



# Soft Power and Hard Views: How American Commentators are Spreading over the World's Opinion Pages

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**Soft Power and Hard Views: How American  
Commentators are Spreading over the World's  
Opinion Pages**

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Shorenstein Fellow, Spring 2005

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**#2006-1**

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## Executive Summary

“Power over opinion is... not less essential for political purposes than military and economic power, and has always been closely associated with them. The art of persuasion has always been a necessary part of the equipment of a political leader. But the popular view that regards propaganda as a distinctively modern weapon is, nonetheless, substantially correct... Democracies, or the groups which control them, are not altogether innocent of the arts of molding and directing public opinion.”<sup>i</sup>

E. H. Carr

In 1981, British realist and writer E. H. Carr defined international power as being divided into three categories: military, economic and power over opinion.<sup>ii</sup> The last of these is notoriously difficult to measure, and to consciously control. To date, theorists like Joseph Nye have used public opinion polls, particularly those canvassing the attitudes people in other countries hold towards the United States, to try to gauge how effective American soft power is, and how palatable its ideals are beyond its borders. For this paper, I chose to examine the export of American thought by documenting the presence of American columnists on newspaper opinion pages around the world in the 2000s. This was in part an attempt to assess what impact, if any, September 11 and the war in Iraq had on the demand for American opinion by editors who act as local gatekeepers of thought.

In this paper, I sought to answer three questions:

1. Were there any studies on America’s power over opinion, measured by the presence of their commentators - including those from think tanks - on the op-ed pages in other countries?
2. Had there been an increase in the number of American opinion pieces published in other countries? If so, why was this happening?
3. Were American columnists conscious of, or writing for, their global audience?

First of all, I determined that this subject had never been studied before. The work and influence of American columnists has been curiously unexamined, with only a handful of books on the subject – and not a single study on their global reach. Through a series of searches on the Lexis Nexis and Factiva databases, I then found that there had been a marked rise in the number of op-ed pieces by American writers in foreign publications, notably those from think tanks, since the late 1990s. The country where the greatest growth is occurring is the United Kingdom. Conservative think tanks such as the American Enterprise Institute have had the greatest rate of growth, along with think tanks focused on foreign policy. Significantly, the profile of key American think tanks – as measured by mentions in major English speaking newspapers – has grown more rapidly outside the US than within it.

I also found almost all of the thought being exported from the United States is male. The notable exception was Maureen Dowd, although demand for her pieces was stronger before the war than after it in some countries. Somewhat troublingly for opinion editors keen to kindle debate in their own countries by using American writers, many of the columnists I spoke to said they do not write for a broader audience – they write for Americans, and rarely keep track of where, and how often, their work is reprinted.

My research has documented that the subtle but growing Americanization of opinion pages in many countries has largely been driven by a demand from opinion page editors for pieces on American foreign policy in the wake of September 11 and in the lead up to, and aftermath of, the war in Iraq. Other influences have been the marketing and strategic thinking of think tanks seeking to expand their influence beyond the United States, the strong relationship the business press and Murdoch papers have with American think tanks – and, significantly, the fact that many op-eds from think tanks are free. At a time of shrinking newspaper audiences and a consequent tightening of editorial budgets across the world, this last factor should not be underemphasized.

## Introduction

IN JANUARY 2003, the *New York Times*' Maureen Dowd wrote a column about President Bush's State of the Union address, unwittingly hurling a grenade into cyberspace. "Can you believe," she wrote, "President Bush is still pushing the cockamamie claim that we went to war in Iraq with a real coalition rather than a gaggle of poodles and lackeys?". Bloggers snarled and hissed, firing letters of complaint to the *New York Times*. Several bloggers, including "the rantings of a homicidal maniac" and "badmoney", posted a "google bomb", which is a mechanism by which people can jam the google ranking system by linking items and forcing one to the top. By connecting Maureen Dowd and poodle, bombers hoped that when web-surfers searched for poodle, Dowd's name would come up.

The abuse was rife. The "Alliance of freeblogs" just called her a "stupid skank". "Marybeth" snorted, "Maureen is a rabid poodle. Think about it... symptoms of rabies can include foaming at the mouth, erratic behaviour, extreme excitement, and aggression." "Blackfive" apologized to any coalition countries; "If you are from a coalition country and are reading this, I won't even try to explain that woman to you. Suffice to say she is constantly making statements that offend a huge number of people. Personally I would like to thank each coalition country for their help and sacrifices in helping us. Know that most Americans know and appreciate what you are doing (even if the news media wants to ignore or belittle it)."<sup>iii</sup>

As an opinion editor in a country that had sent troops to fight in Iraq alongside American, British, Spanish and other troops, it was a curious, jarring moment. Maureen Dowd has long been popular amongst readers of the paper I work at, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and between January 2000 and January 2005, we ran 89 of her columns. We have frequently 'puffed' her, or put her photograph on the front page, and the man who edited the opinion page before me, declared, in a briefing note about which columnists to look out for on the wires, that she was "probably the best columnist in the world". What was evident in the "poodles and lackeys" comment however, was that she had an American audience in mind when writing that column. It was not intended as an insult, but for the Australian and British readers of her column, it was a reminder that she was not writing for them. (A similar moment came for those who saw Michael

Moore's Fahrenheit 9/11, where he painted the allies who went to war in Iraq with the U.S. as a group of irrelevant banana republics – and failed to mention Britain or Australia.)

Two years later, I decided to go to America's capital city and ask Dowd about that column for this paper. She is notoriously shy, hates doing interviews, is loath to appear on television and is a most reluctant public speaker. In my attempt to ask her questions about her global audience, I followed her from Washington DC to Phoenix, San Francisco and then Las Vegas, where she finally consented to an interview in the casino of the Bellagio Hotel. When I asked her about the poodle comment, she said – while pointing out the tendency to link women with dogs – that she was trying to comment on the Bush administration's claim that their push to war had been credible, palatable and accepted by a phalanx of allies. She had not intended to insult anyone:

“We shouldn't have really had anyone with us, really. The Bush people knew a year out... that they wanted to knock off Saddam and they just used all the intelligence organization of the United States government and warped all the information and twisted everything and distorted democracy for their own ideological agenda. In the end it may turn out to be right but as Richard Cohen said, even if there is freedom from the Tigris to the Nile, it doesn't make it right to assume the American people are so stupid that you can't tell them the real reason you are taking them to war, or even telling the kids, or their parents, it's not an ends justifies the means situation... I wasn't even anti-war, I was just 'Don't tell us fake reasons, don't hype up intelligence, don't distort intelligence to craft an ideological agenda that you have already decided on'...

But that was no offence to Australia, because no one loves Australia more than I do and I tried to move there after college, I loved it so much. And I am very disappointed that I only visited there with Dan Quayle because it was another case of the wrong guy in the right place. But as a columnist you are just trying to express things in a colorful way and maybe sometimes you go over the line.”<sup>iv</sup>

What are the implications of the export of American thought for newspaper readers in other countries? Opinion pages are as widely varied as the newspapers that house them. Some – like the *New York Times*, attempt to run pieces with views which counter those of the paper, as evident in the editorials, while others – like the *Wall Street Journal* - publish pieces which uphold the editorial line of the newspaper – and even the proprietor. Some pages are sober and

reflective, others are provocative and eclectic. Some are columnist driven, while others prefer to give more space to their contributors. Pieces can be run for myriad reasons, including to provide depth or analysis on current events, to provide balance or a change of pace, or to ensure the mix of pieces on the page is right.

Editors obtain opinion pieces from several sources. They can either commission pieces, accept those which are submitted to them from various contributors – and, sometimes, lobby groups - each day, or pull pieces from the wires. Many news organizations around the world pay large amounts of money for American wire services. Approximately 700 newspapers for example, use the New York Times service. For opinion editors, access to these pieces can be both cheap and easy: they do not have to be purchased, substantially edited, nor, usually, fact-checked.

Opinion pages are regularly scoured, and scrutinized for evidence of bias. Are there more men than women, more pro-Israel pieces than pro-Palestinian, more columnists who favor the government or more who ritually condemn them, or more right than left? More hawks than doves? What my research has established is that one trend that is clearly discernible in the noughties is the growth in use of pieces by American columnists. Readers are starting to react to this in a range of ways.

As Joseph Nye has explained, soft power is the “ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country’s culture, political ideals and policies.”<sup>v</sup> Nye believes the soft power of a country rests on three resources – culture, political values and foreign policies. This was particularly evident in 2003, he argues, when the appeal of the United States dropped suddenly in the months before the Iraq war - America fell an average 30 points of support in most European countries – support was much lower in Islamic countries.<sup>vi</sup> Pew Research Center polls conducted in 2002 found a majority of people in 34 of 43 countries agreed with the statement, “It’s bad that American ideas and customs are spreading here.”<sup>vii</sup> Half of the countries polled liked the ideas about the democracy that came from the United States, but far less – a third – thought it a good thing in general that American ideas and customs spread. With a dominance of culture and ideas can come resentment, as well as unease at the erosion of local cultures, language and even thought.

The range of views on the war in Iraq and the Bush administration's foreign policy expressed in American opinion pieces are legion. It is interesting, however, that the countries with particularly high take-ups of American columns were allies - Britain and Australia – where there was fierce majority opposition to the war. In both countries, while the government agreed to join the coalition of forces in Iraq, a majority of the population was against it. It is not within the scope of this paper to definitively determine what kind of impact columnists from the United States had in this context – and whether they undermined or boosted American soft power. Their influence was much more complex than simply being negative or positive. It is significant, and important, to establish first of all a different kind of power – access to influential opinion pages in other countries. These pages are historically a primary determinant and source of elite opinion, and the fact that the presence of American thinkers on them is growing seems to be having a curious impact on debates and indigenous intellectual cultures.

The subject of American column writing has been curiously unexamined: little has been written about it. One exception is Sam Riley's *The American Newspaper Columnist*, but this book is more an eclectic collection of trends and names than thorough analysis.<sup>viii</sup> Political theorists interested in soft power have touched on the flow of ideas, and the need to win the minds of other countries, but I have not found any academics who have tried to measure this, or even considered the growth of global interest in American opinion. In addition, while there have been extensive studies on the growing influence of the think tank, particularly conservative think tanks, there has been no work done on the global influence of those think tanks: what role do they play in debates about the US and international affairs in other countries?

## **Methodology and Evidence**

In order to assess the rise in the number of opinion pieces published by American think tanks on the world's opinion pages, I undertook a three-part analysis. The first stage involved documenting the rise in the number of mentions of the best-known think tanks in American newspapers over the past 15 years, thereby determining the increments by which their profile was rising in the domestic market. The second extended this search to English speaking newspapers in Europe, Asia and the Pacific, to provide a comparison of visibility, in simple terms, of these think tanks both inside and outside the U.S.. In the third stage, I compiled the



available evidence to measure the number of columns published on foreign op-ed pages since 1998 to the present day: the three years before, and the three years after September 11.

The think tanks chosen for this study were those which have been the most visible in American national newspapers: the Brookings Institution, the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute.<sup>ix</sup> These were also the think tanks considered to be the most influential by congressional staff and journalists in 1997.<sup>x</sup> As Heritage and Cato have a greater presence within America than globally, I added to the initial four categories those think tanks which are devoted to foreign policy: CFR – the Council on Foreign Relations – the CSIS – the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and the CEIP – the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Of all foreign policy-oriented think tanks, these had the greatest presence globally.

It should be noted that, while the searches done for this paper have been thorough, they are not comprehensive. Two sources of information have been used for data collection. The first was the records of publications kept by think tanks themselves. As explained below, these records should be considered a reasonably accurate guide, while the second source, the online electronic databases Lexis-Nexis and Factiva, should be treated with caution, largely because their data on foreign newspapers is incomplete. These still remain the best possible sources because neither newspapers nor syndicates will provide information on the circulation of their writers, as it is considered to be proprietary, or commercially sensitive. Mary Fleming Svensson, the sales manager (international) of the Washington Post Writers' Group, for example, would only tell me that their highest selling global columnists internationally are Jim Hoagland, David Ignatius, Robert Samuelson, Charles Krauthammer, George Will and Fareed Zakaria, not how often they are reproduced, where and if demand for their writing has increased over the past few years.<sup>xi</sup>

The searches of think tank mentions in the American media were conducted using the Lexis-Nexis and the Wall Street Journal archives on Factiva. Using the “major news” source list on Lexis-Nexis, I searched any mentions of the full names of each think tank on an annual basis from 1998 to 2004. The newspapers included in this analysis were the: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *Baltimore Sun*, *Boston Globe*, *Boston Herald*, *Buffalo News*, *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Columbus Dispatch*, *New York Daily News*, *Denver Post*, *Hartford Courant*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Miami Herald*, *New York Times*, *Newsday*,

*Omaha World Herald, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Cleveland Plain Dealer, San Diego Union-Tribune, San Francisco Chronicle, Seattle Times, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, St. Petersburg Times, Minneapolis Star Tribune, Tampa Tribune, Times-Picayune, USA Today, Wall Street Journal,* and the *Washington Post*. The same search was then conducted on Factiva, including only the *Wall Street Journal* in the source list. I then added together the Lexis and Factiva totals.

The second search – of the annual number of think tank scholar’s op-eds appearing in foreign publications - was conducted in slightly different ways, depending on whether think tanks were able to supply a list of their publications. While these lists tended to be more reliable than the newspaper database searches, the think tank clipping services are not comprehensive: they may have missed publications, and duplicate syndications are rarely included. The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) supplied a list of all their opinion pieces, and from this the number of foreign pieces could be counted. The Brookings Institution has a list of op-ed pieces on its website. For Cato, Heritage, and CSIS, every scholar was searched individually on Lexis, and the numbers were then compiled into a total for the relevant think tank. This was crosschecked with a search on Factiva, and any discrepancies were reconciled. Results included some letters to the editor, and “notebooks” that may appear on opinion pages, but are more snippets, or short extracts than full opinion pieces. Any Cato, CSIS or Heritage scholar who has retired since 1998 and is not listed on the think tanks’ websites has not been included. For both the Council on Foreign Relations and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the publication lists on their websites were used, and again, like AEI and Brookings, the foreign policy publications were culled.

The Lexis-Nexis and Factiva databases are not comprehensive when conducting searches on reprints from wire services, or American newspapers. It is almost impossible to conduct reliable searches for a columnist from a wire service like the *New York Times* because of the way articles are gathered from overseas newspapers. For example, an author search for Maureen Dowd in overseas publications on Factiva between 1999 and 2005 brought up 19 in 1999, 2 in 2000, 14 in 2001, 13 in 2002, 62 in 2003 (this would be 120 if the *International Herald Tribune* was included), and 25 in 2004. When I checked this against figures from my own paper, the discrepancy was startling. The *Sydney Morning Herald* had run 89 articles by her on the op-ed page between March 2000 and March 2005, and the *Age* – the Fairfax broadsheet in Melbourne – had run 54. This means the Australian figures alone outnumber the Factiva results.

Diane Thieke, Director of Global Public Relations at Factiva, a Dow Jones & Reuters Company, said that even the the newspaper databases with the most comprehensive coverage – “full text” – did not always include opinion pieces. She explained in an email:

“Full Text indicates cover-to-cover or near cover-to-cover coverage of that publication. However, some items found in print are not included. These items include: advertisements, classified ads and lengthy tabular material (i.e., stock quotations). In addition, letters to the editor, obituaries, wire stories and syndicated columns may be excluded.”<sup>xii</sup>

The gaping holes in the online search engines means that information on individual columnists must also be obtained from the databases of individual newspaper, which I have done with the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age* for both Thomas Friedman and Maureen Dowd.

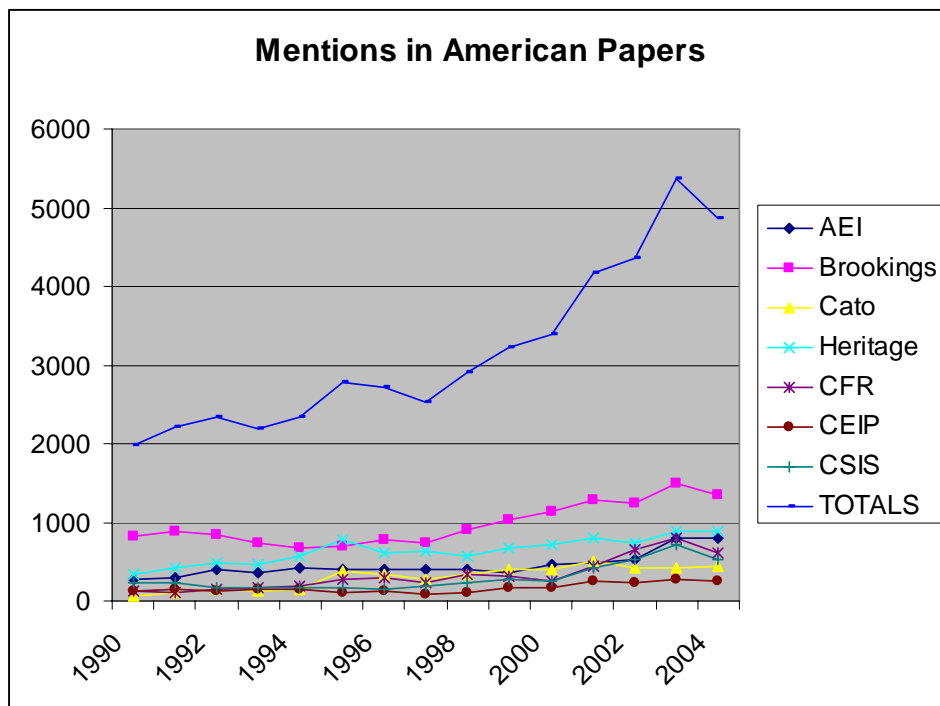
## **Results**

The major findings of this research paper are outlined below:

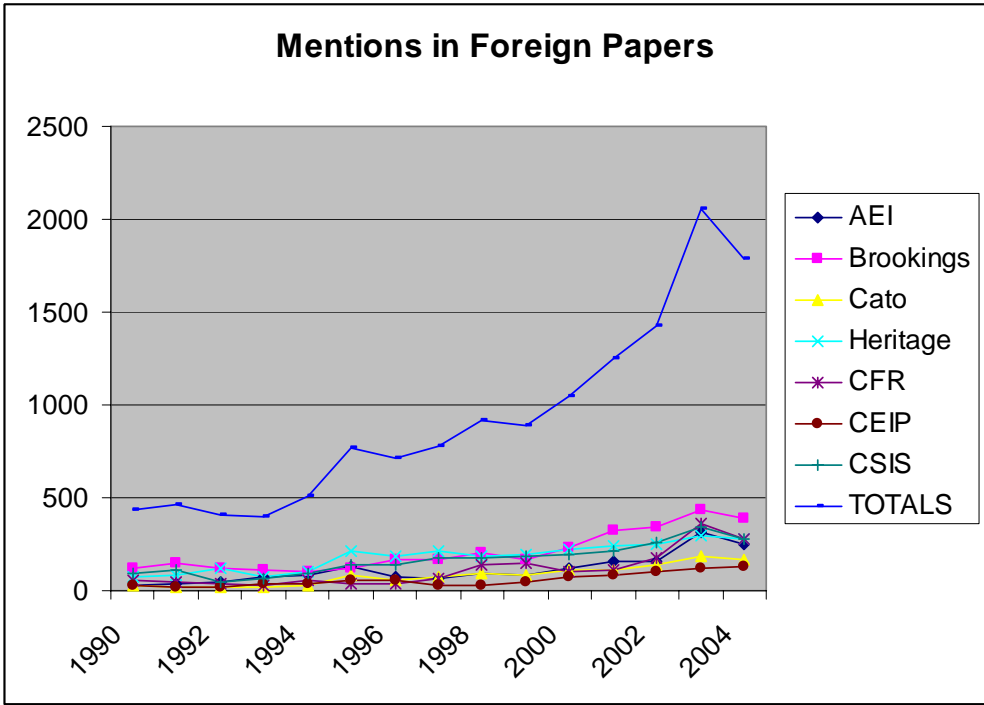
**1. The international profile of American think tanks has escalated sharply since September 11, and particularly since the Iraq war. The growth in the global visibility of these think tanks began in the late 1990s.**

The greatest leap in visibility of American think tanks has not been in the local press, but in that of other countries. This is a significant result, because all previous analyses have onlydocumented the rise in the number of mentions of think tanks in the local media, which my research has confirmed. Between 1998 and 2004, there was a 54 per cent increase in the number of times the top four American think tanks were mentioned in the major American newspapers – from 2385 in 1998 to 3685 in 2004. The following table below shows – Table 1 – the Brookings Institute has the highest profile of the four. However, in terms of growth, the AEI outstripped its competitors with an increase of 95 per cent, Heritage rose by 53 percent, Brookings slightly less at 46 per cent, and Cato was last with 30 per cent.<sup>xiii</sup> The Brookings Institution was the only one to peak in 2003 instead of 2004.

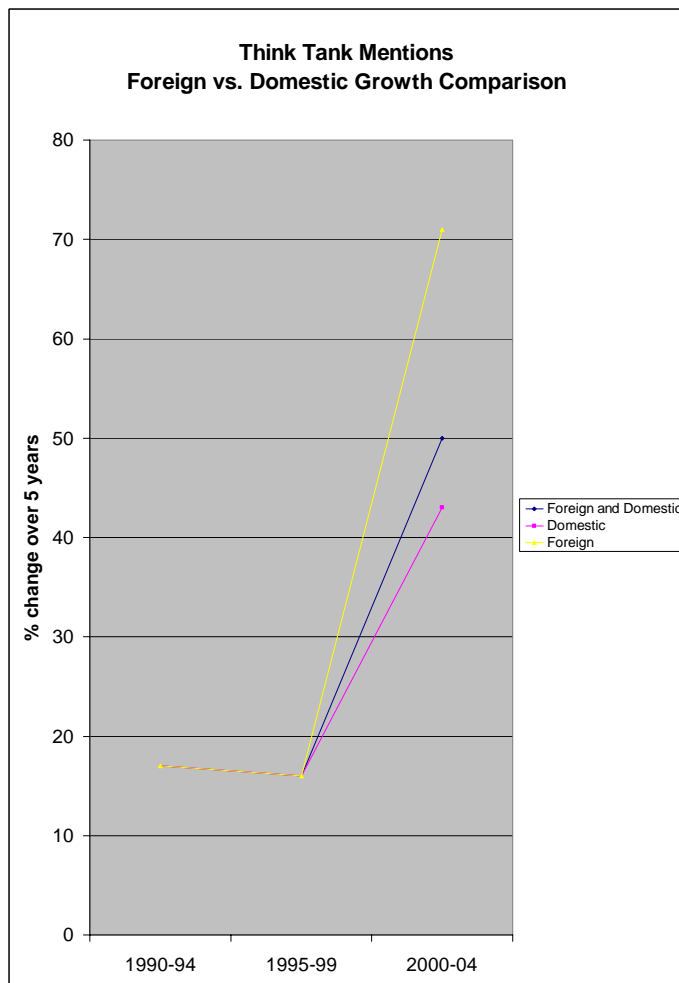
When placed in a graph together, the difference between the rate of growth in domestic mentions and those in foreign countries, seen in Table 2, is stark – and surprising. As shown in Table 3, from 1990 to 2000, there was a steady growth rate, where the domestic mentions paralleled the foreign mentions. The percentage of growth in five-year increments, from 1990 to 1995 was 17 per cent for both foreign and domestic. Both categories again dropped slightly to 16 per cent between 1995 and 1999. In the key period, between 2000 and 2004, while both were rapidly climbing, the growth rate of foreign mentions substantially overtook the growth rate of domestic mentions: mentions in domestic newspapers grew by 43 per cent while foreign think tank mentions in papers outside the U.S. jumped by 71 per cent. It is within this context that the number of opinion pieces being published in other countries has grown.



**Table 1**



**Table 2**



**Table 3**

### **Presence of op-eds in Foreign Newspapers**

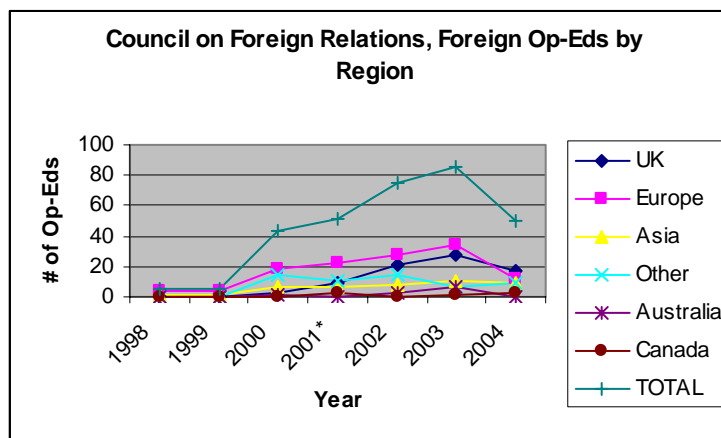
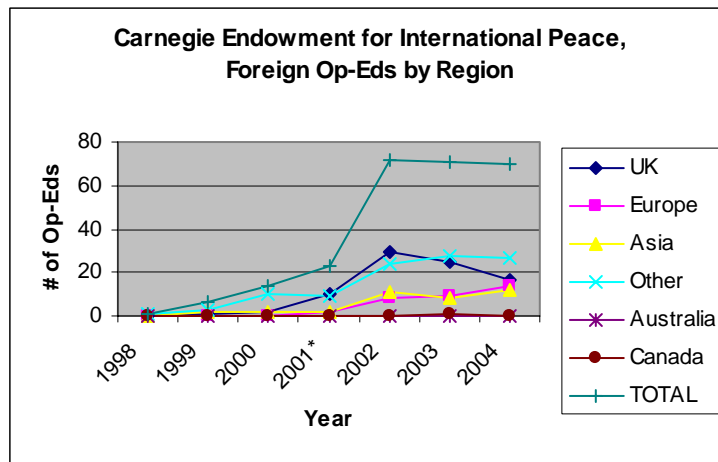
The growing visibility and influence of American think tanks has also been reflected in the presence of opinion pieces in foreign newspapers. My search of major international newspapers shows that the total number of op-ed articles by the Brookings Institution, the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute published overseas rose by 400 per cent between 1998 and 2004.<sup>xiv</sup> When the foreign policy think tanks, the CFR, CEIP and the CSIS are included, the rate is even higher, at 457 per cent over the same period. Most of the growth was due to articles on foreign policy, defense and war. Just under half of all of the pieces published in 2003 were articles on foreign policy.

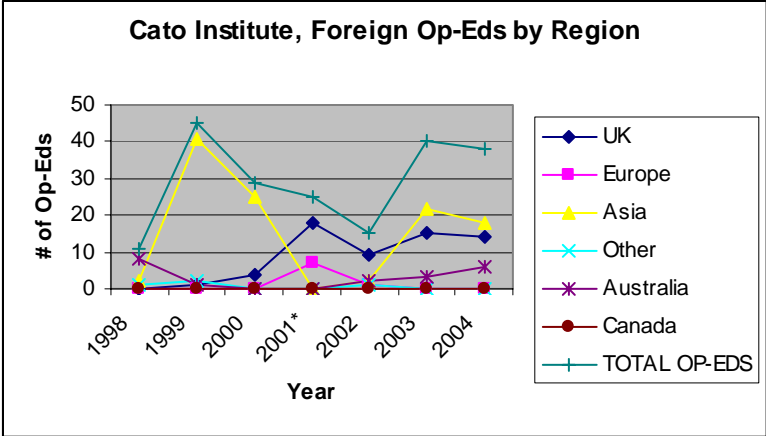
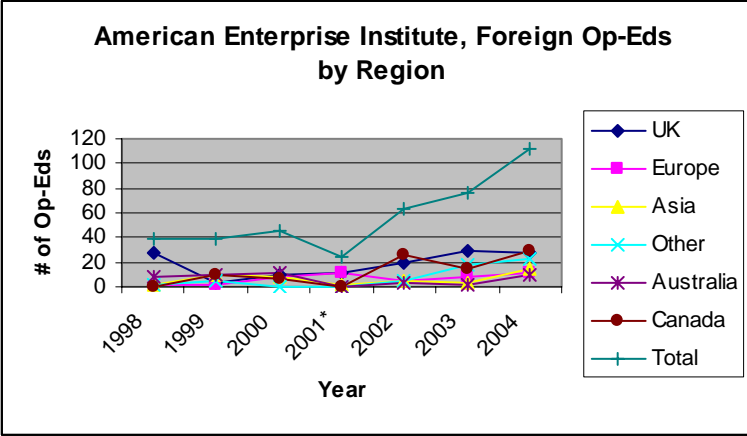
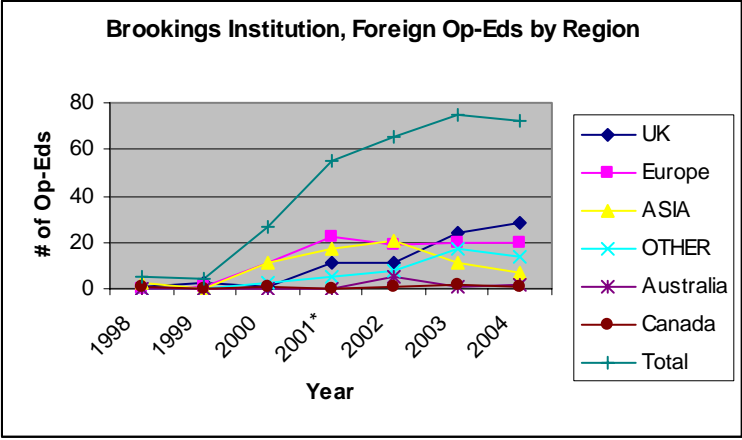
The next group of tables shows the increase in the publication of opinion pieces, by year and region, of each of the think tanks included in this study. The evidence reveals that the presence

of Carnegie on international opinion pages shot up in 2001, while the CFR has seen a constant rise in the number of columns by their scholars published overseas, dropping off in 2003. The Brookings Institution has had sustained growth since 1999, especially in the UK. After a dip in 2001, the AEI has risen strongly, and steadily. Cato peaked in 1999, and has been erratic ever since, only sliding upwards after 2001, due to demand in the Asian newspaper market. Heritage declined in the first half of 2001 but European editors have aided an improvement since then. The opinion profile of the CSIS has also improved dramatically.

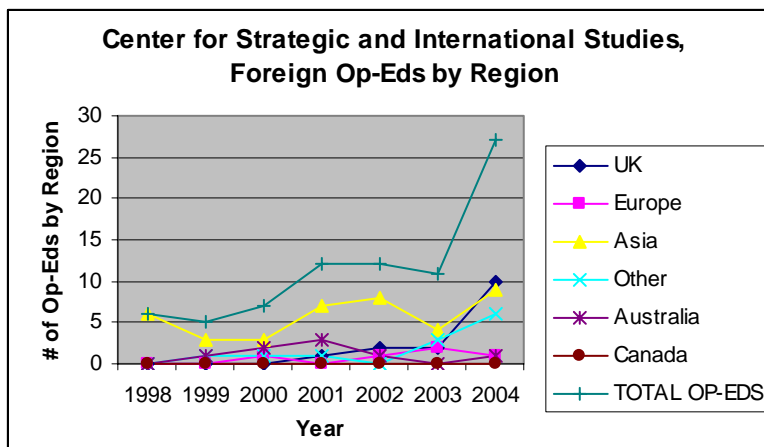
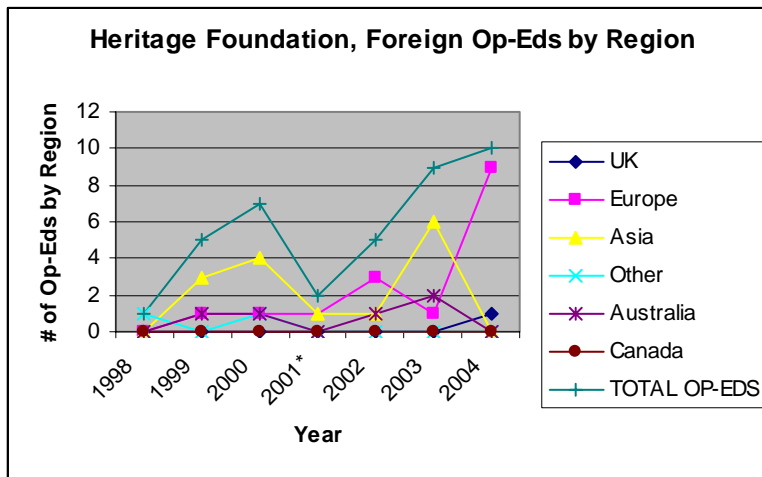
It should be noted that these tables and figures are, at best, a conservative estimate of the global expansion of American thought. As discussed above, the think tank officials I spoke to all indicated that their record keeping for foreign op-eds was thorough, but may not include all the reprints, or even all the publications of their scholars' work.

**Graphs for Annual Foreign Op-Eds by International Region**  
*(See appendix for charts with data for the above graphs)*









**b. In an increasingly competitive market of ideas, conservative think tanks have been particularly successful.<sup>xv</sup>**

My research – which includes only newspapers, not the electronic media - revealed that while the centrist Brookings Institute has had more success than the AEI placing opinion pieces by its fellows on op-ed pages in the United States, the more conservative, right-leaning AEI outstrips it in the global market: with at least 112 op-eds in 2004 to Brookings' 72.

Recent studies have shown that conservative, Washington based think tanks are more likely to be mentioned and published in newspapers than their liberal counterparts.<sup>xvi</sup> Andrew Rich found, in

a study from 1993 to 1999, that there was a significantly greater proportion of references to conservative think tanks for articles written by their personnel than for liberal think tanks or those of no identifiable ideology (which includes Brookings): “Almost 30 per cent of references to conservative think tanks were to articles written by think tank staff, compared with no less than 8 per cent of the references to think tanks of liberal, centrist or no identifiable ideology.”<sup>xvii</sup> It should further be noted that almost one third of what he terms substantive references to think tanks appear in the opinion pages of three newspapers. Two-thirds of those were in the *Wall Street Journal*. Just under one in five references to liberal think tanks appeared on opinion pages. This means that conservative think tanks are not only likely to appear as authors of articles on op-ed pages, they are also more likely to be cited on these pages by other authors. Rich concludes that the think tanks most successful at conveying their ideas – through national newspapers – are the “conservative, marketing-oriented think tanks.”<sup>xviii</sup>

Other surveys confirm Rich’s thesis. According to Fair.org, which has claimed that “the invisibility of left think tanks is a long-standing phenomenon”, in the year after September 11, the mentions of progressive institutes dwindled to just eleven per cent of all think tank mentions in the media (Classifying Brookings as centrist, they found not one single progressive think tank was in the top ten most-cited organizations in the print press). In 1996, sociologist Michael Dolny cited a study of Gulf War coverage by Lawrence Soley that found that the Institute for Policy Studies – described as progressive - received only six per cent of Brookings’ citations over seven months.<sup>xix</sup> Dolny has conducted a survey of mentions of think tanks in both the press and broadcast media for the past ten years and has found that there has been a drop in the visibility of think tanks who concentrate on domestic policy, a boost in the profile of those who specialize in foreign policy, and “increasing focus on centrist to conservative voices”.<sup>xx</sup>

A bias towards conservative think tanks may, obviously, reflect a favouring of conservative commentary on op-ed pages. In a study of 51 think tanks in six national newspapers between 1991 and 1998, Andrew Rich and R. Kent Weaver found newspapers like the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Times* were far more likely to use material from think tanks which were conservative, and in line with their editorial position.<sup>xxi</sup> Another survey, by Todd Gitlin showed that between December 1, 2002, and February 21, 2003, during the debate about whether to go to war with Iraq, the *Washington Post* op-ed page published 39 hawkish commentators and 12 dovish ones.<sup>xxii</sup>

Political commentator David Brock claims a bias towards hiring conservatives began three decades ago. In *The Republican Noise Machine: Right Wing Media and How it Corrupts Democracy*, he writes that in the 1970s, op-ed pages were relatively new in print journalism, and that most newspapers had conservative local political columnists or syndicated centrists like Walter Lippmann: “Even if they didn’t know it, the newspapers may have been recruiting conservatives in reaction to the mythology of the mid-1970s that the ‘liberal media’ had brought down a Republican president and lost the Vietnam War, as well as to the concerted right-wing political attacks by Accuracy in the Media and others.”<sup>xxiii</sup> Over the next few years, many of the columnists who were employed were not journalists, but came from think tanks or political groups – former President Ronald Reagan, for example, had a column for some time.

In a 2002 survey published in the *Editor and Publisher* magazine, Dave Astor, found that sales of columnists by conservatives had not risen by much after September 11, but suggested this may have been because they already outnumbered liberal columnists. At the eight biggest syndicates, there were, he wrote, roughly 35 conservative and 30 liberal columnists. The group with the largest op-ed roster – the Creators Syndicate - had twice as many conservatives as liberals. Alan Shearer, editorial director and general manager of WPWG – which, according to Astor, has four liberal, three conservative, and eight moderate or hard-to- pigeonhole Op-Ed columnists - said “Conservative columnists are a bit more popular”, partly because conservative publishers, especially at smaller papers, can have an influence on the hiring of columnists.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Danielle Pletka, Vice President, Foreign and Defense Policy Studies, of the American Enterprise Institution, when asked how AEI op-eds are different to those of other think tanks, claimed it was not just the ideological positioning but the style of the right that made them superior crafters of opinion pieces:

“I think they are better. Part of it is the right/ left problem and the paucity of ideas on the left. I think there are cycles in all ideological movements and for the last ten years or so conservatives have been the party of ideas and change and liberals haven’t and it is why they are losing elections. When you translate that on the ground I don’t want to write a piece saying someone is a jerk, I want to do something and say something. We are true believers in things that we do and I don’t

really want to score points. There's a need to score points on the other side and it's why our people are better."<sup>xxv</sup>

While I have found that the AEI has been remarkably successful in penetrating the overseas market, other conservative think tanks, like Heritage, have not shared their success. Arguably the most critical factor in success in the global market is foreign policy expertise, as demonstrated below. Think tanks like Heritage and Cato which focus on American domestic politics were more successful placing op-eds locally.

**c. Those who deliberately target the global market appear to be increasing their penetration in greater increments.**

One important difference between syndicated columnists and think tanks scholars is that the former write for Americans, and are picked up by a wider audience if it happens to be of interest. The latter have scholars who frequently deliberately tailor their pieces for different countries, either using research which relates to their domestic politics, or comparing the American experience to their own. Think tanks have also employed writers and researchers with competence in international affairs or pockets of the globe, which are currently under scrutiny – like the Middle East or Northern Asia. This appears to have had a discernible impact on their presence in foreign newspapers.

Carmen MacDougall, the Vice President for Communications of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace – which has seen a steep incline in the uptake of their pieces internationally - said while three quarters of their op-ed pieces are placed by their authors, they have been pursuing a conscious strategy of trying to get their ideas published on foreign opinion pages. In recent years, this has seen a focus on Asia, South Korea and China, or, in the case of non-proliferation, Canada and Australia. “We take great pride in having more international scholars here,” she said.

When I asked how important their global audience was, she replied, “Extremely important, it is growing in importance to us, it's not at all arbitrary... There's a great consciousness that we can

influence these issues if we reach leaders in these other countries...US leadership is always ideal but because it has been absent recently, we look for other pulse points.” One example of an issue where there was an absence of leadership, she said, was in nuclear non-proliferation: “the U.S. is absent largely, therefore we try to reach as many other countries as we can to explain the importance, we try to get them to explain other ideas, catch on to our ideas to encourage other people to take action and fill the vacuum that exists.”<sup>xxvi</sup> This observation is very significant, as it demonstrates that some think tanks can seek to influence not just other countries with their op-ed pieces, but, indirectly, pressure the American government by gathering support for their ideas from political elites and leaders elsewhere.

**d. Think tank visibility is determined by size, location and expertise.**

The major variables for visibility of American think tanks are size, budget, whether they are based in Washington, and breadth of research mission. Those with scholars whose expertise relates to topical matters also experience greater exposure. According to Andrew Rich, “independent political events remain most important in accounting for the frequency with which think tank expertise is cited.”<sup>xxvii</sup>

Variables for success in foreign newspapers are expertise in American foreign policy, and global politics generally, as well as an understanding of the culture and politics and problems of different countries. Think tanks have a long history of gaining status or access to both government and media because of their foreign policy expertise. Donald E. Abelson argues that one reason there was a boom in the number of think tanks in the US after World War Two was that “as a result of casting aside its isolationist shell to assume the global responsibilities of a hegemonic power after World War II, the United States had to rely increasingly on policy experts for advice on how to conduct its foreign relations”. The consequent demand for expertise in foreign policy contributed to the creation of several institutes, including RAND (1948), the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI, 1955), the Institute for Defense Analysis (1956) and the CSIS (1962).<sup>xxviii</sup> The growth in the number of think tanks prompted many to aggressively market themselves to enhance their status in a competitive market, as discussed below.

More recently, my research has shown that foreign policy think tanks have had the highest rate of growth when it comes to op-eds in the newspapers of countries outside America. The

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, for example, had one op-ed in 1998, in the rest of the world, and 70 in 2004. The Council on Foreign Relations had 5 in 2000 and 50 last year.

**e. The individual countries with the greatest demand for opinion pieces by American think tanks are the United Kingdom, along with Australia and Canada. There has also been strong growth in Europe since 2001, and a fairly stable presence in Asia.**

The United Kingdom is the greatest individual consumer of opinion pieces from the United States, having published one third of the foreign op-eds published in the past four years. The next two countries with greatest demand are Canada then Australia. When I asked Kate Carlisle, the Managing Editor of the Washington Post/LA Times syndication service why she thought there was such a strong demand in Australia, she said, “I have often wondered about that, is Australia becoming more like the US or is the US becoming more, because of the significance of its moves internationally, is it more interesting to everyone in the world?”<sup>xxix</sup>

While historically a reluctant consumer of American opinion, for nationalistic reasons, the increase in the number of pieces appearing in Europe (which does not include the UK in these search engines) has been interesting, and, according to my research, the continent now reprints almost a quarter of foreign op-ed pieces. Asia published 15 per cent. There are some interesting exceptions – the *Jerusalem Post* (mainly conservative think tanks), the *Straits Times* in Singapore and, increasingly, English-speaking newspapers in countries like Pakistan and Lebanon are also strong consumers of opeds coming out of the United States (the search was only done for English speaking papers). The table below provides clear evidence of a long-term trend.

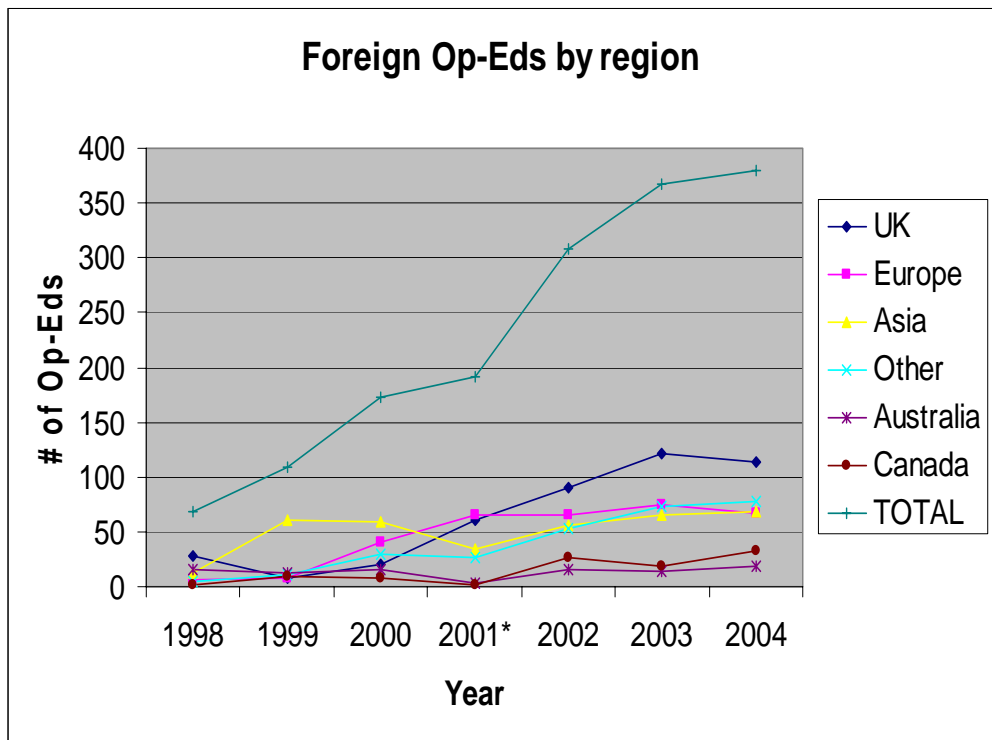


Table 4

**f. There is a marked division between the financial press and the mainstream press.**

According to the number of op-eds which have been published since 1998, American think tanks have a closer alliance with Australian and British business papers- notably the *Financial Times* and the *Australian Financial Review (AFR)*, who have persistently purchased American columnists for their pages – than with other papers.

When I asked Rob Bolton, opinion editor of the *AFR* in which circumstances he ran op-eds by American columnists or think tanks, he replied, “Big economic news, like interest rates rises, monetary testimony by Fed. US strategic policy shifts. Big shifts on Wall Street (rare). Changes in domestic policy say on pensions, governance or financial reporting standards.” The editorial line of the newspaper often influenced his choice of think tank, he wrote in an email: “Being a conservative newspaper our interests run to the likes of the American Enterprise Institute, the Hudson Institute, Heritage Foundation and Cato. I personally like Brookings, although it is less useful from a business perspective.”

The *AFR* also has three contracted American columnists, all from the Washington Post –Charles Krauthammer, Robert Samuelson, and George Will. “Of these,” said Bolton, “Samuelson is the best - we like his economic commentary. George Will is good for economic history, or sense of. Both of these get used once a month, more or less. Charles Krauthammer possibly less.”

**g. Most syndicated American columnists that I have spoken to were not conscious of their global audience.**

Most columnists I have interviewed told me they did not know who reprinted them and few kept track of their wider syndication lists. Many were insistent that they wrote for Americans. Ellen Goodman, a high profile, broadly syndicated columnist based in Boston said her international readership was “an interesting subject but not who I think of as my audience”. The authors and commentators who are most conscious, responsive, and deliberately market themselves to foreign countries are from American think tanks. Others rely on demand for American syndication lists and on the power of the brand of the newspaper they work for.

Goodman said, “I write mainly about American society so I am not focused very much on international foreign affairs, but at the same time American society is so exported and when you google American stories are just everywhere like entertainment stories, American stories are all over the world, for better or for worse.... It is interesting, what columns get picked up and what doesn’t. It has to do with not just me but the subject and how what happens in America ripples – it wouldn’t have the same international reach if you were writing from Canada or Mexico. People know the cast of characters in America, whether [they are from] entertainment or political [spheres].”

When I asked about her global audience, she answered, “It’s an interesting subject but it’s not who I think of as my audience.” Who is that? “Americans.”

One notable exception is New York Times columnist Tom Friedman, who travels throughout the Middle East or Arab world frequently, and is widely recognized. His column is reprinted in many of the 700 newspapers who subscribe to the New York Timeswire service, including half a dozen Indian papers, and in newspaper in Australia, and throughout the Middle East. When



editorial board director Gail Collins accompanied him on one trip recently he told me she said to him afterwards “Going to the middle east with Tom Friedman is like going to the mall with Britney Spears”. During the Iraq war, he said teenagers would walk up to him on the street and say, “Mr. Friedman please keep writing what you are writing, you are saying what none of us are able to say.” When I spoke to him, before a forum event at Berkeley in California, where he had arrived in a Google helicopter, he was keen to emphasize that he was not consumed with the size of his audience, but was more interested in ideas: “I am aware but I am not writing for the audience. I am still writing about the issues that I care about. But I am aware that if I am writing about reform in Egypt, then someone in Egypt will read it and it may influence the debate, and that makes me happy.”

He said columnists needed to be careful about their ego: “I get a big kick out of [my global audience], but I am a big believer as a columnist that if you are sitting back, you wake up in the morning and go [lifts his right arm in the air and flexes his muscles], ‘Wow I know how powerful I am, when you do that, [think] I am Thor, I can throw thunderbolts’, that’s when you get in trouble... you need to keep reporting.”<sup>xxx</sup>

Friedman owes a lot of his readership to the online version of the *Times*. When I asked when he became aware of his global audience, he answered “I woke up one morning and discovered we have 16 million registered users on the Internet.” The decision of the *New York Times* to place their columnists “behind the firewall” of their website, so that users will need to pay to read them, will inevitably – at least initially – shrink the audience size of a columnist like Friedman.

**h. The thought being exported from the United States onto the world’s opinion pages is largely male - and white.**

The lack of female columnists in the United States was thrust onto the public agenda early in 2005 due to a public spat between syndicated columnist and legal professor Susan Estrich, and the opinion editor of the *LA Times*, Michael Kinsley. Unfortunately, the unpleasantness of the exchange - and personal nature of Estrich’s remarks (about Kinsley’s health) detracted from the importance of the issue, and the troubling statistics, which emerged in press reportage. According to a report in the *LA Times*, “in the first nine weeks of this year, women penned 20.5 per cent of the [LA Times] op-ed columns, not including staff editorials, which do not carry

bylines. That compared to the *New York Times*, with 17 per cent women writers on its op-ed pages and the *Washington Post* with 10 per cent.<sup>xxxix</sup> As Howard Kurtz pointed out few women columnists are known nationally – Dowd, Goodman and Molly Ivins.<sup>xxxii</sup> Where are the up and comers?<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Gail Collins, who was the first woman to head the *New York Times* editorial page, says, "The pool of available people doing opinion writing is still tilted toward men. There are probably fewer women, in the great cosmic scheme of things, who feel comfortable writing very straight opinion stuff, and they're less comfortable hearing something on the news and batting something out."<sup>xxxiv</sup>

The lack of women opinion writers in the United States has been obviously reflected in the thought exported to other countries. The notable exception of course is Maureen Dowd. This may explain in part her popularity – while she writes mostly on politics, she has also met a need for intelligent discussion of gender issues, which the managing editor of the *Washington Times* and *LA Times* syndicate, Kate Carlisle, told me is in great demand today. Dowd wrote a column at the time of the Estrich/Kinsley dispute pointing out that she was the only female columnist at the *New York Times* – out of eight (nine if the public editor is included) and that she had tried to quit six months into writing it: "I was a bundle of frayed nerves. I felt as though I were in a "Godfather" movie, shooting and getting shot at. Men enjoy verbal dueling. As a woman, I told [editor Howell Raines], I wanted to be liked - not attacked. He said I could go back to The Metro Section; I decided to give it another try.... Men take professional criticism more personally when it comes from a woman... While a man writing a column taking on the powerful may be seen as authoritative, a woman doing the same thing may be seen as castrating. If a man writes a scathing piece about men in power, it's seen as his job; a woman can be cast as an emasculating man-hater. I'm often asked how I can be so 'mean' - a question that Tom Friedman, who writes plenty of tough columns, doesn't get." She urged opinion editors to find and nurture women. Bloggers, proving her point, were again scathing and personally abusive in response to this column.

When I asked Dowd about it, she said,

“As a woman it’s very hard because you want everyone to like you, you don’t want people to hate you, and what Tom [Friedman] and [Bill] Safire never did. There’s a line in the new Woody Allen movie, Amanda Peet says she is working on a movie called the Castration Sonata, which I love. I was thinking of making it the subtitle of my book, because whenever anyone describes my writing it’s like cutting and biting, and Clinton made a comment about it once, I wrote a column about it, but it’s something that I have to deal with. One time someone gave me a gift of acupuncture and I went in and they have to interview you before and I have never been to a shrink or anything and she was asking me these questions and so I began telling her I was telling her, you know, that I was really upset because people thought I was castrating and she was so fascinated she never even got to a single needle though she told me I really needed it.

But you know they don’t have to deal with it. Anna Quindlen doesn’t because she does more earth-mother columns and guys don’t need it because when you do ‘voice of God’ things, the voice of God is male and if you do it as a voice of a woman, you play into different archetypal myths, like the heartbeat, the fury, nagging, harping, carping, ‘Mommy we don’t want to hear what you have to nag us about’, and you get that a lot. For example when I was doing my impeachment column that I won the Pulitzer for, Chris Mathews did this show where he was like “Poor Bill [Clinton], he has to deal with his own wife Hilary, he has to got deal with Maureen, it’s like she’s his wife, she’s like all nagging him, so you play into this image of the nagging mother, the nagging wife...”

But that’s not how any woman wants to think of herself, those are the worst images of womanhood, in fact they are the ones used in famous movies, Basic Instinct, Sharon Stone with the ice pick and Glenn Close in Fatal Attraction, you don’t want to be the slashing she-monster of mythology, the primera. So that has caused me a lot of stress.”

Dowd’s suggestion that women wanted to be liked, and were wary of abuse, was scoffed at by some of her fellow female columnists. Writer and columnist Barbara Ehrenreich told one reporter, “Some of us love fights. I think that’s complete bullshit.”<sup>xxxv</sup> Anne Applebaum, who is the only woman columnist at the *Washington Post* said Dowd should not blame abuse on her gender: ‘People hate Maureen Dowd for other reasons besides the fact that she’s a woman. She has a style that inspires angry response.’<sup>xxxvi</sup> Ellen Goodman also disagreed with Dowd. It’s true that there are fewer women on op-ed pages, she told me, and “some women don’t like people getting mad at them”, but that was not the primary problem:

“I think that there’s something of the boys raising their hands first in class and they don’t know what they are talking about but they still raise their hand. In terms of saying what we are thinking, women still have to learn. Thatcher [got ahead] by people yelling at her and she just stood there and yelling back. You have to be willing to stand up and have people call you an asshole. It’s not the end of the world if people call you an asshole, it’s not that easy when you are young but so what? I think that some of it is believing that over time you will care a lot less and it’s more important to speak up. And it’s a lot of fun.”

Goodman believes you can't afford to be sensitive as a columnist: "You only give a certain number of people the dirt to make you feel bad about yourself. You don't give it out indiscriminately because otherwise you are sitting up the back with a lampshade on your head. You listen to people who you really respect who will say that you blew it but you don't listen to every jerk with an opinion. There was a sign in the *Globe* editorial room for some years saying, 'That's your opinion, we welcome ours'. (From a talk show with the slogan, 'that's our opinion we welcome yours'.)"

An interesting debate about whether women were reticent to write opinion, and why, also ensued after the Estrich/Kinsley dispute became public. Deborah Tannen, a professor of linguistics at Georgetown University, and author of *The Argument Culture*, wrote an oped supporting Dowd in the LA Times, but took her argument further, claiming women were not comfortable with "attack dog journalism" and should be encouraged to write differently to men.<sup>xxxvii</sup> Zofia Smardz, editor of the Washington *Post's* Outlook section said men outnumbered women in the number of submissions they sent in to her by seven to one. Men were eager to opine, she wrote, while women were "more reluctant to do something unless they're sure they're going to get it right."<sup>xxxviii</sup>

An oped editor of one of the top American newspapers, who did not wish to be named, told me roughly 85 per cent of the submissions he gets are from men. The numbers of women who submitted pieces went down after September 11, because men are more likely to write about the Middle East, Islam, war and foreign policy. Anecdotal evidence – and my own experience – would suggest this is a global problem, or at least certainly not unique to America. The fact that the thought being exported from the States is male can only exacerbate the problem.

Kinsley admitted in one of his own columns that when it came to hiring women op-ed columnist, "Everyone involved should be trying harder, including me." He also admitted he had advised Dowd to write "boy stuff" if she wanted to succeed as a columnist, and that she had wisely ignored him, and "proceeded to reinvent the political column as a comedy of manners and a running commentary on the psychopathologies of power".<sup>xxxix</sup>

While Dowd would appear to be the best known, and most widely read, female American columnist, demand for her writing has fluctuated as it does for any columnist. In Australia, her popularity peaked in the Clinton years- when she won a Pulitzer prize for her reporting of the Lewinsky scandal. Since September 11, her columns have generally focused more on American political power plays and have not been as accessible to a general audience. In the two major Fairfax newspapers in Australia, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age*, which have rights to her copy because they subscribe to the New York Times wire service, she was run almost fortnightly in 2000, but has slowly declined since. In the same papers, Friedman was run 57 times in the *Herald* between 2000 and 2004, and 110 times in the *Age*. Reflecting an interest in his foreign policy expertise, Friedman had the most columns printed in 2003. His voice, and views on war were widely cited in those years.

#### **Possible reasons for the greater use of American columnists:**

##### **a. A desire to better understand American foreign policy following September 11 and the war in Iraq.**

When two planes hijacked by terrorists speared the World Trade Towers on September 11, 2001, the whole world turned to look. Ever since, all eyes have been trained on the United States. Around the world, editors have been keen to find foreign policy experts who could chew over the causes for, and possible consequences of the acts of terror committed in New York City and Washington. This has caused a natural bias towards pieces about America, and by Americans, as other countries have vigorously debated what their own response should be, as well as that of the United Nations and the international community. Kate Carlisle, the Managing Editor of the Washington Post/LA Times syndicate said that “anecdotally, absolutely yes there has been more use of American columnists since September 11 and certainly since the war”. What has become increasingly apparent to her in the last couple of years, as she has traveled the world promoting her writers is that there is a “deep, deep interest in American politics... this spills into an interest in American culture as well.”<sup>x1</sup> Mary Fleming Svensson, from the Washington Post Writers Group, said that while September 11 “absolutely” pushed up the demand for American writers, the interest in the US also intensified at the time of the 2004 election.

September 11 had a striking impact on the thinking of many columnists. Tom Friedman, for example, said he was, “Angry - angry that my country had been violated in this way, angry at the senseless deaths of so many innocent people, angry at the megalomaniacal arrogance of Osama bin Laden and his men, who so blithely assumed that their grievance, whatever it was, justified this mass murder.” He became a liberal hawk, urging the democratisation of the Middle East.<sup>xli</sup> Dowd, in turn, was maddened by the government’s response: “I don’t like to bring emotions into how I feel about things, but it did make me feel more emotionally upset that the neo cons were so brazen about taking all the emotions that Americans felt about 9-11, for years everyone was so terrified.... everyone felt awful and they did this heist where they took all these emotions and applied them to this old ideological agenda about getting rid of Saddam and I think that was the most cold-blooded thing I have ever seen officials do. They took this raw period of American history and used it for their own heist of American foreign policy, to overturn American foreign policy.”<sup>xlii</sup>

As a side note, despite an initial surge in newspaper readership in the weeks following September 11, this did not translate into long-term growth. A Pew Research center survey in 2002 found that the American public’s news habits had been “largely unaffected by the September 11 attacks and subsequent war on terrorism”. While there were some signs of a growing interest in the Middle East, they concluded “[r]eported levels of reading, watching and listening to the news are not markedly different than in the Spring of 2000”.

#### **b. The position of the proprietor:**

Easily the most significant proprietor in this study is News Corp chief executive Rupert Murdoch, who publishes 40 million papers a week, and has played an important part in American soft power. The Murdoch-owned *Sunday Times* said in the lead up to the Iraq war, “Winning the public relations battle [is] almost as vital as military victory”.<sup>xliii</sup> Murdoch played a critical part in this public relations battle in the 175 newspapers he owns across the war, in the lead up to, and post-mortem of the Iraq war. With few exceptions, all of his newspapers took a strong pro-war stance on their op-ed pages. The Guardian’s Roy Greenslade undertook an exhaustive survey of Murdoch’s highest selling and most influential papers and found “all are singing from the same hymn sheet’ as regards the war, and “none, whether fortissimo or

pianissimo, has dared to croon the anti-war tune. Their master's voice has never been questioned.<sup>xliv</sup>

Murdoch – who was also on the board of the Cato Institute in the late 1990s - had made it very clear he supported the Bush administration in leading a pre-emptive strike against Saddam Hussein and the country he controlled. He told an Australian magazine, the *Bulletin*, that he supported the war, and said, “The greatest thing to come out of this for the world economy... would be \$20 a barrel for oil. That’s bigger than any tax cut in any country.” At the time of writing, oil was \$50 a barrel.

As the *New York Times* reported on September 4 2003, “The war has illuminated anew the exceptional power in the hands of Murdoch, 72, the chairman of News Corp... In the last several months, the editorial policies of almost all his English-language news organizations have hewn very closely to Murdoch’s own stridently hawkish political views, making his voice among the loudest in the Anglophone world in the international debate over the American-led war with Iraq.”

In the six months leading up to the war, national Murdoch broadsheet, the *Australian* ran a total of 30 pieces by American commentators. (In Australia, 40 per cent of the population opposed going to war in Iraq, even with UN backing, and 76 per cent opposed it unless there was full international support.) Murdoch’s newspapers control 35 per cent of the market in the UK, and 70 per cent in Australia.<sup>xlv</sup> One opinion editor of a Murdoch paper told me he ran Kristol, Barnes and Kagan from the *Weekly Standard* because: “Simply because of the Murdoch position, it was natural to run them”.

Use of – or rather choice of – American columnists can frequently align with the paper’s editorial position. For example, Rob Bolton, the opinion editor of the *Australian Financial Review* said, “Being a conservative newspaper our interests run to the likes of the American Enterprise Institute, the Hudson Institute, Heritage Foundation and Cato. I personally like Brookings, although it is less useful from a business perspective.”

### **c. Greater visibility of well-marketed American think tanks.**



Today, think tanks operate in an increasingly aggressive marketing environment. The number of think tanks active in American politics has more than quadrupled since the 1970s, from less than 70 in 1970 to more than 300 in 2000. Naturally, lobby groups that try to influence public policy have sought to “greatly expand their visibility in the national media”.<sup>xlvi</sup> With the success of a media-savvy, results-oriented conservative think tank like the Heritage Foundation, the climate surrounding powerful think-tanks has become as much to do with marketing as generation of ideas, as an ever greater proportion of their budgets is spent on public relations. As James Allen Smith wrote in 1991, “The metaphors of science and disinterested research that informed the creation and development of the first think tanks, have now given way to the metaphor of the market and its corollaries of promotion, advocacy and intellectual combat. And the market metaphor has brought professionals in public relations and marketing onto the staffs of most think tanks.”<sup>xlvii</sup>

As discussed above, the greatest determinants of media visibility for think tanks have to date, been the size of their budget, location, and the breadth of their research base.<sup>xlviii</sup> Another significant factor today is the proportion of a think tank’s budget that is spent on marketing and promotion – and conservative think tanks have historically been more intent on devoting resources to this.<sup>xliv</sup> Niels Bjerre-Poulsen put the case that the reason that overtly ideological think tanks have a higher profile in the media is because they are more aggressive in promoting themselves.<sup>1</sup> The Heritage Foundation has been particularly aggressive in its marketing approach, and happily describes itself as a “marketing machine”. Heritage founder Edwin Feulner wrote that while some people consider that a pejorative term, “it is also used as a term of endearment by policy makers who have benefited from taking our ideas seriously, and is one that other think tanks have eschewed to their disadvantage.” After the lead Heritage took, he wrote, “now, virtually all U.S think tanks seek to market their ideas to the policy and opinion making communities.”<sup>li</sup>

Generation of op-ed pieces has long been recognised as a crucial strategy employed by think tanks to air, and promote, their ideas. James Allen Smith wrote in 1991 that some think tanks, “one of the most distinctive ways in which Americans have sought to link knowledge and power,” were generating 200 or more op-ed pieces per year.<sup>lii</sup> In 1993, David Ricci wrote that think tanks “encourage their fellows to write topical articles or op-ed commentaries on a broad range of public affairs, from nuclear strategy to energy regulation, from crop subsidies to urban

renewal”. These essays, which appear in quality newspapers like the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Wall Street Journal*, perform the role of “advertising each author’s institute and demonstrating that such organizations can supply information and advice on matters of social concern.”<sup>liii</sup>

Donald Abelson is another author who has described “the transformation of think tanks from non-partisan research institutions to avowedly ideological organizations committed to influencing Washington’s agenda” over the past century. The range of strategies employed by think tanks to boost their profile, prestige and penetration, including holding open forums, giving public lectures, and creating home pages on the Internet.<sup>liv</sup> One of the major strategies has been submitting op-eds to newspapers – he claims some think tanks have hired ghost writers to submit articles for some scholars. This approach is common - think tanks across the world provide op-ed pieces to newspapers.<sup>lv</sup>

Danielle Pletka, Vice President, Foreign and Defense Policy Studies, of the American Enterprise Institution, affirmed the significance of having opinion pieces published: “I think that op-eds are very important. At the end of the day a lot of think tanks produce monographs and they are good but I would say the consumption of monographs by policy makers is fairly limited. The consumption of newspapers is much greater. We want to get everything out there in the current [ideas] market and op-eds are better.”<sup>lvi</sup>

One reason for the success of a group like the AEI is their perceived proximity to the Bush administration, and a curiosity about how their ideas may have come to fruition. In a speech given just weeks before the Iraq War, President George W. Bush said to an audience at the Washington-based AEI, founded in 1943, “you do such good work that my administration has borrowed 20 such minds”.<sup>lvii</sup> The AEI had been arguing for the removal of Saddam Hussein, and for democracy in the Middle East for many years, which is why it was significant that Bush chose to give his speech there. The ability to define the terms of debate, and have an impact on perceptions of policy has been described as “atmospheric” influence, which means that think tanks have been perceived as “agenda-setters that create policy narratives that capture the political and public imagination [and have an] ability to set the terms of debate, define problems and shape policy perception.”<sup>lviii</sup>

It should be noted that America has a far stronger think tank culture than countries like Australia, for example, where think tanks are not as large or well funded. Ian Marsh and Diane Stone claim this is because, “Executive dominance of policy-making, a closed bureaucratic culture and a weak Parliament create a difficult environment for immediate think tank influence.”<sup>lix</sup> This may also explain their rate of penetration – there is a vacuum of professional “ideas” lobbyists, in one sense, in other countries.<sup>lx</sup>

#### **d. Demand and Supply**

It would be erroneous to assume the publication of think tank thought in a global market is only due to marketing, and self-promotion. The media often develop mutually beneficial relationships with think tanks, and opinion editors are no exception. The growth in demand for pieces by American scholars, researchers or columnists has been pushed largely by demand from op-ed editors for columns on foreign policy.

Danielle Pletka, from the American Enterprise Institute insisted while she “actively encourage[s] people” to write op-eds, and everyone at the AEI was “alive to the importance it has in making your ideas known,” their success in foreign newspapers was due to demand. She was careful to point out that this demand was stronger than supply: “We are lucky because we have a two-way street because a lot of people come to us. Seventy per cent of op-eds I write are because people come to me, and it is the same with most of our scholars. It increases when people know you.”

Somewhat surprisingly, Pletka was dismissive when asked about the global reach of the AEI: “We are not interested in publishing in other countries. I am not interested. I am interested in the United States; I am interested in influencing policy makers here. It’s just a bonus, it’s not what we focus on... also there’s something obnoxious about it – like the *Guardian* in Ohio [when they told readers to send letters to Ohio voters giving them reasons why they should not vote for Bush], it’s none of your bloody business. The UK and Australia are exceptions because they are like family. Why would I want to be in other countries? Why? Why?”

When I asked how the expansion of the AEI had happened then, she replied:

“It has happened because good things sell, and there’s a real appetite to understand the thinking of the US, more than in the sound bites that you get. I think when you provide information and digest it, it helps people understand why Iraq, why democracy, why we are worried about the EU and Iran... Part of [the demand] is the assumption that we have a close relationship with the Bush administration. It probably explains some of the appeal, though you still need to produce quality work. I will say no to nine of out ten of the foreign requests, it’s just too much work.... I think a lot of people say no because they don’t want to publish a piece of crap.”

Other think tanks deliberately court a wider readership, and are strategic in their approach. When I asked Carmen MacDougall, Vice President for Communications at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, how important her global audience was, she said “Extremely important, it is growing in importance to us, it’s not at all arbitrary, for us anything we write, if we get it in the *Post* or *New York Times*, we want it, it makes sense, for papers overseas it’s more targeted and strategic.”<sup>lxi</sup>

The staff at Heritage, renowned for their media savvy, and who were so intent on being accessible to journalists that they built a broadcast studio in its headquarters – have focused more on an American audience. As Heritage fellow Lee Edwards wrote, “For Heritage, the mission is the message. And the mission is to build a conservative establishment from Washington DC, to Washington State.”<sup>lxii</sup> This is reflected in the slower growth in the number of their pieces published overseas.

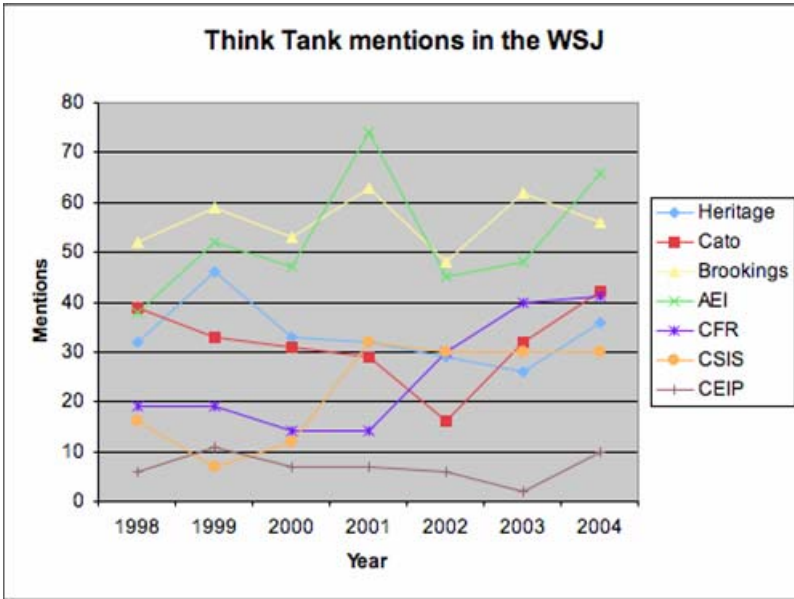
#### **e. Personal leanings of the opinion editors**

Many of the think tank staff I spoke to mentioned that they found that invitations to appear on op-ed pages was very personality driven – if the relevant op-ed editor liked them, was keen for content from America, or pieces expressing a particular point of view, they were more likely to be pursued. This interest they noted, was not predictable or constant. Andrew Rich and R. Kent Weaver found, in their studies of American newspapers, and the visibility of think tanks, that one major source of bias was personal networks and editorial judgments of journalists and editors, evident in the success of Washington based groups. They added: “Ideological biases are evident, too, benefiting conservative think tanks in the *Washington Times* and *Wall Street Journal* and

think tanks of no identifiable ideology in the *New York Times*, even after controlling for budget use”<sup>lxiii</sup>.

Sometimes personal connections drive the change, like the current opinion editor of a Murdoch paper in Australia who once worked at the AEI, and brought his contacts with him. Gregory Hywood, who returned to Sydney from a post as a Washington political correspondent to edit the *Australian Financial Review*, promptly signed up for the columns of the three Washington columnists mentioned earlier: Krauthammer, Samuelson and Will. Having been influenced by his time in Washington reading the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, Hywood’s intent was to “create a real op-ed page in a major Australian newspaper”. These papers used non-staff writers for commentary. In an email, Hywood told me he “banned staff writers from the page and set about finding academics and independent commentators to write op-ed pieces. I also scooped up the available U.S. talent through the Washington Post writers group and a wide range of think tank publications. The *AFR* still has these rights much to the chagrin of other [Australian] papers, including the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age*. The approach worked a treat. Although the other papers followed the no staff rule to varying degrees the decisions taken then established the *AFR* op-ed as the best in the country... This all may appear very self-serving. But it is an accurate representation of what occurred.”<sup>lxiv</sup>

In some instances, a preference for think tanks may reflect not just a personal predilection, but also the particular culture of individual newspapers. As discussed above, some papers are also more likely than others to cite think tanks, and use their copy. The *Washington Post*, for example, has a greater tendency to cite think tanks than the *Wall Street Journal* or the *New York Times*. One study found the *Wall Street Journal* “shows a remarkably strong preference for ideologically conservative think tanks, citing them on average five more times per year than the other newspapers and than think tanks of other ideologies on their own pages.”<sup>lxv</sup> My research has shown, as seen in the graph below, that despite a sharp increase in think tank citations in the *WSJ* in 2001, and a drop in 2002, that there has been a substantial rise in the number of citations of the AEI by the *WSJ*, as well as the CFR, and, to a lesser extent, by the CSIS. There has been only a moderate increase in the number of citations of the Brookings Institute. These results seem to confirm the leaning of the paper towards more conservative think tanks, while suggesting there also may be a preference for think tanks that specialize in foreign policy.



**f. Quality**

While researching this subject, one of my colleagues – an American journalist – memorably asked if it had occurred to me that American columnists were the best in the world, adding, “We should dominate!”. It’s true that columnists at the top American newspapers, like Dowd, Friedman and Brooks at the *New York Times*, are outstanding, and well deserve their international renown. Editors like myself who have ready – and cheap, or free - access to columns by these writers, or scholars of renown from reputable think tanks, usually happily run them, knowing their work is of a high standard. It would be myopic at best to assume, however, that there were not columnists of an equivalent calibre in the rest of the world.

**g. Cost**

As has been widely documented, the newspaper market has been shrinking in countries around the world. We should not then underestimate the effect of tight budgets and resource cutting – many of these columns are free, either from the wires service or think tanks. Op-ed editors are also more likely to use columnists from wire services that the newspaper has already paid for –

and will not come out of their own budget. As Rob Bolton, the opinion editor of the *Australian Financial Review*, explained to me, "For a long time the *AFR* had a deal with the *Wall Street Journal*. As long as that was good I could raid their incredibly good store of commentators, which also drew on business and government, for which I was very grateful."

**Consequences of growth in the export of American thought:**

- a. Informed public debate about American foreign policy.

The opinion pieces from American commentators are meeting a need for incisive, well-reasoned and informed views on the actions of the Bush administration. (See the comments by Greg Hywood above)

- b. Complaints from readers.

Op-ed editors in both Britain and Australia told me that they were receiving a growing number of complaints from readers who were disgruntled at the colonization of their fiercely fought over opinion pages, particularly during the recent Iraq War. The complaints seemed to be greater in these countries where the majority opposed going to war - and even more so when the pieces were strongly pro-Bush, and supported a unilateral pre-emptive strike on Iraq.

- c. Restricted local debate.

There was one instance when, as editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald's* opinion page, I encouraged debate on Michael Moore's documentary, *Fahrenheit 9-11*. Moore's books on American politics had spent years on the best sellers lists in Australia. It was released in Australia some months after the US, so some of our columnists wrote about it before having seen it. When it was finally released in Sydney, and I went to our morning news conference to brief on a column I wanted to run on the Australian reaction, it was vetoed as a tired subject. Which means that the American reaction, and debate becomes *the* debate, which in this instance crowded out any other discussion. This poses particular challenges for op-ed editors, as gatekeepers of public opinion writing, who have a responsibility to kindle and nurture indigenous debate.

d. Impact on public opinion?

It is difficult to ascertain what precise impact commentary has on public opinion. A study published in 1987 by Page, Shapiro and Dempsey found that, on television at least, commentators and experts had powerful impacts on public opinion.<sup>lxvi</sup> Another study, conducted by Donald Jordan of stories on policy in the *New York Times* also found that experts had a marked influence on public opinion, leading him to conclude “this suggests that the public is very accepting of expertise on policy matters provided through the mass media.”<sup>lxvii</sup> Jordan wrote that both his and the Page, Shapiro and Dempsey analyses pointed to the importance of experts and commentators (and not all columnists would be viewed as such), but added that the real question was “What are the implications of their apparent power to persuade?”<sup>lxviii</sup>

It would be too simplistic to suggest that op-eds arguing the case for the Bush administration would automatically engender sympathy for, or even understanding of, American foreign policy when the frame of reference is so different. In Australia, for example, where there has been a significant amount of column space given to pieces by American thinkers, particularly by the Murdoch press, a 2005 poll by the Lowy Institute found that there was a low “rating of positive feelings for the United States - just 58 percent.” Asked about a series of threats from the outside world, respondents were just as worried about American foreign policy as they were about Islamic fundamentalism: 57 per cent said they were very worried or fairly worried about them both. At the same time, almost three in four respondents thought the alliance was either very or fairly important for Australia’s security. More than 50 per cent remembered opposing the war, and just over 40 per cent supporting it.<sup>lxix</sup> This survey would suggest concern about foreign policy is not the simple “elite anti-Americanism” that the *Weekly Standard* and the Australian Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer have suggested.<sup>lxx</sup>

I would argue that within this context of conflicting sentiment about American hegemony, it is even more important to have a debate about the United States, the role it takes in world affairs and what this means for other countries. The Lowy poll also shows the American government may need to better explain its motives and actions in foreign policy at a time of heightened global suspicion.



## Recommendations

American political, military and cultural hegemony is unlikely to substantially shift in the short term. In the next few years editors around the world will continue to look to American thinkers for illumination on some of the internal political debates in the United States, and to hunt for, commission, or pluck from the wires the best pieces on relevant subjects like non-proliferation, North Korea, and Iran. Given a perhaps nascent but nonetheless apparent resentment from some newspaper audiences about an excessive reliance on columnists from other countries, it is important to make clear why these thinkers are favoured over local columnists in certain instances. In light of this, following are some recommendations for editors.

1. Opinion editors of countries outside the United States should develop relationships with thinkers and encourage them to write for their particular audience, just as the *Guardian* did when they hired Washington-based political commentator Sidney Blumenthal as a commentator. This should foster a more relevant and inclusive debate.

Many op-ed editors do insist on exclusivity – many more would prefer to if they did not have budgetary constraints or did not wish to avail themselves of the wire services which their newspapers pay so dearly for. Patrick Martin, the opinion editor of Canada's *Globe and Mail*, told me:

“We don't, as a rule, reprint any columnists, American or otherwise. We don't use syndicated columnists at all, with the single exception of a Palestinian writer whom we run a few times a year, whose work also appears in a handful of other papers around the world. Those who appear on our Comment pages appear there first and, usually, they appear only there; though, sometimes, rarely, they appear simultaneously with other publications. (Edward Luttwak comes to mind. Once or twice we have run a column from him simultaneously to it appearing in a different edited form in the *New York Times*.)”<sup>lxxi</sup>

It will be interesting to observe if Martin's stance becomes more or less common.

2. If a paper intends to reprint articles from think tanks, it has a responsibility to readers to explain who these think tanks are and provide some context for the role they have played in American political thought.

This may mean running a feature outlining the history of the key think tanks, and their influence on, or relationship with the current administration. It should also include a short description at the bottom of an op-ed piece. When writing news stories, reporters should clearly explain what kind of think tank they are citing, and what views they are known to promote – for example, they should write “according to a study from the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington-based, conservative think tank founded in 1943”. Editors or reporters could also add context – if it was a study about Iraq, they could add that it had been a think tank that had long supported ousting Saddam Hussein and enforcing democracy in the Middle East.

3. Newspaper editors should be cautious about importing opinion at a time of fierce foreign policy debate about the actions of America, when it is clear now that many columnists were not as incisive, or questioning as they could have been in the lead up to the recent Iraq war.

The American press has been strongly criticised for its coverage of the Bush administration’s rationale for war. John MacArthur, the publisher of *Harper’s Magazine* and author of *Second Front: Censorship and Propaganda in the Gulf War*, argued in the *Columbia Journalism Review* that the success of Bush’s public relations was “largely dependent on a compliant press that uncritically repeated almost every fraudulent administration claim about the threat posed to America... just a few columnists seriously challenged the White House advertising assault.”<sup>lxxii</sup>

Editorial boards at six of America’s leading newspapers have been criticized for a lack of skepticism, for accepting weak, unproven factual claims and lowering the standard of proof during the heated pre-war period.<sup>lxxiii</sup> The *New York Times* issued a statement on May 26 2004 admitting their own shortcomings, and saying that they had “found a number of instances of coverage that was not as rigorous as it should have been”. They had found “Editors at several levels who should have been challenging reporters and pressing for more skepticism were perhaps too intent on rushing scoops into the paper. Accounts of Iraqi defectors were not always weighed against their strong desire to have Saddam Hussein ousted. Articles based on dire

claims about Iraq tended to get prominent display, while follow up articles that called the original ones into question were sometimes buried. In some cases, there was no follow up at all.” The Times’ public editor, Dan Okrent, wrote in his column four days after the editorial board’s statement was published, some of the Times coverage had been “credulous; much of it was inappropriately italicized by lavish front page display and heavy-breathing headlines; and several fine articles by David Johnston, James Risen and others that provided perspective or challenged information in the faulty stories were played quietly as a lullaby”.

Narasimhan Ravi, the editor of the *Hindu*, argued in a paper written at the Joan Shorenstein Center in 2004, that the lack of questioning in the press – or doubts that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction - had broader consequences for global reportage, which relied on stories from American newspapers, particularly the *New York Times*. He wrote, “the lack of a vigorous debate and the large scale acceptance among the elite of the administration’s claims on the weapons of mass destruction made the press adopt the Bush administration’s framing of pre-war Iraq as posing an extreme danger that had to be addressed without delay”<sup>lxxiv</sup>. This is reason enough for editors, and newspapers from other countries, which reprinted these pieces to reflect on their responsibility to their readers.

#### 4. Caution should also exercised about the partisanship of modern commentary.

Editors and readers must also be conscious that the columns they are reprinting have been produced at a time of growing partisanship and punditry in American political commentary. A 2004 study by the Project for Excellence in Journalism found a growing number of Americans think news organizations are politically biased, jumping from 45 per cent in 2003 to 59 per cent the following year.<sup>lxxv</sup> Washington Post Staff Writer Howard Kurtz wrote on February 7, 2005 that the “world of opinion now resembles a choose-up-side playground, with the players rarely straying from their assigned spots. The only real motion if when they jump back and forth between politics and journalism, or demonstrate agility by keeping a foot in both camps.” He quoted *Washington Monthly* editor Paul Glastris saying, “Everyone’s more partisan now – magazines, pundits, individuals... [But it is] largely driven by the extreme partisanship on the right.” *Weekly Standard* Executive Editor Fred Barnes told him, “We live in a more polarized time. There are so many people who’ve come into journalism from politics and other fields

rather than straight reporting... As Republicans and Democrats divide more, commentators who are sympathetic to one party or the other divide more, and I'm no exception."<sup>lxxvi</sup>

## Conclusion

The concept of soft power, as exercised through access to the world's opinion pages, is a fascinating one. The subject of individual columnists and newspapers is ripe for further research, as well as the impact of American thinkers on populations either supportive of, or hostile to, a unilateral American foreign policy. Subsequent studies could analyze the content of the pieces, to shed more light on this - something that was not within the scope of this study.

The Internet will, and has, of course shatter traditional notions of soft power, particularly power over opinion. Bloggers, acting like Statler and Waldorf, heckling from the box-seats, smarter and sassier and even more self-satisfied than the mainstream press, have sliced through global boundaries of thought with ease over the past few years. This online community, and the growth in online readership of mainstream newspapers creates a new set of questions: Which voices are the loudest and why? Which countries do they come from, and which newspapers do they daily dissect? The ubiquity of newspapers like the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Post* - and their reputation as leading the world's quality newspapers - should ensure that the blogging community, as parasitic as they are on the mainstream press, continues to closely scrutinize American newspapers. By doing this, whether citing or undermining them, they are still upholding the idea that these newspapers and journals are significant, worthy of attention and, usually, authoritative.

What I have established is that the globalization of opinion in the noughties has had particular advantages for American scholars and columnists writing on foreign policy, especially those who have sought out a foreign readership. The centrality of foreign policy has been assured at a time of a declared war on terrorism. The question now is whether the interest in American thought will continue, and what the implications will be. Will the demand for thought generated in the United States continue?

The globalization of opinion should make the world's best commentary - from any country - widely available for newspaper readers. In many ways, this trend is positive, representing the

fluid movement of thought and information throughout the world. It is natural that at a time of war, and American global dominance of foreign policy, that columns about the United States should abound in the print media internationally. Opinion editors, in their pursuit of excellence, authority and rigor on their pages, will be drawn to scholars with the greatest expertise and the ability to express their opinions quickly and clearly. When the presence of American columnists begins to replace, or undermine that of local commentators, however, editors should be cautious. This is particularly so at a time of more feverish, and prevalent partisanship in newspapers, and when the American commentariat is still debating errors of analysis in the lead up to the war on Iraq. Think tanks may also be involved in political campaigns or have agendas which foreign audiences are not aware of. It is all too easy to echo errors as well as insights when reprinting columns. Readers also want to feel columnists are writing for them, not for readers in another country. This is why opinion editors would be best advised to run, or, ideally, commission, columns from scholars and columnists they trust.

*Julia Baird is the opinion editor of, and a columnist for, the Sydney Morning Herald. This paper was researched and written during a fellowship at the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy in the Spring Semester 2005. My excellent research assistant, Nick Grudin, was thorough, efficient, and invaluable in many ways, particularly when it came to translating data into graphs! I am also indebted to the cheer and constant assistance of Edie Holway, and the advice of many of the members of the department, particularly Tom Patterson and Alex Jones.*

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939*, Palgrave, New York, 2001, pp. 120-121.

<sup>ii</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>iii</sup> Australian blogger Tim Blair was incensed, and posted a response to a complaint from the office of the Times' Public Editor on his website: "Unless there's evidence of ethical misbehaviour of factual error, individual columnists can say what they want to say and individual readers can like the ones they like and dislike the ones they don't like." The Public Editor, Daniel Okrent, later replied personally, saying that the opinion pages were governed by different – and much broader – guidelines than the news pages, and that opinion writers were allowed to express their opinions. "Nonetheless", he added, "I do feel that the issue is a substantive one, and will look further into it as I get more comfortable in this difficult job."

<sup>iv</sup> Interview with Maureen Dowd, May 15, 2005.

<sup>v</sup> Joseph S. Nye, Jr, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Public Affairs, New York, 2004, p. x.

<sup>vi</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>vii</sup> Pew Global Attitudes Project, *What the World Thinks in 2002*, (Washington, D.C.; Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2002), p. T54. Quoted by Joseph Nye, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>viii</sup> Sam G. Riley, *The American Newspaper Columnist*, Westport, Conn., and London: Praeger, 1998. Note that Riley has edited one, and written one other books about column writing: *The Best of the Rest: Non-Syndicated Newspaper Columnists Select Their Best Work*, Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1993, and *Biographical Dictionary of American Newspaper Columnists*, Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1995. As Kenneth Starck pointed out in a review, "Riley's work provides numerous leads for follow-up research. For example: Why does it appear easier for African-American conservative columnists to become syndicated than for African-American liberals? To what extent and with what impact have newspapers begun to rely on usually ideologically driven free columns from 'think tank' writers?". Kenneth Starck, "Journalism: Helping establish journalism as a discipline", *The Journal of International Communication*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1999). Karl Ernest Meyer has also edited a collection of columns: *Pundits, Poets, and Wits: an omnibus of American newspaper columns*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1990.

<sup>ix</sup> Andrew Rich and R. Kent Weaver, "Think Tanks in the U.S. Media", *Harvard International Journal of Press and Politics*, Vol. 5 (4), 2000, pp. 81-103.

<sup>x</sup> Andrew Rich, *The Tanks, Public Policy and the Politics of Expertise*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004, p. 81.

<sup>xi</sup> Interview with Mary Fleming Svensson, sales manager (international) of the Washington Post Writers' Group, Feb. 9, 2005.

<sup>xii</sup> Email from Diane Thieke, Director of Global Public Relations, Factiva, June 6 2005. She also added, "Selected Text indicates coverage that includes full text articles that meet specific criteria based on the type of publication (e.g., newspaper vs. trade publication). For example, newspapers will typically include articles with a business slant including major news items and articles from the business section of the paper. For trade publications, criteria vary, but will include such items as new products, industry trends, mergers and acquisitions. In addition, as you probably know, the Tasini decision required publishers and aggregators to remove freelancer articles from their databases. Coverage is usually determined by the publisher or by the aggregator."

<sup>xiii</sup> It should be noted that the searches sometimes included duplicate articles that were syndicated to several different newspapers. The searches would also include book reviews that mention the

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name of the think tanks, as well as letters to the editor, and other passing references. However, because this is the case for all the searches conducted, it is possible to assume that for comparison's sake – from think tank to think tank, and year to year – the results should be accurate.

<sup>xiv</sup> For these searches, on Lexis, the terms were: world news, the news sources were Europe and the Asia Pacific, and the category was author. For Factiva, the search was done under the category publications, and by region, Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

<sup>xv</sup> For one view on this see Jean Stefancic and Richard Delgado, *No Mercy: How Conservative Think Tanks and Foundations Changed America's Social Agenda*, Temple University, Philadelphia, 1996. This debate should be differentiated from the long-running dispute about whether journalists are liberal, and whether a personal bias is reflected in news reporting. For different perspectives on this debate, see the fair.org survey of Washington based reporters (which claims they are mostly centrist) – posted on their website, dated January 6 1998, and headed “Examining the ‘Liberal Media’ Claim”. A study done by Time Groseclose, from UCLA, and Jeff Milyo, from the University of Missouri, titled “A Measure of Media Bias”, December 2004 (which found major American media outlets had a “strong liberal bias”, and used the number of times a media outlet cited think tanks and other policy groups as a measure).

<sup>xvi</sup> Andrew Rich and R. Kent Weaver, 2000, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-103. They examined media visibility from a sample of 51 public policy think tanks in six national newspapers between 1991 and 1998.

<sup>xvii</sup> Andrew Rich, 2004, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

<sup>xviii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>xix</sup> Michael Dolny, “The Think Tank Spectrum: For the Media, Some Thinkers Are More Equal Than Others”, *Extra!*, May/June 1996, [www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org).

<sup>xx</sup> Michael Dolny, “Spectrum Narrows Further in 2002”, *Extra!*, July/August 2003, [www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org). According to the most recent survey, of 2003, the most widely cited think tanks are Brookings, the Council on Foreign Relations and Heritage.

<sup>xxi</sup> Andrew Rich and R. Kent Weaver, 2000, *op. cit.*

<sup>xxii</sup> Todd Gitlin, “The Pro-War Post”, *American Prospect*, April 1, 2003. Quoted by David Brock: *The Republican Noise Machine: Right Wing Media and How it Corrupts Democracy*, Crown Publishers, New York, 2004, p.126.

<sup>xxiii</sup> David Brock, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-128.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Dave Astor, “Mapping both sides of Ideologic Divide”, *Editor and Publisher Magazine*, April 1 2002, p. 28.

<sup>xxv</sup> Interview with Danielle Pletka, Vice President, Foreign and Defense Policy Studies, of the American Enterprise Institution, May 12 2005.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Interview with Carmen MacDougall, May 12 2005.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Andrew Rich, 2004, *op.cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>xxviii</sup> Donald Abelson in Diane Stone and Andrew Denham (eds), *Think tank traditions: policy research and the politics of ideas*, Manchester University Press, Manchester; New York, 2004, p. 224.

<sup>xxix</sup> Interview with Kate Carlisle, the Managing Editor of the Washington Post/LA Times syndicate, March 11, 2005.

<sup>xxx</sup> Interview with Tom Friedman, May 13 2005, Berkley University. See also Thomas Friedman, *Longitudes and Attitudes: The world in the age of terrorism*, Anchor Books, New York, 2003.

<sup>xxxi</sup> James Rainey, “A very public opinion exchange”, *LA Times*, March 11, 2005.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Howard Kurtz, “L.A. Woman [vs. LAT Man]”, *Washington Post*, March 7 2005.

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- <sup>xxxiii</sup> For a series of interviews with female writers in America, Maria Braden, *She Said What? Interviews with Women Newspaper Columnists*, The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, 1993.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Howard Kurtz, "Susan Estrich Addresses the Male", *Washington Post*, March 7, 2005; Page C01.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Sheelah Kolhatkar, "Daughters of Maureen... Hello?", *National Observer*, May 25 2005.
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> *Op. cit.*
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Deborah Tannen, "The Feminine Technique", *LA Times*, March 15, 2005.
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> Zofia Smardz, "Just Give it a Shot, Girls", *Washington Post*, March 27, 2004, Outlook B01.
- <sup>xxxix</sup> Michael Kinsley, "Girl Problems in Op-Ed Land", *LA Times*, March 20, 2005.
- <sup>xl</sup> Interview with Kate Carlisle, the Managing Editor of the Washington Post/LA Times, March 11, 2005.
- <sup>xli</sup> Quoted by Oliver Burkeman, "Portrait: 'Some things are true even if George Bush believes them': Oliver Burkeman meets Thomas Friedman, the influential columnist who says the attack on Iraq was justified", the *Guardian*, August 5, 2003, p. 6 (features).
- <sup>lii</sup> Interview with Maureen Dowd, May 15, 2005. See also Maureen Dowd, *Bushworld*, Penguin, New York, 2004.
- <sup>liiii</sup> Quoted by Roy Greenslade, "Their master's voice", the *Guardian*, Feb. 17 2003.
- <sup>liv</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>lv</sup> There was some divergence on the oped pages of the *Times* and *Sunday Times*, but most columnists and all of the leading editorials supported the war.
- <sup>lvi</sup> Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis, "Contemporary Interest Group Politics: More than 'More of the Same'", *Interest Group Politics*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, ed. Allan. J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis, 1995, Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institution, p. 393.
- <sup>lvii</sup> James Allen Smith, *The Ideas Brokers: Think Tanks and the Rise of the New Policy Elite*, 1991, New York, Free Press, p. 194.
- <sup>lviii</sup> Andrew Rich and R. Kent Weaver, *op.cit.*, pp. 81-103; Andrew Rich, *op cit.*
- <sup>lix</sup> Edwin J. Feulner, Jr. "Ideas, Think Tanks, and Governments." In *The Heritage Lectures*, 1986, Washington, D.C., Heritage Foundation. Sally Covington, *Moving a Public Policy Agenda; The Strategic Philanthropy of Conservative Foundations*, 1997, Washington D.C., Brookings Institution; David Callahan, "Liberal Policy's Weak Foundations", *The Nation*, Nov.13 1995, pp. 568-72; David Callahan, *\$1 Billion for Ideas: Conservative Think Tanks in the 1990s*, 1999, Washington, D.C., National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy; Michael H. Shuman, "Why Progressive Foundations Give Too Little to Too Many", *The Nation*, 1998, 266 (2): 11-15.
- <sup>l</sup> Niels Bjerre-Poulsen, "The Heritage Foundation: A Second-Generation Think Tank", *Journal of Policy History* 1991 (3): 152-72.
- <sup>li</sup> Edwin Feulner, "The Heritage Foundation", in James G. McGann & R. Kent Weaver, (eds), *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78.
- <sup>lii</sup> James Allen Smith, *The Idea Brokers: think tanks and the rise of the new policy elite*, New York, The Free Press, 1991, p. xv.
- <sup>liii</sup> David M. Ricci, *The Transformation of American Politics: The New Washington and the Rise of Think Tanks*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1993, p. 1.
- <sup>liv</sup> Donald Abelson in Diane Stone and Andrew Denham (eds), *Think tank traditions: policy research and the politics of ideas*, Manchester University Press, Manchester; New York, 2004, p. 216.



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- <sup>lv</sup> See, for example, James G. McGann & R. Kent Weaver, (eds), *op.cit.*, p. 5: “A second role performed at many think tanks is providing advice on immediate policy concerns that are being considered by government officials.... Advice giving may also take the form of opinion pieces in newspaper commentary pages.”
- <sup>lvi</sup> Interview with Danielle Pletka, Vice President, Foreign and Defense Policy Studies, of the American Enterprise Institution, May 12 2005.
- <sup>lvii</sup> Christian Science Monitor online, *csmonitor.com*, “Empire builders: Neo-conservatives and their blueprint for US power”.
- <sup>lviii</sup> Diane Stone, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
- <sup>lix</sup> Ian Marsh and Diane Stone, “Australian think tanks”, in Diane Stone, and Andrew Denham, *op. cit.*, p. 256.
- <sup>lx</sup> For further discussion, see Diane Stone, Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett (eds), *Think Tanks Across Nations*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1998.
- <sup>lxi</sup> Interview with Carmen MacDougall, Vice President for Communications at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 12, 2005.
- <sup>lxii</sup> Lee Edwards, *The power of ideas: The Heritage Foundation at 25 years*, Jameson Books Inc., Ottawa Illinois 1997, p. 222.
- <sup>lxiii</sup> Andrew Rich and R. Kent Weaver, *op. cit.*, p. 99.
- <sup>lxiv</sup> Email correspondence with Gregory Hywood, June 5 2005.
- <sup>lxv</sup> Andrew Rich, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
- <sup>lxvi</sup> Benjamin I. Page, Robert Y. Shapiro and Glenn Dempsey, 1987, “What Moves Public Opinion?”, *American Political Science Review* 81:23-43.
- <sup>lxvii</sup> Donald L. Jordan, “Newspaper Effects on Policy Preferences”, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 57: 196.
- <sup>lxviii</sup> *Op cit.*, p. 199.
- <sup>lxix</sup> Ivan Cook, “Australians Speak 2005; Public Opinion and Foreign Policy”, The Lowy Institute Poll 2005, Lowy Institute for International Policy, Sydney.
- <sup>lxx</sup> Ross Terrill, “Awesome Aussies: An extra-special relationship”, *The Weekly Standard*, September 29, 2003, vol.9, no. 3.
- <sup>lxxi</sup> Email correspondence with Patrick Martin, May 19, 2005.
- <sup>lxxii</sup> J. R. MacArthur, “The Lies We Bought; The unchallenged ‘evidence’ for war”, *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 2003, p. 62.
- <sup>lxxiii</sup> Chris Mooney, “The Editorial Pages and the Case for War”, *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/April 2004, p. 28. The six papers were the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. Ari Berman wrote on January 28, 2003 that there “did not seem to be one US newspaper among the top 50 dailies by circulation that is strongly ‘anti-war’. The papers appear united in their desire for Saddam Hussein’s disarmament, if not overthrow, and disagree only on the means, or at least the urgency.” An Editor and Publisher survey of war-related editorials published by 37 of America’s top 50 newspapers that month found that of the top 10 papers, only *USA Today* and the *New York Times* advocated restraint. Ari Berman, Editor and Publisher, *Newspaper Editorials Turn Against War*, January 28, 2003.
- <sup>lxxiv</sup> Narasimhan Ravi, “Different Stories: How the newspapers in the United States, Britain and South Asia covered the Iraq War”, The Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, Working Paper Series, Spring 2004-6.
- <sup>lxxv</sup> See Kim Hart, “Go Rightward, Liberal Media?”, *American Journalism Review*, December 2004/ January 2005, p. 19.

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<sup>lxxvi</sup> Howard Kurtz, “Political perspectives with tunnel vision”, *Washington Post*, February 7 2005, p. C01. At least one website, [lyinginponds.com](http://lyinginponds.com), is devoted to the study of partisanship in American columnists, and regularly publishes ranking of columnists according to bias evident in their writing.