity of local political, economic and social contexts, which might rationalize some of these actors. As Zeenia Shaukat (2006) points out for Pakistan, local political actors seized on the publication of the cartoons as a pretext to engage in political protest against their West-leaning regime. Even local businesses seized on the riots to attack branches of multinational competitors. Such actions indicate political and economic – i.e. 'rational' motives for the protests – quite different from the undifferentiated 'Muslim wrath' proposed by the headlines. Meanwhile, these tales also disguise the racism and deep anti-Muslim prejudices in Denmark to which *Jyllands-Posten* has been a continued contributor, described by Peter Hervik (2002, 2006) and Anders Linde-Laursen (2006). Hervik and Linde-Laursen emphasize some of the cultural and ideological (and hence 'irrational') reasons for publishing the cartoons in Denmark in the first place quite aside from issues of freedom of speech. Boycotts of an entire country for the actions of a newspaper seem less irrational when one recognizes that the newspaper is a strong supporter of political parties, including the ruling party, whose members have made calls for internment camps or marital and birth restrictions on the basis of race and religion.[4]

Second, these stories obscure the extent to which the identity label 'Muslim' does not necessarily mark a religious faith but may also be some other kind of social category. Reading accounts of the global against local cultural frameworks, most Americans necessarily understand Islam as a faith individuals choose to confess, not as a community into which people are born, with different social, economic and political consequences in different communities. The news media helps local readers

[4]In the months leading up to the election, Mogens Camre, of The Progress Party, was quoted as saying, 'Muslims are just waiting for the right moment to kill us.' And Inge Dahl Sørensen, of the Liberal Party, explained that 'Certain people pose a security risk solely because of their religion, which means that they have to be placed in internment camps.' And another Liberal Parliamentarian, Birthe Rønn Hornbech, warned that 'We need to prevent immigrants and their descendants from finding their spouses in Turkey, Pakistan and Somalia.' All three were elected or reelected (Hervik pers. comm. See also Hervik 2002).

maintain this understanding of Muslim identity as confessional by writing as if this were the case, and by using local Muslims, some of whom are converts, to speak for the global Muslim community.

Making global news local

Understanding how journalists construct stories in these ways requires careful attention to agency: what social actors, institutions and relations structure the ways in which news stories get constructed? Journalists themselves tend to articulate their work in the frame of a heroic quest, in which they pursue 'the truth' or 'the story' in the face of obstacles including sources with political agendas the journalists must see through.[5] On the other hand, journalists have largely been portrayed in the influential sociological work by Schudson (1978), Tuchman (1978a), Fishman (1980), Gitlin (1980) and others as agency-less components in a news production system. To understand these stories neither exclusively as the product of a particular reporter's agency, nor as the predetermined output of a system of news production, I will draw on Beeman and Peterson's (2001) discussion of *interpretive practice*, 'the ways that routine procedures, cultural categories and social positions come together in particular 'instances' of interpretation' (Beeman and Peterson 2001: 159). In looking at journalism, this approach seeks to focus neither predominantly on the agency of individual journalists nor on the structure through which their practices are organized and ordered. Rather, it assumes that journalists are always engaged in practices of interpretation that precede and order their practices of representation. The selection of what will or will not be included in a news story, and how a particular representation will be constructed, is an interpretive task in which individual journalists draw on their professional and general cultural competences to make sense of events, to imagine an audience reading about those events, and to bring these together in an act of writing.

As described by Beeman and Peterson (2001), an interpretive practice approach looks at four levels of context:

1. *Epistemology*. Journalists act according to particular world views, employing heuristic action frameworks to guide them.
2. *Community*. Journalists are simultaneously members of several communities, with whom they interact at several levels of involvement. At the very least, they are simultaneously members of the larger community for whom they write, as well as of a specialized confraternity of journalists.
3. *Goals*. Journalists, however 'objective,' are always writing with practical, pragmatic, and even perlocutionary goals.
4. *Social Contexts*. The work of journalists is always susceptible to the social forces within which it is contextualized – economic, political, and cultural.

'Interpretive practice' is intended as part of a more general turn in the social theorization of news from studies that presumed news production simply replicated

[5]Pedelty (1995) offers an interesting account of how pursuing or maintaining this identity of heroic independence usually in fact requires journalists to discipline themselves to the news production system.

pre-existing ideologies tied to the corporate ownership of news production, to more complex descriptions of ideologies as *emergent* in the newsmaking process.

'Objectivity' is the term almost universally used to describe American journalism's claim to be an authoritative account of what has actually occurred in the world. 'Objectivity is the most important professional norm, and from it flow more specific aspects of news professionalism such as news judgment, the selection of sources and the structure of news beats' (Soloski 1989: 213). In practice, journalists' uses of 'objectivity' can be unpacked to refer to three different but closely interrelated things. First, objectivity refers to a general epistemology that assumes the world is knowable and can be accurately represented in words and images, reflecting a broader American 'folk epistemology, conceiving of 'the truth' as being singular, unequivocal, and semantically transparent once it has been identified' (Briggs 1986). Second, objectivity refers to a specific journalistic episteme, a 'strategic ritual' (Tuchman 1972) through which one tries to put aside one's own feelings, beliefs and interests so that one can 'see things' objectively in order to produce factual accounts. Westerstahl (1983) uses the terms 'factuality' and 'impartiality' respectively to describe these two aspects of objectivity. Finally, 'objectivity' refers to a style of writing that effaces the role of the journalist as reporter in order to produce accounts that appear to provide 'a perspectiveless view of all perspectives' (Bourdieu 1998).[6]

At all three levels, objectivity produces action heuristics, specific practices that allow journalists to accomplish the complex tasks before them, and these have consequences for how global news is structured. The construction of 'Muslim rage' can be seen not so much a stylistic excess as a natural consequence of a journalist's need to construct a world of facts and events, such that even the most abstract category or generalized set of activities can, once defined as a fact, be written about in as concrete a manner as an individual or an object. Impartiality, by contrast, tends to minimize voices and contexts that might contradict or confound such facts by a commitment to reducing social phenomena to dualistic conflict. The commitment to tell 'both sides of the story' ensures that most stories, however complex, will have only two sides, a fact which nicely dovetails with a 'clash of civilizations' framework. Finally, the style of writing routinely used in journalism not only conceals the authorship role of the journalist (by suppressing the authorial 'I' for example), but also the whole range of reportorial activities. How does the *Globe* reporter, filing his story from Berlin, learn of the *Jyllands-Posten* 'apology'? Where and how did he learn about the responses to the statement by various actors? Ethnographic and confessional accounts of journalism alike agree that news stories are shaped by such processes, from the 'preformulative' style of press releases (Pander Maat 2007) to the negotiation of information between reporters, sources and editors (Peterson 2001). Writers conceal these processes not out of ideological commitment but because objectivity becomes internalized and such 'discretion becomes predictable' (Larson quoted in Soloski 1989: 210).

The efforts of news reporters to wrestle reports into stories always takes place within at least two complex and multilayered social domains. The first is the

[6]With a nod to Liebnitz, Bourdieu also uses this definition to refer to academic theoreticians who attempt to construct final, authoritative explanations of events (1990: 28–29).

community of social relations in which the reporter is embedded as a social actor. The second is the specific social field of newsmaking. The first domain includes the reporter's networks of friends, family, people with whom she does business, and so forth. As a member of a community, participating in conversations and the rituals of everyday life, reporters become aware of the frames people use to organize knowledge and make sense of the world. By frames I mean 'persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which [people] routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual' (Gitlin 1980: 7). Coutin and Chock (1995) argue that when faced with the problem of turning reports into stories, journalists draw from this collective pool of symbolic resources.[7] Even when reporters recognize that situations are more complex than can be expressed through these normative frames, journalists usually continue to use them, in part because they understand their task to be producing stories their readers will understand (Pedelty 1995). Indeed, frames are useful precisely because they reduce the complexity of information into manageable narratives.[8] Once established, frames become institutionalized by news organizations (Tuchman 1974, 1978a). Journalism constitutes its own 'microcosm which has its own rules, which is constituted autonomously and which cannot be understood from external factors' (Bourdieu 1998: 44). In essence, news can be seen as the accomplishment of a professional organization whose routines (Tuchman 1978b), gatekeepers (White 1950), economic considerations (Fradgeley and Niebauer 1995, Djankov et al. 2003), networks of sources (Berkowitz and Terkeurst 1999), deadline pressures (Schudson 1986) and other mechanisms guarantee that sufficient news stories are produced on time in a largely formulaic way (Rock 1981).

The 'clash of civilizations' frame thus offers reporters, editors and essayists a powerful resource for organizing complex levels of information. A European correspondent viewing *Jyllands-Posten*'s apology on television or receiving the statement as a press release is offered a preframed account that pits European 'democratic' values against an 'other' that defies them in the name of religion. Adopting such a frame allows a reporter to rapidly assemble information from multiple sources around the world and turn it into a coherent and manageable story. To situate the cartoons and *Jyllands-Posten*'s statement in terms of a longstanding anti-immigrant politics, and to describe the anti-cartoon events in terms of various different local and international political and economic sentiments requires a level of complexity that extends beyond the limits of American common-sense frames and might smack of bias or editorializing. Even if the reporter has the understanding and technical competence to produce such an account, would it be practical to invest the

[7]For a discussion of the professional/community identity issue by a journalist, see Weiskind (2001).

[8]Some simple examples of news frames include the 'horse race' frame for elections, focusing on who is ahead, who is behind and why (Hallin 1990), and the 'cold war' frame which, until 1989, described almost every story of an international conflict as between two opposed camps (Norris 1996). In reporting complex acts of violence in the Middle East, a 'victim-perpetrator' frame attributes exclusive responsibility for terrorist actions to Palestinians rather than describing the complex, cyclical and dynamic interrelations of state violence and terrorist actions (Cohen and Wolfsfeld 1993). Indeed, Berkowitz (2005) argues that the entire Middle East conflict over Palestine is described using a 'frontier' frame that creates a structural analogy to American myths about 'the wild west.'

time when he has multiple stories to file each week, deadlines, editors to satisfy and readers to consider? The dichotomous structure of the clash of civilizations narrative fits conveniently with standard American frames, which are typically dichotomous and construct accounts in terms of a conflict between two sides (Gitlin 1980; Richards and King 2000).

Journalists must consider multiple audiences as they conduct their reporting, and convert their reports into stories. Journalists in this sense fall into the general category of performers, social actors whose work is articulated with an audience in mind (Bauman 1977). Journalists discipline their writing to meet the exigencies of these multiple audiences. Many people will read these stories to different ends: editors and other gatekeepers who will determine story acceptance and placement; sources, whose future cooperation may be affected in positive or negative ways; friends and family, professional colleagues and other people whose opinions shape the reporter's identity; editors, publishers and other supervisors whose evaluation of a reporter's performance determines retention and promotion. Finally there is the collective imagined reader whose purchase or on-line perusal of the newspaper finances the entire enterprise. In the face of these multiple audiences, and the goals of status, promotion and personal satisfaction they represent, a clear, sensible and collective (rather than personal and idiosyncratic) frame is almost always preferable. Objectivity and professionalism, operationalized as disciplining oneself to the norms of the journalistic field serve as solutions to the difficulties of reporting on contending social interests and dealing their conflicting claims to truth (Tuchman 1978b).

Conclusion

However objectively real globalization may be as an economic and social phenomenon, peoples' *perceptions* of how their lives are shaped by events occurring far away have more to do with local cosmologies and structures of feeling than with actual causal relations – not in the least because such perceptions are necessarily shaped by mediated images. This is the fundamental principle of contemporary life Peters (1997) calls *bifocalism*, seeing the local in terms of the distant and understanding the distant by means of the local. Oil prices, orange alert levels and the service, injuries and deaths in Iraq of people from our own communities rivet our attention to the region we call 'the Middle East.' The news that media consumers attend to is the news that speaks to them because it frames the world in ways that make sense to their locally produced imaginations; in turn the flow of mediated words and images people attend to shapes their imagination of how the wider world works.

News readers are free to consider the informational content of news stories and weigh them. Studies suggest that readers' susceptibility to particular news frames is conditioned by their backgrounds, which make some frames more plausible than others. The continuous repetition of particular frames, however, is influential. More importantly, the defining of events can be crucial. Bourdieu (1991) suggests that it is useful to examine competing discourses as orthodox and heterodox, depending on which dominates the social field. In U.S. journalists' tales of the Muhammed cartoons, the orthodox position, adopted by most newspapers including the *Globe*, is

that Muslims have a right to their beliefs and that religious tolerance is necessary for good democratic citizenship and irresponsible exercise of free speech rights undermines the social good to which free speech is meant to contribute. Heterodox accounts put forward the notion that Muslims are using tactics of fear to restrict the exercise of freedom of speech. Bourdieu then recommends we turn to the commonalities underlying both discourses, what he calls the unexamined *doxa*. What both the competing 'free speech' and 'tolerance' discourses take for granted are

- that the circulation of cartoons and stories about the cartoons, and the riots, protests and other public activities in which the cartoons have played a part constitute a single global event;
- that it is meaningful to constitute a billion people of different linguistic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, with citizenship in very different kinds of states, as a single global actor on the basis of a common religious appellation
- that freedom of speech and freedom of religious expression are two different modes of action, and that the acts of Danish publishers and politicians are expressions of the former while the acts of protestors are the latter.

The point that news stories are not in fact transparent windows on an objective reality existing 'out there' but carefully constructed accounts that help to define the very reality they report on is not news. For a long time, however, exposing the constructedness of news as part of a critical effort to explore power relations was the main effort of most news analysis by social scientists. Benedict Anderson drew our attention to the ways in which news is a productive element in the generation of 'imagined communities' like the nation (1991). Both the common practices of news consumption, he argued, and the shared content of news, helped people perceive themselves as members of communities whose membership included myriads who would never meet or directly interact with one another. Arjun Appadurai (1996) has extended Anderson's insight to the global, arguing that transformations of transportation, information and communications technologies have created possibilities for many other kinds of imagined communities besides and beyond the nation, including the global itself.

The crucial question becomes, then, in what *styles* is the global imagined by what peoples, where? And how are these styles expressed and constructed by and through news media? In globalization, the framing of particular flows as 'events' may be the most crucial role of news media in organizing such social imaginaries.

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Appendix

Index of Globe stories

1. 'Danish Paper's Apology Fails to Calm Protests; Cartoons trigger Muslim Outrage.' By Colin Nickerson. February 01, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A8. 971 words.

2. ‘Islamic Anger Widens at Mohammed Cartoons.’ By Colin Nickerson. February 03, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A12. 1101 words.
3. ‘Forms of Intolerance.’ February 04, 2006. Editorial. Pg. A14. 468 words.
4. ‘U.S. Faults Mohammed Cartoons.’ By Colin Nickerson. February 04, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A4. 929 words.
5. ‘Leaders Urge Calm Amid Muslim Fury; US, Europe Make Plea as protests of Cartoons Spread.’ By Colin Nickerson. February 06, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A8. 1029 words.
6. ‘Four More Killed in Furor over Cartoons.’ By Colin Nickerson. February 07, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A10. 971 words.
7. ‘A Chance to Denounce All Forms of Religious Bigotry.’ February 07, 2006. Letters. Pg. A18. 240 words.
8. ‘The Power of Political Cartoons.’ By H.D.S. Greenway. February 07, 2006. Op-Ed. Pg. A19. 725 words.
9. ‘Political Tension and Religion Prove a Combustible Mix.’ By Charles A. Radin. February 08, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A16. 884 words.
10. ‘Let Readers Judge the Cartoons.’ February 08, 2006. Letters. Pg. A12. 157 words.
11. ‘Islamic Protests Intensify; Afghan Police Fire on Mob.’ By Colin Nickerson. February 08, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A1. 1042 words.
12. ‘Showing of Danish Flag Roils Town.’ By Peter Schworm. February 09, 2006. Metro/Region. Pg. B1. 676 words.
13. ‘Citing Tough Judgment Call, Most US Media Not Using Images.’ By Joseph P. Kahn. February 10, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A12. 874 words.
14. ‘Those Handy Cartoons.’ February 10, 2006. Editorial. Pg. A18. 464 words.
15. ‘Preserve Values in Cartoons War’ By Robert Kuttner. February 11, 2006. Op-Ed. Pg. A11. 756 words.
16. ‘Drawing the Wrong Conclusions; Amid the Cartoon Crisis, Danes are Girding for a Culture War; What they Should Do Is Help Danish Muslims Build an Islam Compatible with Modern Europe.’ By Jytte Klausen. February 12, 2006. Ideas. Pg. E5. 1174 words.
17. ‘Questionable cartoons.’ By Richard Chacon. February 12, 2006. Op-Ed. Pg. E11. 747 words.
18. ‘Tradition Versus Modernity’ February 13, 2006. Op-Ed. Pg. A15. 822 words.
19. ‘Tempest Behind the Turban.’ By H.D.S. Greenway. February 14, 2006. Op-Ed. Pg. A13. 741 words.
20. ‘Protestors Ransack Cities in Pakistan.’ February 15, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A14. 894 words.
21. ‘Harvard Students print Danish Cartoons.’ By Kathleen Burge. February 15, 2006. Metro/Region. Pg. B3. 437 words.
22. ‘Saudi Ambassador Spreads Blame Over Cartoon Dispute.’ By Roy Greene. February 16, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A12. 736 words.
23. ‘Misunderstanding History, Evidence.’ February 17, 2006. Letters. Pg. 22. 247 words.
24. ‘Satirizing Dick Cheney.’ By Ellen Goodman. February 17, 2006. Op-Ed. Pg. A23. 769 words.
25. ‘Islam and the West.’ February 19, 2006. Letters. Pg. E12. 117 words.

26. ‘When Fear Cows the Media. By Jeff Jacoby. February 19, 2006. Op-Ed. Pg. 11. 790 words.
27. ‘Bush’s Response to Riots Not Enough for Neocons.’ By Peter S. Canellos. February 21, 2006. National/Foreign. Pg. A3. 782 words.
28. ‘Double Standard On What Offends.’ February 21, 2006. Letters. Pg. A12. 133 words.
29. ‘Image-Conscious.’ By Melissa Beecher. February 21, 2006. Metro/Region. Pg. B1. 863 words.
30. ‘Free Speech.’ March 05, 2006. Letters. Pg. E10. 164 words.
31. ‘Distress Over Cartoons Aftermath; Interfaith Group Critiques Media.’ By Robert Knox. March 05, 2006. Globe South. Pg. 7. 600 words.
32. ‘Efforts to Sow Unity Reap Hope.’ By Peter Schworm. March 19, 2006. Globe South. Pg. 5. 880 words.

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