MEDIA CULTURE &SOCIETY

Democracy or polyarchy? US-funded media developments in Afghanistan and Iraq post 9/11

Michael J. Barker
Griffith University, Australia

Introduction

In the last few decades, the promotion of democracy (or democratic enlargement) has come to prominence as an integral legitimizing force for US foreign policy, helping fuel the myth that America is a benign and democratic leader of international affairs. This myth has survived, in spite of a well documented (but often ignored) historical record, which has shown that from 1945 onwards 'the United States attempted to overthrow more than 40 foreign governments', 'crush more than 30 populist-nationalist movements' (Blum, 2000: 2) and provided support to right-wing terrorist (stay behind) armies in every European country throughout the Cold War (Ganser, 2005). Nonetheless, President Reagan (1982) was publicly applauded when he said he would 'foster the infrastructure of democracy' to allow people 'to choose their own way'; President Clinton, with more candour, celebrated the need for more 'democracy… particularly in countries of strategic importance to us' (White House, 1996); and President George W. Bush has regularly stated that 'the US is the most democratic country on earth'. It comes as no surprise then that the American media serves an essential role for the government, legitimizing their governance, and manufacturing public consent for often decidedly antidemocratic and repressive policies (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). Numerous studies have documented how the US government has been able to exploit the system-supportive tendencies of the mainstream media to justify overt wars (Keeble, 1997; Mowlana et al., 1992), cover-up covert wars (Herman and Chomsky, 1988), legitimize controversial 'humanitarian' interventions (Hammond and Herman, 2000; Robinson, 2000), marginalize genocides in

Media, Culture & Society © 2008 SAGE Publications (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi and Singapore), Vol. 30(1): 109–130
[ISSN: 0163-4437 DOI: 10.1177/0163443708088615]

which their government is implicated (Holder, 2004), and manufacture public consent for economic sanctions that wrought genocide on Iraqi children (Herring, 2004). The media has also effectively ignored internal 'wars' waged by intelligence agencies against both American citizens and their media outlets (Armstrong, 1981: 37–159; Mackenzie, 1997; Rips, 1981).

Post 9/11, the American media have waged a relentless propaganda offensive against the public on behalf of President George W. Bush's administration, successfully persuading a significant proportion of the domestic population that the annihilation of Afghanistan and Iraq was both necessary and justified (Friel and Falk, 2004; Kumar, 2006; Miller, 2004a). Indeed, surveys conducted before, during, and after the war on Iraq illustrate that a high percentage of Americans believed one of the following myths propagated by the Bush administration: (1) that there was a demonstrated link between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda, (2) that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, and (3) that the war had international legitimacy (Kull et al., 2003; Kull, 2004). The degree to which public opinion can be effectively moulded by elite decision makers is disturbing; however, instead of dwelling on the well documented democratic deficits of the US's own local media, specifically in regards to the wars on Afghanistan and Iraq, this paper critically examines the US's influence on the development of any independent media outlets found within these occupied countries. In light of the fact that the US government took a lead role in instigating both wars and in promoting independent media organizations within both countries, American based democracy promoting organizations will be the primary focus of this study. To begin, this paper will sketch out the recent changes in US foreign policy which have led to a focus on promoting democracy in foreign countries, of which the promotion of independent media outlets is just one small but vital part.

Historical precedents: exporting democracy

For most of the Cold War, the dominant paradigm of development studies was modernization theory, which asserted that for the seed of democracy to grow in third world countries they would first have to become 'modern'. Unfortunately, this approach to promoting global democracy was fairly pragmatic and in many cases '[a]uthoritarian arrangements were judged to be the most expedient means of assuring stability and social control in the Third World' (Robinson, 1996: 15). Partly in response to these antidemocratic modernizing arrangements, the late 1960s and 1970s witnessed a global blossoming of social movements, united in their demands for the replacement of elite-driven democracies and dictatorships with more equitable and participatory forms of governance. Moreover, the exposure of the criminal nature of many of the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) operations undertaken – in the name of democracy – against both domestic and foreign populations, only

served to fuel popular resistance to US imperialism (Blum, 2004; Churchill and Wall, 1990). Faced with this massive display of opposition to American global hegemony, influential modernization scholars, working under the remit of the Trilateral Commission, controversially concluded that the problems stemmed from an 'excess of democracy' which could only be quelled 'by a greater degree of moderation in democracy' (Crozier et al., 1975: 134). One can begin to understand this elitist diagnosis, when considering Pateman's (1989: 79) observation that the dominant political and economic elites in the US posited that true democracy rested 'not on the participation of the people, but on their nonparticipation.' Consequently, to avert this apparent *Crisis of Democracy*, US policy planners began searching for new strategies to diffuse the masses' inconvenient desire to participate in democracy. Towards the end of the 1970s, this search was successfully concluded when policy planners ironically latched upon William Douglas's (1972) previously marginalized concept of promoting democracy.

The political adoption of Douglas's (1972) proposed democratic solution was first utilized under President Jimmy Carter, who implemented what Wheaton (1980) described as a policy of *'Democratization' in the Dominican Republic*. Following Douglas's theoretical prescriptions, similar democratization strategies were carried out through the provision of strategic support to indigenous democratic forces within target countries, with the aim of promoting 'regimented democracy' (instead of authoritarianism). The concept of 'promoting democracy' was quickly endorsed by both Democrats and Republicans. Wiarda points out, that the passion with which the Reagan administration went on to promote this policy shift had a lot to do with their recognition that Congress, the public, and their foreign allies were 'much more cooperative and supportive' when the goals of US policy were 'presented as "democracy"' (1990: 147). This tactical play on words is in keeping with earlier rhetorical transitions within academia, which have successfully substituted the word propaganda with public relations, and recast psychological warfare research as mass communications research (Simpson, 1994). Subsequently in 1984, with bipartisan support, these new 'democratic' strategies were institutionalized within the US foreign policy making establishment through the creation of a Congressionally funded non-governmental organization (NGO), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

The NED's role in 'promoting democracy' is particularly crucial to the implementation of US foreign policy, as its nongovernmental status allows it to 'legally' intervene in sovereign countries to direct funding for larger agencies, like the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the CIA. This coordinating role helps explain why the NED's budget is relatively low compared to other government agencies. During the 1990s, Congressional funding for the NED amounted to around US$30 million a year; in 2005, increased recognition of the NED's work caused it's funding to reach an all time high of US$80 million (Rieffer and Mercer, 2005: 397).

Unfortunately, '[h]uman rights talk has not been accompanied by human rights behaviors' (Mertus, 2004: 1) and apart from a change in semantics, very little differentiates the 'new' NED strategies from the ones of it's predecessors (Robinson, 1996).[1] The NED's first president effectively agreed with this statement when he noted that '[a] lot of what we do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA' (cited in Ignatius, 1991). Thus, the US government was 'talking democracy' in the late 1970's, while simultaneously laying the foundations for a 'War on Terror' – a 'war' which proved to be a useful ideological construct to justify interventionist foreign policies (often) carried out hand-in-glove with 'democracy promoting' activities (Ahmed, 2005; Robinson, 1996: 89).

The seminal study on the 'democracy promoting' establishment in America, is Robinson's (1996) *Promoting Polyarchy,* which examined the NED's interventions in Chile, Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Philippines. Robinson concluded that despite the democratic rhetoric emanating from groups like the NED, the main purpose of 'promoting democracy' was actually to suppress popular desire for progressive social change. Since his pioneering study, a number of other scholars have supported his findings, demonstrating that the activities of 'democracy promoting' organizations are usually strongly tied to the interests of transnational capitalism and/or US geo-strategic ambitions (Gills, 2000; Saltman, 2006; Taylor, 2002). Until recently though, no researcher has critically reflected on the relevance of Robinson's (1996) polyarchy thesis to the promotion of independent media organizations overseas. Therefore, it is vital that the media's role in promoting polyarchy is discussed in the context of the post 9/11 invasions, as PR-friendly 'democracy promoting' efforts now appear to be playing a central legitimizing role for wars. By examining how the US has promoted independent media institutions within Afghanistan and Iraq, this paper will illustrate how these activities first and foremost satisfy the interests of transnational capitalist elites, while simultaneously neutralizing the roots of popular unrest by promoting low-intensity democracy (Gills, 1993). The following discussion makes no claim to be an exhaustive analysis of the development of 'independent' media outlets within Afghanistan and Iraq, but merely aims to illustrate the diversity of tactics available to foreign policy planners to promote polyarchy (or low-intensity democracy) through the use of media interventions.[2]

Media in Afghanistan

On 7 October 2001, an international coalition led by the US, and supported by the UN, began an aerial bombing campaign against Afghanistan (and the Taliban). Prior to the invasion, most of the Taliban's public broadcasting was carried by *Radio Shariat*; its headquarters were one of the first 'military' targets of the war, enabling the coalition to quickly replace Taliban broadcasts with US war propaganda (Johnston, 2001; Stone, 2001). Thus, right from the start of the

war a key component of the coalition's military strategy was the maintenance of 'information dominance' (Miller, 2004b). Later on the US took this information dominance to extremes by warning reporters in Afghanistan that *all* satellite uplinks from the war zone would be considered legitimate military targets (Gopsill, 2004). On 8 April 2003, the US made good on this illegal threat by killing two journalists in its attacks on *Abu Dhabi TV* and *Al Jazeera*.

A year later, the war was declared over, despite the fact that the main goal of the war – to capture Osma Bin Laden – remaining unfulfilled. Since then, international media coverage of events within Afghanistan has dropped off to almost nothing, being overshadowed by the reporting of the Iraq invasion (Robertson, 2003; Stabile and Kumar, 2005). With the current Afghan humanitarian crisis hidden from sight (for the most part), the international community can conveniently assume that democracy is now taking hold in Afghanistan, as witnessed by the recent 'democratic' (or rather polyarchic) elections (Kolhatkar and Ingalls, 2006). The following discussion will attempt to describe how the promotion of independent media in the aftermath of the war on Afghanistan has helped to produce such polyarchic outcomes. Before outlining these media developments, however, it is worth considering how the US similarly 'supported democracy' and 'independent media' in Afghanistan during the later stages of the Cold War. Throughout the 1980's the US was heavily involved in Afghanistan, funding so-called 'pro-democracy' groups, like the Mujahideen, which in 1987 alone received $630 million for its war against the Soviet occupying forces (Rubin, 1995: 180). Afghanistan was also the training ground for Osma Bin Laden, whose rise to leadership of the Mujahideen, crucially occurred 'with the full approval of the Saudi regime and the CIA' (Cooley, 2000: 120). Furthermore, by 1988 'with US knowledge, Bin Laden created Al-Qaeda (The Future): a conglomerate of quasi-independent Islamic terrorist cells spread across at least 26 countries' (Bedi, 2001). During this time, large amounts of money were provided to similar 'pro-democracy' groups for media development and in 1985, the US Information Agency (USIA) obtained $0.5 million to promote an independent media service in Afghanistan (Snyder, 1995: 207). 'Independent media', in this case, meant supporting Afghan 'self-determination' by helping the Mujahideen publicize their cause internationally through the creation of the Afghan Media Resource Center (AMRC). As Synder (1995: 211) observed, the 'AMRC[s] policy manual specified that every employee should be obedient to the Islamic faith and "must honestly and generously sacrifice for Holy Jihad."' USAID also funded the production of school textbooks designed to promote religious fundamentalism and hatred for the Soviets (Stephens and Ottaway, 2002). However, despite professing a desire to promote democracy, once the Soviets withdrew in 1989:

Afghanistan lost its strategic value to the United States, prompting abrupt disengagement from a renewed conflict the United States had been instrumental in generating. Furthermore, the US Agency for International Development withdrew funding from hundreds of health clinics, a medical

supply system, and training programs in rural Afghanistan (Donini, 1996: 51), leaving the NGOs that had been conduits of US policy with limited financial support to continue their activities. (Terry, 2002: 81)

Although funding was drastically reduced after 1989 (and officially cut off in 1991), the NED continued to fund a number of Afghan groups. The NED's online Democracy Projects Database shows that between 1990 and 2001 just over $300,000 was provided to organizations working in Afghanistan on *media and publishing* projects, and a further $240,000 was distributed for projects which included a partial media and publishing component.[3] Contrary to popular belief then, the US government never really pulled out of Afghanistan, and it turns out that they were in fact also heavily involved in shaping historic developments within Afghanistan. For example, the CIA supported the creation of the Taliban and aided their rise to power in the mid-1990's, and the US government allowed the oil giant UNOCAL and energy corporation ENRON to provide millions of dollars to the Taliban to help secure the development of a geostrategically important oil pipeline (Ahmed, 2005: 19–22). The intimate relationship between the US and the Taliban began to sour in 1998, when the Taliban adopted an increasingly anti-American stance and the oil pipeline project was dropped by UNOCAL. After this, the US began to consider the use of military force to 'stabilize' Afghanistan. In fact, just two days before 9/11, President George W. Bush was provided with a National Security Presidential Directive which outlined military plans to invade Afghanistan (Ahmed, 2005: 29).

Promoting 'independent media' in Afghanistan

With the 'end' of the war, the reconstruction of Afghanistan's media outlets under US direction began as promptly as they had been destroyed, illustrating the vital role US policymakers consider the media to play in the 'promotion of democracy.' Responsibility for overseeing the media development in Afghanistan rested primarily with the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), which maintains an important position in the US's 'democracy promoting' apparatus, sitting within USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance. The OTI is well funded, and between 1994 and 2004 it spent $745 million in twenty-four foreign interventions, $325 million of which was for work in Afghanistan and Iraq. Although only a small proportion of this money was for media development, Rotberg (2005: 18) noted that media development work is 'an area in which OTI has made outstanding, almost unique, contributions to the development of new nations and new societies.'

The USAID/OTI coalition set out three primary media goals for their mission in Afghanistan, these were to (1) create 'Western-style media law,' (2) produce new radio programs and research materials to enable the Afghan government to

'highlight progress and educate the public about important national and development issues,' and (3) support 'the first truly independent radio stations in Afghanistan' (USAID/OTI, 2005: 29). Bearing in mind the US's controversial history in Afghanistan, it seems wise to cast a critical eye over these strategic objectives for developing the media environment in Afghanistan. The first USAID/OTI coalition goal typifies the polyarchic strategies commonly employed in 'democracy promoting' projects, which sees the wholesale transplant of liberal democratic (or more often neoliberal) policies overseas (Robinson, 1996). The second goal does not clarify which 'important' issues would be prioritized for media distribution, although it seems likely that these would be strongly influenced by the US's geopolitical concerns for the region (as will become apparent in the following discussion). The third media development objective sounds more positive, as it places a strong emphasis on promoting *truly* independent media: furthermore, USAID/OTI (2005: 29) has acknowledged that this part has been the most successfully implemented. The crucial issue to question regarding this last objective is the US's definition of independent media. Here it seems that the US is not promoting *truly* independent media (in an autonomous sense), but instead aims to create and nurture market-driven media systems that are independent of state support, but dependent on advertising – an emphasis that many scholars would agree is the perfect way to promote low-intensity democracy (Berry and Theobald, 2006; McChesney, 2004).

According to USAID researcher Lisa Hartenberger (2005: 231) the OTI spent $67 million in Afghanistan between October 2001 and June 2005, of which around $23 million was spent on increasing the capacity of Afghan media. The largest OTI media grant was provided to the American NGO Internews, which received $4 million to create a nationwide network of independent community radio stations (Rohde, 2005: 20). A joint effort between USAID and the European Commission then created the Tanin distribution network, in order to distribute radio programming along with the most popular newspapers and magazines to these radio stations (Kumar, 2006: 130). In 2002, the London-based Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) also received $80,000 from the OTI to create a national news agency called the Bakhtar Information Agency.

Another significant OTI media project involved the creation of the Killid Media Group (KMG) in 2002. This news group was founded by Iraqi exile Aziz Hakimi with $400,000 from the OTI and $1 million from the European Commission (Rohde, 2005: 22). One can imagine, that this high level of financial support has greatly helped KMG, which now publishes the country's two largest magazines, the news magazine *Killid Weekly* and a women's magazine called *Mursal* (www.thekillidgroup.com). In August 2003, KMG also launched *Radio Killid Kabul*, a private talk radio station, which was also set up with assistance from Internews.

Although Aziz Hakimi founded KMG, the news network was launched by the Afghan NGO, Development and Humanitarian Services for Afghanistan

(DHSA), which also runs a number of other media outlets in Afghanistan (Internews, 2004). DHSA is linked to a number of 'democracy promoting' organizations. Its director, Shahir Zahine, sits on the advisory committee for the Fund for Women's Rights in Afghanistan, a side project of Rights and Democracy – the Canadian counterpart to the NED (Rights and Democracy, 2004: 1). Furthermore, according to DHSA's most recent audit, its largest donor is Creative Associates International (CAII), from whom they received $1.2 million in 2004, and $1.7 million in 2005 (Rafaquat Babar & Co, 2006: 7).[4] CAII's involvement with DHSA is a crucial indicator of the importance of KMG to the promotion of polyarchy in Afghanistan. Ever since the early 1980s, CAII has been involved with the NED in 'projects that merged development work with political, military, and economic influence strategies on the part of the US' (Saltman, 2006: 26). Indeed, as Saltman (2006: 28) illustrates, CAII's recruitment by the US government to coordinate educational development in Afghanistan and Iraq is an integral component of their polyarchic plans for the region.

While the previous examples illustrated the promotion of non-profit 'independent' media operations in Afghanistan, the OTI also supports for-profit media. A $2.2 million grant went to two Afghan-Australian brothers to create Afghanistan's first private media outlets, *Radio Arman* and *Tolo TV* (Rohde, 2005: 21). If the unstated goal of OTI funds is to promote polyarchy, then it seems like these radio stations are doing just that. A recent USAID/OTI (2005: 15) evaluation report concluded that both of these private broadcasters have 'fail[ed] to carry out any journalistic or public service role.' The report also recognized that, as US funding is phased out, this 'failure' will force smaller community stations to focus more on entertainment than public service functions if they are to remain competitive. As Hartenberger (2005: 256) admits, such changes will make it particularly hard 'for smaller media organizations, not working within the Internews broadcast network, to access funding.' However, despite acknowledging the serious problems facing community broadcasters, Kumar (2006: 137–8) notes that USAID still provided *Radio Arman* with grants to 'establish repeat stations in Afghan providences', where non-profit community radio stations are already struggling to make ends meet. An additional problem facing community broadcasters is that many foreign personnel, working in provincial reconstruction teams, view US-funded radio stations as tools for their 'public affairs and psychological operations messages' (Kumar, 2006: 135). Kumar (2006: 135) suggests that 'USAID and Internews are aware of the challenge' of preventing community radio stations being seen as US propaganda tools: but it still remains to be seen how serious they are in tackling the root cause of this confusion, which would appear to stem from the US's overarching interest to promote polyarchy in Afghanistan.

In contrast to the OTI, which has lavished tens of millions of dollars on promoting 'independent' media in Afghanistan, the NED spent only $438,000 on *media and publishing* projects between 2001 and 2004, and a further

$255,000 on projects that had a media component. However, in no way should that belittle the significance of their efforts, because support from the NED usually paves the way for funding from other more lucrative 'democracy promoting' organizations (Robinson and Gindin, 2005).

In 2001, three Afghan groups received NED funds for media projects, the Afghanistan Study Center ($24,000), the Afghanistan Information Center (which received $24,000 to help produce their quarterly magazine *Afghanistan Program*), and the AMRC ($10,000). The following year the International Republican Institute (IRI) also received a $225,000 media grant from the NED to work with the AMRC and its newspaper, *Erada* (Afghanistan's only national daily newspaper). In addition, the National Commission on Human Rights in Afghanistan received a $30,000 NED grant (in 2002), part of which was to be used for *media and publishing*. In 2003, another $225,000 NED grant was given to the IRI for *media and publishing*, *conflict resolution* and *education*. This grant also enabled the IRI to work more closely with the Afghan NGO Coordination Bureau and the Association for Democracy in Afghanistan. The NED continued to show its support for *Erada* in 2004 by giving the IRI a further $155,000. The high level of patronage shown by the NED for the AMRC and its paper *Erada* suggests that it continues to play an important role in their plans to 'promote democracy' in Afghanistan. Therefore it is fitting, that 'USAID granted $1 million to Internews to revive independent broadcast media' through the AMRC (Hume, 2004).

Another media NGO working in Afghanistan with direct links to the NED is a Canadian charitable organization, the Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society (IMPACS). In 2003, IMPACS worked closely with the IWPR and Internews to lead *The Loya Jirga Reporting Project* – with funding provided by USAID and the Canadian International Development Agency. In addition to this project, IMPACS launched Afghanistan's first independent political newspaper for women, *Rah-e-Naw*, and four independent women-managed radio stations – which together form the Parwana Media Network (www.impacs-afghanistan.org). IMPACS work appears to be tied to the US's 'democracy promoting' initiatives, as one of their Directors, Les Campbell, is also the Senior Associate for Strategy and Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (one of the NED's core grantees). Furthermore Ed Broadbent, a former President of Rights and Democracy, was also a board member of IMPACS from 1997 to 2003 (IMPACS, 2006).

Three months before Afghanistan's September 2005 elections, OTI handed Afghanistan's media program over to USAID's Democracy and Governance sector. As the OTI's work in Afghanistan was wound down in 2005 in preparation for the handover, it seems logical to assume that transitional media grants might also be gradually reduced. Instead, the opposite happened, with OTI grants being greatest in 2005. A closer look at their grant allocations reveals that from October 2001 to January 2004 the OTI spent $7.3 million on

media development in Afghanistan, but in the year prior to the 2005 elections (from February 2004 to July 2005) its media budget was $15 million (Hartenberger, 2005: 231; USAID, 2005). This use of OTI funds does match with the participatory rhetoric accompanying its aid, but assuming the goal of media development is to promote polyarchy, then such an electoral focus makes perfect sense. Robinson (1996: 111) has referred to this tactic – routinely used by NED – as an 'electoral intervention', whereby 'US teams attempt to shape and manage (and, under certain circumstances, to hijack) indigenous political processes and to latch them on to transnational political processes.' Robinson (1996: 146) also illustrated – in his analysis of the US electoral intervention project in Nicaragua – that success can only 'be understood only when seen in its entirety – as a skilful combin[ation] of military aggression, economic blackmail, CIA propaganda, NED political interference, coercive diplomacy, and international pressures into a coherent and unitary strategy.' Key to the success of the US's military and electoral 'interventions' in Afghanistan was its ability to sustain domestic support for its policies, or to at least ensure that dissenting voices were silenced in the mainstream media. Here the US media proved itself admirably capable of defending the US government's distorted version of reality, and in no small part helped to enable the US to move smoothly from a war on Afghanistan to an illegal war on Iraq.

Media in Iraqi

One of the first bombing targets in the war on Iraq was *Iraqi TV* – it was demolished on 25 March 2003. When the US troops reached Baghdad a few weeks later, they launched a similar attack on *Al-Jazeera* (Herman, 2005a). Pre-war media manoeuvres, however, were well underway before this invasion, with a US-funded 'media war' in operation since the first Gulf War. Indeed, prior to the launch of the military offensive in 2003, at least 27 separate opposition radio stations were broadcasting into Iraq (for further details see, Radio Netherlands Media Network, 2003). In addition, to ensure that desirable media groups thrived in this *war of ideas*, the NED granted $260,000 for *media and publishing* projects between 1991 and 2003, and a further $430,000 for work which included a *media and publishing* component. The following brief examination of the NED's activity during this time provides a useful insight into their post-invasion 'democracy promoting' plans for Iraq.

One prominent group supported by the NED throughout the 1990s is the Free Iraq Foundation (FIF), which received regular funding to publicize its work and produce its *Iraqi Issues* newsletter. Founded in 1991 by two Iraqi exiles, FIF is indicative of the type of organization the NED supports, as the year after its creation FIF received a grant from the Bradley Foundation, a foundation which is well known for supporting neoconservatives (Media Transparency 2004). FIF has also worked closely with the neoconservative-supported Foundation for the

Defense of Democracies to create the Iraq-America Freedom Alliance (Hanieh, 2006; McCarthy, 2003). More recently, FIF has received strong support from the US government which gave them $1.6 million in 2003 (which was 98.5 percent of their income for that year) (Guidestar 2004). Furthermore, relations between the NED and FIF are more intimate than their funding links suggest, as 'a former board member of the [Free] Iraq Foundation, Laith Kubba, is currently the senior NED program officer for the Middle East and North Africa' (Hanieh, 2006).

Another group that has received NED funds for media projects is the American Society for Kurds (ASK). In 2001, ASK received $40,000 from the NED to train 100 journalists in the rights, duties and role of journalists in democratic societies, and the following year they obtained a further $74,000 to carry out a series of workshops on press-law reform. The role of ASK in promoting Iraqi polyarchy is perhaps best revealed by a 2005 workshop they co-hosted with the Center for International Private Enterprise (a core NED grantee) entitled *A Free Market and Democratic System in Iraq* (ASK, 2005).

Promoting 'independent media' in Iraqi

An integral date for finalizing post-invasion media strategies was June 2003, when a conference hosted by Internews and the World Bank developed a blueprint for media regulation and legislation for Iraq (Annon, 2003).[5] Although this *Framework for Change* proved influential initially, it was later dropped by most parties involved, as the complex realities of the Iraqi conflict became apparent (International Media Support, 2005: 11).

In Iraq the allocation of media reconstruction grants started early, and more than a week before the US officially started bombing Iraq, the Pentagon gave a $15 million contract to Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) to revive Iraq's national broadcasting system, and convert it into a Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) administered Iraqi Media Network (IMN). The now well established IMN has three core components, the *Al-Iraqiya* television network, the daily newspaper *Al-Sabah*, and a radio network. Despite being touted by the US as an independent media network, the initial IMN project grant was issued from a division of the Defence Department that ran psyops (psychological warfare operations), while SAIC itself was a major Defence Department and CIA contractor (Chatterjee, 2004). Ironically, for an organization entrusted with developing a democratic media in Iraq, SAIC's press officers have been reported as being 'notorious for not providing information' (Dauenhauer and Lobe, 2003). Perhaps it was fitting then, that the man initially placed in charge of IMN was Robert Reilly, 'an outspoken right-wing ideologue who began his public career in the 1980s as a propagandist in the White House for the Nicaraguan contras' (Dauenhauer and Lobe, 2003). On another point of interest, all of SAIC's

contracts were issued by the US Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Douglas Feith, whose principal deputy, Christopher Ryan Henry, had been working as the head of strategic development at SAIC until just prior to the war on Iraq (Calbreath, 2004). David Kay, a SAIC employee until October 2002 and former UN weapons inspector also played an important role in pushing for the invasion of Iraq: while employed by the CIA he warned Congress that Saddam was just months away from developing nuclear missiles. Retired Army General Wayne Downing (who was a former chief counter-terrorism expert on the National Security Council) also sits on SAIC's board; in the past he has also lobbied for Ahmad Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress (Dauenhauer and Lobe, 2003).

Like many of the Iraqi reconstruction contracts granted by the US government, SAIC's contract was issued with no competitive bidding. SAIC obtained seven such no-bid contracts for work in Iraq, one was even to provide advice on the US democracy promotion process. Another $33 million contract (issued before the war) was given to SAIC to create a secret shadow government made up of Iraqi exiles called the Iraq Reconstruction and Development Council – a predecessor to the Iraqi Governing Council (Calbreath, 2004; Rohde, 2005: 9). (The members of this council discussed in the following section are Ahmed Chalabi and Ayad Allawi: in addition, a former member of the council, Kanan Makiya, has also been involved in media related work in Iraq.) Interestingly, all five Iraqi-Americans who went on to run the IMN were members of this Pentagon-backed exile government, including the Chief Executive Officer Shameem Rassam (who is also an SAIC subcontractor) and Alaa Fa'ik who was placed second in command at IMN (Chatterjee, 2004; Kraner, 2003). By the time the initial IMN contract expired and was put up for competitive bidding in January 2004, SAIC had spent $82 million on the IMN project. Florida-based Harris Communications then took over from SAIC and was awarded a $96 million contract to run the IMN, which was later extended with another $22 million contract.

In May 2004, Jalal al-Mashta became head of IMN, but just six months later he resigned due to the overt attempts by the US to manipulate the IMN (House of Commons, 2005: 116; Haner, 2004).[6] One year earlier, Don North, a former adviser and trainer at *Al-Iraqiya* television made a similar claim, noting that 'IMN has become an irrelevant mouthpiece for CPA propaganda, managed news and mediocre foreign programs' (Krane, 2003). North testified before Congress in February 2005 saying that American officials had told him that 'we were running a public diplomacy operation' for the occupation authority and that the network had been given 'a laundry list of CPA activities to cover' (Margasak, 2005). Recent reports also illustrate how the CPA has clamped down on media freedom in Iraq, with allied soldiers raiding newspaper offices and shutting down at least two newspapers and one radio station for violating CPA regulations (Williams, 2003). This is especially significant, as a review of all international support for media development in Iraq

from 2003 to 2005 concluded that the CPA was 'by far the most influential actor in post-invasion media developments' (International Media Support, 2005: 7). Similar tactics to those employed by the CPA are now being used by the newly formed Iraqi Communications and Media Commission (established by the US in March 2004), which have been used to stop *Al-Arabiya* and *Al-Jazeera* from broadcasting within Iraq in August 2004 (Cochrane 2005). (*Al-Jazeera* is still banned from operating in Iraq, but *Al-Arabiya* resumed its broadcasting after just one month.)

Although the IMN appears to function as a fairly overt propaganda outlet, the US has also been involved in more clandestine propaganda operations to influence the Iraqi population. For example, the US-based company Lincoln Group have been active in planting stories in the Iraqi media (Mazzetti and Daragahi 2005). *Radio Takrit* also appears to be a 'black clandestine' operation linked to *Al-Mustaqbal*, the radio station ran by the CIA-backed Iraqi National Accord (founded by Dr Ayad Allawi) as it is being broadcast into Iraq via a CIA-owned transmitter (Cockburn and Cockburn, 2002: 45; Lena, 2003: 26).

Many newspapers once produced in exile are now being printed in Baghdad, like the Iraqi National Congress's (INC) *Al-Moutamar* (Fisk, 2003). This paper is important as American support for the INC dates back to its creation shortly after the Persian Gulf War, as in a bid to 'create the conditions for removal of Saddam Hussein from power' the US government provided millions of dollars to the Rendon Group and the CIA to form the INC around a group of Iraqi dissidents led by Ahmed Chalabi and Laith Kubba (Cockburn and Cockburn, 2002: 56; Miller, 2004c). Miller (2004c) notes that the INC's US-supported Information Collection Program – which ran until May 2004 – 'was the source of much of the key intelligence used by the White House to make its case for the Iraq invasion.' In an interesing turn of events, in March 2004 *Al-Moutamar* 'charged that Iraqi government ministries unfairly subsidized *Al-Sabah* by giving it exclusive contracts for government advertising' (Schwartz, 2004). This attack on the US-backed *Al-Sabah* highlights the deteriorating relationship between Chalabi's INC and the US government. Further evidence of the US's low regard for Chalabi was provided a few months later when Hosenball (2004) described how 'US intelligence agencies have recently raised concerns that Chalabi has become too close to Iran's theocratic rulers.' Later on in 2004, Chalabi was accused of laundering counterfeit money, and his nephew Salem was accused of murder by the US administration (Cockburn, 2004).

Fisk (2003) also identified Saad al-Bazzaz's newspaper *Az-Zaman* as another publication which has recently begun being printed in Baghdad, following years of publication in exile. He adds that the *Az-Zaman* 'never refers to the "occupation", only to the "Coalition", America's own favoured expression for the armies of the United States and its allies in Iraq.' *Az-Zaman's* owner Saad al-Bazzaz (also known as the 'Rupert Murdoch of Iraq') not only produces the most widely read daily in Iraq, but also owns *Al-Sharqiya*, Iraq's

first private satellite TV channel (Pallister, 2005). Of more interest though is his Saudi connection, as this new media mogul was taken to court in the UK for allegedly running a covert propaganda campaign funded by the Saudi intelligence (who act as a crucial US ally in the Middle East). Bank statements presented at al-Bazzaz's trial showed how his newspaper had received £2.5 million in funding from Saudi Arabia (Pallister, 2005).

As in all US 'democracy promoting' initiatives, the NED has been actively promoting 'independent' media developments within Iraq, and according to their records between 2003 and 2005 they provided around $325,000 for Iraqi *media and publishing* work. A further $105,000 was allocated for activities for which *media and publishing* was just one component. Over this same period of time, the NED committed around $21 million to all forms of 'democracy promotion' for Iraq, meaning that it spent less than two percent of its Iraqi funds on media projects. In comparison, in the period between the two Gulf wars, much more emphasis on supporting 'independent' media, as the NED distributed nineteen percent of its grants to *media and publishing* projects. Likewise, previous estimates of the NED's support for media work globally is much higher than evident in Iraq: one study determined that nine percent of NED funds were used for 'developing the institutions and activities of a free press' between 1990 to 1997 (Scott and Steele, 2005: 449); while unpublished analyses show that in 2003, fourteen percent of global NED grants were given to *media and publishing* projects. In Iraq then it seems that the low percentage of NED grants committed (post-2003) to media projects is most likely a reflection of the US's record breaking expenditures on developing the IMN. It is also likely that the NED has concealed many media grants from their online database to protect their grantees, as more journalists have been murdered in Iraq than in any other war in history (Santora and Carter, 2006). Consequently, the following discussion of the NED's media activities will likely only graze the surface of their true involvement in promoting 'independent' media in Iraq.

The Iraq Institute for Democracy received a $15,000 NED grant in 2003 to expand the readership of its weekly business newspaper, *Al-Ahali*: this newspaper also received some support from a $134,000 *business and economics* grant given to the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE). The following year CIPE obtained a $3 million grant from the NED to 'foster new business associations and business support organizations' and 'build the information infrastructure to provide a platform for market democratic views' in Iraq. Hanieh (2006) observes that CIPE has been involved in several media projects in Iraq, which include: *Economic Freedom Radio* (launched in June 2004), which is a weekly business talk radio program that serves to 'explain economic policy issues' (CIPE, 2004a); a project which seeks to 'build support for market oriented economic policies' by selecting 'the right journalists' to participate in a journalist training program (CIPE, 2004b); and more recently they have begun broadcasting a weekly TV program called *Economic Files*

(Hanieh, 2006). However despite CIPE's evident involvement in promoting media projects in Iraq, according to the NED's project database, CIPE has never been given a grant for promoting *media and publishing* projects.

Another media outlet which appears to have indirect links to the NED was the daily newspaper *Al-Sabah*, which was created in May 2003 with the help of the Mare Foundation (a Dutch NGO which had a history of working with exiled Iraqi journalists). In 2002, the NED granted the Mare Foundation a $55,000 grant to run a workshop to train 'fifty Iraqi journalists in the diaspora and northern Iraq' and then help them 'form a professional association of Iraqi journalists.' In January 2004, *Al-Sabah*, which had boasted the largest daily circulation in Iraq, came under the remit of the CPA's IMN, but shortly thereafter, most of the staff at *Al-Sabah* quit and announced they were creating a new independent paper called *Al-Sabah al-Jedid* (Schwartz, 2004).

ASUDA Organization for Combating Violence against Women received a $22,000 from the NED in 2003, part of which was used 'to conduct a public awareness seminar in Sulaymania to be aired on local television.' This support continued the following year when they received a further $33,000 (which this time specified a *media and publishing* component). In the same year, the Nahrain Electronic Encyclopedia received a $31,000 grant from the NED to help it 'form a network of young Iraqi writers, reporters and civic activists in Baghdad' and become a 'main source of credible, unbiased news' for young Iraqi's. In 2004, the IWPR was also recruited by the NED to help establish an Iraqi Media Institute with a $109,000 grant, and *AmmanNet* obtained $45,000 'to support the development of innovative and independent media in Iraq' and assist in the development of a regional network of journalists. The incestuous relationship of US-funded media organizations is clearly evident in this latter case, as the founder and director of *AmmanNet*, Daoud Kuttab, was co-director of the Internews Middle East Institute in Jerusalem in 1994. (Internews receives the majority of its funding from the US government and received a start-up grant from the NED between 1990 and 1995.)

One intriguing organization funded by the NED in 2004 was the Iraq Memory Foundation (IMF), which received a $45,000 grant for *human rights* work to 'promote dialogue about understanding of Iraq's past among Iraqi students, educators and decision makers.' Of particular interest are this group's links to US neoconservatives and the IMN. Kanan Makiya, the founder of IMF, is a former member of the Iraqi Governing Council and a member of the neoconservative supported FIF; while another central member of IMF is Mustafa Al-Kadhimiy, who prior to joining IMF served as Director of Planning and Programming for the IMN. Makiya is also currently on the books of the public relations firm Benador Associates, alongside other leading neoconservatives like Richard Perle (Lobe, 2003).

Echoing the situation in Afghanistan, in Iraq there also appears to have been a NED-led media focus on the 'demonstration elections', which are a vital part of the promotion of polyarchy (Herman, 2005b). Thus in 2004 the

Kurdish Institute for Elections received $39,000 to 'advance a democratic culture' and produce a radio program; and the Independent Film and Television College obtained a $50,000 grant to assist filmmakers in producing 'documentaries in the run-up to the national assembly elections' to broadcast on Iraqi national media. Finally, shortly after President George W. Bush declared the US 'mission accomplished' (in June 2004), USAID awarded a $40 million grant to the non-profit America's Development Foundation to set up a Civil Society and Media Support Program in Iraq. To cast away any doubt as to the type of media systems that the US would be working towards creating in Iraq, a USAID (2003) document noted that the aim of their aid programs was to 'build the capacity of the Iraqi Government to manage the transition from a command economy to that of one that is market-driven.'

Conclusions

This paper has demonstrated that the benefits for the general Afghan and Iraqi public derived from the 'promotion of independent media' by institutions like the NED are questionable, especially for parties interested in encouraging more deliberative or participatory forms of democracy. Instead, the promotion of 'independent' media in Afghanistan and Iraq seems to be playing a key role in the promotion of low-intensity democracy or polyarchy. Additionally, it also appears that countries of greater geostrategic value need more 'democratization', for example, both countries have roughly the same population but 'oil rich Iraq received 20 times more American media development assistance per year than war-ravaged Afghanistan, one of the poorest nations on earth' (Rohde, 2005: 29). With such large amounts of money being wielded by 'democracy promoters', their short term influences may impact heavily on both countries, yet perhaps the most significant effects of these media interventions will be felt in the long term. Previous case studies have shown that groups or individuals supported by 'democracy promoters' are expected to move on to fill leading roles within their societies. USAID director, Andrew Natsios, expands on this point, noting that USAID:

> …has established over 670 community action groups which operate in 17 Iraqi governorates. These are the 'little platoons' of democracy, to borrow a phrase from Edmund Burke. They are also intended to be the proving grounds for future leaders who will assume responsibilities for governing at higher levels in the new Iraq. (Natsios, 2005: 7)

Unfortunately, Natsios even considers US-based humanitarian organizations to be 'an arm of the US government' (Epstein, 2003). This blunt admission of the 'instrumentalization of humanitarian action to disguise overt political ends' (Terry, 2002: 217) has been well documented, and Mertus (2004: 1) notes, that although '[t]he United States is in fact still leading the

world on human rights' it is doing so 'in the wrong direction.' 'Democracy promoters' who declare humanitarian motives realize all too well, that the legitimacy of their actions is well fortified by their rhetoric – who would argue against democracy? With neoliberal media organizations dominating the world's democracies, it is difficult to critique the practice of 'promoting democracy'; when their actions are reported (if at all) they are decontextualized from historical precedents and smothered in humanitarian logic. Western media organizations propensity to manufacture mass consent for ruling elites means that they naturally shield organizations like the NED and its counterparts from any sustained criticism in the public sphere. In response to this media silence, two groups have recently formed to expose the hypocrisy of US 'democracy promoters' and challenge their antidemocratic operations; they are the *International Endowment for Democracy* and *In the Name of Democracy*.

Lastly, it must be remembered that US 'democracy promoting' organizations, like the NED, are only the most visible and best funded groups on the international stage, and they are merely 'playing a leadership role on behalf of an emergent transnational [capitalist] elite' (Robinson, 1996: 20). Globally, their role in 'promoting democratic media' may be seen as an extension of Schiller's cultural imperialism thesis – which has evolved to acknowledge that 'transnational corporate culture' acts as 'the central force' for change, not simply American interests (Schiller, 1992, 14–15). Further research must investigate the linkages between 'democracy promoters' and media development in order to combat this new insidious form of cultural imperialism. Most importantly though, everybody needs to realize and acknowledge the lies behind these 'democratic' interventions – which will be difficult within the confines of our neoliberal media systems. Finally, media scholars should join with others in the development of grassroots' media reform movements to counteract the powerful antidemocratic forces that are currently working behind the scenes to globalize polyarchy.

Notes

1. In many ways, 'promoting democracy' might be seen as a natural successor to earlier international 'aid' programs directed through USAID (Weissman, 1974), international labour organizations (Scipes, 2000), and philanthropic foundations (Roelofs, 2003).

2. It should also be noted, that similar organizations replicating the NED's objectives exist all over the world, for example, the British version of the NED is the Westminster Foundation (for further details of global ventures see, Melia, 2005).

3. All subsequent funding details and quotes referring to the NED grants can be found on the NED's Democracy Projects Database (http://www.ned.org/dbtw-wpd/textbase/projects-search.htm).Grant details are only available from 1990 onwards.

4. In 2004, Development and Humanitarian Services for Afghanistan received donations totalling just under $3 million, while in 2005 these had increased to just over $4 million (Rafaquat Babar & Co, 2006: 7).

5. Although Internews have not opened an office in Iraq, they received a grant from USAID for $160,000 to carry out work in Iraq in 2003 (USAID, 2004).

6. Jalal al-Mashta had been a former editor of *Al-Nahda* newspaper (Jayasekera, 2005) and is currently a 'key member' of the political coalition, Gathering of Iraqi Democrats, which is led by Sunni leader Adnan Pashaji (Phares, 2005).

References

Ahmed, N.M. (2005) *The War on Truth: 9/11, Disinformation, and the Anatomy of Terrorism*. Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press.

Anon (2005) 'Framework for Change: Transforming Iraq's Media Landscape', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.worldfreepress.org/Documents/Iraq MediaFramework.pdf

Armstrong, D. (1981) *A Trumpet to Arms: Alternative Media in America*. Boston, MA: South End Press.

ASK (2005) 'A Free Market and Democratic System in Iraq: Assessment and Plan of Actions', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.thekillidgroup.com/images/highlights/PROPERTY%20AND%20ASSETS%202005.pdfhttp://www.askurds.org/cipeproject.htm

Babar & Co., R. (2006) 'Auditor's Report 2005 for the Killid Group (30 March 2006)', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.thekillidgroup.com/images/highlights/PROPERTY%20AND%20ASSETS%202005.pdf

BBC (2003) 'Iraqi Governing Council Members', URL (consulted September 2006): http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3062897.stm

Berry, D. and Theobald, J. (2006) *Radical Mass Media Criticism: A Cultural Genealogy*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Blum, W. (2004) *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions since World War II*. Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press.

Calbreath, D. (2004) 'A Blueprint for a Nation: The Pentagon Leans on San Diego's SAIC in Rebuilding Iraq', *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 4 July.

Chatterjee, P. (2004) 'Information Warfare or Yesterday's News?', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.corpwatch.org/article.php?id=9508

Churchill, W. and Van der Wall, J. (1990) *The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI's Secret Wars against Domestic Dissent*. Boston, MA: South End Press.

Cochrane, P. (2005) 'Live from Baghdad: Iraqis Zap through a Barrage of New Channels', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.mebshow.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=237&Itemid=371

Cockburn, A. and Cockburn, P. (2002) *Saddam Hussein: An American Obsession*. London: Verso.

Cooley, J.K. (2000) *Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America, and International Terrorism*. London: Pluto Press.

Crozier, M., Huntington, S.P. and Watanuki, J. (1975) *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*. New York: New York University Press.

Dauenhauer, K. and Lobe, J. (2003) 'Iraq: Media Venture by Major Military Contractor under Fire', *Inter Press Service*, 14 August.

Douglas, W.A. (1972) *Developing Democracy*. Washington, DC: Heldref Publications.

Fisk, R. (2003) 'Iraq: News, but Not as We Know It', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.corpwatch.org/article.php?id=7886

Friel, H. and Falk, R.A. (2004) *The Record of the Paper: How the New York Times Misreports US Foreign Policy*. London: Verso.

Ganser, D. (2005) *NATO's Secret Army: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe*. London: Frank Cass.
Gills, B., Rocamora, J. and Wilson, R. (1993) *Low Intensity Democracy: Political Power in the New World Order*. London: Pluto Press.
Gills, B.K. (2000) 'American Power, Neo-Liberal Economic Globalization, and Low-Intensity Democracy: An Unstable Trinity', in M. Cox, G. J. Ikenberry and T. Inoguchi (eds) *American Power, Neo-Liberal Economic Globalization, and Low-Intensity Democracy: An Unstable Trinity* pp. 326–44. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Gopsill, T. (2004) 'Target the Media', in D. Miller (ed.) *Target the Media* pp. 251–61. London: Pluto.
GUIDESTAR (2004) 'The Free Iraq Foundation', URL (consulted September 2006): http://partners.guidestar.org/controller/searchResults.gs?action_gsReport=1&partner=networkforgood&ein=52-1750875
Hammond, P. and Herman, E.S. (2000) *Degraded Capability: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis*. London: Pluto Press.
Haner, N.C. (2004) 'Iraq: How Harris Became a Major Media Player', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.corpwatch.org/article.php?id=11746
Hanieh, A. (2006) '"Democracy Promotion" and Neo-Liberalism in the Middle East', URL (consulted September 2006): http://inthenameofdemocracy.org/en/node/34
Hartenberger, L.A. (2005) ,Mediating Transition in Afghanistan, 2001-2004', Unpublished PhD thesis: The University of Texas.
Herman, E.S. (2005a) 'They Kill Reporters, Don't They?', URL (consulted September 2006): http://zmagsite.zmag.org/Jan2005/herman0105.html
Herman, E.S. (2005b) 'The Election in Iraq: The U.S. Propaganda System Is Still Working in High Gear', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?ItemID=7240
Herman, E.S. and Chomsky, N. (1988) *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. New York: Pantheon Books.
Herring, E. (2004) 'Power, Propaganda and Indifference: An Explanation of the Maintenance of Economic Sanctions on Iraq Despite Their Human Cost', in T.Y. Ismael (eds) *Power, Propaganda and Indifference: An Explanation of the Maintenance of Economic Sanctions on Iraq Despite Their Human Cost*, pp. 34–56. London: Pluto Press.
Holder, A. (2004) 'Forgotten or Ignored? News Media Silence and the Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)', Unpublished MSc thesis: London School of Economics.
Hosenball, M. (2004) 'Intelligence: A Double Game', URL (consulted September 2006): http://msnbc.msn.com/id/4881157/
House of Commons (2005) 'Foreign Policy Aspects of the War against Terrorism: Sixth Report of Session 2004-05 (Volume II Oral and Written Evidence)', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmfaff/36/36ii.pdf
Hume, E. (2004) 'Media Missionaries: American Support for Journalism Excellence and Press Freedom around the Globe', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.ellenhume.com/articles/missionaries.pdf
Ignatius, D. 'Innocence Abroad: The New World of Spyless Coups', *The Washington Post*, 22 September.
IMPACS (2006) 'Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society: Board of Directors', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.impacs.org/about/board
Internews (2004) 'Afghanistan's Talk Radio Station Reaches Another Million Listeners', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.internews.org/news/2004/20040901_afghan.html

Jayasekera, R. (2005) 'Rohan Clock Ticks on Iraqi Public Service Broadcasting Ambitions', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.indexonline.org/en/news/articles/2005/1/iraq-clock-ticks-on-iraqi-public-service-bro.shtml

Johnston, D. (2001) 'Hi-Tech Spear Hits Taliban Heartland', *Herald Sun*, 8 October, p. 5.

Keeble, R. (1997) *Secret State, Silent Press: New Militarism, the Gulf and the Modern Image of Warfare*. Bedfordshire: John Libbey Media Faculty of Media University of Luton.

Kolhatkar, S. and Ingalls, J. (2006) *Bleeding Afghanistan: Washington, Warlords, and the Propaganda of Silence*. New York: Seven Stories Press.

Krane, J. (2003) 'Pentagon Funds Pro-U.S. Network in Iraq', *Associated Press Newswires*, 29 November.

Kull, S. (2004) 'US Public Beliefs and Attitudes about Iraq', URL (consulted September 2006): http://65.109.167.118/pipa/pdf/aug04/IraqAttitudes%20Aug04%20rpt.pdf

Kull, S., Ramsay, C. and Lewis, E. (2003) 'Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War', *Political Science Quarterly* 118(4): 569–98.

Kumar, D. (2006) 'Media, War, and Propaganda: Strategies of Information Management During the 2003 Iraq War', *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3(1): 48–69.

Kumar, K. (2006) *Promoting Independent Media: Strategies for Democracy Assistance*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Lena, J.C. (2003) 'Psyops, Propaganda and Gangsta Rap', *Radical Society* 30(1): 25–30.

Lobe, J. (2003) 'The Andean Condor among the Hawks', Asia Times, URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Front_Page/EH15Aa01.html

Mackenzie, A. (1997) *Secrets: The CIA's War at Home*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Margasak, L. (2005) 'Former Journalism Adviser in Iraq Says U.S. Officials Steered Coverage to Themselves', *The Associated Press* 14 February.

McCarthy, D. (2003) 'Most Favored Democracy: The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies Goes on Offense', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.amconmag.com/11_17_03/article1.html

McChesney, R.W. (2004) *The Problem of the Media: U.S. Communication Politics in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Media Transparency (2004) 'Recipient Grants: Free Iraq Foundation', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.mediatransparency.org/recipientgrants.php?recipientID=728

Mertus, J. (2004) *Bait and Switch: Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy*. New York: Routledge.

Miller, D. (2004a) *Tell Me Lies: Propaganda and Media Distortion in the Attack on Iraq*. London: Pluto.

Miller, D. (2004b) 'Information Dominance: The Philosophy of Total Propaganda Control', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.coldtype.net/Assets.04/Essays.04/Miller.pdf

Miller, L. (2004c) 'Our Man in Iraq: The Rise and Fall of Ahmed Chalabi', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.prwatch.org/prwissues/2004Q2/chalabi.html

Molwana, H., Gerbner, G. and Schiller, H.I. (1992) *Triumph of the Image: The Media's War in the Persian Gulf: A Global Perspective*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Nelson, M. (1997) *War of the Black Heavens: The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Pallister, D. (2005) 'Media Mogul Accused of Running Saudi-Funded Propaganda Campaign', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,1398597,00.html

Pateman, C. (1989) 'The Civic Culture: A Philosophical Critique', in G.A. Almond and S. Verba (eds) *The Civic Culture: A Philosophical Critique*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
Phare, W. (2005) 'Iraq's Electoral Babel', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.defenddemocracy.org/publications/publications_show.htm?doc_id=257857
Radio Netherlands Media Network (2003) 'Iraq Media Dossier', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.radionetherlands.nl/features/media/dossiers/iraq.html?version=1
Rafaquat Babar & Co. (2006) 'Auditor's Report 2005 for the Killid Group', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.thekillidgroup.com/images/highlights/PROPERTY%20AND%20ASSETS%202005.pdf
Rights and Democracy (2004) 'Rights & Democracy: Fund for Women's Rights in Afghanistan', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.w4wafghan.ca/pdf/AWAC-A-Brochure.pdf
Rips, G. (1981) *The Campaign Against the Underground Press*, San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books.
Robertson, L. (2003) 'Whatever Happened to Afghanistan?', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.ajr.org/Article.asp?id=3041
Robinson, P. (2000) 'The Policy-Media Interaction Model: Measuring Media Power During Humanitarian Crisis', *Journal of Peace Research* 37(5): 613–33.
Robinson, W.I. (1996a) *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization, US Intervention, and Hegemony*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Robinson, W.I. and Gindin, J. (2005) 'The Battle for Global Civil Society', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.venezuelanalysis.com/articles.php?artno=1477
Roelofs, J. (2003) *Foundations and Public Policy: The Mask of Pluralism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
Rohde, D. (2005) '"All Successful Democracies Need Freedom of Speech": American Efforts to Create a Vibrant Free Press Iraq and Afghanistan', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/presspol/Research_Publications/Papers/Working_Papers/2005_6.pdf
Rotberg, R.I. (2005) 'The First Ten Years: An Assessment of the Office of Transition Initiatives', URL (consulted September 2006): http://bcsia.ksg.harvard.edu/BCSIA_content/documents/OTI%20Report%20Final.pdf
Rubin, B. (1995) *Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
Saltman, K.J. (2006) 'Creative Associates International: Corporate Education and ''Democracy Promotion'' in Iraq', *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 28: 25–65.
Santora, M. and Carter, B. (2006) 'Iraq Becomes Deadliest of Modern Wars for Journalists', *The New York Times*, 30 May.
Scipes, K. (2000) 'It's Time to Come Clean: Open the AFL-CIO Archives on International Labor Operations', *Labor Studies Journal* 25: 4–25.
Simpson, C. (1994) *Science of Coercion: Communication Research and Psychological Warfare, 1945–1960*. New York: Oxford University Press.
Snyder, A.A. (1995) *Warriors of Disinformation: American Propaganda, Soviet Lies, and the Winning of the Cold War: An Insider's Account*. New York: Arcade Pub.
Stabile, C.A. and Kumar, D. (2005) 'Unveiling Imperialism: Media, Gender and the War on Afghanistan', *Media, Culture & Society* 27: 765–82.
Stephens, J. and Ottaway, D.B. (2002) 'From U.S., the ABC's of Jihad; Violent Soviet-Era Textbooks Complicate Afghan Education Efforts', *The Washington Post*, 23 March.

Stone, A. (2001) 'U.S.'S Airborne Message: Taliban, "You Are Condemned"', *USA Today*, 17 October.
Taylor, I. (2002) 'South Africa's Transition to Democracy and the "Change Industry": A Case Study of IDASA', *Politikon* 29(1): 31–48.
Terry, F. (2002) *Condemned to Repeat?: The Paradox of Humanitarian Action*. Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press.
USAID (2003) 'Assistance for Iraq: Economic Governance', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/accomplishments/econgov.html
USAID (2004) 'USAID Iraq Reconstruction Financial Summary', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/2004/usaid-irq-27apr.pdf
USAID (2005) 'USAID/OTI Afghanistan Field Report April 2005', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/transition_initiatives/country/afghan/rpt0405.html
USAID/OTI (2002) 'Field Report: Afghanistan (January/February 2002)', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti/country/afghan/rpt0202.html
US Government (2005) 'Report on Iraq Relief and Reconstruction: Appendix II', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/rpt/2207/jul2005/html/48781.htm
Weissman, S. (1974) *The Trojan Horse: A Radical Look at Foreign Aid*. San Francisco, CA: Ramparts Press.
Wheaton, L. (1980) '"Democratization" in the Dominican Republic', pp. 419–34 in H. Sklar (ed.) *'Democratization' in the Dominican Republic*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
White House (1996) 'National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement', URL (consulted September 2006): http://www.fas.org/spp/military/docops/national/1996stra.htm
Wiarda, H.J. (1990) *The Democratic Revolution in Latin America: History, Politics, and U.S. Policy*. New York: Holmes & Meier.
Williams, D. (2003) 'U.S. Taps Media Chief for Iraq; Regulation Attempted without Appearing Heavy-Handed', *The Washington Post*, 19 August.

Michael Barker is a doctoral candidate at Griffith University. *Address*: Urban Research Program, Griffith University, QLD 4111, Australia. [email: Michael.J.Barker@griffith.edu.au]