Quick Response Report #146

Patterns of Media Coverage of the Terrorist Attacks on the United States in September of 2001

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ABSTRACT

The horrific attacks of September 11th, 2001, caught the natural hazards and technological risks communities as completely off-balance as they did the intelligence and military communities. Soon after these terrible events, the Natural Hazards Center at Boulder issued a call to the hazards communities to marshall what they knew of extreme events and make it available to those responsible for responding to this new kind of hazard, crime, and war. My normal area of research lies in the analysis of various media as they report natural disasters and hazardous situations and thereby affect public perception and agency response. I agreed to do an analysis of one newspaper's coverage of these incidents and their aftermath for the 12 weeks following the disaster.

I followed events in the on-line edition of the *Los Angeles Times*, the nationally prominent newspaper that dominates the region in which I live. I categorized the main concerns of each article originating on the front screen of the on-line paper and then followed trends in coverage through the 12 weeks of the project.

The main concerns of the stories break down into 10 principal categories, plus miscellaneous and unrelated categories. These can be further compressed into three metastories: the events as disaster, the events as crime, and the events as war. The first three weeks of coverage concentrated on the disaster story; the last nine weeks were dominated by the war story.

The rapid shift in interest from the World Trade Center and Pentagon disasters to the military response is a bit troubling. The needs of the survivors and the cities in which they suffered such losses have not simply gone away with the shift in coverage, and the change in attention may adversely affect their recovery.

INTRODUCTION

Media affect the social understanding of hazards, crimes, and wars. They influence public opinion through directing audience attention to the particular issues that they emphasize. This focussing of public opinion can then lead to public pressure on risk management decision-makers, thus setting the agenda for their debates on risk management policy ([Birkland](#) 1996). Alternatively, by not focussing on an important hazard, media can blunt the development of effective public pressure on decision-makers ([Rodrigue](#) 2001a).

Media criticism literature has identified those factors that may lead to a story's salience or, conversely, its invisibility. Among them is the pressure on media subsidiaries to contribute to, not drain from, the profitability of their parent corporations. This pressure can enhance an already existing media predilection for sensationalism (Smith 1992; Herman and Chomsky 1988). Sensationalized coverage may then skew public perception of a given event or risk, usually amplifying public concerns but sometimes attentuating or deflecting them (Kasperson *et al.* 1988; Rodrigue 2001a).

Another possible influence on media emphasis is the intense capital concentration in the media: Approximately 10 corporations control the majority of print and broadcast media (television, radio, daily newspapers, magazines, movies, and books). A common concern raised about this centralization is that the narrowness of ownership structure may produce a narrowing of the ideological discussion brought to bear on a given situation of importance to society. If so, narrowing of the range of views and information available could diminish the informed consent on which effective democratic oversight of policy depends (Bagdikian 1997; Lee and Solomon 1990).

Media generate profits through advertising revenue, and this can lead to a skewing of coverage in a disaster towards the interests of the usually more prosperous "desirable demographics" the advertisers are trying to reach (Herman and Chomsky 1988). This could lead to media marginalization of the needs of poorer victims or geographical areas, which can impact disaster recovery (Rodrigue, Rovai, and Place 1997; Rovai and Rodrigue 1998; Rovai 1994).

CRITICAL MEDIA THEORY AND THE EVENTS OF 9/11

From the foregoing theoretical framework, I suspected that the *L.A. Times'* front screen coverage might evince sensationalism, a narrow ideological spectrum on the context of the attacks, and a reduced emphasis on poorer victims or on workers as opposed to more prosperous victims or corporate employers. These events were so extreme and so far outside my usual concern with natural and technological disasters or risks, however, that I was not really sure of the relevance or appropriateness of media criticism. I decided not to use the formal hypothetico-deductive methodology with which I usually approach case studies: I opted instead for a much more inductive and descriptive approach. The classification system that emerged and the distribution of news stories within it, however, yielded results that do speak to these issues and expectations.

DATA AND METHODS

I utilized the online *Los Angeles Times* for the 12-week duration of the project. This is a nationally prominent newspaper, which dominates the region in which I live. I decided to go with the Los Angeles paper because it has long maintained bureaus in Washington, D.C., and New York, as well as overseas. Its audience, moreover, is geographically removed from the two

cities struck by the terrorists, so its coverage is likely to concentrate on those stories of national appeal. A few other papers might have offered these advantages, but I am less familiar with them and decided to go with the known quantity.

I made use of the on-line edition simply because that is the way I normally access the paper and because of the ease of data collection that the on-line edition enables. I could thereby avoid manual typing of headlines and lead sentences into the spreadsheet with which I coded the main concerns of the articles.

For this project, I concentrated on the articles that appeared on the front screen (the home page) of the *L.A. Times*. In other words, these are the stories that the editors of the paper deemed significant enough to showcase on the front screen. The home page presents the reader with a visually intricate screen, including navigation buttons to other sections of the paper, teaser lines leading to specific articles elsewhere in the paper, advertisements, photographs, and, often, thumbnail images leading to stories elsewhere in the paper or to multimedia presentations (such as video/audio clips from television broadcasts). To be included in this study, the article had to include both a headline and at least one lead sentence on the home page, from which it would be possible to code the major concerns or themes of the article. This normally yielded about six to eight articles each day, divided into a top-of-screen section (roughly the above-the-fold part of a paper newspaper) with from three to five articles and, usually, a local or state section generally with three articles.

The headline and then the lead sentences were highlighted, copied, and then pasted into a spreadsheet. Besides these two variables, other items recorded included the date, key theme, and up to three modifiers of that key theme. As a backup measure, a hard copy was printed of the home page and the main sections of the paper each day. Identification of the key themes was done only by myself, given that the Quick Response grant program precludes wages for assistants. Results, then, may be skewed due to the one-coder methodology. The advantage of a one-coder system, however, is consistency across stories.

To develop the main themes, I read the headlines and lead sentences and recorded a word that summarized the central concern of the article. I then read through the articles to confirm my categorization. After doing this for a week's coverage, I sorted the spreadsheet by the key theme category and noted instances where I had used similar but not identical words. I settled on a consistent expression for such cases and then went back through the database, reclassifying and again sorting. After a couple iterations of this process, I found I was consistently naming the main themes. I repeated the process for a couple more weeks' coverage until I was certain I was classifying the stories consistently and clearly. This process yielded 17 key themes, but only 10 of these ultimately included more than five stories each.

At six weeks of coverage, I gave a progress report to the Learning from Urban Disasters Workshop at the New York University Institute for Civil Infrastructure Systems. This conference brought together those researchers who had received an NSF-funded Quick Response Grant or a Small Grant for Exploratory Research to study the 9/11 disasters. The codification proved suitable for that presentation, and so I have continued the same system here, extending it to the full 12 weeks of coverage promised in the Quick Response grant proposal.

This process yielded 558 articles and 10 emergent central themes. As mentioned above, there were also seven minor themes that were then grouped into a single "other related stories" category. These 11 categories were then later collapsed into three main metastories: disaster, crime, and war.

Unfortunately, I did not have access to the Internet for two days during these 12 weeks (one day each during the ninth and tenth weeks), importing a small error into the analysis reported here (about 3 percent of the potential articles are, thereby, missing).

FINDINGS

In this section, the findings will be broken down by the 10 main themes and the three metastories of disaster, crime, and war, into which the 558 stories fell. The relative abundance of each theme and metastory will be discussed for the 12-week study period as a whole and then the distribution will be traced by week.

The Ten Main Themes

The 10 categories that emerged from this iterative coding process each covered anywhere from six to 103 individual stories. These were:

- **Context**, n=6 (e.g., the cultural and geopolitical background to the terrorist attacks, including Islamism, the history of American involvement in the economies and politics of the Middle East, anti-Western and anti-American sentiments around the world that could be organized to support terrorism, the suppression of women in Afghanistan, the workings of the Al-Qaeda network, Osama bin-Laden's personal history)
- **Diplomacy**, n=38 (e.g., American efforts to build a multinational coalition against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban; the varying interests of Pakistan, India, Uzbekistan, and Iran that shape their response to American entreaties and pressure)
- **Impact**, n=35 (e.g., the human toll in lives and business relationships lost and economic dislocations caused by the attacks in the aviation, entertainment, sports, tourism, and other industries, in governance, and in lower Manhattan)
- **Investigation**, n=57 (e.g., progress on the criminal investigations identifying suspects, the history of the suspects in the United States, the genetic identity of the anthrax strains found in letters)
- **Military**, n=103 (e.g., airstrikes in Afghanistan, deployment of special forces, deaths of military and intelligence personnel in combat or while providing support for combat operations)
- **Mitigation**, n=24 (e.g., proposal and implementation of heightened security measures in the wake of the 9/11 attacks)
- **Reactions**, n=55 (e.g., grief of victims' families and friends and the nation and world as a whole, commemorations of the victims, fear of flying, anger, attacks on Muslims and people who "look" Muslim)

- **Reconstruction**, n=9 (e.g., plans for rebuilding the World Trade Center and the economy)
- **Response**, n=19 (e.g., search and rescue operations, evacuations, workers being sent home by employers)
- **Restoration**, n=19 (e.g., reopening of airports, resumption of sports events, workers returning to their jobs, restoration of utilities)

Not all stories about 9/11 fell tidily into these 10 areas. There were seven categories that had too few stories to warrant listing separately, so these were grouped together as "other related stories" (n=14). An example would be two stories reporting on Kofi Annan and the UN receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for "tackling challenges from poverty to terrorism." Another single article was coded as "politics," dealing with an incident in which President Bush embarrassed members of Congress by revealing leaks to the press traceable to some of them.

In addition, as time wore on, other unrelated stories began to return to the front screen of the *L.A. Times*. These were recorded as reflecting the return to a semblance of normalcy, but they were not specifically classified beyond "unrelated story." Some of these were a bit of a judgment call. For example, the ongoing Israeli and Palestinian confrontations, while often mentioned by Osama bin-Laden and others as part of what allegedly drove them to terrorism, were deemed separate stories. There were eventually 179 unrelated front screen stories in the first 12 weeks of *L.A. Times* coverage.

The Three Metastories

The 10 categories and the stories in them began to converge into three overarching narratives: There were stories of the *disaster*, response to it and recovery from it; there were stories about the *crime* and its investigation; and there were the *war* stories of diplomacy, deployment, airstrikes, and the fall of the Taliban. Each theme was eventually assigned to one of these metastories and then the *other related story* category was gone through, story by story, with individual stories assigned to one of the three larger narratives. There is a tacit fourth metastory implicit in all the other stories that were *unrelated* to the disaster, crime, and war. Their presence tells the stories of a nation returning to its more normal concerns, and they serve as a harbinger of at least partial recovery.

Overview of the First Twelve Weeks

This section considers the twelve week study period as a whole. The 10 themes and then the three metastories are discussed in terms of dominant themes and metastories over the study period. A later section will follow key themes and metastories week by week.

The Ten Main Themes. Far and away the dominant concern through the first 12 weeks viewed together was the *military* category with fully 103, or 18.5 percent of the 558 stories (Figure 1). Pallid secondary themes were those of the crime *investigation* (n=57, or 10.2 percent) and of *reactions* to the disaster itself (n=55, or 9.9 percent).

The *context* of the events of 9/11 received the least front screen coverage, with just six stories, or 1.1 percent. The context is an important part of this story and key for Americans to understand and prepare for what is to them a new hazard. In this sense, the attacks of 9/11 generated similar needs for contextualized information as any disaster, and the weak showing of the context on the front screen here fits with prior work on how media perform in other hazards and disasters (e.g., Singer and Endreny 1994). Moreover, the context of this disaster was deeply and unavoidably political and ideological at core. Its disappointing treatment here is consistent with the ideological narrowing that some media critics worry comes with corporate concentration in media, but it is also consistent with the long-established media need for drama and simplicity, which contextual information rarely satisfies.

Also receiving very little coverage was *reconstruction* (n=9, or 1.6 percent). This is not too surprising due to the still early stage of this disaster on the conventional post-event timeline of response-restoration-reconstruction (Haas, Kates, and Bowden 1977).

The tacit story of recovery is seen in the eventual appearance of large numbers of stories that were *unrelated* to the events of 9/11 and their aftermath. By the end of the 12-week study period, fully 179 or 32.1 percent of the front screen stories in the *L.A. Times* fell in the unrelated category.

The Three Metastories. -- Collapsed into the three metastories of disaster, crime, and war, the dominant narrative was the *war story*, with 168 of the 558 stories, or 30.1 percent (Figure 2). The *disaster story* was the second most prominent metastory for the 12-week study period, almost a co-dominant at 152 stories or 27.2 percent. The *crime story* was the least covered of the grand narratives, with 59 stories or 10.6 percent.

Changes in Coverage over Time

Broken out week by week, however, there were interesting and revealing shifts and constancies in attention. Only one of the main themes remained salient throughout the study period. More commonly, a few main themes became prominent at one time during the study period and then submerged at other times. In terms of the metastories, the two co-dominant larger narratives switched dominance between the first three weeks and the last nine weeks.

The Ten Main Themes. -- Only one of the ten major concerns garnered at least 10 percent of each week's coverage consistently for every single week of the study period: *military*. Its share of each week's coverage ranged from a low of 10.9 percent up to 25.6 percent, averaging 18.5 percent (Figure 1).

Investigation was the second most common dominant of each week's coverage. It appeared among the list of categories winning at least 10 percent of a week's coverage in six weeks out of the 12. Not too surprisingly, the crime investigation was especially salient in the two weeks right after the attacks. It appeared again as a prominent story from the fifth through the eighth weeks, as the anthrax attacks reached their peak and as controversy developed over FBI warnings. It dropped off during the last four weeks of the study period.

Two more themes appeared among the salient stories for still shorter periods of four weeks each. *Reactions* understandably dominated the first three weeks after the disasters. This theme became prominent again during the eighth week, when the Bin Laden videotape was released, data confirming the economy had turned south were published, and the governor of California instituted controversial precautionary measures to protect bridges on the basis of an FBI warning later retracted. *Diplomacy* became salient during the third and fourth weeks as the United States began to launch the air war in Afghanistan and, again, during the ninth and tenth weeks (when the Taliban began clearly to fall apart, and the missionary aid workers held by the Taliban were rescued). Figure 3 provides a reference timeline for each week's 9/11-related news events.

Restoration was prominent during two weeks of the first month after the disaster (Week 1 and Week 3) as New York and Washington struggled to restore the lifelines and activities on which their safety and livelihoods depend. Two more categories flashed briefly into salience for one week each: *impact* during Week 7, when anthrax seemed to be spreading through the mail enough to alter business practices, and *mitigation* during Week 3 as more permanent security measures were being proposed and debated, especially for air travel.

The Metastories. -- Grouping all these into the three larger narratives of disaster, crime, and war, it had seemed that disaster and war were nearly matched in their dominance of the coverage during the 12-week study period (Figure 2). Broken out week by week, however, a strong shift in emphasis was seen. The *disaster story* completely dominated the first three weeks of coverage, from 58.5 percent of the stories in the first week to 43.5 by the third week. Dominance switched drastically in the fourth week to the *war story*. As airstrikes began in Afghanistan, the war story now won 43.5 percent of the coverage. Meanwhile, the disaster story dropped down to 20.8 percent. The war story dominated from the fourth week through the sixth week, co-dominated with disaster during the seventh week, and resumed dominance from the ninth through the twelfth week. The disaster story experienced a flurry of salience in the seventh week, when it matched the war story, and the eighth week when it actually once more dominated coverage (the seventh and eighth weeks experienced increased numbers of anthrax cases in several places and the first economic data on the downturn associated with the attacks, both of which events briefly refocussed attention on the disaster itself).

The *stories unrelated* to 9/11 first showed up on the third week after the attacks, making up 8.7 percent of the third week's front screen stories. This percentage climbed dramatically over the next two weeks, to 27.1 percent on the fourth week and to 43.5 percent by the fifth week. It fluctuated from roughly 35 percent to 44 percent for the next few weeks, from the sixth through the tenth week. By the eleventh week, this had shot up to 59.6 percent and, by the twelfth week, to 51.1 percent. This is not too surprising a trajectory, as the paper's readership became accustomed to the disaster and its aftermath and gradually became interested in other matters going on in the world.

DISCUSSION

Looking at these findings a little more closely, one finds that the disaster story experienced daily in the lives of New Yorkers and Washingtonians was displaced by the war story within the first month after the attacks. The military-related coverage took up 30.1 percent of the 558 front screen stories in the first 12 weeks of overall coverage (or 44.3 percent of the 379 front screen stories that were related to the attacks and their aftermath). Disaster-related stories (27.2 percent of all 558 articles and 40.1 percent of the 379 related stories) did dominate for the first three weeks of coverage, but they gave way to the war story for most of the last nine weeks. While the events of 9/11 were a stupendous disaster, an audacious crime, and a clear act of war, the movement from disaster-focussed coverage to war-dominated coverage may deprioritize the needs of New Yorkers and Washingtonians in recovering from these horrible events.

The 9/11 attacks were quite possibly the greatest disaster to befall the United States in the last half century, due to the thousands of deaths, the huge property losses, and the economic and personal disruptions it caused, directly and indirectly. The war to exact vengeance and dismantle terrorist networks does not compare to other wars after WWII in terms of American casualties and other losses, but it has held most of the media focus after the third week anyhow, perhaps expressing American anxiety about getting into an endless war.

The crime story is a fairly minor strand in front screen coverage (10.6 percent of the 558 stories, or 15.6 percent of the 379 relevant stories) though it is quite possibly the greatest crime ever perpetrated within this country. This relative quiescence of the *L.A. Times* quite possibly just reflects the necessary secrecy in which an investigation of this sort must be conducted, so there may simply not be much information to report.

As often seen in the coverage of any disaster, the context of the events of the 11th of September is poorly drawn out. Only six stories appeared on the front screen of the *L.A. Times* about the geopolitical background that produced such murderous men so indifferent to their own lives. Normally, a category with a mere six stories in it should have been lumped into the "other related" category, but the context of a disaster is central to the disaster research and policy communities. Preserving it as a freestanding category with its six paltry entries thus highlights a serious gap in front page disaster coverage, in this catastrophe as in so many others.

Sensationalism, a common criticism leveled at media during disasters, is evident in the obsessively repetitive imagery of the plane striking the South Tower on television and on the front page graphics of newspapers, including the *L.A. Times*. The on-line format of this edition of the *L.A. Times* enabled readers to access the video imagery from the broadcast media. Anthrax has been sensationalized, too, in the wake of the anthrax-laden letters mailed to Senators Daschle and Leahy, NBC news anchor Tom Brokaw, the *New York Post*, and the supermarket weekly tabloid, *The Sun*. The coverage of these bioterrorist incidents, however, amplified public concern far above the actual numbers of people exposed, sickened, and killed by mailed anthrax, leading to pressure on physicians for wanton prescriptions of Cipro.

Despite the expectations of media criticism literature and to its credit, the *L.A. Times* has covered impacts on businesses and impacts on workers in roughly equal numbers in front screen stories. The paper was careful to draw out the job losses cascading from these events, despite Congressional and Presidential focus on the needs of the businesses ordering the layoffs.

CONCLUSION

For people involved in clearing the rubble, restoring the full functionality of New York, rebuilding the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and trying to mitigate the risk of any similar event striking their regions, the disaster stories are being gradually submerged under the stories of war. While the war takes more and more media attention away from the needs of the victimized people and places, their needs are not just gradually and proportionally fading away at this point. Those responsible for recovery will have to work to get the media to focus on the needs still lingering after this unprecedented military strike, criminal action, and disaster.

The following recommendations follow from other work I have done on media and disasters (Rodrigue, Rovai, and Place 1997; Rovai and Rodrigue 1998; Rodrigue 2001b; Rodrigue 2001c):

- First, government agencies and NGOs can actively cultivate personal relationships between particular reporters and particular representatives of their organizations. A good example of this is the relationship of national media with seismologists Kate Hutton and Lucy Jones of Caltech and the U.S. Geological Survey, respectively. Journalists face extreme time pressure on stories like these and work in a competitive environment. Anything that can make them use their time more effectively and promote accuracy in their final product is appreciated. One of the most helpful things for them in doing their jobs quickly and accurately is simply knowing who the peer-respected experts are ahead of time. Many reporters develop particular "beats" and are open to deepening their knowledge of those areas. Agencies and NGOs with responsibilities for disaster preparation or response will not be wasting their valuable time by sharing it with interested individual reporters on a regular basis.
- Second, those in non-governmental and victim advocacy organizations are in a position to play to the media's need for human drama by generating "newsworthy" events, including demonstrations. A common framework for a story is to express the pertinent information through an emotionally-engaging human interest angle. The conflict and drama of a demonstration or staged confrontation may generate the coverage needed to set issues of victim needs on the political agenda.
- Third, the Internet can be used to generate public interest in and support for victims' needs and the organizations trying to meet them. Other work of mine has shown the stunning efficacy of Internet organizing in public risk debates (Rodrigue 2001a; Rodrigue 2001c). While the web is all the rage, it is e-mail, listservers, and news groups that proved the most effective channels. These channels enable exponential expansion of a message to reach an audience of a size and geographical scope once the domain exclusively of national media conglomerates. Getting a message onto listservers or news groups can lead to readers forwarding it to all of their Internet friends, who forward it to theirs, and so forth. The organization of protests around the meetings of the World Trade Organization is just one example of how effective these new media can be. Disaster managers and victim advocates would benefit from studying Internet organizing around a variety of political issues and working out similar techniques that might be relevant and appropriate to their own mandates.

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FIGURES

Figure 1. Key Themes by Week

Key Themes by Week	context	diplomacy	impact	investigation	military	mitigation	reactions	reconstruction	response	restoration	other related	unrelated	SUMS
Week 1 #	0	1	5	11	9	1	12	0	5	8	1	0	53
(%)	(0.0)	(1.9)	(9.4)	(20.8)	(17.0)	(1.9)	(22.6)	(0.0)	(9.4)	(15.1)	(1.9)	(0.0)	(100.0)
Week 2 #	1	2	5	8	12	1	16	1	4	1	1	0	52
(%)	(1.9)	(3.8)	(9.6)	(15.4)	(23.1)	(1.9)	(30.8)	(1.9)	(7.7)	(1.9)	(1.9)	(0.0)	(100.0)
Week 3 #	0	6	4	3	5	8	6	0	4	6	0	4	46
(%)	(0.0)	(13.0)	(8.7)	(6.5)	(10.9)	(17.4)	(13.0)	(0.0)	(8.7)	(13.0)	(0.0)	(8.7)	(100.0)
Week 4 #	2	10	3	3	8	1	1	2	0	1	4	13	48
(%)	(4.2)	(20.8)	(6.3)	(6.3)	(16.7)	(2.1)	(2.1)	(4.2)	(0.0)	(2.1)	(8.3)	(27.1)	(100.0)
Week 5 #	1	2	1	5	10	2	0	0	1	0	4	20	46
(%)	(2.2)	(4.3)	(2.2)	(10.9)	(21.7)	(4.3)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(2.2)	(0.0)	(8.7)	(43.5)	(100.0)

Week 6 #	0	2	2	7	8	0	0	0	1	0	3	19	43
(%)	(0.0)	(4.7)	(7.0)	(16.3)	(18.6)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(2.3)	(0.0)	(7.0)	(44.2)	(100.0)
Week 7 #	0	0	6	5	7	3	2	1	1	0	0	20	45
(%)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(13.3)	(11.1)	(15.6)	(6.7)	(4.4)	(2.2)	(2.2)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(44.4)	(100.0)
Week 8 #	0	2	2	5	7	1	9	1	2	1	0	19	49
(%)	(0.0)	(4.1)	(4.1)	(10.2)	(14.3)	(2.0)	(18.4)	(2.0)	(4.1)	(2.0)	(0.0)	(38.8)	(100.0)
Week 9* #	0	5	0	2	10	1	3	0	0	0	1	17	39
(%)	(0.0)	(12.8)	(0.0)	(5.1)	(25.6)	(2.6)	(7.7)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(2.6)	(43.6)	(100.0)
Week 10* #	0	6	0	2	10	3	4	1	0	2	0	15	43
(%)	(0.0)	(14.0)	(0.0)	(4.7)	(23.3)	(7.0)	(9.3)	(2.3)	(0.0)	(4.7)	(0.0)	(34.9)	(100.0)
Week 11 #	1	0	2	3	9	1	0	2	1	0	0	28	47
(%)	(2.1)	(0.0)	(4.3)	(6.4)	(19.1)	(2.1)	(0.0)	(4.3)	(2.1)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(59.6)	(100.0)
Week 12 #	1	2	4	3	8	2	2	1	0	0	0	24	47
(%)	(2.1)	(4.3)	(8.5)	(6.4)	(17.0)	(4.3)	(4.3)	(2.1)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(51.1)	(100.0)
All 12 Weeks #	6	38	35	57	103	24	55	9	19	19	14	179	558
(%)	(1.1)	(6.8)	(6.3)	(10.2)	(18.5)	(4.3)	(9.9)	(1.6)	(3.4)	(3.4)	(2.5)	(32.1)	(100.0)

Figure 2. Metastories by Week

Weeks ---> Metastories ↓	week 1	week 2	week 3	week 4	week 5	week 6	week 7	week 8	week 9	week 10	week 11	week 12	1st 12 weeks
War story #	11	15	19	21	15	10	10	10	16	19	10	12	168
(%)	(20.8)	(28.8)	(41.3)	(43.8)	(32.6)	(23.3)	(22.2)	(22.2)	(41.8)	(44.2)	(21.3)	(25.5)	(30.1)
Crime story #	11	8	3	4	5	7	5	5	3	2	3	3	59
(%)	(20.8)	(15.4)	(6.5)	(8.3)	(10.9)	(16.3)	(11.1)	(10.2)	(7.7)	(4.7)	(6.4)	(6.4)	(10.6)
Disaster story #	31	29	20	10	6	7	10	15	3	7	6	8	152
(%)	(58.5)	(55.8)	(43.5)	(20.8)	(13.0)	(16.3)	(22.2)	(30.6)	(7.7)	(16.3)	(12.8)	(17.0)	(27.2)
Unrelated story #	0	0	4	13	20	19	20	19	17	15	28	24	179
(%)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(8.7)	(27.1)	(43.5)	(44.2)	(44.4)	(38.8)	(43.6)	(34.9)	(59.6)	(51.1)	(32.1)
SUMS # (100.0%)	53	52	46	48	46	43	45	49	39	43	47	47	558

Figure 3. Reference Timeline of News Events

Events that Week | v Weeks --->	week 1	week 2	week 3	week 4	week 5	week 6	week 7	week 8	week 9	week 10	week 11	week 12
WTC/Pentagon plane-bombings *Airports reopen* *Stock markets reopen*	1											
First hate-killing in L.A. *First peace protests* *First celebrity fund-raiser*		2										
Pakistan allies with US *First unrelated story on front page* *First report of Special Forces in Afghanistan*			3									
Anthrax in Florida *First airstrikes* *Russian jet struck by missle*				4								
Anthrax in New York *First errant bomb kills non-combatants* *Anthrax in DC (Daschle)*					5							
Anthrax in New Jersey *First ground force military engagement* *Shift of bombing from cities to battlefields*						6						
Anthrax spreading *Air strikes and ground involvement increase* *FBI warns of new threats*							7					
Bin Laden videotape *Economic downturn* *FBI: warning not credible after CA gov's measures*								8				
US diplomacy on several fronts *Plane crashes in Brooklyn* *Taliban defeats*									9			
Anthrax seems to be domestic terrorism *Hostage aid workers rescued* *Problems distributing aid to 9/11 victims*										10		
Taliban collapsing *International terrorism: Madrid, Indonesia* *Taliban prison revolt*											11	
Recession deepening *First American to die in combat* *American Taliban*												12

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