

HOW TO FRAME A PATRIOT

BARRY KRUSCH

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ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

Of all the articles which appear on this CD-ROM, this is the one which has probably received the most attention by the public. It has been emailed to dozens, if not hundreds of people, replied to by a reporter at *Time* magazine, and has even been anthologized in a book.

I suspect that many of the people who have passed along this article have concluded that I am a member of the militia movement, and/or an otherwise right-wing commentator. Nothing could be further from the truth. I am not a member of the militia movement, and the article which I wrote was not intended to defend members of the militia movement per se. My concern was then and is now solely with the way media reports the news, and the way in which it is slanted in a particular manner. In particular, I was concerned about how peaceful members of a nascent political organization — the Patriot movement — were linked with militia groups, in the same way that members of the new left in the '60s were linked with the Black Panthers and similar militant-style organizations. The targets were different, but the technique remains the same.

Based on what I write in the article, it would be easy for a reader who doesn't know me to reach some false conclusions. For example, in the article I criticized by implication the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Thus, a reader might erroneously conclude that I am not only not Jewish, but that I am against Jews in general. Both assumptions are false. I *am* Jewish, and I *am* for Jews in general. However, I believe that the Anti-Defamation League was really going after the wrong target. The greatest threat to Judaism, as I saw it, was not some isolated militia groups, but the emergence of a large-scale totalitarian society which would do its best to crush any outburst of individualism or religion, especially Judaism, much like the Nazi Reich tried to do in the 1940s.

My tone at times in the article is sarcastic, but the underlying thought is always with reference to ideas contained in many different media analysis texts, most of which have been written from the so-called left-wing point of view. As I stated in the introduction to my article, there has been a shortage of analysis of content from the so-called right-wing perspective, and I wanted to address the balance.

Following my article are comments from Internet readers on Farley's article, Farley's reply to my article, readers replied to Farley's reply to my article, and my own reply to same.

The discussion which follows is a great example of what the Internet could be all about, if people would let it.

B. Krusch 8/16/1998

INTROS TO HOW TO FRAME A PATRIOT
BY INTERNET READERS

To: *plear@netcom.com*

Subject: *TIME MAGAZINE, MILITIA ARTICLE, rebuttal (fwd)*

This article has been discussed by many people but I haven't found anyone to date who has done as thorough a job analyzing this article. Reading the media is becoming an art ... this is a great example of how to find the bias.

Sorry about the length . . . couldn't be avoided.

Patrick

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Date: *Thu, 5 Jan 1995 15:45:09 -0800 (PST)*

Subject: *time magazine, militia article, rebuttal*

Here is a great analysis on the Dec 94, Time Article on Militias. It's long but worth your -time-. :-) Doris

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Date: *Wed, 11 Jan 1995 00:16:16 -0800 (PST)*

From: *"Edgar A. Suter" <suter@crl.com>*

To: *cfarley@time.timeinc.com*

Cc: *plear@netcom.com, bak@netcom.com, alt.politics.clinton@crl.com, alt.politics.usa.constitution@crl.com*

Subject: *TIME MAGAZINE, MILITIA ARTICLE, rebuttal (fwd)*

Orwellian newspeak debunked! I am glad that someone had and took the time to dissect your militia article. . . .

HOW TO FRAME A PATRIOT

article by Christopher John Farley

analysis of article by Barry Krusch

On December 13, 1994, a TIME journalist posted a message on the Internet (to the newsgroup TALK.POLITICS.GUNS), and invited public comment on an article he wrote in time:

This is Christopher John Farley, a staff writer at TIME magazine. I wrote a story in this week's TIME on the growth of the militia movement. Has anyone read it? Does anyone have any comments or criticisms? It's available on newstands, but, in the spirit of the internet, if you want to read it for free TIME has an web site at www.time.inc.com where several of the featured articles in TIME are posted for all to read, including my piece on militias.

Message-ID: <AB12999B44014756@chris_farley.timeinc.com>

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 94 00:21:47 GMT

You have to hand it to Farley. Considering the nature of his article, this was a gutsy move. The first reply to his message came five hours later, but it wasn't the last. A flood of comments were posted in reply, and they weren't flattering. Phrases like "hatchet job", "statist liberal paranoia", "lots of supposition without underlying factual support", "suspicious of your motives and your professionalism", "the constant effort to arouse fear" and "sleazy", among many others, peppered the commentary, and by the tone of things, you could tell that there weren't a lot of happy folks out there. Three days later, Farley came back on line to reply to these criticisms:

A lot of the people that have posted notes here have been calling my article biased. I don't think it was. I tried to keep my opinions out of the piece as much as possible (absolute objectivism is perhaps achievable only by supernatural beings). In almost any news piece dealing with a controversial subject, a responsible journalist will and should quote a range of people. So I quoted not only militia members, but their critics as well. The militia members were allowed to make their case -- that they wanted to protect the second amendment, that they were nonracial, that they were family-oriented etc. And the militia critics were allowed to state their case. If what you were looking for was a pro-militia or pro-gun article, then sorry, that's not what I set out to write. I also didn't set out to write an anti-militia story either. What I wanted to write and what I did write was a story that presented the pros and cons of militias and patriots so intelligent readers could make up their own minds.

Message-ID: <AB172D1B7A014756@chris_farley.timeinc.com>

Date: Fri, 16 Dec 94 11:40:11 GMT

Farley says that he "didn't set out to write an anti-militia story". Rather than take his word for it, I took instead his implicit advice to "make up [your] own mind[]", my curiosity piqued by the criticisms in the newsgroup.

I went to my local library and photocopied the article, and after reading it was not surprised to discover the obvious bias present. For the last fifteen years, I've been reading about (and tolerating) media manipulation of reality, but most of the books I've read have given examples from the "left-wing" point of view. Few of these writings launched their in-depth analysis from the "right-wing" point of view.

I was glad to be made aware of this piece, and I'm in Farley's debt. The article gave me a chance to exercise what I've learned about media analysis on a horse of a different color. Throughout this analysis, I was amazed at Farley's sophistication. I can't escape the feeling that he had a little help from a fatherly "editor".

In the interests of helping people see "how the media does it", I'm posting my analysis on the Internet. "Reading" the media is a valuable skill, particularly in this day and age, when the power of the media to frame the way we think (and thus control the way we act) is truly awesome.

The following piece is Farley's article line-by-line, with no words omitted or added, followed immediately by my analysis. After you read this piece, you be the judge. See if you think Farley's article is unbiased.

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Farley's article appeared in TIME on December 19, 1994, pages 48-9. The article was illustrated with three pictures, with these captions:

WEEKEND WARRIOR: California militiaman Dean Compton says he's ready for the worst

LINE OF DEFENSE: In the unlikely event that the U.N. invades northern Michigan, the local militia will be ready

FAMILY FUN? Militia training includes obstacle courses, long marches and even playing capture the flag with the kids

Under the first photograph was the title of the article:

PATRIOT GAMES

This is a reference to the recent Harrison Ford movie made from the Tom Clancy bestseller, but there's another subtext here: these patriots are

playing a "game". Thus, they are not serious. The only difference between these "men" and boys are the size of their toys.

If you didn't know that only "men" were involved, let the subtitle of this article explain:

Irate, gun-toting white men are forming militias. Are they dangerous, or just citizens defending their rights?

Farley/TIME tells us how we are to think of these "men": they are "irate" (irate people, as we all know, are irrational), "gun-toting" (the use of the word "toting" from the rural lexicon calls up images of hillbillies against the revenueurs), and "white" (thus "racist" by implication, even though there are many black members of the movement). These terms, standing alone, have a "negative spin", but when conjoined one after the other create a far greater and enhanced "negative spin" derived from their mutual "confirmation". This illegitimate bootstrapped credibility flows from the presence of a unifying negative spin that cuts across diverse substantive domains ("irate": EMOTION, "gun-toting": VOLITION, "white": DEMOGRAPHIC); the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and the whole sends a clear message of *minus-value*.

Having thus begun by framing the movement with minus-value (the mark of all journalists who try to keep their "opinions out of the piece as much as possible"), we are then presented with the following "either/or" alternative (there are no other views possible): are these patriots "dangerous" (minus-value), or "citizens defending their rights" (plus-value)? The answer is obvious: since minus-value = minus-value, the patriots must be DANGEROUS. Note that this identification is implicit in the framing of the article. The facts presented will flesh out this frame, as we'll see.

Now let's go to the article proper:

In a remote meadow in northern Michigan, inside a large tent heated by a wood stove, 50 white men dressed in combat gear and wielding rifles talk about the insanity of the outside world.

"[W]hite men . . . wielding rifles" in a "remote" area. Sounds scary! These "white men" use a "wood stove", so they are unsophisticated (this echoes and thus confirms the rural implication launched by "toting"). And what do these men talk of? "[I]nsanity". This word "insanity", floated into the conceptual ether, will find a resting place soon.

The men, civilians all, see threats everywhere. There are reports of foreign soldiers hiding in salt mines under Detroit, some of the men say. Others speak of secret markings on highway signs meant to guide conquering armies.

Since these white men "see threats everywhere", they must be "paranoid", and therefore "nuts". This is proven by the "secret markings" which "others speak of". Of course, it's a characteristic of the insane to think that everyone else ("the outside world") is insane, isn't it?

The men's voices subside as "General" Norman Olson, a Baptist minister, gun-shop owner and militia leader, enters the tent. He tells the men they are the shock troops of a movement that's sweeping America, that the "end times" are coming, and civil wars are two years away. "People think we are the ones who bring fear because we have guns," Olson says. "But we are really an expression of fear."

The "voices subside" when the "leader" enters -- sounds like a cult to me! Since the "leader" of this group is not a "General", but only thinks he is (quotes around the word "General"), he is just one of those loonies playing a game (one of the characteristics of the insane is thinking that they are someone more grandiose than they are, e.g. Jesus, Napoleon, etc.).

Thus, Farley's first named example of the average patriot is someone the average reader of TIME has already mentally discredited. Note that Farley doesn't focus instead on the members of the movement who communicate on the Internet, members who presumably aren't insane, but rational. These members will be discussed later, after the frame has been set.

In dozens of states, loosely organized paramilitary groups composed primarily of white men are signing up new members, stockpiling weapons and preparing for the worst.

"[L]oosely organized", as opposed to "well-regulated" -- how can these people think that the Second Amendment could possibly apply to them? This is the third time the word "white" has appeared. Farley is "paving the way" for an upcoming framing.

The groups, all privately run, tend to classify themselves as "citizen militias." They are the armed, militarized edge of a broader group of disgruntled citizenry that go by the label of "patriots."

"[P]rivately run", as opposed to "State" militias -- how can these people think that the Second Amendment could possibly apply to them? They "go by the label of" patriots, but they really aren't. They're just a bunch of disgruntled citizens.

The members of the larger patriot movement are usually family men and women who feel strangled by the economy, abandoned by the government and have a distrust for

those in power that goes well beyond that of the typical angry voter.

Thus, their views, motivated by personal concerns, must be the illegitimate expression of negative emotion ("General" Olson said so himself), and could not possibly be derived from an historical analysis of examples of totalitarianism such as Stalin's Russia, Hitler's Germany, Batista's Cuba, Somoza's Nicaragua, the Shah's Iran, the Khmer Rouge's Cambodia, etc. etc.

Patriots join the militias out of fear and frustration. Says Jim Barnett, leader of a Florida militia: "The low-life scum that are supposedly representing us in Washington, D.C., don't care about the people back home anymore. We're grasping at straws here trying to figure out what we can do to get representation, and this is our answer."

These people are desperate, "grasping at straws". Look out!

Patriots claim to be motivated differently from other fringe groups that have sprung up in America and taken up arms.

They "claim" to be motivated from "other" "fringe groups", but of course they aren't. Thus, they too are a "fringe group", with the same (presumably) illegitimate motivations of all the other fringe groups that have taken up arms.

The Ku Klux Klan, for example - born as a social club and quickly evolving into a militia, recruiting members through appeals to patriotism - still thrives on hatred of blacks, Jews, Roman Catholics and foreigners. The moribund Posse Comitatus, a militant group based in the Farm Belt, wanted to wipe out the tax collectors.

Now we know why "white" has appeared three times. Subconsciously, you were supposed to be thinking of the Ku Klux Klan. Now your suspicion is confirmed. No matter how noble the present motivations of the patriots, they will eventually degenerate into just one more racist, "militant" organization. What else could we expect from "gun-toting white men" "grasping at straws" by a "wood stove" in a "remote meadow", all the while talking of "the insanity of the outside world"?

The patriots, by contrast, have a more generalized fear of Big Government, which they say is rapidly robbing individuals of their inalienable rights, chief among them the right to bear arms.

Now TIME has to get some credibility back. Just in the nick of time, too! Here's the "balance" that is supposed to make this an "objective" article.

Patriots were particularly enraged when Congress passed a crime bill last August that banned assault weapons. Complains Henry McClain, the leader of another Florida militia unit: "The Federal Government has taken it upon themselves to regulate everything you can think or touch or smell."

And more "balance":

Patriots also fear that foreign powers, working through organizations like the United Nations and treaties like the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, are eroding the power of America as a sovereign nation.

This "balancing" sentence shows a different, and more plausible side of the patriot movement, a view not grabbed out of thin air or based on fear, but one based on evidence one might be exposed to if one had a subscription to TIME.

Take, for example, the case of Strobe Talbott, a former "editor-at-large" of TIME who was nominated on December 28, 1993 to be Warren Christopher's Deputy Secretary of State. Both Talbott and Christopher were members of the Council of Foreign Relations. In a July 20, 1992 TIME essay entitled "The Birth of the Global Nation", this CFR member/former editor of Time (now government official) wrote the following in his column "America Abroad":

All countries are basically social arrangements, accommodations to changing circumstances. No matter how permanent and even sacred they may seem at any one time, in fact they are all artificial and temporary.

Prior to making this observation, Talbott had stated this:

I'll bet that within the next hundred years . . . nationhood as we know it will be obsolete; all states will recognize a single, global authority. A phrase briefly fashionable in the mid-20th century -- 'citizen of the world' -- will have assumed real meaning by the end of the 21st.

No such evidence for patriot views was quoted in Farley's article, even though Farley not only had access to this quote, but copyright privileges as well. Instead, we go to Farley-style "balance", where we are given views that are to be seen as mere opinions based on "fears", not views based on facts available to anyone who subscribed to the writings of Farley's employer:

On a home video promoting patriot ideas, a man who gives his name only as Mark from Michigan says he fears that America will be subsumed into "one big, fuzzy, warm planet where nobody has any borders."

Here's "balance" for you. This is a "home video", so this is the work of amateurs, not researchers who cite evidence which appeared in, of all places, TIME. What's more, these amateurs are clandestine, since the individual in the video is not "named" Mark; rather, this individual "gives his name only as Mark" -- so the "name" is really an "alias" (what criminals use). Maybe that's why they hang out in "remote meadows".

Samuel Sherwood, head of the United States Militia Association in Blackfoot, Idaho, tells followers, absurdly, that the Clinton Administration is planning to import 100,000 Chinese policemen to take guns away from Americans.

Back to the thrust of the article. These guys are nuts!

Such wild allegations have proved to be an effective method of grabbing the attention of the disaffected and recruiting them into militias.

Ahh, that explains it. All this talk of GATT and the U.S. government robbing people of supposedly inalienable rights are nothing more than "wild allegations", just like the story of 100,000 imported Chinese policemen. But it turns out that these "wild" allegations, which are ignored by the rational among us, are "effective" on the members of the patriot movement (not surprising, since the movement is primarily composed of the "abandoned" and "disgruntled" who have been made gullible by their fears). So, if you meet someone who's in this movement, the chances are excellent he's there because he's an intellectual bimbo who's been sucked into the movement by "wild allegations" the rest of us rational people have dismissed out of hand.

Thus, the "balancing" sentences are re-framed with minus-value. Well, it was nice while it lasted.

Most experts agree that the groups are multiplying and their membership is expanding, though estimates vary. Chip Berlet, who studies militias for Political Research Associates, a Massachusetts think tank, says militia units exist in 30 states, including large organizations in Michigan, Montana and Ohio, and he suspects there may be units in 10 other states. Although there may be hundreds of thousands of people who identify with the patriot movement, Berlet estimates that only about 10,000 people have actually joined the armed militias.

If "only 10,000 people" have joined armed militias out of "hundreds of thousands" who identify with the movement, why focus on them?

On their wilderness training excursions, these would-be warriors give themselves a vigorous workout. In Michigan the members of a local militia build their endurance by running army-style

outdoor obstacle courses or tramping long distances across rugged-terrain while holding heavy semiautomatic rifles.

Oh, that's why. Note that we don't read, "many concerned individuals post information on USENET regarding the failure of the American government to actually represent the people who finance it, a government which has willfully and wantonly disregarded clear constitutional directives against its actions, and a government which day by day seems to grow more and more remote from the concerns of the average American". We won't talk about the set of people we don't typically fear, concerned people who express their views on-line -- we're going to talk about the set of people upon whom fears can plausibly be projected, the minority set of people who "tramp[] long distances . . . while holding heavy semiautomatic rifles." We'll talk about the people on-line later, once the well has been suitably poisoned. Note also the conceptual no-win for the militia: if they don't train, they're "amateurs wielding rifles" (and therefore "dangerous") -- but if they do, they're "exhibiting militant tendencies" (and therefore "dangerous").

Here we find yet another example of an ages-old pattern in American media discourse: not only are the activities of the more militant sub-groups of larger anti-establishment groups focused on at the expense of their more pacifist brethren, but in addition, these more militant activities will be ripped from the web of history; the spotlight will focus on the falling of dominoes M and N, but not dominoes A through L which occurred prior in time, and which help to explain (and legitimize) the actions in question.

This "decontextualization" of events by the media is a classic tactic. We aren't given any direct contact with the thoughts of these men who are holding the rifles, men who obviously have concerns about the way things are going in the United States. We're only to view what they do, and react accordingly.

Of course, this image is a frightening one, and is preparing us for a frame of "incipient revolution is headed our way". But TIME has more than one ace in the hole; these people aren't that influential yet, so it doesn't need to step up to direct accusation of nascent revolutionary tendencies at this time (though TIME reserves the right to utilize [and is paving the way for utilization of] this frame in the future). TIME is going to "go to the bench", and introduce a subtle frame shift.

When we started the article, the frame was supposed to be MINUS-value ("dangerous") vs. PLUS-value ("citizens defending their rights"). That was supposed to show us how "balanced" and credible TIME is: "You can trust us! Come on in!" But the use of the word "games" clued us in (and prepared us for) another possible framing, which we're to be presented with here. Now that we're deep in the bowels of the article, the frame will magically shift to MINUS-value ("dangerous") vs. MINUS-value ("boys n' toys") -- VOILA! Another conceptual "no-win" for the patriots! The frame having shifted, we'll enter it by moving to the story of "boys n' toys".

John Schlosser, coordinator of Colorado's Free Militia (claimed membership: 3,000), admits that his group's doomsday preparations sometimes amount to no more than "playing games in the woods." Militia members, sometimes with their families in tow, play hide-and-seek and capture the flag, all to build conditioning in case of an armed conflict.

Not "membership", but "claimed membership". We're to be wary of these militia "claims", except when a militia coordinator inadvertently happens to follow the TIME line, and therefore gets an "admits" (not "claims") inserted before the report of his TIME-echoing view that these "doomsday preparations" are "games". Well, TIME/Farley is right after all! Look, they play "hide-and-seek" and "capture the flag" -- that proves the subsidiary TIME frame is legitimate.

When it comes to organization, however, the troops go high-tech. The militia movement, says Berlet, "is probably the first national movement organized and directed on the information highway." Patriot talk shows, such as THE INFORMED CITIZEN, a half-hour program broadcast on public-access TV in Northern California, spread the word that American values are under attack from within and without.

Looks like balancing, but watch out.

Militias also communicate via the Patriot Network, a system of linked computer bulletin boards, and through postings in news groups on the Internet. One recent posting by a group calling itself the Pennsylvania Militia, more specifically the F Company of the 9th Regiment, asked for "a few good men" to join up and "stand up to the forces of federal and world tyranny."

When patriots/militias communicate over "linked computer bulletin boards", they don't exchange historical analysis of the Second Amendment, revelations of government hijinks, or in-depth analyses of media framing techniques. Rather, they use the power to communicate to recruit armies (and that doesn't surprise us, given the prior discussion of the "heavy semiautomatic rifles" brigade). "F Company" calls up "F Troop", a 60's television sitcom. Maybe this army is the "Keystone Kops".

The patriot movement was galvanized by two events: the bloody face-off in rural Idaho between white separatist Randy Weaver and law-enforcement officials in 1992 and the fiery siege of the Waco, Texas, compound of cult leader David Koresh in 1993.

Balancing, but note that while Farley throws in the word "cult", he frames the event as a siege on "Koresh", and not the other people in the "compound". There WERE other people in the "compound" (house?).

The violent confrontations helped convince many would-be militia members that the U.S. government was repressive as well as violently antigun and untrustworthy. "The Waco thing really woke me up," says Frank Swan, 36, a trucker who is a member of a militia in Montana. "They went in there and killed women and children."

Balancing (though we still don't know how many women and children were killed, nor the motivations for Koresh and his "followers". Farley spares us any dissertation of the factual background of this case). Maybe these people aren't nuts after all.

Critics of the militias say the genuine concern on the part of patriots for second-amendment rights could, in many cases, turn into something more menacing. In October the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith issued a report titled ARMED AND DANGEROUS, which charged that militias were "laying the groundwork for massive resistance to the Federal Government and its law-enforcement agencies."

Now, the counter-framing. Sure, these concerns are "genuine", but they could turn into "something more menacing". Turns out that these genuine concerns are just tools to carry out the real agenda of the patriot movement: they are to "[lay] the groundwork" for massive resistance to the Federal government. Our one last flirtation with the minus/plus frame just leads us back to "dangerous" again -- it's how TIME makes a lemon out of lemonade.

Note also that the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, a Jewish organization, is opposed to this movement. Well, we all know what group was opposed to the Jews (it starts with an "N"). TIME implies (in the same way it implies that a handful of patriots represents a larger movement) that one Jewish organization (note: not characterized as a "fringe" organization) speaks for Jews in general, with a very subtle painting of the larger patriot movement with a tainted brush, because supposedly all Jews are opposed to them (and we know who opposed the Jews, don't we?). This subtlety will now be made explicit.

But most militia groups claim to be nonracial, nonpolitical outfits interested only in preserving the Constitution and core American values. Dean Compton, a real estate agent and California militia member, says members aren't consumed by ideology: "I still play with my kids. I still go to the movies. It's not all gloom and doom." Compton also says neo-Nazis and white supremacists were purged from his militia, and they're

not welcome back: "If they're crazies, we don't want 'em."

Your subconscious thoughts of "Nazis" are now echoed in print. The "militia groups" (and by extension, the larger non-militia patriot movement) "claim to be" nonracial, but since they are composed of "white" men (as were the Nazis), this could not possibly be true. And we get yet another subconscious echo when we read Compton's quote, where we re-learn that the choice for patriots is only "play[ing] [games]" or "gloom and doom". So the subsidiary frame IS true after all.

You can see how, for TIME, "balancing" facts are just cakes to be iced with minus-value: in this case, a ton of it.

But analyst Mike Reynolds of the Southern Poverty Law Center says some of the people emerging as militia leaders have ties with hate-mongering groups. "They are being very canny about it," says Reynolds. "They aren't going around lighting torches and burning crosses at these meetings. They are using code words. Instead of talking about the Zionist occupation, they talk about the new world order. It's the same old stuff dressed up for the '90s."

Watch out for those false claims! Don't be fooled -- these people are "canny". When they dress in three-piece suits and cite footnoted articles, this is just part of the act. Really, this is just camouflage, "code words" for the "same old stuff".

Note what TIME has adroitly done here. We already knew that "General" Olson was illegitimate, as were the men in the "remote meadows", not to mention the ones carrying the "heavy semiautomatic rifles". Now TIME tells us that when we meet a person in a three-piece suit (or on-line) who talks in the standard academic dialect, we're actually to see this individual as a smooth talker using "code words". So, the entire spectrum of members of the patriot movement, from alpha to omega, is SUSPECT. The message is clear:

**THERE ARE NO LEGITIMATE MEMBERS OF THE PATRIOT MOVEMENT,
NOT EVEN THE ONES WHO APPEAR LEGITIMATE!**

"You can't trust anyone!" TIME sternly warns. Gosh, TIME, you're starting to sound a little paranoid yourself! Better watch out, before those militia recruiters come after you to suck you into their Koresh-style cults.

Militia recruiters have no shortage of fears to play on. Recently, members of the Militia of Michigan stopped by the Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting room in the town of L'Anse to scout for new members. The local timber and mining industries are fading, and an area Air Force base is set to close next year. Residents, looking in vain

Amendment. Here is what was broadcast to over ten million Americans as the text of our written Constitution:

A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

Check your copy of the Constitution, and see if YOU can find the missing words!

Just a harmless error? A tiny boo-boo that somehow managed to slip past the producer?

Somehow I doubt it.

FURTHER READING

On-line
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MASS MEDIA 101 ftp.netcom.com /pub/kr/krusch/media.txt

A survival guide for the DisInformation Age, this 67-page article contains much hard evidence for media distortion -- dozens of framing techniques are discussed (with examples), along with information "behind the scenes" (memoranda, laws, and what not) which serves to explain why this distortion of information is so pervasive.

THE ROLE OF FRAME ANALYSIS IN ENHANCING THE TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE
ftp.netcom.com /pub/kr/krusch/frame.dp

This paper contains extensive discussion of issues related to frame analysis, including schemas, encoding, and decoding.

Off-line
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MEDIA
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THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING	Gitlin (University of California: 1980)
THE PERSIAN GULF TV WAR	Kellner (Westview: 1992)
SEEING THROUGH THE MEDIA	Jeffords and Rabinovitz (Rutgers: 1994)
BY INVITATION ONLY	Croteau and Hoynes (Common Courage: 1994)
THE MYTH OF SOVIET MILITARY SUPREMACY	Gervasi (Perennial: 1986)

LANGUAGE AND PSYCHOLOGY
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TELLING IT LIKE IT ISN'T	Rothwell (Spectrum: 1982)
HOW WE KNOW WHAT ISN'T SO	Gilovich (Free Press: 1991)
LOGIC AND CONTEMPORARY RHETORIC	Kahane (Wadsworth: 1980)
METAPHORS WE LIVE BY	Lakoff and Johnson (U. of Chi.: 1980)

TEACHING THINKING SKILLS Baron and Sternberg (Freeman: 1987)
THE SOCIAL ANIMAL Aronson (Freeman: 1980)
THINKING, PROBLEM SOLVING, COGNITION Mayer (Freeman: 1992)

CD-ROM
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TIME ALMANAC 1994

A superb collection of texts on which to practice media analysis, all downloadable to a word processor. The trick is to go for articles which are likely to be embedded with bias. You might try searching for terms like "Persian Gulf", "Gun control", "abortion", "Perot", "fringe group", etc.

Thanks to Drew Betz for posting the e-text.

REPLY TO FARLEY BY CHARLES SCRIPTER

Disclaimer: I am not a member of the of the Michigan Militia, nor do I represent them in any way. I did, however, attend the informational meeting in L'anse . . .

On Wed, 4 Jan 1995 10:49:20 GMT, Tim Starr (timstarr@netcom.com) wrote:

> In article <3e2egr\$7s7@alterdial.uu.net>, Christopher John Farley <cfarley@time.timeinc.com> wrote: Let's take his attacks on the rather neutral words I used one by one. "Men." Well, the people discussed in my story were men and many had joined these groups because they were men, heads of households concerned about their places in society. To leave out that word would have been an illogical coverup.

> Were there no women involved? Women have been some of the most vocal of militia advocates, at least here on the Net. Is Linda Thompson's sex other than one would expect from her name and appearance? Is she the only one of her kind in the entire movement?

Yes, Tim, there were women involved. Had Farley actually attended the meeting in L'anse Michigan, which he purports to "describe" in his article, he would have seen several women there. . . .

Since Farley claims he presented only the facts, without distortions, let's examine just a few of his statements...

Farley> Militia recruiters have no shortage of fears to play on.

What fears did they play upon, Chris? I'm still waiting for an answer to this.

Farley> Recently, members of the Militia of Michigan stopped by the Farley> Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting room in the town of L'Anse to Farley> scout for new members.

One of Farley's few factual statements.

Farley> The local timber and mining industries are fading, and an area Farley> Air Force base is set to close next year.

The timber industry is alive and well. The mining industry faded MANY, MANY YEARS AGO. The only factual statement here is the closing Air Force base.

Farley> Residents, looking in vain for new solutions to old problems, Farley> were good targets for the militia message.

Innuendo. No report of what the "militia message" was.

Farley> The patriots, to him, seemed to offer a clear alternative.

Innuendo, and no facts presented.

Farley> They had bold ideas and big guns.

Outright FALSEHOOD! The militia members brought no firearms with them.

Farley> After the meeting, Thoren and four others stood next to a flag
Farley> in the corner of the room, underneath a gun case filled with
Farley> vintage M-1 rifles, and took the oath to join the militia.

Innuendo and misleading statements. These firearms and the flag were not the property of the militia, but the Veterans Hall. Had Farley bothered to read the plaque on the wall of the Veterans Hall, he would have known that these are part of their historical display. . . .

Charles Scriptor
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Houghton, MI 49931

" . . . when all government . . . in little as in great things, shall be drawn to Washington as the centre of all power, it will render powerless the checks provided of one government on another and will become as venal and oppressive as the government from which we separated."

— Thomas Jefferson, 1821

REPLY TO FARLEY BY B. FAY

So let me see if I've got this straight. Christopher Farley "author" of "Patriot Games" (Tme December 19, 1994) innocently asks in alt.conspiracy for feedback on his piece about the nationwide militia movement. Farley's reply to previous comments is kind of like an impish Stevie Urkel dropping a goldfish in the piranha bowl--"Did I do that???" Well Steve, I'll take the bait.

But, before I do, let me insert what my local paper wrote about the same informational meeting held by a representative of the Michigan militia at the L'Anse VFW in Baraga County. This is the same meeting Farley "covered" in the last two paragraphs of Patriot Games.

(Source: The Peninsula News December 11, 1994 "Local Militia starts up" by Stephen Dresch.)

"The Michigan Militia's Fifth Brigade appears to be officially in place in Baraga County.

Approximately 100 people turned up at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall in L'Anse Saturday for an informal meeting and swearing in of recruits to the controversial organization which one state official has called a vigilante movement.

Presiding over the two-hour session was Col. Ken Adams, state sommunications officer of the militia, which was formed in Michigan this spring. Militia officials portray their organization as a public servant whose functions range from good works to national defense.

At the end of the meeting, Adams administered the membership oath to new Fifth Brigade recruits. It had to be administered several times to accomodate those who preferred to avoid the cameras.

Fear of reprisal was fueled in Michigan by state Attorney General Frank Kelley's public opposition to the militia which he characterized as a "vigilante" movement.

Shortly after it was founded in the spring of 1994, the Detroit Free Press reported that the Michigan State Police, on orders form Kelley, were monitoring militia meetings and recording members' vehicle license numbers.

When questioned by the Peninsula News concerning the monitoring, Adams confirmed that this had been an early problem but contended that police surveillance had since been terminated.

Adams began his presentation with a brief history of the militia movement. The First Brigade of the Northern Michigan Regional Militia was organized in Emmet County in April. Since then, brigades have been organized in 72 of Michigan's 83 counties, according to Adams. He estimated that militias have been founded in about 25 percent of all counties nation-wide.

Summarizing the "militia concept," Adams characterized it as "focused on the U.S. and Michigan constitutions." The purpose, he said, was to uphold the sovereignty of the United States, the state and the citizen. He noted that the oaths taken by members of the U.S. armed forces and of the Michigan militia both include the words, "I will support and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies, both foreign and domestic."

Adams identified the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution as providing the foundation for the citizens' militia movement. Alluding to the language of the Second Amendment, "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed," Adams noted that "only a comma separates the militia and the right of the people to keep and bear arms."

Calling the militia a "public servant" he identified a hierarchy of functions (canned-good drives, adopt-a-highway) to volunteer-type support of local law enforcement (search and rescue, assistance to crime victims, disaster relief) to the Minute-Man function of armed defense of the country.

While Adams frequently mentioned national problems which motivated formation of the militia, he did not elaborate on these problems. He did, however, say that "Once again, this government is going to fear the people."

Adams was joined at the meeting by Lt. Col. Randy Monday of Negaunee, commander of the Michigan Militia's Superior Division, and Bill Rolof, information officer of the Fifth Brigade. Monday indicated that until brigades are organized in other western U.P. counties, persons from other counties are welcome to join Baraga's Fifth Brigade."

In the spirit of "journalistic fairness" let's compare what Farley wrote about the same meeting that was presumably covered by Time correspondent Ed Barnes in the December 19th issue.

"Militia recruiters have no shortage of fears to play on. Recently, members of the Militia of Michigan stopped by the Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting room in the town of L'Anse to scout for new members. The local timber and mining industries are fading, and an area Air Force base is set to close next year. Residents, looking vain for new solutions to old problems, were good targets for the militia message. Said logger and school board member Sonny Thoren: "I can't tell the difference between Democrats and Republicans anymore."

The patriots, to him, seemed to offer a clear alternative. They had bold ideas and big guns. After the meeting, Thoren and four others stood next to a flag in the corner of the room, underneath a gun case filled with vintage M-1 rifles, and took the oath to join the militia. A new brigade was born."

In looking at the last two paragraphs, they are filled with half-truths and false implications. As an example, Time's portrayal of the area as being economically depressed is false. The logging industry is prosperous; used logging equipment is at a premium, the pulp mills have

an insatiable appetite for wood, and timber and land prices are rising. White Pine (an area copper mine) faces problems with the EPA, not the lack of demand for their copper. Turning to the militia for economic salvation as you allude in your article, paints the picture of desperation. . . .

In the last paragraph Farley states the patriots have "big ideas and big guns." This implies people in the room were armed. It is highly doubtful anybody in the room was flashing artillery around. Michigan has serious penalties for carrying a concealed weapon without a permit. Furthermore, in a vehicle, long guns by law must be cased, unloaded, and separated from ammunition. I doubt anybody in that room carried in a firearm. If indeed, there were weapons in there, they belonged to the VFW or undercover law enforcement. To imply the answer to everything is a big gun is a cheap shot.

Other points you somehow neglected to mention about the L'Anse meeting was that the speaker stressed adherence to firearms statutes; and there were several women in attendance.

Let's face it Farley, propaganda techniques can be studied at almost any library. The use of stereotypical emotional phrases is an old trick. The media intends to portray the militia as "rascist vigilantes," and/or "extremist fringe groups" that are "armed and dangerous." That was exactly the spin of your article, I assume your reward shows up in your paycheck.

The opinions and time are my own.

bfay@mtu.edu

Let's take his attacks on the rather neutral words I used one by one. "Men." Well, the people discussed in my story were men and many had joined these groups because they were men, heads of households concerned about their places in society. To leave out that word would have been an illogical coverup. "Irate." If anyone takes the time to canvas the opinions of militia members you'll find, as TIME did, that many members are indeed irate about the way the country is going. Again, it would have been a lie, and illogical, to say they were "happy" or "gleeful" about Clinton administration gun-control policies. "White." The men TIME interviewed and saw at the militia meetings were all white. Saying they are "white" does not mean or imply that they are racist. That's absurd. The New York Rangers are all white-but a finer group of human beings you'd have a harder time finding. If I were writing a hockey story, no, I probably wouldn't bring race into things. But I was writing a story about a social movement in which race clearly plays a part. Besides which, later in the story, I quote a militia member saying that he is not a racist. "Toting." Well grandmothers carry tote bags and tote their purses around too. It's hardly a nefarious word to use.

Mr. Krusch also writes: "Gosh, TIME, you're starting to sound a little paranoid yourself! Better watch out, before those militia recruiters come after you to suck you into their Koresh-style cults."

That certainly doesn't sound like the tone a cold-eyed analyst would use. Clearly Krusch's analysis isn't done in the name of fairness, but out of outraged partisanship, something I avoided entirely in my story.

3) AN EQUATION EINSTEIN FORGOT TO WRITE: There have been a few length examinations of my story on these boards, all offering up much heat and not much light. Length plus heat does not equal weight ($L + H \neq W$ if you want it rendered in mathematical terms). "How to Frame a Patriot" may have been a long piece but it certainly didn't have anything to add beyond line-by-line sniping. In a way, I'm probably playing into it by posting this long reply, but I've got a few minutes on my hands before I leave for New Year's Vacation.

4) THE SEMI-MYTH OF OBJECTIVITY: I don't think judgements are entirely out of place in news articles. Sometimes I write news stories that are quite sharply worded, and have a clear point of view. Sometimes it's the journalist's duty to take a look at two sets of facts presented by two sets of people and try to objectively determine who is telling the truth. In the case of this article, I thought the best approach was to lay out the opinions of militia members without explicit commentary on my part. Some of you are going to remain convinced, as Mr. Krusch obviously is, that the story was loaded with bias. That's your right. But if you really think using words like "toting" and "irate" are indicative of bias, then I'm afraid you need to take a hard look at your own biases. Mr. Krusch, if you want to ban and censor words like "white" and "toting" and "irate" from TIME magazine, I don't even want to attempt to make the attempt to try to please you or conform to your notions of verbal correctness. Happy Holidays everyone!!!

REPLY TO FARLEY'S REPLY BY DAVE MARINO

From: Dave Marino <dmarino@tpts1.seed.net.tw>
To: cfarley@time.timeinc.com
Cc: bak@netcom.com
Subject: Dialogue

Dear Mr. Farley:

I am writing you in response to the various exchanges that have taken place in regards to your posting of your TIME article "Patriot Games" and Mr. Barry Krusch's critic of the same.

First, I'd like to congratulate you on the innovative and perhaps courageous move of inviting comment on your article. I personally had not previously seen any mass media concern invite comment from users of the Internet and believe this to be an exciting opportunity to enhance and just maybe improve the relationship between journalists and their audience. Your action is commendable and I hope you will continue and encourage your colleagues to do the same in the future as such openness could set a new standard for fairness.

With the above acknowledgement in mind, I am writing you today in hopes that something positive will come from yours and Mr. Krusch's response. I say this because all too often the exchanges on the Internet tend to be sophomoric (perhaps due to the large number of university students using it) rather than reasoned and thoughtful. And, more often, individuals appear to deliberately want to polarize opinions rather than arrive at some better understanding of the issues under discussion. Thus, when I first encountered Mr. Krusch's critique of your article, I was pleasantly surprised and encouraged that significant reasoned dialogue could actually take place on the Internet and between the audience and large media concerns. However, I must say, I was surprised by the tone of your response to Mr. Krusch's critique. Before going into this question however, let me simply state that I do not wish to rehash the specifics of the discussion but instead hope that we can keep any subsequent discussions on a professional and reasoned course. Furthermore, you should know that I have no affiliation with any organized militia or patriot concern; indeed, I have spent the latter half of my life living outside of the United States and, at this point, I hope I can claim some distance or maybe objectivity on U.S. domestic issues.

Thus, I want you to know I harbor no ill-will or biases toward you personally or TIME magazine in making the following observations about yours and Mr. Krusch's exchange.

HOW IT CAME OFF TO ME - THE OUTSIDER

First, contrary to your statement about Mr. Krusch's critique, I found nothing in his extensive analysis which led me to believe he was

"biased" one way or another. Indeed, his article came off to me as a very strained attempt to be as objective as possible. For that matter, I still don't know whether Mr. Krusch supports or opposes militias. Rather, it appeared to me that Mr. Krusch's agenda was more to illustrate certain aspects of how media works to "frame" social reality and how the rhetorical use of language can be used to position items in the minds of the audience. Therefore, your assertion about Mr. Krusch being biased, based upon the example of his title (How to Frame a Patriot) having an implicit conclusion in it missed the point of the use of the word "frame." Mr. Krusch's use of the word "frame" admittedly uses double entendre; however, I believe his article was primarily relying upon the sociological usage of this word as developed by Erving Goffman in his landmark work "Frame Analysis." In any event, the other, more familiar usage does not necessarily prove any bias but could be easily taken to be a conclusion given "up front." But what's wrong with stating a conclusion at the beginning of an exposition and then providing your arguments supporting the conclusion? Common practice throughout scientific and academic papers. Indeed, I wish mass media would do the same rather than insult the intelligence of the audience by trying to persuade through rhetoric rather than reason.

Second, and most disappointing for me was the overall "tone" of your response - it was sarcastic at points and Mr. Krusch is quite correct when he states the tone of your response was an attempt to "trivialize" his commentary. But, perhaps more disappointing is that he deserved better than you gave because, after all, you were the one who invited comment! Can you really say you viewed any other commentaries on your article more exhaustive and reasoned than his? I doubt it! Yet, you adopt a dismissive tone in your response. That was, frankly speaking, poor form - especially from a professional which I'm sure you are a very good one. Now, please don't adopt at this point a defensive posture because that would defeat my intention in writing this to you -- that's the last thing I want to do. You are a professional and as a professional you are fully conversant with all aspects of good composition and the rhetorical uses of language -- you wouldn't be where you are otherwise, I assume. Thus, you know full well what Mr. Krusch's sometimes microscopic analysis was getting at at every point. Furthermore, I know you know how to take and use criticism to constructive ends - being a journalist with editors above you this is a fact of life. So, I can only tell you how your response came off to me, an outsider, namely, defensive, dismissive, arrogant, and, frankly, unprofessional. That's pretty hard, I know, but I state these observations as an outsider and not having any particular point of view on the subject matter of the article you wrote. I truly hope you were just having a bad day when you wrote your response because I'm quite certain you are more than capable of responding in a responsible and professional manner - but it didn't come through in your response, sadly. Indeed, if you can relax any knee-jerk response to what I just stated and open up a little to what I'm getting at here perhaps you could imagine another type of response, at least I can. If it were I responding I would have stated something along the following:

"Well, Mr. Krusch while I disagree with your overall assessment, I can, nevertheless, see that my use of certain language may, in some minds, cause an alternative interpretation. It's good to know that some people read closely my writings and take me to task when I might lose sight of how language can be read sometimes. Based upon your comments, I'm going to be sure to carefully review future stories to guard against that which might be misinterpreted,,,etc."

See my point? Yes, Mr. Krusch was coming down hard but he kept the tone objective and open. I do not believe his purpose was to polarize opinion but more to open up people's minds to be more critical of what they read - surely a good and noble intention. However, the tone of your response undercut whatever of objective value you might have been criticizing in his article. I would like to hope that your intention was not to hope that others would likewise dismiss Mr. Krusch's viewpoints based upon the rhetorical nature of your response because otherwise your response merely served to support one of Mr. Krusch's main contentions, namely, that TIME is more interested in using rhetorical devices to persuade rather than pursuing the objective reporting of facts!

Well, you can see that your response said more to me than your article or even Mr. Krusch's critic of the same. But, I hope you will take what I'm saying as a sincere attempt to bring some good exchanges between your organization and the Internet audience. I'm sure you can understand that if you belittle those you invite to comment on your articles than you can expect only trivial and pointless responses or no responses at all. Rather, I hope that your inviting comments was a sincere attempt to solicit opinions in order to improve your coverage and writings and to better communicate with your audience. Assuming this, I hope you will continue doing so and that next time around we can keep matters on the elevated level Mr. Krusch attempted to do rather than the normal knee-jerk, snide, polarizing level most of the Internet responses tend to do. Indeed, I'd encourage you to talk with the folks at TIME and promote the idea of establishing an open USENET newsgroup along the lines of "alt.TIME.comments." Isn't that a good idea if you are really interested in gaining attention for your publication? TIME could be the first mass market magazine to capture the attention of the significant and fast growing Internet community. This could even be a story you could write for them. Great idea, no?

Well, if you got this far, God Bless You, because I'm exhausted and will now go up on my roof to do some star gazing and sip some wine. No need to respond if you don't have time - I understand.

Keep up the good work.

Regards,
Dave Marino

KRUSCH'S RESPONSE TO FARLEY'S REPLY

Mr. Farley, at the outset I'd like to thank you for taking the time to reply to my analysis. If all the reporters in the establishment media would follow your lead, I think we'd be on our way to getting more accurate journalism. Actually, it's not the "field troops" I'm worried about, it's the commanders: the people at the top. They're the ones who exercise the editorial control, and for that reason, we're having this conversation on a "common carrier" called USENET, and not within the pages of TIME magazine. To the readers of TIME, this conversation does not exist: and won't until it is published in your employer's pages. Maybe one day your employer will make TIME into a "common carrier": that would be something!

As I stated in my analysis, I saw your article as "nothing new". To me it was just one more example of a long, long line of biased reporting going back as far as the Vietnam war, and probably way beyond that as well. At the end of my article, I indicated some essential "off-line" readings such as Jeffords and Rabinovitz' SEEING THROUGH THE MEDIA and Gitlin's THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING. These books, and many others, painstakingly document the "what" and "how" of media disinformation techniques.

In THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING, Todd Gitlin details how the mass media attacked the "New Left" in the 60's. As Gitlin states on p. 8 of his book,

Media certainly help set the agendas for political discourse; although they are far from autonomous, they do not passively reflect the agendas of the State, the parties, the corporations, or 'public opinion.' The centralization and commercialization of the mass media of communication make them instruments of cultural dominance on a scale unimagined even by Balzac.

Gitlin tells us that any "analytic approach to journalism must ask the following questions" (p. 7):

What is the frame here? Why this frame and not another? What patterns are shared by the frames clamped over this event and the frames clamped over that one, by frames in different media in different places at different moments? And how does the news-reporting institution regulate these regularities?

And then: What difference do the frames make for the larger world?

When we see that "liberal" Phil Donahue uses the same frame as "conservative" TIME magazine (a frame which permits his show to beam a false, re-written version of the actual text of the Second Amendment to millions of people), we have to ask, "if print media echoes broadcast media, how can people see in any other terms other than those employed by the media?" As the views of the media become absorbed by the populace

magazine. I thank him for his note -- I think talking about these sorts of things in a public forum is a good thing and helps to fill up the time between NFL playoff games.

Note that you can't simply say, "talking about these sorts of things in a public forum is a good thing" -- you feel compelled to add, "and helps to fill up the time between NFL playoff games." In other words, you feel the need to trivialize this very important discussion as something which "helps to fill up . . . time" between what is itself a trivial exercise, watching mindless sports on television. For your information, I don't watch NFL playoff games; I use what precious time I have available to me to think, read, and write about what I view as disturbing developments in society.

While his post didn't present any new ideas or arguments (to quote that great American Christian Slater, all the great themes have been used up and turned into theme parks), I thought I'd make a few comments about it.

Actually, "new" is a relative term. Some ideas, like "frame", may be new to some people. However, the "newness" of an idea is not solely indicative of its worth. By stating that my ideas and arguments were not "new", you seek to trivialize them.

1)KRUSCH'S BIAS: I hope people who read Mr.Krusch's post take the time to read my story without his running commentary. Reading something with a highly partisan critic's commentary stuck in every few lines is a little like attending a movie with a movie critic whispering in your ear. Even if you're watching a Kurasawa flick, you're not going to get as much as you should out of the experience.

Learning how to counter-frame biased framing is a valuable skill. My running commentary was designed to show people one way of thinking about an article as they read it; not to just passively absorb it, but to analyze "what makes it tick".

I'd also like to point out something interesting about Mr.Krusch's criticism-he accuses me of bias, yet his article is, without question, highly partisan, and, without question more overtly opinionated than anyone could possibly consider my article to be. His article's headline drew an explicit conclusion: "How to Frame a Patriot." My article was evenhandedly titled "Patriot Games." Clearly he is the one coming from a rigidly defined position. (Krusch, in his post, argues that by making a reference to a Tom Clancy thriller, I'm somehow making light of the patriot movement. I think anyone who's has read Clancy or is familiar with his work knows that Clancy takes military matters very, very seriously).

If my analysis appears "highly partisan", it is because I was analyzing an article that was itself "highly partisan". Had I had a more objective

piece of journalism to work with, you would not have any reason to perceive me as "partisan".

Actually, my analysis was not "partisan", for the same reason that the techniques you used were not "partisan"; media framing techniques are neutral and can be applied to any group of any political orientation, and so can analysis of those framing techniques. You don't have to be a member of the patriot movement to be disturbed at TIME's media bias.

My title did draw an explicit conclusion, because to me, there was a strong conclusion that could be reached beyond a reasonable doubt: your article was heavily biased. If you'll go back and read my article, you'll see that my concern was with the use of the (non-"evenhanded") word "games", not the reference to Tom Clancy's novel.

2)FILET OF BIAS: I'm not going to go through Mr. Krusch's entire analysis because its rather repetitive. Instead, I'll take a look at two passages that pretty much sum up his entire venture:

Mr. Krusch writes at one point: "Farley/TIME tells us how we are to think of these "men": they are "irate" (irate people, as we all know, are irrational), "gun-toting" (the use of the word "toting" from the rural lexicon calls up images of hillbillies against the revenuers), and "white" (thus "racist" by implication, even though there are many black members of the movement)."

Let's take his attacks on the rather neutral words I used one by one. "Men." Well, the people discussed in my story were men and many had joined these groups because they were men, heads of households concerned about their places in society. To leave out that word would have been an illogical coverup.

Using "two passages" that, to you, "pretty much sum up [an] entire venture" is your *modus operandi*, the same approach you took with the patriot movement: taking a small sample of data and then extrapolating it to the entire set. Any first-year logic or statistics student can point out the fallacy (and inherent bias) of that approach. The attempt to escape this form of bias is why I analyzed your article line-by-line, and why I'm now analyzing your response to me line-by-line.

Yes, the people discussed in your story were men, but the more important issue is, "what percentage of the people in the movement are men"? Rather than burden us with statistical data on the male-to-female ratio in the movement, you throw in a lot of anecdotal evidence that any social scientist would be embarrassed to use when authoring a journal article on a movement's demographic composition.

"Irate." If anyone takes the time to canvas the opinions of militia members you'll find, as TIME did, that many members

are indeed irate about the way the country is going. Again, it would have been a lie, and illogical, to say they were "happy" or "gleeful" about Clinton administration gun-control policies."

There are obviously many people in this movement who have been, at one time or another, "irate" about the way things have been going. There are still others who have been "disturbed", and others "concerned". You paint all members of the movement with the same brush.

"White." The men TIME interviewed and saw at the militia meetings were all white. Saying they are "white" does not mean or imply that they are racist. That's absurd. The New York Rangers are all white-but a finer group of human beings you'd have a harder time finding. If I were writing a hockey story, no, I probably wouldn't bring race into things. But I was writing a story about a social movement in which race clearly place a part. Besides which, later in the story, I quote a militia member saying that he is not a racist.

But elsewhere in the story, you talk about the "Ku Klux Klan" and "neo-Nazis", which frames "white" as something more sinister. You also talk about "canny" people using "code words", in case we didn't get the message. In context, your use of the term has clear racial implications. You quote a militia member, but the whole thrust of the article is to discredit militia members: so who cares what he says? A member of the Patriot movement is either a nutball like "General" Olson, or a "canny" individual capable of fooling us -- but we know better, don't we?

"Toting." Well grandmothers carry tote bags and tote their purses around too. It's hardly a nefarious word to use.

In context, the word trivialized the members of the movement.

Mr. Krusch also writes: "Gosh, TIME, you're starting to sound a little paranoid yourself! Better watch out, before those militia recruiters come after you to suck you into their Koresh-style cults."

That certainly doesn't sound like the tone a cold-eyed analyst would use. Clearly Krusch's analysis isn't done in the name of fairness, but out of outraged partisanship, something I avoided entirely in my story.

Actually, my analysis WAS done "in the name of fairness": you wouldn't want me to just sit back and allow you to get away with biased "reporting", would you? And I wasn't "outraged" when I wrote it; as a matter of fact, I was astonished at the sophistication with which the piece was written, and gratified that I was able to discover the many sophisticated framing techniques you (or your editors) employed.

3)AN EQUATION EINSTEIN FORGOT TO WRITE: There have been a

few length examinations of my story on these boards, all offering up much heat and not much light. Length plus heat does not equal weight ($L + H \neq W$ if you want it rendered in mathematical terms). "How to Frame a Patriot" may have been a long piece but it certainly didn't have anything to add beyond line-by-line sniping. In a way, I'm probably playing into it by posting this long reply, but I've got a few minutes on my hands before I leave for New Year's Vacation.

Well, I was under the impression that my analysis did "have [something] to add". Thanks for discrediting and trivializing my analysis. You feel compelled to point out that you did not compose your response on VALUABLE time, but rather INSIGNIFICANT time, "a few minutes on [your] hands before [you] leave for . . . [v]acation". Thus, my analysis is not worthy of your valuable time, only what's left -- the table scraps.

Just for your information, I'm composing my response to you on VALUABLE time.

4)THE SEMI-MYTH OF OBJECTIVITY: I don't think judgements are entirely out of place in news articles. Sometimes I write news stories that are quite sharply worded, and have a clear point of view. Sometimes it's the journalist's duty to take a look at two sets of facts presented by two sets of people and try to objectively determine who is telling the truth. In the case of this article, I thought the best approach was to lay out the opinions of militia members without explicit commentary on my part.

It wasn't the "explicit" commentary I was worried about, it was the "implicit" commentary!

Some of you are going to remain convinced, as Mr.Krusch obviously is, that the story was loaded with bias. That's your right. But if you really think using words like "toting" and "irate" are indicative of of bias, then I'm afraid you need to take a hard look at your own biases. Mr.Krusch, if you want to ban and censor words like "white" and "toting" and "irate" from TIME magazine, I don't even want to attempt to make the attempt to try to please you or conform to your notions of verbal correctness. Happy Holidays everyone!!!

It is not just the use of the words "toting" and "irate" which exemplifies a nascent bias, but rather the whole thrust of the article. Don't try to reduce the entire puzzle to a couple of pieces (your modus operandi is showing). I have not advocated, nor will ever advocate, "ban[ning]" or "censor[ing] words like" "white" or "toting" or "male", nor even your combination of these terms and others into a patchwork quilt of biased reporting.

"Verbal correctness" is not the issue; biased reporting is.