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Media Framing of U.S. University and Student Responses to the Israel-Hamas War

Master's Thesis



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Abstract

Amidst the landscape of the Middle East, the Israel-Hamas war has shattered a decade-long period of relative peace in the region. It has brought renewed attention to entrenched political tensions, sparking global discourse and widespread protests, including significant activism on college campuses. The war has been particularly contentious due to the devastating impact on Gaza, where the humanitarian crisis has reached dire levels amid heavy suffering and devastating numbers of civilian deaths.

This thesis examines media framing of university and student group activities in response to the initial outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war, focusing on mainstream American media outlets (CNN, New York Times, Newsweek, FOX News, and New York Post) and university-specific newspapers (The Harvard Crimson, The Daily Pennsylvanian, and Columbia Daily Spectator).

Rooted in agenda-setting theory and the concept of framing, the research aims to uncover the diverse framings presented by different media outlets. Utilizing a qualitative frame analysis, this study examines diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames across the outlets. By examining and comparing the distinct framings, the findings reveal the nuanced landscape of media representation.

Results of the analysis reveal a multifaceted portrayal of university and student responses to the Israel-Hamas war across media outlets. Variations emerge in how events are portrayed, with left-leaning and right-leaning media displaying biases, while university-specific outlets provide perspectives grounded in campus experiences.

Overall, the study highlights the role of media in shaping public discourse and perceptions, demonstrating the complex interplay between media representation, university activism, and global conflicts. It contributes to the understanding of media dynamics in contemporary conflicts and underscores the importance of critical media literacy in navigating diverse narratives.

Keywords: *media framing; university activism; Israel-Hamas war; agenda-setting; campus tensions; media bias; ideological polarization; academic freedom, free speech*

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Table of contents

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	5
1 INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 Overview	6
1.2 Literature review	8
1.3 Purpose, objectives, aim	9
1.4 Thesis structure	10
2 METHODOLOGY	11
2.1 Research design	11
2.1.1 Analytical focus	13
2.1.2 Hypotheses	14
2.2 Research method	15
2.2.1 Data collection	15
2.2.2 Data analysis	16
2.2.3 Validity and reliability	18
2.3 Limitations	19
3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	21
3.1 Agenda-setting theory	21
3.1.1 Framing	22
3.1.2 Critique	23
3.3 Integration and application	24
4. EMPIRICAL RESULTS	26
4.1 University newspapers	26
4.1.1 The Harvard Crimson	26
4.1.1.1 Diagnostic frame	26
4.1.1.2 Prognostic frame	28
4.1.1.3 Motivational frame	29
4.1.2 The Daily Pennsylvanian	30
4.1.2.1 Diagnostic frame	30
4.1.2.2 Prognostic frame	31
4.1.2.3 Motivational frame	33
4.1.3 Columbia Daily Spectator	34
4.1.3.1 Diagnostic frame	34
4.1.3.2 Prognostic frame	35
4.1.3.3 Motivational frame	37
4.2 National media outlets	38

4.2.1 CNN	38
4.2.1.1 Diagnostic frame.....	38
4.2.1.2 Prognostic frame	39
4.2.1.3 Motivational frame.....	41
4.2.2 The New York Times.....	43
4.2.2.1 Diagnostic frame.....	43
4.2.2.2 Prognostic frame	44
4.2.2.3 Motivational frame.....	46
4.2.3 Newsweek	47
4.2.3.1 Diagnostic frame.....	47
4.2.3.2 Prognostic frame	49
4.2.3.3 Motivational frame.....	50
4.2.4 FOX News	51
4.2.4.1 Diagnostic frame.....	51
4.2.4.2 Prognostic frame	53
4.2.4.3 Motivational frame.....	54
4.2.5 New York Post	56
4.2.5.1 Diagnostic frame.....	56
4.2.5.2 Prognostic frame	57
4.2.5.3 Motivational frame.....	59
4.3 Comparison	60
4.3.1 Diagnostic frame	60
4.3.2 Prognostic frame	62
4.3.3 Motivational frame.....	64
5. DISCUSSION	67
5.1 Summary and interpretation of results	67
5.2 Limitations of the research	69
5.3 Recommendations for future research.....	70
6. CONCLUSION	72
7. REFERENCES	74

List of tables and figures

Table 1: Media outlets' bias.....	13
Table 2: The Harvard Crimson Frame Summary.....	30
Table 3: The Daily Pennsylvanian Frame Summary.....	34
Table 4: Columbia Daily Spectator Frame Summary	38
Table 5: CNN Frame Summary.....	42
Table 6: The New York Times Frame Summary.....	47
Table 7: Newsweek Frame Summary	51
Table 8: FOX News Frame Summary.....	55
Table 9: New York Post Frame Summary	60
Table 10: Similarities & Differences in Frames Across Outlets.....	66
Figure 1: Data Collection.....	15

1 Introduction

Amidst the complex and turbulent political landscape of the Middle East, the current Israel-Hamas war has surged to the forefront of international attention, signaling a notable increase in regional tensions. It has broken the relative calm that had prevailed in the region for over a decade and marks a dramatic escalation in the longstanding Israel-Palestine conflict rooted in deep political tensions and historical grievances.

1.1 Overview

On October 7, 2023, the region of southern Israel was jolted by an abrupt and unprecedented cross-border attack from the Gaza Strip by Hamas, an Islamist militant movement and one of the Palestinian territories' two major political parties. Targeting Israeli military sites and residential neighborhoods during the final Jewish high holiday, the surprise attacks claimed the lives of an estimated 1,200 individuals and left around 240 others held hostage (Vinograd & Kershner, 2023). The assault had no precedent in the 16 years since Hamas gained control of Gaza and is the deadliest attack in Israeli history (Zanotti et al., 2023). The militants had killed more than 1,200 people, and taken 253 as hostages (McDowall, 2024). The attacks' repercussions have reverberated far beyond the immediate conflict zone, sending shockwaves throughout the world and international diplomatic circles, igniting fears of a protracted and devastating conflict. Other militants outside of Hamas also claimed participation in the attack, amplifying the scale and severity of the crisis.

In response to the onslaught, the Israeli government declared war on Hamas and launched a series of military operations aimed at destroying Hamas and quelling the rising violence. A barrage of aerial bombardments and ground invasions into Gaza ensued, which resulted in extensive damage and many casualties, especially among civilians. Initially, Israel also stopped supplying food, fuel, and electricity to Gaza from Israeli territory. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made clear that Israel aims to secure hostages' return and eliminate Hamas's military and governing capabilities (Shurafa et al., 2024).

As the war intensified, the United Nations proclaimed the situation in Gaza a major humanitarian crisis, with approximately 1.9 million Gazans displaced (out of a total population of 2.1 million) and the majority enduring severe economic and humanitarian challenges (UN SC/15564, 2024). The war's toll on civilians has been severe (Oxfam, 2024), with acute shortages of essential resources compounding the already dire living conditions in the territory. Since the outbreak of the war, Israel and Egypt have coordinated the use of Egypt's Rafah crossing with Gaza and later Israel's Kerem Shalom crossing in an effort to prevent Hamas from diverting international aid from outside the region.

Generally, both the Israeli and Palestinian communities have suffered greatly as a result of the ceaseless cycle of violence and destruction, which has deepened the sense of hopelessness and despair that permeates the region. It is believed that over 60 % of Gaza's housing units have been damaged or destroyed (Goldstein, 2024). More than 40,000 Palestinians in Gaza have been killed as of early May 2024, while thousands remain injured or missing (Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, 2024).

The war has become a focal point of international concern, coming to the attention of diplomats, policymakers, and humanitarian organizations worldwide. It has turned out to have far-reaching ramifications going beyond the boundaries of the Gaza Strip, creating uncertainty throughout the Middle East as a whole. Tensions and violence persist between Palestinians and Israelis. Moreover, the war has drawn involvement from various non-state actors supported by Iran across the Middle East. For instance, groups in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen have clashed with Israeli soldiers over expressions of sympathy for the October assaults. Notably, Israel's exchanges with the Shia Islamist group Hezbollah along its northern border have raised concerns about the potential escalation of conflict, given Hezbollah's significant arsenal and strategic position. Additionally, post-October attacks by the Houthi militia in Yemen have disrupted maritime trade routes (Stewart et al., 2024), triggering military responses from the United States and the United Kingdom. Furthermore, incidents in Iraq and Syria, including drone attacks and retaliatory strikes involving Iranian and Iran-backed forces, highlight the war's broader regional implications and the intricate web of geopolitical processes at play.

As the war continues, concerns about the likelihood of a long-term settlement to one of the most intractable conflicts in history persist. The broader discourse among various stakeholders surrounding the war has been fragmented, representing a diverse range of viewpoints, beliefs, and political allegiances. From Free Palestine protests advocating for Palestinian rights to pro-Israel demonstrations asserting Israel's right to self-defense, the spectrum of voices in the ongoing debate is vast and multifaceted. Amid this clamor of differing opinions, there are also those advocating for peace, underscoring the humanitarian cost of the war and calling for an end to the suffering of innocent civilians on all sides. Additionally, universities across the world have become arenas for student activism in response to the war, sparking controversies and debates within academic communities. Notably, numerous activist endeavors have originated from esteemed American universities (Hartocollis et al., 2023).

In the context of polarized public discourse, the role of media in molding and reflecting divergent viewpoints becomes increasingly intriguing. How different news and media outlets present and frame conflicts such as the Israel-Hamas war not only affects public perceptions but also contributes to the broader discussion on geopolitical consequences and international relations. Furthermore, the

involvement of student groups and universities in responding to the war adds another layer of complexity to the discussion. Often seen as bastions of free speech and intellectual debate, universities have become important platforms for expressing solidarity with various sides of the war. Inspired by these dynamics, I am driven to explore the media framing of the Israel-Hamas war within the context of university and student group activism, specifically in the United States. This topic is highly relevant and topical given the polarized nature of public discourse on the Israel-Hamas war and the significant role of media in shaping public opinion (Ahmed et al., 2019; Knupfer & Entman, 2018). Analyzing and comparing how mainstream American media outlets report on the activities of universities and student groups with the coverage provided by the universities' official newspapers will unravel the various framings employed by different media outlets and shed light on the diverse nature of media representation. Ultimately, this thesis aims to explore how mainstream American media outlets and university newspapers frame the activities of universities and student groups in response to the Israel-Hamas war.

1.2 Literature review

The current state of academic literature on media framing and university activism in the context of conflicts like the Israel-Hamas war reveals several key themes. In general, scholars have extensively explored the role of media narratives in shaping public opinion and discourse (Ahmed et al., 2019; Knupfer & Entman, 2018; Joseph & Barclay, 2018). These studies emphasize the influence of media framing on public perceptions and policy decisions, underscoring the significance of comprehending how various media outlets convey and frame conflicts.

The engagement of universities and student groups in addressing conflicts further enriches the complexity of media discourse surrounding these issues. Gardner et al. (2021) call for the inclusion of advocacy in academic mandates, highlighting the role of institutions in supporting intellectual activism and advocacy. Brown and Harlow (2019) discuss the delegitimizing pattern in media coverage of protests centered on racial issues, underscoring the influence of framing and sourcing preferences. Meanwhile, Gill and DeFronzo (2009) offer a comparative approach for examining global student movements, emphasizing the role that student activism has historically had in sparking anti-war movements.

Student activism has a huge impact on shaping social and war policy, as demonstrated by historical precedents like the Vietnam War protests (Gill & DeFronzo, 2009). This activism goes beyond college walls, taking on national significance and influencing broader societal discourse. As evidenced by Sorey

and Gregory (2010), the impact of protest movements in the 1960s is still palpable in American higher education, particularly in terms of student affairs and campus culture.

Additional research by Lee (2018) and Hertz (2020) emphasizes the value of academic freedom and the acceptance of student activism as a legitimate form of engagement on campus. According to Russomanno (2017), the generation commonly known as the “activist generation” exhibits a heightened social consciousness that manifests in several forms of student activism. Nevertheless, tensions arise when it comes to protecting free speech and preventing behavior that incites harm or hatred (Barrie, 2017). These tensions call for a complex understanding of how to strike a balance between safeguarding the rights of others and freedom of expression.

All in all, while existing literature has examined media framing in conflicts and the advocacy role of universities, there remains a gap in understanding how these two phenomena intersect, especially within the context of contemporary conflicts like the Israel-Hamas war.

1.3 Purpose, objectives, aim

This thesis seeks to answer the following research question: *How do mainstream American media outlets and university newspapers frame the activities of universities and student groups in response to the Israel-Hamas war?*

The purpose of this thesis is twofold: firstly, to investigate how media frames and reports on the activities of American universities and students amidst the Israel-Hamas war; and secondly, to compare and contrast media framing of the war between mainstream US media outlets and university newspapers within the context of university and student activism.

There are several objectives guiding this study:

1. analyze textual media coverage from both national and university-specific sources to understand the framing of university and student activism in response to the war
2. compare the framings of mainstream American media outlets and university newspapers to identify similarities and differences, shedding light on how different types of media portray campus responses to the war
3. explore how different political biases within mainstream media influence the framings of university and student activism, with a focus on understanding the broader societal discourses and political agendas shaping media coverage

Overall, the aim of this thesis is to elucidate the multifaceted nature of media representation within the context of university and student group activism in the United States. By examining how mainstream media outlets with varying political biases frame the activities of universities and student groups, the research seeks to identify dominant themes and discourses present in media coverage of campus responses to the war and provide insights into ideological influences on news coverage and the portrayal of contentious issues.

1.4 Thesis structure

The paper is organized into several sections. Firstly, the Methodology chapter delineates the approach taken to gather and analyze data, providing a clear framework for the subsequent empirical investigation. The research design and the research method are discussed. Limitations inherent in the research design are also addressed. Next, the Theoretical Framework chapter delves into the theoretical underpinnings guiding the thesis, particularly agenda-setting and framing. In the Empirical Results chapter, the analysis is first presented in individual chapters dedicated to each media outlet. A Comparison chapter then synthesizes the findings from individual analyses, highlighting similarities and differences in framing across different media sources. The Discussion chapter then holistically examines and interprets the results. Finally, the Conclusion consolidates key findings and implications.

2 Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodological process guiding this thesis.

2.1 Research design

The research design used in this thesis is a qualitative comparative study with elements of a case study approach within a constructivist theoretical framework. By integrating agenda-setting and framing theories, the purpose is to examine and contrast how different media outlets frame and report on university and student group activities in response to the Israel-Hamas war. Constructivism, emphasizing the co-creation of social reality and knowledge, provides a robust foundation for analysis (Guzzini, 2000). Unlike traditional political science approaches that focus on material and rational explanations, constructivism highlights the importance of ideational and intersubjective aspects in shaping perceptions and actions (Hoffmann, 2010). This perspective allows for a detailed examination of how media framing and agenda-setting contribute to the creation of social meaning and political discourse around the Israel-Hamas war, aligning with the thesis's goal of deciphering varied media viewpoints.

By adopting a qualitative approach, I aim to delve into the nuances of media framing and coverage surrounding the activities of American universities and student groups in response to the war. Investigating American media outlets alongside university-specific newspapers through framing analysis allows for an in-depth examination of media coverage variations. While purely quantitative methods could provide statistical insights, they would not capture the qualitative nuances essential for understanding media framing in this context. Moreover, the complexity and variability of media framing make it challenging to measure and analyze effectively using quantitative approaches alone.

As already mentioned, this thesis is a qualitative comparative study with elements of a case study approach. A case study involves a detailed and intensive analysis of a particular event, situation, organization, or social unit, typically within a defined space and time frame (Schoch, 2020). In terms of scope, a case study investigates contemporary phenomena within its real-life contexts (Schoch, 2020). In my thesis, elements of a case study are present for several reasons. Firstly, the thesis focuses particularly on the media framing of the Israel-Hamas war as it relates to university activism at selected American universities. This bounded system of interest aligns with the definition of a case study. The case here is the media coverage of American universities' responses to the Israel-Hamas war, analyzed within the specific context of American higher education and media landscapes, providing a clear space and time frame. Secondly, the study provides an understanding of the media narratives and the responses of university communities, situating these within the broader socio-

political context of the Israel-Hamas war and American higher education. This depth of analysis is characteristic of case studies, which aim to uncover the complexities and dynamics of a particular case (Ebneyamini & Moghadam, 2018). The relevance of the context to the phenomenon is clear, as the media's portrayal and the universities' reactions are linked to the broader geopolitical conflict. Thirdly, the research aims to explore and interpret the nuanced ways in which different media outlets frame the university and student responses to the war. This exploratory aspect is a hallmark of case study research, which often aims to generate insights and hypotheses for further investigation. Moreover, within this central case, each media outlet or each university's response can be viewed as a sub-case. By comparing these sub-cases, patterns, differences, and broader implications can be examined within the overarching case of media framing.

Comparative research enhances the robustness of case studies by identifying patterns and variations across different cases (Della Porta, 2008). In this thesis, comparing media coverage across multiple outlets allows for a richer analysis of framing strategies and their implications. The comparative study framework allows for the identification of similarities and differences in media framing. This perspective is crucial as it helps to highlight any potential biases or conflicting viewpoints across different types of media. By comparing mainstream American media outlets with university-specific newspapers, I can explore how different sources portray the same events and issues, revealing underlying narratives and ideological influences. On top of that, incorporating features from a case study approach facilitates an exploration of individual media outlets as distinct cases. This approach allows for an examination of specific instances and contexts, providing richer insights into the dynamics involved in media framing.

To maintain a focused study, I decided to focus solely on the period surrounding the initial outbreak of the war. Therefore, the chosen timeframe for this study spans from October 7 to October 31, 2023. This timeframe is especially intriguing as it captures the immediate reactions and initial debate surrounding the war's inception. It encapsulates key events that likely affected public perceptions as well as media coverage, providing a rich and complex terrain for analysis. Additionally, concentrating on American universities offers a unique lens into the intersection of activism, academia, and media representation. With a history of student activism and movements, notably exemplified by the protests against the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 70s, these centers of learning often act as hubs for political activism and dissent. All in all, the wide range of viewpoints and actions exhibited within these universities, coupled with the United States' diverse media landscape often characterized by varying political biases, heightens the complexity of media framing in the context of the Israel-Hamas war.

2.1.1 Analytical focus

The analytical focus of the thesis revolves around news articles and stories from university-specific newspapers and well-known American mainstream media outlets. Specifically, attention is directed towards stories originating from the following media sources:

- mainstream / national: CNN, New York Times, Newsweek, New York Post, FOX News
- university-specific: The Harvard Crimson, The Daily Pennsylvanian, Columbia Daily Spectator

In selecting media outlets, several criteria were considered to ensure a comprehensive analysis of media framing surrounding the Israel-Hamas war within the context of university activism. Firstly, major media platforms with significant audience reach were chosen for their potential to influence public perceptions, political discourse, and international understanding of the conflict. Secondly, specific university newspapers were included to provide unique perspectives on student-led initiatives, campus activities, and university responses within academic communities. Additionally, the selection was informed by factors such as the outlets' political leaning, their coverage of academic activism and events related to the war on university campuses, and their varied reputation for providing reliable reporting on contentious issues. The Media Bias/Fact Check website was used to determine the political bias and factual accuracy of these outlets, ensuring a balanced representation of different viewpoints (see Table 1).

Table 1: Media outlets' bias

	Bias rating	Factual reporting	Media type	MBFC credibility rating
CNN	left-center	mostly factual	TV station/website	high credibility
The New York Times	left-center	high	newspaper	high credibility
Newsweek	right-center	mostly factual	magazine	high credibility
FOX News	right	mixed	TV station/website	low credibility
New York Post	right-center	mixed	newspaper	medium credibility

Note: own table creation based on information on MBFC website

The selection of university newspapers of Harvard, Columbia, and UPenn is based on several reasons. When the war broke out, I was residing in North America, where I was heavily exposed to American media and the situations unfolding on American university campuses. This proximity and extensive media coverage I encountered made the American context particularly relevant and accessible for my research. The three universities were chosen due to their significant size and the notable levels of

activism observed there during the period following the October 7 Hamas attacks. Harvard, Columbia, and UPenn are prestigious institutions and their prominence ensures a wide array of perspectives and responses, enriching the analysis. Furthermore, the United States in general plays a crucial role politically and diplomatically in the Israel-Hamas war, making the American perspective particularly significant. American universities, with their diverse higher education system, provide a multifaceted landscape due to their varied institutional structures and student demographics. This diversity makes them ideal for studying the dynamics of student activism and media framing in response to the conflict. Moreover, the American media landscape is exceptionally diverse, offering a broad spectrum of political biases and editorial approaches. This variety ensures a comprehensive analysis of how the conflict is reported and perceived.

2.1.2 Hypotheses

Based on preliminary research and the objectives of this thesis, I have developed several hypotheses guiding this study.

Firstly, I assume that mainstream media outlets exhibit bias in their coverage, reflecting their political leanings, which may influence the framing of university activism in the context of the Israel-Hamas war. This bias may manifest in the selection of news stories or the emphasis placed on certain perspectives. Left-leaning outlets may emphasize themes such as social justice, human rights, freedom of expression, and solidarity, while right-wing outlets may focus on themes such as national security and terrorism. I also assume that the coverage of university activism and the war may be influenced by broader sociopolitical dynamics. Media outlets may seek to align their coverage with the prevailing political discourse or agenda, potentially amplifying certain narratives or perspectives to appeal to their audience or advance specific political objectives.

Secondly, I expect that the depiction of academic freedom varies across media sources, with some highlighting its role in fostering intellectual discourse while others may frame it as politically motivated or disruptive.

Thirdly, I anticipate that university newspapers provide a more authentic representation of student perspectives and activism compared to mainstream media. I believe this assumption is straightforward as university newspapers are closer to the student community and may be more attuned to their concerns and viewpoints.

Fourthly, I assume that national media outlets are likely to employ specific framing strategies to influence public opinion on university activism and the conflict, potentially shaping public perceptions.

These framing strategies may include highlighting certain aspects of the issue while downplaying others, employing emotive language or imagery, and framing events within broader political or ideological narratives.

2.2 Research method

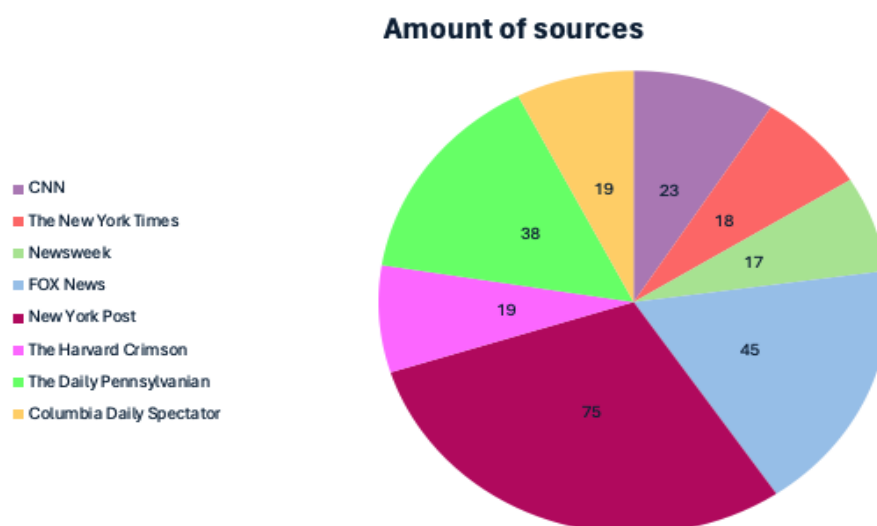
2.2.1 Data collection

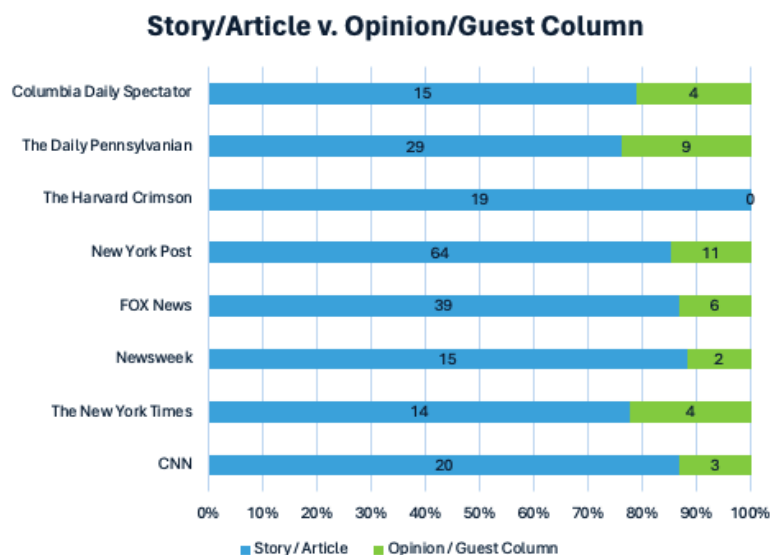
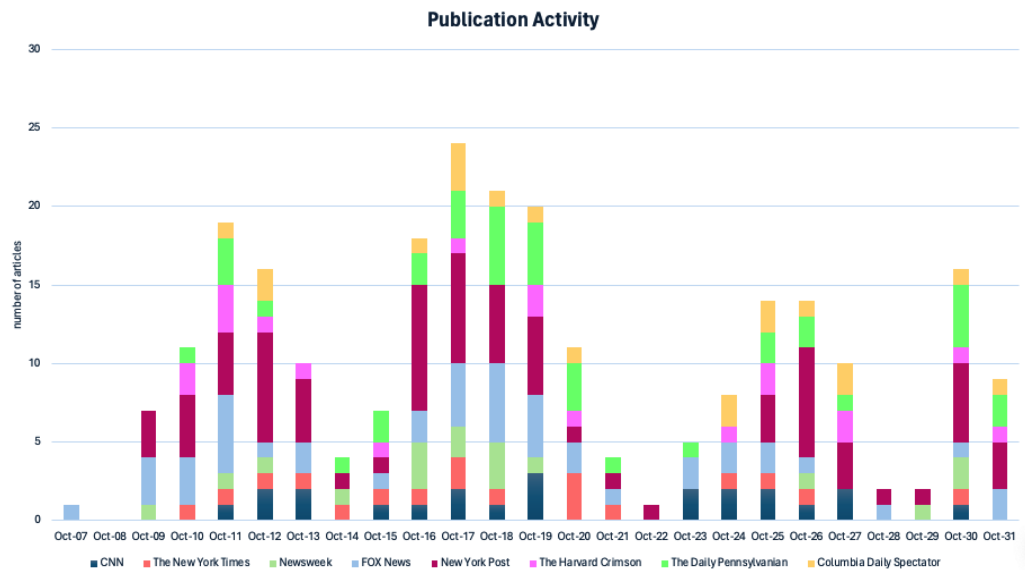
The data collection process followed a purposive sampling approach, specifically targeting media articles from both mainstream and university-specific sources related to the responses of university campuses during the initial phase of the Israel-Hamas war, from October 7 to October 31, 2023. I chose this approach to ensure the inclusion of a range of media representations while maintaining relevance to the research question.

To gather data, I utilized the search function on Google to select a custom time range, filtering articles published within the specified timeframe. Criteria for inclusion included a publication date within the chosen timeframe and contextual relevance of the headline. I used the following searches to collect my data: “Harvard **name of outlet**”, “Columbia **name of outlet**”, “UPenn **name of outlet**”.

In total, I was able to gather 254 textual sources across all my chosen outlets and my chosen timeframe (see Figure 1 and Annex 1).

Figure 1: Data Collection





2.2.2 Data analysis

The chosen research method to answer my research question is a frame analysis. The concept of framing has become a well-known approach in media analysis, and permeated various disciplines, such as social studies, political communication, journalism studies, communication studies, and social movement studies. Based on the constructionist paradigm, framing asserts that meanings are socially formed through interpretive processes rather than being inherent in objects, events, or circumstances. Frames are interpretive schemas that selectively emphasize and encode particular features of the outside world, therefore reducing and simplifying its complexities (Snow & Benford, 1988). According to scholar Robert Entman, framing is the process of highlighting and choosing specific elements of observed reality to create a narrative that supports a particular interpretation (Entman, 2007). In a similar vein, Pan and Kosicki stress that framing draws attention to specific aspects of a

problem, making “the selected elements to become important in influencing individuals’ judgments” (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 57).

The concept of framing has been used by media scholars to explain how the media organizes the way they present news, favoring particular interpretations of events by selecting certain facts. Within media discourse, frames function as central organizing concepts within stories, offering interpretive cues that affect how audiences perceive and understand issues (De Vreese, 2005). This imprint of power embedded within frames highlights the importance of examining framing processes in news media discourse. In fact, “news is anything but a true reflection of reality”, it “is a frame or window on reality that seeks to or can only reflect part of this reality” (Linstrom & Marais, 2012, p. 24).

There are various methodological approaches to frame analysis. Some studies favor a text-based interpretative, qualitative method, while others use computer-assisted frame analysis or quantitative content analysis. While the two do not mutually exclude one another, I have chosen the former course, using a qualitative frame analysis specifically based on Benford and Snow’s concept of framing. Originally developed within sociology and the study of social movements and collective action, their framework on framing processes offers a valuable lens for comprehending the dynamics of media framing within the context of university activism. Benford and Snow suggest that framing actors participate in a group process of negotiating a shared understanding of a problematic situation, assigning blame or responsibility, proposing alternative arrangements, and persuading others to act collectively for change (Benford & Snow, 2000). Their framework outlines three fundamental framing tasks – diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational – and therefore, we can distinguish between three main frame categories:

1. diagnostic frame: identification and explanation of a given situation, and attribution of blame or responsibility
2. prognostic frame: solutions offered to the identified issue
3. motivational frame: “rationale for action”, call for action to bring about change (Benford & Snow, 1988).

Benford and Snow’s concept of framing serves as a valuable analytical tool to analyze media framing within the context of university activism during the Israel-Hamas war. Their framework is adaptable to various contexts and provides a structured method to understand how media construct narratives. By focusing on diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames, the framework aligns with the multifaceted nature of media coverage, allowing for a nuanced exploration of how issues are presented, solutions proposed, and action advocated. This relevance is particularly appropriate in

analyzing news media articles, as the identification of these frames can illuminate the underlying narratives shaping public discourse.

In the data analysis process, I utilize NVivo software to organize and analyze the textual data obtained from the selected media articles. Following Benford and Snow's framework for framing analysis, I code passages of the articles into the three main frame categories: diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational. These frames serve as the foundational structure for analyzing how the media present and interpret the activities of universities and student groups in response to the Israel-Hamas war. Subsequently, I extract direct quotes from the coded passages that correspond to each frame, providing concrete examples of how the media frame the discourse surrounding university activism. Additionally, in a separate table in a Word document, I systematically document and summarize each frame. This table includes a concise description of each frame.

2.2.3 Validity and reliability

Critics of the qualitative approach point out that analysis can be difficult when definite categories are not immediately apparent and "no easy coding scheme into which textual units can be sorted is evident" (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010, p. 37). However, in my case, the framework provided by Benford and Snow offers a clearer direction. With their delineation of three main frames, I have predefined categories to guide my analysis, providing a foundation from which to explore media narratives. Moreover, while sorting parts of coverage into the predefined frames, the prospect of uncovering additional themes in coverage adds an element of excitement to the analysis, underscoring the richness of qualitative research in uncovering new insights.

To ensure validity of my qualitative analysis, I maintain a clear decision trail and transparency in the interpretation of data. Leveraging NVivo software for the analysis of the collected data, I have a structured platform for organizing and managing the data. I used systematic data collection and detailed documentation of the analysis process, making sure that the research process is replicable. Furthermore, by examining various media outlets, I ensure that a wide range of perspectives is represented in the analysis, which enriches the depth of understanding and strengthens the internal validity of my findings. However, due to the specific focus and scope of this thesis, external validity may be limited.

In terms of reliability of my research, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations inherent in performing a qualitative analysis. While intensive readings of text enable a deep exploration of media framing within the context of university activism, this method may not be suitable for large-scale analysis across diverse media outlets and time periods. While the findings provide valuable insights within the

specific context of this thesis, their applicability and replica go beyond the scope and may of course be limited. Recognizing the constraints of qualitative analysis in achieving broad generalizability, it is essential to interpret the findings within the context of this study's objectives. Qualitative research often prioritizes depth over breadth, making it crucial to contextualize findings within the specific parameters of the study (Silverman, 2013).

It is also important to acknowledge the potential influence of personal bias. As the researcher, my own perspectives may inadvertently shape the interpretation of data and the framing of findings. To mitigate this bias, I remain vigilant in maintaining objectivity throughout the analysis process. For example, I have taken regular breaks to manage the workload effectively and maintain analytical focus. Additionally, I should mention that I have no personal connections or prior direct experiences related to the Israel-Palestine conflict. I believe this enables me to critically examine all perspectives without predispositions toward any particular inclination. While I do hold my own opinions regarding the war, I have committed to upholding academic objectivity when analyzing and making conclusions about the diverse framings and perspectives presented by different news media sources.

2.3 Limitations

To further comprehend the scope and boundaries of the thesis, I should acknowledge the potential limitations of the research design.

Firstly, the focus on a specific timeframe and a select group of media outlets and universities may limit the generalizability of the findings. The findings may not fully represent the entirety of media coverage regarding university responses to the Israel-Hamas war, especially given the dynamic nature of media narratives and the evolving nature of the war. Also, by narrowing the research to a limited set of media outlets within a specified time period, the applicability of the results to more recent periods may be constrained. Since frames are "continuously being constituted, contested, reproduced, transformed, and/or replaced" (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 628), caution should be exercised when extrapolating conclusions beyond the defined scope of this study.

Furthermore, while the chosen timeframe of the first month following the October 7 attacks offers valuable insights into immediate reactions and early media framings of university and student activism in response to it, it is important to acknowledge its inherent limitations. The consequences and dynamics of a conflict as complex and protracted as the Israel-Hamas war extend far beyond this initial period. Subsequent developments, such as rising civilian casualties, heightened international discussions, perspectives from various humanitarian and political organizations, and increasing societal pressure, may lead to shifts in media coverage and framing over time. By focusing solely on

the initial month, this study may not fully capture the evolving nature of university and student responses as the war continues. The early reactions observed within this timeframe may also differ from those occurring later as the war progresses and its impacts become more pronounced, which is the case today, in the moment of writing this thesis. Thus, while the analysis provides valuable insights into early media framings, it is important to recognize the limitations imposed by this narrow timeframe and the implications for the broader understanding of university and student activism in response to the Israel-Hamas war.

I have also chosen to focus exclusively on textual data, which presents a limitation as it may overlook information present in other forms of media, such as audiovisual content or interviews. This limitation could potentially lead to gaps in understanding and interpretation, particularly when it comes to non-verbal cues and elements portrayed through multimedia formats.

Moreover, frame analysis is a subjective and interpretative method, which introduces the risk of varying interpretations among different researchers. Consequently, as already mentioned, the reliability and consistency of the results may be questioned. While I have tried to mitigate bias, the inherent subjectivity of frame analysis requires careful consideration when generalizing findings beyond the context of this study.

Additionally, the broader socio-political context and cultural considerations underlying media framing and university activism may not be fully captured within this study. Furthermore, the absence of detailed examination of the wider Israel-Palestine conflict may limit the depth of understanding regarding certain perspectives.

3 Theoretical framework

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework that serves as the basis for my investigation. Within this framework, I draw upon agenda-setting theory and the concept of framing to guide the analysis and interpretation of empirical findings.

3.1 Agenda-setting theory

The investigation of media power and its effects is a crucial component of mass communication research. Over time, scholars have emphasized the tremendous influence of mass media. For example, McQuail (1994) stated that the study of mass communication is based on the supposition that there are major media effects. In fact, the debate around media power has been characterized by discussions over the extent of media's ability to sway public opinion and affect personal behavior. Academics like Connell (1988) have characterized the media as having unique powers, emphasizing their function as watchdogs that provide citizens with information and represent a range of public opinions. Notably, in addition to acting as informational channels and symbolic power brokers, the media constructs and shapes reality.

In the field of mass communication study, agenda-setting theory provides valuable insights into the dynamics between media coverage and public opinion formation.

The conceptual groundwork for the theory was established by Walter Lippmann in the 1920s. Although he never used the term "agenda-setting" in his writing, he proposed that the media are a major link between the external world and "the pictures in our heads" (Lippmann, 1922). In other words, according to Lippmann, the media shapes our mental map of the world. People react to the pseudo-environment they create (Lippmann, 1922).

Since Lippmann, academics have been investigating the effects of media on audience cognitions. It was then Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw who empirically tested Lippmann's concept in 1972 and developed their findings into the agenda-setting theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1993). Examining the 1968 US presidential campaign in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, McCombs and Shaw explored how media coverage shaped voters' priorities for particular issues. By investigating media content in conjunction with public views, they demonstrated the relationship between audience reactions and agenda-setting. Their research showed that the information presented in mass media content significantly influences audience priorities and public perceptions of the covered issues (McCombs, 2002). Since the Chapel Hill study, research has further elucidated the dynamics of agenda-setting. Utilizing a broad

range of research designs, hundreds of published studies have documented the impact of the news media (e.g., Carroll & McCombs, 2003; Dearing & Rogers, 1996; Iyengar, 1993; Birkland, 2017; ...).

To explain the effect of agenda-setting, McCombs refers to the 'need for orientation' (McCombs & Weaver, 1993; McCombs, 2002). In various situations, people often discover that they do not have enough information and turn to others for assistance in navigating their comprehension. For instance, people look to the media for pertinent information to help them orient themselves during elections or in the midst of political and economic changes. This need for orientation is rooted in Tolman's theory of cognitive mapping (Tolman, 194), which suggests that people create mental maps in order to navigate their environment. According to McCombs (2002), the need for orientation varies among individuals based on two factors: relevance and uncertainty. When a topic is seen as extremely relevant and there is little uncertainty about it, the need for orientation is mild. However, when there is a high level of both relevance and uncertainty, the need for orientation increases. Entman (1993) expands on this by talking about the concept of "selection" and "salience", where the media spotlight certain elements and make information more noticeable and meaningful to audiences. Furthermore, Kioussis (2004) identifies three characteristics of the orientation requirement: attention, prominence, and valence. These dimensions pertain to the duration of time allocated to a particular topic, its placement in the news, and the narrative's tone, respectively. Together, these elements contribute to the audience's need for direction and guidance in comprehending complex subjects presented by the media.

In summary, agenda-setting theory asserts that the way in which a topic is covered by the media can have a substantial effect on how important the public believes it to be. Therefore, the media play a role in establishing an agenda for public conversation. While the media may not dictate what people should think, they exert considerable influence over what topics people think about (Cohen, 1963). At its core, the theory clarifies the significant impact that the media, gatekeepers of information, has on deciding the prominence and significance that are assigned to different concerns in society.

3.1.1 Framing

The impact of news media on agenda-setting extends beyond directing public attention to specific topics. It also shapes our understanding and perspectives on these topics (McCombs, 2002). In essence, the items that make up the agenda are objects. The objects are what the media and the public choose to focus on. In turn, each of these objects possess various characteristics and traits known as attributes. Consequently, there exists an agenda of attributes associated with each object,

since when the media and the public discuss it, certain attributes are highlighted while others receive less attention or none at all (McCombs, 2002).

Therefore, a crucial aspect of agenda-setting is the way in which a topic is presented. In this case, framing is integral to what is known as second-level agenda setting (McCombs & Ghanem, 2001), wherein specific attributes or themes are delineated for the issues under consideration. To clarify, while agenda setting pertains to the choice of stories as a 'determinant of public perceptions of issue importance' (Ghanem, 1997, p. 7), framing examines the specific methods by which these stories are presented to the public and the potential cognitive impact they may have.

Based on the premise that media not only transmits information but also creates meanings out of reality, the concept of framing clarifies how journalists and media outlets choose which aspects of a story to emphasize while downplaying others. As articulated by Entman (1993), framing is the process of "selecting some aspects of perceived reality and making the more salient in a communicating context," thereby influencing how audiences understand and interpret the subject matter.

In terms of media effects, framing provides important insights into the cognitive processes people use to comprehend mediated information and form attitudes and opinions. By portraying issues within particular interpretive frames – characterized by problem definitions, causal interpretations, moral judgments, and treatment recommendations – media outlets can influence public perceptions and encourage particular reactions to societal challenges (Entman, 1993). In other words, through strategically deploying frames, the media direct their audiences toward specific interpretations and assessments of complex issues. Moreover, framing serves as a valuable methodological tool for analyzing media content, allowing researchers to examine the ways in which messages are constructed and presented to the audience.

In essence, framing shapes public opinion by highlighting specific values, facts, and considerations, giving them a perceived relevance greater than they might otherwise have. Different to agenda-setting, which mostly focuses on the frequency of media coverage, framing goes deeper into how issues are presented in the news and examines unique aspects that different frames bring to a message. While agenda-setting studies the shell of a topic, framing research looks inside that shell (Kosicki, 1993).

3.1.2 Critique

Agenda-setting theory and framing face several critiques. One criticism concerns the inconsistency found in framing literature, which indicates a lack of consensus or clarity in its conceptualization and

application (De Vreese, 2005). Furthermore, it is challenging to generalize findings across various contexts (De Vreese, 2005).

Critics also argue that these theories emphasize the media's role in shaping public opinion while overlooking individual attitudes and thoughts (Shaw, 1979). This highlights the need to explore the complexity of human behavior and the numerous variables affecting perceptions and beliefs. Moreover, the theories focus heavily on the media-audience dynamic, ignoring other influential factors on public opinion (Shaw, 1979).

Additionally, agenda-setting theory struggles to adapt to the shifting media environment, especially with the rise of online media (Takeshita, 2006; Naser, 2020). Critics suggest that its basic structure may become outdated due to changing media consumption patterns. Furthermore, the theory has come under fire for lacking sufficient psychological explanation for its effects (Takeshita, 2006).

Despite critiques, agenda-setting and framing theories remain valuable frameworks for comprehending the impact of media on public opinion. In this thesis, they are crucial for analyzing how different media cover university and student activism during the Israel-Hamas war, influencing public perceptions.

3.3 Integration and application

The synthesis, integration, and application of agenda-setting theory and framing in this thesis are paramount to effectively achieving the stated objectives and answering the research question.

Agenda-setting theory provides a lens into how the media shapes the salience and prominence of topics surrounding campus activism in reaction to the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war. In this context, I intend to determine the themes and issues that media outlets emphasize. Furthermore, framing complements agenda-setting theory by delving into the specific ways in which issues are presented by the media to their audiences. By conducting a frame analysis, I seek to uncover the narratives employed by media outlets in their coverage.

To sum up, agenda-setting theory clarifies the media's ability to choose which topics gain importance and attention, while framing explores the particular methods in which such topics are presented and understood. Although my analysis covers a limited period of time (less than a month), it provides insights into the salience of certain issues and the framing employed by media outlets. This timeframe may not fully capture the evolving emphasis of media coverage, but it offers indications of how media coverage can influence public perception. Additionally, the analysis sheds light on how academic

freedom and the role of academics are portrayed in media discourse surrounding the Israel-Hamas War.

In general, integrating both agenda-setting and framing in my thesis allows me to explore not only which issues are highlighted by the media but also how they are framed and presented to the audience, offering insights into the fundamental processes by which the media shape public opinion.

In practical terms, the application of the theoretical framework entails a methodical examination of media content, the identification of prevailing themes and narratives, and an evaluation of the implications for public discourse. Through this analytical approach, I seek to uncover patterns, trends, and differences in how the media cover the topic of university activism in the context of the Israel-Hamas war.

4. Empirical results

Through a systematic examination of media coverage surrounding university and student responses to the Israel-Hamas war, this chapter presents the empirical findings of the analysis. The results elucidate the dominant topics present in several mainstream US media outlets and university newspapers.

This chapter is structured into eight individual sections, each dedicated to analyzing the coverage of a specific media outlet. These sections are dedicated to the description of coverage that pertains to the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames. In addition, underneath each individual chapter dedicated to a media outlet, I summarize the findings in tables that delineate the three frames.

Following the individual analyses, a comparative analysis section offers insights into the similarities and differences in the framings across the eight media outlets.

It is important to mention that the analysis is based on an examination of a large number of articles. Therefore, for readers interested in a deeper exploration of the coded references and analyses of textual data, Annex 2 and Annex 3 provide detailed documentation. Annex 2 contains summaries of frames for every analyzed article, while Annex 3 is a compilation of all coded sections, direct quotes, of the articles. These documents offer a more granular view of the analysis, capturing all details of the media coverage examined. This paper presents a summarized overview of the findings, with the detailed data available in Annex 2 and Annex 3.

4.1 University newspapers

4.1.1 The Harvard Crimson

4.1.1.1 Diagnostic frame

Within the diagnostic frame, The Harvard Crimson's coverage delves into various topics.

A central focus is the controversy stirred by a letter issued by the Harvard Undergraduate Palestine Solidarity Committee and signed by many student groups, which attributes entire blame to Israel for the October 7 Hamas attacks. The Crimson extensively examines the fallout from this letter and describes that it has been perceived by many as a morally unconscionable, offensive, and unacceptable attempt to justify terrorism. It has received backlash from stakeholders including students, faculty, donors, federal lawmakers, and national politicians.

Criticism directed towards Harvard's leadership emerges as another theme within the diagnostic frame. The Crimson dissects the university's response to the war, as affiliates state that it has been slow and inadequate. Many voices have criticized the university and President Claudine Gay's lack of condemnation of terrorism. Although various perspectives are presented on the situation, a recurrent consensus is the criticism of Harvard for its early silence, tardy response, and apparent ineptitude in handling the war on campus. There are questions about the university's moral stance, leadership effectiveness, and commitment to fostering a safe and inclusive campus environment. Despite Harvard eventually issuing statements, dissatisfaction persists among affiliates, who assert that the university's response fell short, particularly in its initial failure to unequivocally condemn Hamas and rising antisemitism. An example of the discontent is the termination of the partnership between the Wexner Foundation and Harvard, as the Foundation cites the university's lack of a clear moral stance as the reason behind the decision.

Furthermore, the newspaper covers the topic of security and welfare of Harvard students during rising tensions on campus. It highlights concerns about student safety and the doxing of students affiliated with the controversial letter, including reports of a doxing truck circulating on campus displaying students' names and faces. Descriptions of instances of social media harassment and threats faced by these students underscore the tense nature of the discourse on campus. Notably, the scope of harassment and targeting extends beyond signatories of the controversial letter, as many pro-Palestinians as well as Israeli students are reported to face hate speech.

The Harvard Crimson's coverage extends to the campus demonstrations, capturing both pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli sentiments. It delves into the plight of Palestinians in Gaza, particularly through reports on demonstrations advocating for Palestinian liberation. Within this context, the newspaper sheds light on the experiences of students, highlighting claims that the administration has fallen short in safeguarding the free speech of groups including Muslims, Arabs, Blacks, and Palestinians, who have been labeled by many as antisemites for their views.

The presence of antisemitism at Harvard is recognized, as Harvard President Gay admits that the university has a long and shameful history in this regard. Israeli and Jewish students have also voiced their concerns as they feel unprotected on campus; they highlight the university's alleged failure in ensuring their safety.

Moreover, The Harvard Crimson emphasizes the need for enhanced dialogue and understanding surrounding the conflict. In the diagnostic frame it draws attention to the lack of readily available nonpartisan information and constructive discourse, prompting calls for addressing the issue within

an academic context. Recognizing the palpable tension on campus, with entrenched beliefs among pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli groups, there are evident challenges of polarization and limited understanding among individuals. Acknowledging this gap in knowledge and dialogue, efforts to bridge these divides becomes imperative.

4.1.1.2 Prognostic frame

In its prognostic frame, The Harvard Crimson explores various topics and anticipates future developments regarding the handling of the war on the Harvard campus.

One significant aspect highlighted is the potential for further backlash against Harvard-affiliated student groups endorsing positions blaming Israel for the Hamas attacks. There are calls for the retraction of these endorsements, with some organizations having already removed themselves from the list of signatories. Additionally, the newspaper delves into the potential professional consequences for those involved with the controversial letter, as some figures have expressed that they will not hire these students. With this in mind, many business leaders and CEOs call for transparency regarding the signatories of the statement.

Additionally, calls persist for Harvard's leadership to take a stronger stance in condemning antisemitic statements and terror attacks, as the university faces increased pressure by donors. President Gay is urged to denounce all forms of racism, Islamophobia, and xenophobia, and to hold responsible those involved in attacks against students. Gay emphasizes the importance of eradicating antisemitism and introduces a newly established advisory group as a response to combat antisemitism.

Moreover, there is an emphasis on the need for adequate measures to protect students, with calls for increased campus security measures and the establishment of a task force to support all students facing harassment, doxing, and online threats. Communication with students is deemed crucial to ensure they are aware of available resources, including a mental health support hotline.

Harvard is further urged to issue stronger statements condemning terrorism and antisemitism, with President Gay emphasizing the importance of eradicating antisemitism while upholding the university's commitment to free expression. Anticipating continued demonstrations and rallies on campus, along with potential escalations in tensions, The Harvard Crimson emphasizes the calls for Harvard to reassess its approach to the war and its communication.

Furthermore, the newspaper describes the demands and actions of demonstrators, including calls for Harvard to condemn anti-Palestinian racism and protect students. Suggestions are made for faculty to address the events in their classes to counteract misinformation circulating within both pro-Israel and

pro-Palestine circles. As part of this mission, a text hotline service has been created to provide accurate, nonpartisan information, serving as both an educational resource and a means to bridge gaps in understanding and perspective.

Last but not least, concerns are expressed regarding the repercussions of inadequate addressing of the situation, highlighting the need for Harvard to take proactive steps to alleviate tensions surrounding the war and promote understanding and dialogue within the university community. Looking ahead, there is an acknowledgment that the university's response to the war, hate speech on campus, and ongoing divisions will impact its reputation, relationships with donors and partners, alumni engagement, and campus climate. There is a keen interest in comprehending how the university's actions will be perceived both internally and externally, and the potential implications for its standing in academic and broader communities. The present actions taken have the potential to shape future outcomes, necessitating Harvard's decisive action to mitigate negative consequences.

4.1.1.3 Motivational frame

In the motivational frame of The Harvard Crimson's coverage, there is primarily a resounding call for accountability and responsibility, with calls for individuals and groups to unequivocally condemn violence and terrorism. The newspaper portrays a shared expectation for Harvard to uphold moral standards, reflecting an aspiration for greater clarity and integrity. Appeals to common humanity and greater sensitivity underscore the importance of shared values in navigating deep-seated divisions.

President Gay's pleas for mutual respect and understanding highlight the significance of fostering safety and solidarity within the community. Various stakeholders, including former Harvard President Lawrence H. Summers, students, alumni, and faculty, advocate for greater support from Harvard's administration and call for proactive measures to reject terrorism while nurturing constructive dialogue rooted in freedom of speech. Efforts to promote dialogue, reject intimidation tactics, and cultivate empathy are emphasized as pivotal in addressing the current tense campus climate.

Additionally, expressions of solidarity and a desire for dialogue underscore the underlying motivations of seeking justice, peace, and mutual understanding amidst conflict. Calls for stronger condemnation of doxing, racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, and antisemitism exemplify a commitment to upholding moral standards and protecting the well-being of all Harvard students.

Throughout the coverage, there is a concerted effort to inspire actions aligned with values such as compassion, support, and academic integrity. Initiatives led by students, faculty, and alumni to foster

sensitivity and understanding reflect a collective determination to address the challenges posed by the war and strive for positive change.

Table 2: The Harvard Crimson Frame Summary

<i>Diagnostic frame</i>	<i>Prognostic frame</i>	<i>Motivational frame</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • controversy surrounding a letter blaming Israel for Hamas attacks • criticism of Harvard's response to the war and perceived lack of condemnation of terrorism • concerns about student safety and doxing incidents • coverage of campus demonstrations and polarization • recognition of antisemitism on campus and concerns about university's response • lack of nonpartisan information and constructive discourse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anticipation of further backlash against student groups endorsing positions blaming Israel for Hamas attacks • calls for transparency regarding signatories of controversial letter and potential professional consequences for students involved • expectation for university leadership to condemn antisemitic statements and terror attacks • calls for increased campus security measures • demands for stronger statements condemning terrorism and antisemitism, as well as calls to condemn anti-Palestinian racism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calls for accountability and responsibility from individuals and groups • appeals to common humanity, sensitivity, moral standards • advocating for fostering safety, solidarity, and constructive dialogue within the community • highlighted values of compassion, support, academic integrity, ...

4.1.2 The Daily Pennsylvanian

4.1.2.1 Diagnostic frame

Amidst the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas, The Daily Pennsylvanian diagnoses a palpable sense of crisis within the UPenn community. Rising antisemitism has stirred profound emotional responses, particularly among Jewish individuals within the university and broader community. Israeli and Israeli American students, along with faculty and staff of Jewish descent, are reported to grapple with fear, anger, sadness, and confusion in the wake of escalating tensions.

The controversy surrounding the September Palestine Writes Literature Festival has exacerbated existing tensions, drawing criticism from various quarters. This festival took place before the October 7 attacks but has faced backlash for hosting certain speakers with a history of antisemitic remarks. Internal discord within UPenn is evident in criticisms leveled at the university's response to the festival and broader antisemitic sentiments on campus. Trustees have faced pressure to resign after criticizing UPenn's handling of the festival, signaling a breakdown in trust between the administration and alumni. The resignation of prominent figures, such as Vahan Gureghian, underscores deep-seated concerns about UPenn's leadership and its alleged tolerance of antisemitism.

On the UPenn campus, Jewish and Palestinian students alike express safety concerns amidst heightened tensions, fueled by threats and acts of violence. Instances of hate speech, vandalism, and harassment increase feelings of fear and marginalization within the academic community. Some

demonstrators are reported to have taken to the streets in support for Hamas attacks, further dividing the UPenn community. In addition, Muslim and Palestinian students fear associating with identity and advocacy groups at UPenn and discussing the humanitarian crisis due to concerns about academic and career consequences. Incidents of doxing have added to the atmosphere of fear and distrust.

The Daily Pennsylvanian highlights that the situation is further complicated by social media, as some say it can have a dehumanizing effect, which perpetuates polarization and disseminates misinformation. Moreover, social media is said to undermine genuine empathy and understanding. For example, there has been misinformation about chants made at marches, such as the false claim of a pro-Palestine march calling for "Jewish genocide" which organizers have debunked.

Furthermore, there is a perceived deficiency in liberal education regarding moral understanding and ethical reasoning, with allegations of a lack of conviction and critical thinking skills among graduates when evaluating complex moral issues. The spike in Islamophobia and antisemitism across the West exacerbates these tensions.

Moreover, the university's response to the conflict has come under intense scrutiny. The lack of clear communication and decisive action has drawn criticism from alumni, donors, and trustees, threatening UPenn's reputation and financial stability. The debate over UPenn's moral stance and commitment to free speech underscores the complexity and divisiveness of the Israel-Hamas war on campus. Many students also report that there are disparities in institutional support for different communities, particularly the focus on the Jewish community's concerns while neglecting those of Muslim and Arab students.

Overall, in the face of many challenges, UPenn grapples with maintaining unity and solidarity while navigating deeply entrenched divisions. As tensions persist, the university faces the task of fostering dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation in a polarized campus environment.

4.1.2.2 Prognostic frame

Amidst the current crisis, The Daily Pennsylvanian's prognostic frame touches on various points.

Firstly, the newspaper highlights the call for unity and support among Jewish students. Emphasizing the need for solidarity with Israel, Israeli Americans, and the Jewish community, the publication underscores the students' calls for coming together in times of adversity. This extends beyond mere rhetoric, with actions such as fundraising, education, prayer, and advocacy suggested as steps towards addressing the tense situation.

Furthermore, from public scrutiny of UPenn's leadership to alumni withholding donations, there is an anticipation of potential shifts in the university's direction. Proactive measures, such as enhancing education and training to combat antisemitism and fostering constructive dialogue, are advocated as essential strategies for navigating challenges. In order to foster an environment of inclusivity and respect, there is a resounding call for the university community to stand up against hatred and violence in all its forms.

In addition, as tensions and uncertainties regarding campus dynamics persist, the safety and security of all community members remains a paramount concern. Students advocate for more support and security measures for centers of Jewish life and a commitment from university leadership to condemn threats and harassment. Institutional actions must address anti-Arab sentiment, Islamophobia, and discrimination on campus. Acknowledging this sentiment, a plan proposed by the Biden administration aims to address antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents on college campuses through collaboration between federal departments and campus law enforcement.

Central to the prognostic outlook of The Daily Pennsylvanian is the promotion of constructive dialogue and ethical engagement. The newspaper illuminates voices that call for the reevaluation of approaches to the war and investment into educational initiatives. In this regard, the importance of fostering understanding is highlighted. Students are encouraged to stay open-minded, updated and engaged on what is happening. In regard to the principle of open expression, the publication underscores the importance of universities in facilitating meaningful conversations, nurturing critical thinking skills, and fostering moral reasoning among students. Some call for a return to in-person discussions where emotion can be better captured, allowing for a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding the war and the broader Israel-Palestine conflict. To counter the proliferation of misinformation and polarizing narratives, there are calls for trust in legitimate sources and engagement in meaningful conversations with diverse perspectives. Some affiliates also call for changes in curricula, one that embraces diversity of thought and encourages empathy.

Looking ahead, The Daily Pennsylvanian reports on a range of challenges and opportunities for the university community. From potential donor backlash to the need for enhanced security measures, the importance of proactive measures and institutional responses is highlighted. Many believe that by remaining vigilant, adaptable, and committed to its core principles, the university community can navigate through turbulent times and emerge stronger and more united. However, with alumni and community members expressing differing opinions, the prognostic outlook acknowledges the probability of continued criticism and scrutiny of UPenn's response to issues related to antisemitism, Palestinian rights, and the conflict in general.

4.1.2.3 Motivational frame

There are several prominent sentiments highlighted within the motivational frame of *The Daily Pennsylvanian*.

First off, the community is portrayed as a source of strength and empowerment, which highlights the collective resolve to overcome challenges and effect meaningful change. Voices advocating for a more inclusive and supportive environment within the university emphasize mutual support and students' well-being. Central to the motivational framing is the call for active engagement, urging participation in advocacy, dialogue, and education to make a difference. Recognizing the emotional toll of recent events, the publication extends a supportive hand, emphasizing the importance of seeking assistance and utilizing campus resources for emotional support and guidance.

Education emerges as another topic. Many UPenn affiliates emphasize the value of knowledge and understanding as they encourage universities to prioritize the cultivation of students' moral and ethical foundations. This promotes real conversations over performative acts on social media. Highlighting inclusivity and empathy, the university is urged to address needs and concerns of all communities on campus. Furthermore, there is a push to understand the conflict within its historical context, urging a departure from cycles of violence towards promotion of peace. Upholding UPenn's reputation as a bastion of open inquiry and fearless research, there is an endorsement for academic freedom and exposure to diverse perspectives. Within the university, there is a call for collective introspection.

Motivational framing can also be seen in the actions of alumni and donors. Asserting a moral stance by disengaging from the university, donors express dissatisfaction and reject bystander status. They highlight values of justice and morality in critiquing leadership decisions that supposedly diverge from these principles. In a stance against violence and extremism, UPenn is urged to challenge those who have supported Hamas, which emphasizes the moral imperative of speaking out against hate and injustice. Generally, calls are made for accountability and transparency in university governance.

Table 3: The Daily Pennsylvanian Frame Summary

<i>Diagnostic frame</i>	<i>Prognostic frame</i>	<i>Motivational frame</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rising antisemitism and pro-Palestinian sentiments on campus • controversy surrounding the Palestine Writes Literature Festival, significant backlash • safety concerns for Jewish and Palestinian students amid tensions • criticism of university responses and leadership • negative impact of social media on campus atmosphere – dehumanizing effect • perceived deficiency in liberal education regarding moral understanding and ethical reasoning • criticism of university's response to the war 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis on unity and support among Jewish students • calls for enhanced education and training to combat antisemitism and foster dialogue • concerns about potential shifts in university direction and alumni withholding donations • focus on safety and security measures for all community members • advocacy for constructive dialogue and ethical engagement, investment into educational initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UPenn community as a source of strength and empowerment • calls for active engagement, advocacy, and dialogue • value of education, knowledge, understanding – highlighting the cultivation of moral and ethical foundations • prioritization of ethical development and understanding • justice and morality – donors' motivations

4.1.3 Columbia Daily Spectator

4.1.3.1 Diagnostic frame

In the wake of the escalation of violence between Israel and Hamas, the Columbia Daily Spectator sheds light on the multifaceted response and actions taken by Columbia University's community. The Spectator reports on the escalating conflict between Israel and Hamas, which has catalyzed protests, rallies and vigils on campus organized by student groups like Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and Students Supporting Israel (SSI). These demonstrations have garnered national attention and attracted significant turnout from both pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian camps, showcasing the divergence of perspectives within the Columbia student body.

However, amidst these expressions of support, the Spectator highlights rising concerns about misinformation and antisemitism on campus, particularly regarding social media posts and rhetoric that may inadvertently support terrorist organizations or perpetuate harmful stereotypes. This atmosphere of fear is palpable among Muslim students, who face the looming threat of potential doxing attacks and other forms of harassment.

The diagnostic frame also delves into the internal discord within Columbia University, particularly regarding the administration's response to the war. Criticisms from various student groups highlight grievances against university administrators for statements perceived as insensitive or biased toward Israel. Additionally, the Spectator reports on the distress and concerns among members of the Columbia community, prompting the university to take measures such as increasing Public Safety presence and collaborating with outside security firms to address safety concerns on campus.

Furthermore, recent controversy surrounding Joseph Massad, a professor at Columbia, has sparked calls for dismissal due to his column seemingly celebrating Hamas' attacks. Many view his statements as encouraging violence and misinformation, particularly endangering Jewish and Israeli students on campus. These calls, alongside a widely condemned audio from radio station WKCR advocating violence against protesters, underscore the Spectator's portrayal of a community grappling with complex moral and ethical dilemmas.

In addition to these points, concerns about the safety of Palestinian students amid ongoing violence and aggression towards pro-Palestinian activists on campus are also paramount. Instances of physical harassment (such as spitting, tearing off hijabs), doxing, and mislabeling of pro-Palestinian activists as antisemites and terrorists have further inflamed tensions. Moreover, the presence of a doxing truck on campus targeting affiliates associated with organizations supporting Palestinian solidarity statements adds another layer of complexity to the situation.

As the Columbia community grapples with these challenges, there is a growing recognition of increased antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of hate on campus. This erosion of previously held distinctions between antizionism and antisemitism suggests a loss of moral compass within the community, further emphasizing the need for dialogue, understanding, and constructive engagement to navigate through these turbulent times.

4.1.3.2 Prognostic frame

As the Columbia community grapples with the aftermath of the Hamas attacks, the prognosis points towards a sustained emphasis on awareness, activism, and dialogue within the campus environment. Proactive measures are anticipated to counter the proliferation of misinformation and combat instances of antisemitism and discrimination on campus. In the wake of these challenges, there is a growing expectation for Columbia University to take decisive action in addressing student concerns, particularly regarding the university's handling of the war.

Groups like SJP call for the university to acknowledge Palestinian existence and humanity, underscoring the urgency of amplifying Palestinian voices and perspectives. SJP and Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) have outlined specific actions that they would like to see, such as divestment from Israeli companies, ending the dual-degree program with Tel Aviv University, and canceling the opening of the Tel Aviv Global Center, as necessary steps towards fostering inclusivity and addressing systemic injustices.

As the community braces for potential security threats and continued activism, measures are expected to be implemented to ensure the safety and well-being of all members. Columbia University's recent decision to limit campus access to Columbia ID holders during protests reflects a proactive step toward ensuring safety amidst heightened tensions. Additionally, gate closures and access restrictions may be enforced in response to identified security risks, underscoring the university's dedication to maintaining a secure environment for all.

The recent petition against Joseph Massad, amid concerns that his remarks could fuel a culture of violence and hostility, has prompted discussions around accountability and academic freedom. While some advocate for his dismissal, citing potential dangers his rhetoric poses, others argue that firing him would contradict the principle of tolerance for even the most objectionable speech. This debate underscores the complexities inherent in balancing academic freedom with the imperative to uphold community safety and well-being.

Despite the escalating conflict abroad, advocates for Palestine remain determined to continue raising awareness and mobilizing support for their cause. Nevertheless, there is a growing concern about the increased fear and silencing of pro-Palestinian voices on campus. Demands for action include calls to protect Black, brown, and Muslim students from becoming targets of violence and aggression. Initiatives such as the creation of a task force to support students facing doxing and harassment aim to address these pressing concerns, emphasizing the importance of reporting threatening behavior and fostering a culture of accountability and support within the Columbia community.

The university must uphold a steadfast commitment to advocating for accountability and compassion. Calls for transparency, dialogue, and decisive action serve as guiding principles in efforts to address systemic issues and cultivate a culture of mutual respect and understanding. It is imperative that members of the community engage in thoughtful examination of the conflict, both within and beyond classroom settings, to deepen their understanding and foster meaningful dialogue. Furthermore, amidst a landscape inundated with information and disinformation, students are encouraged to discern and follow reliable news outlets to gain a nuanced understanding of the situation. By prioritizing accuracy and integrity in their information consumption, individuals can contribute to a more informed and constructive discourse.

Navigating through challenging times, the university acknowledges that focus must be on deescalating tensions, modeling respectful behavior, and seeking common ground rooted in shared humanity. Decisions to cease donations, such as those of Leon Cooperman, underscores the urgency of

addressing the current problems, as he calls for a change from the administration regarding its stance on the war.

Looking ahead, Columbia Daily Spectator is positioned to play a pivotal role in amplifying diverse voices and fostering constructive dialogue. The publication's commitment to upholding university values and promoting respectful discourse will guide its coverage and editorial decisions. The Spectator's platform will serve as a catalyst for meaningful engagement, empowering individuals to contribute to campus discourse and advocate for change.

4.1.3.3 Motivational frame

In response to the rising tensions due to the war, the Columbia Daily Spectator serves as a beacon of unity and resilience within the Columbia University community. Through its coverage, the Spectator inspires solidarity and collective action, emphasizing the imperative of standing against injustice, discrimination, and the dissemination of misinformation.

Within Spectator's coverage, expressions of solidarity and personal testimonies serve to evoke empathy and mobilize support for those impacted by the war. Students, faculty, and community members are urged to unite and advocate for peace, justice, and the protection of human rights. Prioritizing humanity above all else is highlighted.

Amidst increasing polarization, the Spectator emphasizes voices calling for dialogue, understanding, and mutual respect. It provides a platform for diverse voices and perspectives, cultivating an environment where every member of the Columbia community feels heard, valued, and respected. Calls for accountability, transparency, and collective action resonate throughout the Spectator stories, urging individuals to stand up against hate speech, harassment, and discrimination.

The newspaper acknowledges the commitment and solidarity demonstrated by both pro-Palestine and pro-Israel protesters, who proudly display symbols of their identity and beliefs, driven by a sense of urgency and purpose to effect change and raise awareness about their respective causes.

Within the motivational frame, the Spectator further reiterates the university's commitment to providing resources and support to affected students and highlights the importance of tolerance for diverse perspectives and the preservation of academic freedom within universities. Warnings are made against reducing discourse to oversimplified viewpoints, urging individuals to reflect and differentiate between political concerns and moral imperatives. Furthermore, appealing to each Columbia community member's sense of responsibility in promoting a safe and inclusive campus

environment, affiliates highlight the importance of remaining vigilant against all forms of discrimination and prejudice.

Overall, the university is reported to be committed to upholding its values, promoting respectful discourse and fostering a culture of empathy, compassion, and solidarity.

Table 4: Columbia Daily Spectator Frame Summary

<i>Diagnostic frame</i>	<i>Prognostic frame</i>	<i>Motivational frame</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protests and demonstrations on campus supporting both sides of the war, divergence of perspectives • rising concerns about misinformation and antisemitism on campus • internal discord and criticism of university responses • safety concerns • controversies surrounding faculty members and their statements (e.g., Joseph Massad) • increased antisemitism, Islamophobia, other forms of hate on campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anticipation of sustained awareness, activism, and dialogue within campus environment • calls for specific actions to address systemic injustices and foster inclusivity • SJP and JVP calls for amplification of Palestinian voices, acknowledgment of Palestinian existence • concerns about safety and security amidst ongoing tensions • debate over academic freedom and accountability • advocacy for meaningful engagement and respect • focus on seeking common ground rooted in shared humanity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inspiring solidarity, empathy, and collective action • advocates for fostering inclusive and respectful campus environment • emphasis on the protection of human rights • emphasizing importance of dialogue and mutual understanding • sense of urgency and purpose to effect change and raise awareness about both causes • university's commitment to providing resources and support to affected students

4.2 National media outlets

4.2.1 CNN

4.2.1.1 Diagnostic frame

In its diagnostic framing, CNN examines instances of perceived antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiment on college campuses across the United States, shedding light on a range of issues.

Central to CNN's diagnostic approach is the critique of universities' responses to allegations of antisemitic behavior, particularly in cases where students or faculty members have expressed support for pro-Palestinian statements or criticized Israeli policies. A significant focus is on the controversy surrounding a letter released by a coalition of Harvard student groups, which blames Israel entirely for the Hamas attacks. Some view this as supporting terrorism. CNN delves into the fallout from this controversial letter and the broader debate it has sparked about the boundaries of free speech and the condemnation of hate speech. Moreover, the Palestine Writes Literature festival that took place in September at UPenn is scrutinized for featuring speakers with a history of antisemitic remarks.

CNN also highlights the psychological harm and fear experienced by students and activists who express pro-Palestinian views on campus, as well as the personal backlash faced by students and faculty for

their positions. This includes instances of public shaming and harassment, such as the use of a billboard doxing truck to display names and photos of students who are considered to be antisemitic. Both pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian students are reported to experience safety concerns amid ongoing tensions on campuses.

The network further explores the failure of institutions like UPenn to effectively address and condemn antisemitism, with figures like Marc Rowan accusing university leadership of neglecting their responsibility to condemn hate speech and uphold moral standards. This has led to the resignation of prominent donors like Israeli billionaire Idan Ofer and his wife Batia from executive boards in protest of the university's response, which they see as lacking support for Israel.

Additionally, CNN examines the backlash faced by universities from donors and alumni over their perceived mishandling of antisemitism-related issues. Donors' decisions to cut ties with universities or withhold funding serve as a potent indicator of dissatisfaction with institutional responses and underscore the broader impact of donor influence on university policies and decisions.

Furthermore, CNN's diagnostic frame underscores the broader context of rising tensions and controversies surrounding the war on college campuses. The network explores the complexities of campus activism and the alleged support for Hamas, a US-designated terrorist organization, by student groups such as SJP. In addition, CNN illuminates concerns about the increase in antisemitic threats targeting Jewish communities on college campuses, emphasizing the need for heightened vigilance.

4.2.1.2 Prognostic frame

In the prognostic frame, several topics and concerns emerge regarding the future trajectory of events following the incidents and controversies discussed in CNN's diagnostic framing.

One significant focus is the demand for transparency and accountability from institutions like Harvard and UPenn. Many business leaders emphasize the importance of universities being transparent about students involved in controversial statements and suggest that they will be taking actions against them, such as blacklisting – refusing to hire them. This call for transparency, as well as calls for clearer condemnation, and accountability for student groups, aligns with a broader consensus among stakeholders for immediate corrective measures to address antisemitism and hate speech effectively, ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all students.

Moreover, there is concern about the potential financial and reputational damage faced by universities implicated in controversies related to antisemitism and controversial statements. CNN's

coverage highlights the donor backlash, resignation of trustees, withdrawal of financial support, and strained relations between universities and their philanthropic supporters. Donors are increasingly vocal, calling to close their checkbooks and for alumni to withhold financial support until changes are made at universities. Growing backlash from donors and trustees, such as Jon Huntsman promising to halt future donations to UPenn, underscores the urgency of the situation. Potential consequences for Harvard, such as reputational damage, loom large, raising concerns about the normalization and spread of dangerous ideologies that incite violence.

There is also a pressing call for universities to issue clear condemnation of Hamas and take decisive action to address hate speech and antisemitism on campus. Donors, alumni, faculty members, and administrators are taking different actions, including mentioned withdrawals of funding, calling for resignations, and issuing statements, to pressure universities into adopting stronger stances against hate speech. While the immediate impact of donor pullback and external pressure may not be significant for Ivy League institutions due to their substantial endowments, there could be long-term consequences.

In light of ongoing dissatisfaction among donors, there is also a recognition of the risks associated with donors attaching strings to their gifts and shaping university policies. To maintain some independence from big donors on all sides, universities are encouraged to establish stronger standards and protocols.

Within the prognostic frame, CNN also raises concerns about the trajectory of campus discourse, ideological diversity, and freedom of speech, highlighting the chilling effect on free expression and debate, particularly with incidents involving doxing, blacklisting, and targeted harassment of individuals expressing political beliefs. This underscores the need for universities to balance free speech principles with ensuring student safety in an increasingly polarized environment, as failing to do so could stifle debate and erode campus free speech rights.

Furthermore, as tensions and polarization on college campuses are anticipated to continue, safety and well-being concerns of all students prompt discussions on implementing heightened security measures. These include increased police presence, coordination with law enforcement agencies, and efforts to enhance campus security. Students are called on to report any harassment through appropriate channels, with a possibility of being referred to external authorities if needed. In addition, Presidents of universities like UPenn, Harvard, and Columbia have expressed their determination to address the situation on their respective campuses to ensure a more inclusive environment. At Columbia, for example, the President has urged the community to avoid language that vilifies, threatens, or stereotypes entire groups of people, warning that it will not be tolerated.

4.2.1.3 Motivational frame

The motivational frame evident in the CNN articles reflects a multifaceted response to pressing concerns such as antisemitism, terrorism, and freedom of speech on college campuses. Central to this narrative is the resounding call for accountability and personal responsibility, echoed by business leaders, activists, and university stakeholders. This demand extends to holding individuals and institutions answerable for their words and actions, particularly in navigating sensitive topics like hate speech and discrimination. Transparency is emphasized, urging all parties to uphold ethical standards and confront societal challenges head-on.

In parallel with calls for accountability, there is a prevailing emphasis on inspiring action and solidarity, as CNN highlights efforts to motivate individuals and communities to combat hate speech, discrimination, and violence. Notably, organizations like the Anti-Defamation League have called upon CEOs to speak out against hate and sign pledges to fight antisemitism, advocating for a clear stance against bigotry and discrimination. In addition, there are appeals for campuses to investigate SJP chapters, update their codes of conduct to forbid support for terrorism, and prioritize the safety of Jewish students. Donors, alumni, and community members are mutually encouraged to express their dissatisfaction and drive change through tangible measures such as withholding financial support. For example, Marc Rowan urges donors to divert their usual contributions to UPenn by making symbolic \$1 donations as a signal of protest against the perceived status quo. In this sense, the power dynamics between institutions and donors are illuminated, as their financial support can be seen as a form of soft power. Indeed, for many donors, monetary contributions represent their only means of exerting influence and advocating for change. As such, the decision to withhold financial support or redirect funds serves as a tangible expression of their values and principles. This sentiment is evidenced in the assertion that “those who cannot bring themselves to condemn deplorable acts are complicit in them,” emphasizing the moral imperative of taking a stand against hatred and discrimination. Ultimately, donors’ actions underscore the belief that words matter more than anything, and institutions must demonstrate a commitment to upholding ethical standards.

Rejecting attempts to silence dissenting voices and fostering a culture of cooperation and inclusivity within academic institutions is another prominent topic within the motivational frame. This collective call to action aims to mobilize communities to stand against discrimination, harassment, and violence. Simultaneously, there is a demand for institutional clarity and integrity, with stakeholders advocating for universities to demonstrate moral leadership in addressing contentious issues like antisemitism and terrorism. This demand extends to clear and unequivocal condemnation of hateful ideologies and behaviors.

Moreover, preservation of open dialogue is underscored as essential for fostering an environment where diverse perspectives are actively engaged with. Amid polarizing debates, calls for empathy, mutual respect, humanity, and constructive engagement resonate strongly. Many pro-Palestinian activists assert that criticism of Israel, similar to that leveled against any other country, cannot be regarded as antisemitism, providing insight into the importance of distinguishing between legitimate critique and discriminatory behavior. Furthermore, Harvard's President reiterates that no student speaks for the university or its leadership, emphasizing the need to avoid conflating individual opinions with institutional positions. Some voices caution against labeling students as antisemites while doxing them, arguing that such actions are far more dangerous than useful, as they undermine productive discourse and jeopardize student safety.

The importance of defending the rights of all students, including pro-Palestinian activists and advocates, and promoting dialogue and exchange of ideas, is highlighted as crucial steps toward fostering a culture of cooperation and mutual understanding on college campuses. Amidst discussions, there appears to be a shared commitment among university leaderships to combatting hatred and ensuring the safety of all members of the community, which is the most important. Recognizing the delicate balance between protecting free speech and expression while ensuring that speech does not incite harm or violate community standards, institutions say they are determined to create environments where diverse views are respected, and dialogue flourishes.

Table 5: CNN Frame Summary

<i>Diagnostic frame</i>	<i>Prognostic frame</i>	<i>Motivational frame</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> critique of universities' responses to antisemitism and pro-Palestinian sentiment coverage of controversies psychological impact on students expressing pro-Palestinian views backlash faced by universities from donors and alumni, dissatisfaction with institutional responses broader context of rising tensions and controversies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demand for transparency and accountability from universities concerns about financial and reputational damage faced by institutions implicated in controversies calls for universities to issue clear condemnation of Hamas and hate speech anticipation of continued protests and activism on campuses, further security measures debate over free speech and ideological diversity, chilling effect of the current situation on free expression and debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> calls for accountability, dialogue, and solidarity value of cooperation and inclusivity, call for collective action appeals to humanity, empathy, mutual respect, constructive engagement urging condemnation of hate speech and violence, while defending the rights of all students shared commitment to combatting hatred

4.2.2 The New York Times

4.2.2.1 *Diagnostic frame*

Within the diagnostic frame, The New York Times examines the complexities surrounding topics like antisemitism, terrorism, and freedom of speech on college campuses in relation to the Israel-Hamas war.

First off, The New York Times illuminates the heightened tensions, painful divisions, and ideological rifts permeating campuses amidst the ongoing war. It portrays how individual students' and student groups' opinions have become national flashpoints, reflecting the deep-seated ideological divides present. At institutions like UPenn, tempers have run high due to objections to a September Palestinian literary conference, with complaints centered around certain speakers who have a history of antisemitic remarks.

Moreover, instances of perceived negligence or misplaced priorities by university leaderships come under scrutiny, fueling discontent among students and stakeholders. The New York Times sheds light on the disillusionment and alienation felt by some due to Harvard's perceived neutrality toward acts of terror against Israel, as expressed by Lawrence H. Summers, former Harvard President. At Harvard, its initial silence on the Hamas attacks is contrasted with its prompt responses to other events like the George Floyd killing and Russia's war against Ukraine. Additionally, the open letter from the Harvard Palestine Solidarity Groups blaming Israel for the Hamas attacks sparked significant backlash, highlighting the campus's deep polarization over the conflict. Similar tensions are observed on other campuses, where students are deeply polarized over the war, leading to protests, demonstrations, and verbal confrontations. Misunderstandings and misinterpretations of chants and positions regarding the war add another layer of complexity of confusion and discord on campuses.

Safety concerns also come into focus in The New York Times' coverage, with heightened tensions prompting closures of campuses to the public and increased police patrols around synagogues and mosques. The pressure on university officials to speak out on the war have intensified, while concerns over perceived failures in addressing antisemitism and defending students' well-being persist.

Additionally, the diagnostic framing touches upon broader concerns about "woke" culture on college campuses and the protection of certain groups over others. The inconsistencies in addressing free speech values and the dichotomy between tolerance and support for Hamas further complicate the discourse. Perceived reluctance by universities to condemn anti-Israel remarks and antisemitism

emerges as a challenge and has supposedly contributed to the spread of hate speech and threats against students, including doxing.

In this emotionally charged atmosphere, there are reports of increased emotional divisiveness over the war, with students on all sides facing hostility. For instance, those supporting the liberation and self-determination of Palestine are targeted and being labeled “antisemitic,” adding to the tense atmosphere at campus protests. The risks of openly taking a side are described, with criticism directed at institutions like NYU and UPenn for alleged failure to acknowledge its Palestinian students’ pain and overlooking their treatment.

The diagnostic frame also includes an opinion on apparent moral deficiencies within American colleges, exposing ideological blindness among students and a failure in educating them about basic principles of humanity and morality.

The New York Times also delves into the complexities faced by employers and employees in navigating the war in the workplace, exemplified by a law firm rescinding a job offer to an NYU law student for inflammatory comments about the Hamas attacks. In addition, ongoing tensions between donors and institutions over responses to antisemitism and the war highlight deeper ideological divides within American colleges and universities. Donors’ dissatisfaction with universities’ actions shows a growing gap between their expectations and the institutions’ responses, leading to ongoing donor revolts at elite universities and continued divisions and turmoil.

4.2.2.2 Prognostic frame

The New York Times' prognostic framing suggests a complex and contentious future landscape for universities across the nation.

One anticipated development is the deepening divide among stakeholders over the role of universities in addressing politically sensitive matters. The contrast between Harvard's initial silence on the Hamas attacks in Israel and its swift responses to other global events may exacerbate tensions and intensify feelings among individuals with strong convictions on the matter. Moreover, the open letter from the Harvard Palestine Solidarity Groups, which attributed blame for the attacks to the Israeli regime, sparked significant backlash and criticism, potentially fueling further disillusionment and alienation among certain segments of the campus community.

As campuses continue to grapple with these issues, the likelihood of ongoing protests, demonstrations, and calls for action remains high. Such activities are expected to amplify existing tensions and prompt universities to implement robust measures to ensure safety and maintain order

on campuses and in surrounding communities. Additionally, there is a growing expectation for university officials to speak out on the war, further intensifying pressure on academic institutions to take a stance in defense of their values and principles.

Moreover, there is a heightened concern for the protection of student privacy and safety amidst escalating tensions. The lack of clear university responses leaves students more susceptible to potential harm, prompting calls for decisive action. The New York Times has also covered the possibility of federal government crackdowns on international students and universities expressing anti-Israel views or failing to address antisemitism. Proposals such as revoking visas, withholding public funding, and deactivating student groups perceived as supporting Hamas or engaging in antisemitic activities underscore the challenges faced by academic institutions in navigating the Israel-Hamas war.

Furthermore, the prognostic frame suggests that donor discontent and threats of funding cuts could have far-reaching implications for universities. As institutions face mounting pressure to address antisemitism and take a clear stance on the war, donors are urging universities like UPenn to exhibit the same vigor in responding to these issues as they would to any anti-Black, anti-Asian, or anti-LGBTQ+ event. There are growing calls from donors and other stakeholders for universities to unequivocally defend Israel in its response to the Hamas attacks.

There are also concerns about potential career repercussions for students involved in controversial actions or affiliations. Demands for transparency, such as the request for Harvard to disclose the names of students associated with organizations that blamed Israel for the Hamas attack, may lead to decisions to rescind job offers and other disciplinary measures. Law firms are being cautioned against hiring students perceived to endorse hate or discrimination, while other alumni advocate against punitive actions, highlighting the divergent perspectives within university communities.

Amidst these challenges, there is a looming possibility of further external involvement and pressure on universities. Donors are encouraged to explore alternative avenues for effecting change, redirecting their contributions to areas where they believe they will see meaningful impact. However, questions persist about the appropriate extent of donor influence, with some arguing that academic freedom must remain immune from both internal and external pressures. They caution that excessive donor pressure could undermine public confidence in the integrity and independence of academic institutions.

Calls also persist for universities to adopt a more self-critical approach and engage in deeper introspection regarding their curriculums and educational methodologies. It is increasingly recognized

that the failure to address harmful speech and create spaces for civil disagreement may exacerbate existing divisions and perpetuate polarization on campuses. There is a pressing need to prioritize critical thinking skills, moral reasoning, and ethical development within the academic environment to counteract the toxic discourse that may arise if universities retreat from engaging in dialogue.

Last but not least, it is recognized that omitting uncomfortable topics from curriculums could lead to an intellectual vacuum, stifling meaningful debate and hindering students' ability to grapple with complex societal issues. To combat this, universities must protect free speech while advocating for mutually respectful dialogue, ensuring that all voices are heard and considered. Proposals for reforms in higher education, including the inclusion of ethics classes and a redefined core mission of education, reflect a broader effort to address systemic issues and promote a more inclusive and intellectually rigorous academic environment.

4.2.2.3 Motivational frame

The motivational frame of The New York Times encapsulates a varied response to the complex concerns arising from the Israel-Hamas war within the context of universities. Firstly, there is a call for introspection and reevaluation of institutional approaches to politically contentious matters. The Times underscores the importance of fostering dialogue, empathy, and accountability on campus, with universities being urged to uphold their role as sponsors of critical discourse.

There is a palpable sense of urgency in addressing moral deficiencies observed among students, with a strong appeal to prioritize ethical development alongside academic pursuits. Leaders within academic institutions are called upon to navigate the delicate balance between maintaining academic freedom and ensuring campus safety, particularly in times of heightened tension and conflict.

Next, donors and influential alumni are depicted as advocating for accountability and alignment with perceived values of justice and moral clarity. Their calls for action range from urging financial pressure until changes occur to redirecting contributions towards student groups fostering free debate and intellectual exploration. There are calls for donors to be constructive and prescriptive, not just critical.

In the motivational frame, there are also calls for action from Republican presidential candidates to address a perceived rise in antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiment on college campuses. These candidates urge that decisive measures to combat these issues must be taken, emphasizing the importance of protecting American values and interests. Appeals to the sense of patriotism and national security are made, framing anti-Israel sentiment as a threat to the fundamental values and

security of the United States. By highlighting the implications of such sentiments on national security, there is a push for a concerted effort to address and mitigate these issues within the academic sphere.

The Times also emphasizes the crucial role that universities play in shaping conversations and fostering a vibrant intellectual environment. It is imperative not to squander their trust and legacy by shying away from difficult discussions. Moreover, amidst the challenges, there is a sense of hope in witnessing a vibrant student body eager for more information and engagement around contentious issues, signaling a desire for constructive dialogue and intellectual growth.

In addition, there is a recognition of the importance of engaging in open dialogue and being able to listen to all sides, emphasizing the societal consequences of failing to educate students effectively in matters of morality and ethics. Universities are encouraged to counter harmful speech, model civic dialogue, and foster spaces for difficult conversations, all while upholding academic freedom and preserving institutional integrity. A balanced approach to free speech is advocated, one that protects students from harassment and intimidation. Universities should ultimately take proactive measures to support affected students in navigating these challenges and ensure that their campuses remain safe and conducive to learning and discourse.

Table 6: The New York Times Frame Summary

Diagnostic frame	Prognostic frame	Motivational frame
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> coverage of tensions and ideological divides on campuses, which have become national flashpoints criticism of university leadership's response and perceived failures, misplaced priorities safety concerns for Jewish and Palestinian students exploration of broader concerns about "woke" culture and ideological polarization increased emotional divisiveness over the war tensions between donors and universities, donor dissatisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> anticipation of deepening divide among stakeholders over university responses to conflict concerns about ongoing protests and calls for action, amplification of existing tensions further pressure on institutions to take a stance in defense of their values and principles emphasis on safety and well-being amidst escalating tensions donor discontent and funding cuts – implications for universities advocacy for transparency and dialogue within academic settings, calls for introspection regarding curriculums and educational methods debate over academic freedom and institutional response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> calls for introspection, open dialogue, and accountability within academic institutions sense of urgency in addressing moral deficiencies emphasizing importance of upholding democratic values and promoting academic freedom politicians underscore importance of protecting American values and interests sense of hope consequences of failing to educate students effectively in matters of morality and ethics

4.2.3 Newsweek

4.2.3.1 Diagnostic frame

The diagnostic frame of Newsweek offers an insight into the war's impact on college campuses, shedding light on various contentious issues and escalating tensions.

The ongoing violence between Israel and Hamas has fueled protests among students expressing solidarity with both sides of the war, leading to heightened tensions across college campuses in the United States. In addition, criticism has for example been directed at several Harvard student organizations for attributing blame to Israel for the initial Hamas attacks that triggered the war.

Due to perceived inadequate responses to the war, universities have encountered challenges such as loss of funding and external pressure. The initial hesitancy from university leaders to publicly denounce Hamas violence and demonstrate solidarity with affected Israeli civilians and Jewish students has sparked debate. The lack of condemnation has exacerbated the emotional turmoil experienced by Jewish students, who have felt marginalized and unsupported amidst rising anti-Israel sentiment.

Moreover, there have been instances of job offers being rescinded for students expressing support for Palestinians and criticizing Israel's actions, which highlights the complexities surrounding free expression and academic freedom on campuses.

Incidents such as tearing down posters of Israeli hostages and outbreaks of violence targeting Muslims and Jewish individuals add to the volatile atmosphere on college campuses. With Jewish students feeling emotional turmoil, some have also criticized universities like UPenn for purportedly overlooking Palestinian treatment in the conflict. Both sides have expressed concerns regarding lack of support from university leaders, as reports of harassment targeting both pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian students highlight the challenges faced by individuals expressing their beliefs.

Amidst the struggles among students, faculty, and administrators in navigating the situation, Newsweek reports on several controversial statements from professors like Joseph Massad at Columbia University that add fuel to the fire, further polarizing campus discourse.

The outlet also acknowledges the fact that dialogue surrounding the war has extended beyond college campuses, with prominent figures like Megyn Kelly, Candace Owens, and Vivek Ramaswamy engaging in discussions about Harvard students' comment regarding Israel and Hamas. This discourse reflects differing perspective on the students' views, with some attributing them to a lack of education rather than malicious intent. The conflict has triggered a political debate, with Senator Marsha Blackburn questioning loan cancellations for students involved in pro-Palestinian groups, framing leftist college students as siding with Hamas.

Furthermore, Governor Ron DeSantis's remarks on expressions of support for Hamas within American universities signal concerns about a perceived decline in institutional values. This sentiment is echoed

by others who question the role of higher education institutions in responding to the conflict and addressing rising antisemitism.

4.2.3.2 Prognostic frame

The prognostic frame of Newsweek anticipates various responses and actions from universities, donors, and policymakers in response to the ongoing tensions.

To begin with, there is an expectation for Harvard and other university leadership to address and condemn antisemitic statements made by student organizations. The criticism faced by these organizations, along with the negative reception of their statements on social media, pressure university administrations to take concrete steps to address their respective controversies and reassure stakeholders.

Additionally, there are concerns about the lasting consequences of the ongoing violence on campus environments and student communities. While Senator Blackburn's remarks questioning leftist college students' affiliations with Hamas add fuel to the political discourse, it's noteworthy that President Biden has not officially announced plans to cancel loan debt specifically for students involved in pro-Palestinian groups. Trump, on the other hand, has proposed to ban Palestinian supporters from universities, referencing past actions like banning Nazis and Communists from school. This evokes discussions around the boundaries of free speech and ideological alignment within academic settings.

Furthermore, there is a growing demand for accountability from students who have endorsed controversial statements, with calls for universities to disclose the identities of signatories to inform hiring decisions by certain employers. This underscores a potential shift towards greater scrutiny of student activism and its implications for future professional opportunities.

Moreover, the withdrawal of donations by influential backers and the potential repercussions faced by universities highlights the financial risks associated with perceived inadequate responses to the conflict. Calls for university leaders to denounce antisemitic rhetoric, condemn Hamas violence, and support Jewish and Israeli students may shape future policies and actions on campuses.

However, there appear to be challenges in achieving consensus on addressing specific expressions of hate speech, as exemplified by a debate between lawmakers like Hawley and Van Hollen over resolutions condemning antisemitic rhetoric, in which Van Hollen states that questioning all students based on the remarks of some is unjust and objectionable.

Governor DeSantis's proposal to revoke visas for foreign students expressing support for Hamas underscores a potential shift in immigration policy and its impact on higher education. DeSantis's stance against individuals hostile to American values indicates a broader concern beyond just campus dynamics. Universities are urged to provide students with a safe space, ensuring additional security on campus and punishment for threats of violence. Clear and transparent communication from university leadership is essential to address concerns and maintain trust within the community.

Overall, the prognostic frame anticipates continued public debate and scrutiny over how universities handle issues related to the war and broader free speech debates.

4.2.3.3 Motivational frame

In the face of escalating tensions surrounding the war, Newsweek's coverage reflects a call to action, urging condemnation of antisemitic statements attributed to Harvard student groups, for instance. The outlet describes the moral outrage felt by many, emphasizing the imperative for public condemnation and parental intervention. This outcry seeks to inspire taking a firm stance against what is perceived as hateful or inappropriate behavior.

Moreover, the outlet underscores the pressure from powerful donors on universities to denounce students who have criticized Israel, adding to the urgency of the situation. There is a compelling appeal to university leaders to demonstrate moral courage, leadership, and empathy by standing with Jewish and Israeli students, rejecting any form of justification or celebration of terrorism on campus. Referring to the Hamas attacks, Newsweek echoes voices saying that it should not be hard to denounce crimes against humanity. This aligns with a broader call for universities to uphold their responsibility in creating a safe and inclusive campus environment.

In terms of political debate, Former President Trump's impassioned rhetoric, condemning perceived antisemitism and anti-American sentiment on campuses, aims to galvanize support for decisive action. By invoking fundamental American values, Trump seeks to motivate people to safeguard national integrity and security. Generally, Trump's strong language, invoking the barbarity of events in Israel and criticizing university deans for allowing what he views as hatred against Israel and America, adds to the urgency and severity of the situation. Additionally, Jared Kushner's statement that American Jews are safer in Saudi Arabia than on US college campuses underscores the sense of urgency and the perceived need for immediate action to address the growing concerns surrounding antisemitism and hostility toward Israel.

Similarly, Governor DeSantis appeals to a sense of duty and responsibility to protect the country's interests and security, advocating for the cancellation of visas for those deemed hostile to American values. His remarks underscore the urgency of addressing the perceived threat posed by expressions of support for Hamas and antisemitic rhetoric on college campuses. Additionally, Senator Josh Hawley's resolution condemning anti-Israel rhetoric reflects a motivation to denounce morally objectionable speech and actions, emphasizing values such as loyalty to Israel and opposition to antisemitism.

When it comes to college campuses, Newsweek reports that communities are being encouraged to engage in constructive dialogue and reflection. At Harvard, President Claudine Gay's condemnation of the terrorist atrocities committed by Hamas serves as a poignant reminder of the university's commitment to denouncing violence and promoting peaceful resolutions. This resolute stance underscores Harvard's recognition of its moral responsibility as an academic institution and a campus community to combat antisemitism and promote a culture of inclusivity and respect. By acknowledging and addressing safety incidents head-on, universities reaffirm their dedication to fostering dialogue, understanding, and unity, inspiring their communities to actively engage in advocacy efforts and work towards positive change.

Table 7: Newsweek Frame Summary

<i>Diagnostic frame</i>	<i>Prognostic frame</i>	<i>Motivational frame</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intense impact of war on college campuses • concerns about university responses and perceived support for antisemitism, lack of condemnation • universities facing loss of financial support, external pressure • incidents of harassment and backlash against students expressing pro-Palestinian views • controversial statements from professors and public figures • emergence of a political debate surrounding the situation on campuses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expectation for university leadership to address and condemn antisemitic statements • concerns about lasting consequences of ongoing violence on campus environments • anticipation of legislative action and policy responses • debate over accountability and career repercussions for students • advocacy for systemic change and ethical principles within academia • calls for additional security measures on campuses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • urging condemnation of antisemitism and terrorism, hateful and inappropriate behavior • appeals to moral courage, leadership, empathy • advocating for fostering safety, solidarity, and moral integrity within university communities • appeals to American values by politicians, sense of duty and responsibility to protect the country's interests and security • calls for constructive dialogue, reflection, moral responsibility to promote a culture of inclusivity

4.2.4 FOX News

4.2.4.1 Diagnostic frame

FOX News' coverage of university and student responses to the Israel-Hamas war reflects a diagnostic frame that encapsulates various topics.

Firstly, FOX News reports on the emergence of pro-Palestinian student groups across US campuses voicing support for Hamas attacks against Israel. Several Harvard student groups, for example, released statements attributing blame solely to Israel for the violence, drawing rebuke from figures like representative Elise Stefanik, who condemned such views as antisemitic. Some voices are also reported to have portrayed Hamas as a resistance movement fighting for liberation. Similarly, a tweet alleging a conspiracy theory about Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's motives, suggesting he pursued war to distract from his own corruption, has faced backlash for its lack of context and factual accuracy.

There are several reports of a broader phenomenon of ideological polarization as some politicians suggest that college campuses are subject to a systemic issue of leftist indoctrination, where certain segments of the student population align themselves with causes perceived to be anti-American or anti-Israel.

Within the diagnostic frame, FOX also delves into the dissatisfaction among top donors with university responses to what they call anti-Israel demonstrations. For instance, UPenn is accused of moral relativism due to its failure to unequivocally condemn the Hamas attacks, which are said to be clear evil. Similar remarks have been directed towards Harvard. This discontent highlights a perceived disconnect between the values of freedom, inclusivity, and progressivism in America and the support for terrorist actions against Israel. The lack of prompt and comprehensive responses from university leaderships has raised questions about the institutions' commitment to addressing antisemitism and promoting open discourse.

In light of the evolving situation, FOX scrutinizes the Harvard student letter blaming Israel for Hamas attacks in its coverage. This has ignited several debates, one being about "cancel culture" and consequence culture on college campuses against leftist students. Critics argue that the controversial letter, which some say could have been written by Hamas itself, epitomizes the erosion of intellectual diversity and freedom of speech within academia.

Additionally, the outlet examines the role of university leadership in making decisions perceived as "woke" or politically motivated. The allowance of pro-Palestinian rallies and expression of anti-Israel sentiments on campuses exacerbates tensions, as elite institutions are accused of excusing antisemitism and anti-Israel views. In this regard, some place blame for student radicalism on university professors and the overall system of higher education. HBO host Maher criticizes universities for indoctrination and the promotion of simplistic, binary views of complex geopolitical issues. This sentiment resonates with an opinion that higher education institutions are centers of ideological conformity rather than genuine intellectual inquiry. In general, there are many voices

suggesting that there is something wrong with America's colleges as way too little education is happening.

Last but not least, incidents such as the assault on an Israeli student at Columbia University and tensions between pro-Israel and anti-Israel demonstrators further underscore the volatile atmosphere on college campuses. Anti-Israel sentiment and incidents of harassment against students who expressed support for Israel is believed by many to be a broader trend of ideological polarization and intolerance on campuses.

4.2.4.2 Prognostic frame

The prognostic frame of FOX News covers various responses and actions in response to the ongoing situation on college campuses.

One prominent theme revolves around the expectations placed upon university leadership to respond decisively to controversial statements or actions that may promote violence or antisemitism. As the aftermath of the attacks unfolds, there is a palpable anticipation for official condemnation and accountability. This sentiment is particularly amplified in cases where individuals have been criticized for spreading unfounded speculation or incomplete information. Consequently, there is a growing demand for transparency and scrutiny regarding the dissemination of unsubstantiated theories, reflecting a broader call for accountability within academic discourse.

Linked to this expectation is the potential reputational damage looming over institutions like Harvard and UPenn. The failure to promptly condemn controversial statements or actions could tarnish the universities' standing and resources, as donors, alumni, and the public express dissatisfaction or withdraw financial support. There is also a concern further polarization, ignorance, and misunderstanding among college students. This looming threat highlights the stakes involved and the imperative for university leaderships to navigate the balance between upholding principles of free expression and addressing concerns about hate speech or violence effectively. Some call for an examination of the education system in its entirety.

Moreover, the prognostic frame anticipates the possibility of further escalation of conflict and tensions on college campuses. Continued military action in Gaza and the escalation of the war may exacerbate existing divisions, leading to heightened confrontations and safety concerns among students and faculty. Protests, walkouts, and other forms of activism from both pro-Israel and pro-Palestine groups are expected to intensify, further complicating efforts to maintain a peaceful and inclusive campus environment. Nevertheless, university administrations have expressed

determination to address the tense situation. For example, Harvard President Gay said that the community has come together despite differences in the past and believes that it is capable of meeting the current moment and one another with grace.

Another facet of the prognostic frame pertains to the accountability of individual students and the potential career repercussions they may face. Those who signed controversial statements blaming Israel are reported to find themselves subject to public exposure, career setbacks, or difficulty securing future employment opportunities.

Furthermore, FOX News highlights the potential for legislative action and policy responses to address the underlying issues of antisemitism and ideological extremism on college campuses. Calls for stricter regulations, such as the proposed Stop Antisemitism on College Campuses Act, and the withholding of federal funds from institutions that support or facilitate antisemitic activities, signal a growing recognition of the need for systemic change to combat hate speech and promote ethical principles within higher education institutions.

4.2.4.3 Motivational frame

The discourse surrounding the Israel-Hamas war evokes deeply held convictions and motivations across various stakeholders, reflecting a spectrum of moral, political, and ideological perspectives. At the forefront of this debate are individuals and entities motivated by a desire to challenge perceived injustices, condemn violence, and advocate for moral clarity.

At the heart of many statements and actions is a moral appeal against excusing violence and terrorism, emphasizing the need to stand firm against antisemitic rhetoric and terrorist acts. Individuals and groups on both sides passionately advocate for action to protect their rights, highlighting the humanitarian imperative and the need for empathy, respect, and understanding in discussions surrounding the war. A sense of urgency can be noticed in encouraging a peaceful and respectful exchange of ideas, as well as constructive dialogue, understanding, and compassion in addressing differences of opinion.

Amidst debates over free speech and academic freedom, faculty members and university leaders emphasize the moral obligation to denounce evil. This underscores a broader commitment to justice and fairness, urging action against individuals and groups that perpetuate anti-Israel and antisemitic ideologies. Moreover, there is a growing recognition among FOX News' coverage of the importance of defending Western civilization and its values against radical ideologies that seek to undermine them.

Calls for reevaluation of the educational system and a return to promoting truth, honesty, and morality imply that combating ideological indoctrination is essential to preserving fundamental Western values. This sentiment is echoed by voices such as HBO host Maher, who warns against what he sees as indoctrination and intellectual narrowness in elite colleges. Additionally, there are people advocating for the importance of accurate information and historical context in shaping perspectives on international conflicts.

Furthermore, there are calls on donors to send symbolic donations of \$1 with the hopes of forcing a change in leadership at UPenn, which demonstrates a desire for tangible action within the university's leadership. This reflects the notion that donor funding represents agreement with how institutions handle themselves and emphasizes the moral responsibility for donors to hold universities accountable. Donor withdrawal is seen as a corrective measure rather than an act of revenge, reflecting a moral imperative to disassociate from institutions that tolerate or perpetuate hate speech or actions.

Finally, as part of the motivational frame of FOX News' coverage, university leaders, such as Harvard President Gay, express confidence in the community's ability to pull through challenging times. A collective commitment to upholding moral principles and fostering resilience in the face of adversity is emphasized. Many stakeholders urge universities to reflect on their role in shaping student perspectives and to take responsibility for addressing perceived moral blind spots, highlighting the need for institutional introspection and proactive measures to promote ethical conduct and discourse.

Table 8: FOX News Frame Summary

<i>Diagnostic frame</i>	<i>Prognostic frame</i>	<i>Motivational frame</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergence of pro-Palestinian student groups and criticisms of Israel • broader phenomenon of ideological polarization, college campuses subject to leftist indoctrination • critique of university leadership and donor dissatisfaction with anti-Israel activities • debates about free speech, cancel culture, ideological polarization • issue of student radicalism – role of professors and the whole system of higher education (there is something wrong with America's colleges) • incidents of harassment and assaults targeting students, volatile atmosphere on campuses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis on university leadership to respond decisively to controversial statements or actions • concerns about reputational damage and escalation of conflict on campuses • focus on legislative action and policy responses to combat hate speech, ideological extremism • personal accountability, career consequences • continued debate over academic freedom and free speech • advocacy for safety and security measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • desire to challenge injustices, condemn violence, and advocate for moral clarity – moral appeal • moral obligation to denounce evil, strong language • calls for reevaluation of the educational system, combatting ideological indoctrination essential to preserving Western values • universities' confident in their ability to pull through challenging times • calls for upholding American values and defending against radical ideologies

4.2.5 New York Post

4.2.5.1 *Diagnostic frame*

The coverage of New York Post pertaining to the diagnostic frame encompasses many topics surrounding college campuses' responses to the Israel-Hamas war.

First off, the coverage discusses the students and groups who have openly blamed Israel for the Hamas attacks. Some express that these individuals are privileged proponents of a "hard-left" ideology, justifying war crimes under the guise of fighting imperialism. Harvard's perceived failure to educate students out of this alleged blind bigotry towards Israel has come under scrutiny, suggesting a moral and educational deficit within the university.

Moreover, the discourse emphasizes a moral stance against Hamas' actions, condemning the organization for its oppressive tactics and targeting of civilians. There is a growing chorus calling out universities for their perceived failure to address students' support for jihadist violence, with accusations of double standards and hypocrisy in their responses compared to previous events like the George Floyd protests and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

On campuses across the country, tensions have escalated, leading to heated exchanges and confrontations between pro-Israel and pro-Palestine groups. Instances of student groups and individuals expressing support for Hamas and condemning Israel's actions are said to be evidence of a broader sentiment against the Jewish state within certain segments of academia. Concerns over university leadership's response have also been raised, with accusations of silence, delayed condemnation, or perceived neutrality towards Hamas' terrorist activities.

New York Post also reports on the safety concerns of Jewish and Israeli students, which have intensified amidst reports of violence, intimidation, and harassment. The situation is exacerbated by instances of student groups and individuals at universities expressing support for Hamas while condemning Israel's actions. The rise of antisemitic acts across the United States, including the intentional setting of a Jewish student's dorm room on fire, tearing down of posters of hostages in the Israel-Hamas war, assaults on Israeli students and the intentional targeting of Jewish students in university libraries, have underscored the pervasive climate of fear and hostility. Such incidents not only threaten the physical safety of Jewish students but also erode the values of tolerance and diversity that universities strive to uphold. Furthermore, many have expressed concern regarding statements of some pro-Palestinian advocates, who seemingly endorse terrorism, and allegedly chant for the eradication of Israel during protests.

Compounding the issue is the perceived lack of adequate response or action from university administrations to address incidents effectively. This perceived inaction not only fuels frustration but also perpetuates a sense of vulnerability among affected students. Some believe that Nazi sentiment is spreading on campuses, emphasizing a troubling shift towards radical activism.

High-profile donors and alumni have expressed dissatisfaction with universities' leadership's handling of antisemitism and perceived support for Hamas. The withdrawal of financial support and calls for accountability highlight the impact of donor activism on institutional policies. Additionally, there have been instances of repercussions for students who supported Hamas, such as the rescinding of job offers, sparking discussions about potential blacklisting.

New York Post's coverage also delves into a broader political and ideological divide, with criticism directed towards progressive ideologies dominating academia and perceived biases against Israel. Concerns over the influence of left-leaning ideologies, cancel culture, and the stifling of free speech on college campuses intertwine with discussions on antisemitism and support for Hamas. Some voices believe that students feeling emboldened to support terrorism is due to the prevailing ideological climate on campuses and the logic rewarded by the educational system. Criticism extends to the Biden administration and the left for not defining antizionism as a form of antisemitism, further highlighting the ideological polarization. Florida's move to outlaw groups whose leadership backed Hamas' attack on Israel sets a precedent, while figures like Megyn Kelly suggest that failure to explicitly condemn Hamas equates to being anti-Western.

Furthermore, some say that erosion of academic freedom and intellectual diversity hampers genuine dialogue and exchange of ideas, perpetuating a cycle of ideological conflict and stifling progress towards constructive solutions. New York Post echoes concerns among university outsiders who believe the current state of the higher education system, with leaders allegedly losing the ability to take the moral high ground, underscores deep-rooted problems within academia.

4.2.5.2 Prognostic frame

As tensions escalate on college campuses, the prognostic frame of New York Post sheds light on paths moving forward.

To begin with, concerns mount over the perceived failure of university administrations to address instances of bigotry and antisemitism among students. This has sparked outrage and calls for decisive action. Demands call for the condemnation of antisemitic statements and Hamas, reflecting a broader call for moral clarity and a firm stance against terrorism. Silence in the face of antisemitism is seen as

complicity, as freedom of expression should not extend to condoning immoral speech but should include the right to condemn such speech. There is a warning that not condemning antisemitism can lead to further division, hatred, radicalization, and hostilities towards certain groups, particularly Jewish students.

Meanwhile, the planning of a National Day of Resistance by SJP chapters signals a continued push for activism on college campuses, raising concerns about the potential normalization of violence and antisemitic activities. Demands for the release of a list of members of groups that signed controversial statements highlight fears of repercussions, including career consequences and potential blacklisting by employers. While some advocate for education over blacklisting, others believe that firm consequences are necessary to address such behavior. This is evidenced by the action of at least a dozen business executives, who vowed to deny employment opportunities to students whose groups were signatories to a controversial letter at Harvard blaming Israel for the Hamas attacks.

Furthermore, New York Post extensively reports on the growing anticipation of increased dissatisfaction among alumni and donors if universities do not address the current situation adequately. Withdrawals of financial support, calls for leadership changes and demands for accountability persist. Calls for universities to take a stronger stance against antisemitism and condemn Hamas' terrorist activities unequivocally reflect a call for action within academia. In this regard, the Israel on Campus Coalition has called on US universities to end funding for all chapters of SJP, adding to the pressure on institutions.

The prognostic frame highlights the potential repercussions of failing to address antisemitism effectively, including donor withdrawals, reputational damage to universities, and increased tensions on campuses. The ongoing pressure underscores the urgency for universities to take decisive action to ultimately ensure the safety and well-being of all students. Some individuals have expressed that they will not allow their children to attend Ivy League schools if the culture of antisemitism remains unaddressed. In terms of safety, stepped up police security presence on campuses reflects the seriousness of the situation.

In general, in an increasingly polarized environment, the future trajectory of college campuses remains uncertain, with questions lingering about the effectiveness of current measures in addressing underlying issues and fostering a conducive academic environment. The prognosis for academia hinges on the ability of university administrations to navigate challenges effectively. There is a recognition of the likelihood of a protracted and devastating war and further debates surrounding it if issues are not addressed promptly and effectively.

4.2.5.3 Motivational frame

In the motivational framing of the New York Post's coverage, a multitude of voices converge to underscore the imperative of taking action in response to the ongoing events on college campuses.

Firstly, as symbols of accountability, there is commendation for individuals who publicly denounce controversial statements. Expressions of moral outrage permeate the discourse, urging universities to unequivocally condemn terrorism and express support for Israel. A profound plea for moral integrity, leadership, and alignment with American values resonates within institutions of higher learning. Alumni, donors, and influential figures demand that universities uphold their founding principles of inquiry, debate, and diversity of opinion. Some stress that institutions perceived to support evil or espouse antisemitic rhetoric have no place for self-respecting Jewish individuals, highlighting the urgency of addressing the current situation.

There is a call to restore universities to bastions of intellectual discourse, fueled by a conviction that accountability and transparency are essential for fostering a safe and inclusive academic environment. It is recognized that academic freedom does not excuse hate speech, as a growing chorus of voices urges solidarity with Jewish communities and condemnation of terrorism, hate speech, and violence.

Moreover, there is a palpable sense of urgency to combat antisemitism, inspired by hope that the donor revolt and changing discourse could lead to positive reforms in higher education. Calling on universities to explicitly denounce the Hamas attacks, the debate invokes the memory of past terrorist attacks, emphasizing the importance of condemning such acts of violence on American soil. Israel is stated to be the one reliable ally in the Middle East, and the fight against antisemitism is a moral imperative, as well as a matter of national security.

Furthermore, there is a strong push for tangible measures and accountability, including the possibility of cutting funding to institutions that fail to effectively combat antisemitism, a stance reinforced by the forceful language of White House officials condemning antisemitism. The call to denounce speech promoting violence and misinformation resounds throughout the New York Post's coverage, underlining the urgency of the situation where campuses are no longer safe.

Additionally, the imperative to restore intellectual rigor in academia is not just vital for universities; it is crucial for the overall health of the nation. Advocates stress the importance of transparency, dialogue, and embracing diverse perspectives, highlighting the significance of upholding moral clarity and rejecting extremist ideologies.

Advocacy efforts from students highlighting Palestinian rights add another layer to the conversation, aligning with personal values related to social justice, human rights, or political activism. There is support for protecting students' rights to express opinions and engage in activism, emphasizing the importance of fostering a campus environment where diverse viewpoints can be heard. Some individuals clarify that love for the Palestinian people does not imply hatred for Jewish people, highlighting the need to distinguish between political positions and bigotry. Furthermore, the motivational frame of New York Post includes a call to consider the human cost of the war and the impact it has on individuals and communities, regardless of political affiliations, underscoring the need for empathy and understanding amid polarizing rhetoric.

Table 9: New York Post Frame Summary

Diagnostic frame	Prognostic frame	Motivational frame
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> criticism of students blaming Israel for Hamas attacks failure of universities to educate students out of blind bigotry towards Israel – moral and educational deficits moral stance against Hamas' actions and condemnation of terrorism safety concerns for Jewish and Israeli students amid rising antisemitism, tensions between both groups perceived lack of adequate response from university administrators donor dissatisfaction broader political and ideological divide – progressive ideologies dominating academia, concerns over the influence of left-leaning ideologies, cancel cultures concerns about ideological bias and erosion of academic freedom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> concerns over failure of university administrations to address bigotry and antisemitism, calls for condemnation anticipation of continued activism on campuses increased dissatisfaction among alumni and donors if situation is not addressed calls for leadership changes, demands for accountability, withdrawals of financial support advocacy for safety and security measures and decisive action from universities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> calls for accountability, transparency, integrity, and alignment with American values calls to restore universities to bastions of intellectual discourse – crucial for the health of the country advocating for decisive action against antisemitism and terrorism, sense of urgency, strong language importance of upholding moral principles and fostering an inclusive campus environment advocacy efforts from pro-Palestinian advocates – values of social justice, human rights, political activism

4.3 Comparison

The paragraphs below summarize the main findings in terms of similarities and differences in framing across the eight media outlets' coverage of university and student responses to the Israel-Hamas war.

4.3.1 Diagnostic frame

Several similarities as well as differences appear in the diagnostic framing.

Firstly, there is a shared emphasis across all outlets on the increased tensions and divisions within college campuses in response to the Israel-Hamas war. Each outlet acknowledges the emotional turmoil experienced by students, highlighting the profound impact of the conflict on campus dynamics. Specifically, the coverage details emotions such as marginalization and a lack of support experienced by Jewish students, who also report feeling unsafe. Students across various groups

express emotional responses of fear, anger, sadness, uncertainty and confusion, alongside mourning and grief. The portrayal of campus tensions remains a central theme, with descriptions of protests, rallies, and demonstrations organized by both pro-Israel and pro-Palestine groups. These tensions often refer to an overall charged atmosphere, including conflicts between alumni and universities, clashes among students with differing opinions about the war, and dissatisfaction with perceived institutional weaknesses. Additionally, safety concerns for students, particularly Jewish and Israeli students, are consistently addressed, with reports of intimidation, harassment, and incidents of violence being emphasized across all outlets. These concerns include threats of physical harm, doxing incidents where personal information is exposed, social media harassment, and the presence of a 'doxing truck' displaying student names and faces. The outlets highlight a pervasive sense of fear and vulnerability among these students, with many feeling targeted and unsafe on their own campuses.

Similarly, there is a consensus among all outlets regarding the critique of university responses to the conflict. Universally, university leaderships face scrutiny for perceived inadequacies in addressing antisemitism, condemning Hamas attacks, and ensuring the safety of all students. The portrayal of universities grappling with how to address the war resonates across the coverage.

Moreover, a shared concern across the diagnostic frames is the impact of the war on free speech and academic freedom on college campuses. Instances of: a) job offers being rescinded; b) accusations of ideological indoctrination, and c) debates surrounding hate speech are prevalent across the coverage, indicating a broader discourse on the boundaries of expression and intellectual diversity within academia. Across the board, the coverage highlights concerns over the erosion of academic freedom and the stifling of diverse viewpoints.

Each outlet brings its own perspective and emphasis to the coverage. Understandably, the university newspapers primarily focus on campus-specific incidents and responses, providing detailed insights into main controversies, protests, and safety concerns within their respective university communities. In contrast, national news outlets examine trends and patterns across multiple universities. CNN, The New York Times, and Newsweek adopt a broader lens, contextualizing campus events within the national discourse on antisemitism, free speech, and student activism. FOX News and New York Post tend to emphasize ideological divisions within academia and critique perceived biases against Israel.

In general, it is evident that the ideological leanings of the outlets shape their coverage. While the university newspapers maintain a relatively neutral tone, reporting on events and reactions without overt editorializing, it is evident that FOX News and New York Post adopt a more assertive stance. They frequently employ the term "anti-Israel," when referring to pro-Palestinian activists, which could

oversimplify the multifaceted nature of the conflict. In addition, they frequently critique what is perceived as leftist biases within academia and emphasize moral clarity in condemning Hamas' actions. On the other hand, it appears that CNN and The New York Times strike a better balance between objective reporting and editorial commentary, contextualizing campus events within broader societal trends while also acknowledging complexities. These outlets generally dedicate more commentary to issues of free speech, safety concerns, and university leadership responses without ascribing blame to specific ideologies.

There are also differences in terms of depth of coverage. The university newspapers stand out for their analysis of internal discord within their universities, offering insight into the challenges faced by students and administrators in their communities. Similarly, The New York Times provides coverage of the dilemmas surrounding the war, not shying away from issues of free speech, academic freedom, and institutional responses. When it comes to FOX News and New York Post, narratives of ideological polarization and moral clarity stand out, ones which offer less nuanced analyses of actual campus dynamics.

Furthermore, while all outlets acknowledge the impact of external factors such as donor activism, political discourse, and national trends on campus dynamics, FOX News and New York Post tend to foreground these factors, framing campus tensions as symptomatic of broader cultural and political divides. CNN, The New York Times, and Newsweek provide more balanced coverage, acknowledging external influences while also centering campus-specific events and responses.

The coverage across outlets also differs in terms of presence of stakeholder voices. University newspapers prioritize the voices of students, faculty, and administrators within their university communities, offering firsthand perspectives on campus events and reactions. CNN, The New York Times, and Newsweek incorporate a wider range of stakeholder voices, including national lawmakers, advocacy groups, and external commentators, to contextualize campus events within broader societal trends. FOX News and New York Post prioritize voices critical of perceived leftist biases within academia, often amplifying perspectives aligned with conservative viewpoints.

4.3.2 Prognostic frame

Comparing the prognostic frames across the outlets again reveals similarities and differences.

First and foremost, there is a clear consensus on the importance of holding university administrations and students accountable for their actions and statements related to the Israel-Hamas war. This accountability extends to condemning hate speech, addressing safety concerns, and taking proactive

steps to mitigate tensions on college campuses. All media outlets also emphasize the need for transparency from universities in addressing instances of antisemitism and violence. Silence or inaction from university leadership can be perceived as complicity, thereby exacerbating tensions and perpetuating a divisive environment.

Safety and security concerns emerge as another theme across all prognostic frames. Anticipated tensions and potential escalations in the war prompt discussions about implementing heightened security measures to ensure the safety and well-being of students amidst polarizing dynamics on campuses. The outlets highlight the need for universities to prioritize the safety of their student populations by enhancing campus security, fostering open dialogue, and providing support mechanisms for students facing threats or harassment. There is a recognition across all outlets of the potential for escalation of war and tensions on college campuses, with continued military action in Gaza exacerbating existing divisions. Protests, activism, and safety concerns on campuses are expected to intensify.

Furthermore, there is a shared recognition of the potential reputational damage and donor backlash faced by universities if they fail to address the war adequately. Continued donor dissatisfaction and withdrawals of financial support are anticipated consequences. Therefore, all media outlets emphasize the importance of universities taking decisive action to address concerns related to hate speech, violence, and antisemitism to minimize the risk of reputational damage and maintain the trust and support of donors and alumni.

However, within the prognostic frames, the tone and emphasis vary significantly across different media outlets. For example, FOX News and New York Post adopt a more critical and confrontational tone towards universities, emphasizing the urgency for action. CNN and New York Times, on the other hand, maintain a relatively neutral tone in their prognostic frames, focusing on the broader implications of the conflict on college campuses and potential policy responses. Understandably, campus newspapers highlight specific actions and demands from student groups active in their communities.

What is also noticeable is the more sensationalist or opinionated approach to coverage of FOX News and New York Post, which often portray issues in stark terms of right versus wrong and highlight potential worst-case scenarios when emphasizing the dire urgency of addressing the situation. Other outlets take a more measured approach, focusing on constructive solutions and the potential for positive outcomes through dialogue and collaboration.

Another difference across the outlets is the prioritization of certain actors or stakeholders in their coverage. For instance, The New York Times and CNN focus more on the role of university administrators and student organizations in effecting change, whereas FOX News and New York Post highlight the perspectives of donors, alumni, or political figures.

Policy recommendations and legislative actions proposed across different prognostic frames also vary. FOX News and New York Post incorporate advocacy for specific policy measures into their coverage, such as federal funding cuts, or legislative initiatives targeting antisemitism on college campuses. Conversely, university newspapers offer alternative recommendations aligned with their respective university contexts.

Moreover, the discussion of academic freedom and free speech differs among media outlets. While CNN and The New York Times often prioritize free speech rights and fostering open dialogue, FOX News and New York Post emphasizes the need to combat hate speech and ideological extremism in order to create a safe and inclusive campus environment, even if it means limiting certain forms of expression. This divergence reflects general debates about the boundaries of expression within academic settings and the balance between protecting individual rights and promoting community health.

Last but not least, certain media outlets provide more extensive coverage of external factors and international relations in their prognostic frames. In this regard, university newspapers focus more on internal campus dynamics and community-specific initiatives, whereas the national media outlets often include discussions of geopolitical implications, national efforts to address the conflict, or the role of external figures in shaping university responses. FOX News and New York Post, for example, provide more commentary from politicians and public figures than other outlets.

4.3.3 Motivational frame

Comparing the motivational frames across the outlets reveals a variety of perspectives and emphases in response to the Israel-Hamas war within the context of university environments. While each outlet shares a common goal of addressing the nuances of the war and its impact on campuses, there are notable differences in the *themes, tones, and priorities* highlighted within their coverage.

First off, across all media outlets, there is a resounding call for accountability and responsibility in addressing instances of discrimination, hate speech, and violence on college campuses. Whether it is condemning antisemitic statements or denouncing terrorism, there is a shared expectation for universities to uphold moral standard and ensure the safety of their students.

Next, each outlet underscores the importance of unity and solidarity within the academic community as a means of overcoming divisions and bringing about meaningful change. Regardless of ideological differences, there is an acknowledgment of the collective strength derived from standing together against injustice and discrimination.

Furthermore, there is a consistent advocacy for dialogue, understanding, and empathy in navigating the war. There is a push for constructive engagement and respectful discourse. Across all outlets, there is a shared sentiment regarding the significance of upholding institutional integrity and ethical principles. Universities are urged to demonstrate moral leadership, transparency, and accountability in addressing contentious topics and fostering a safe environment.

In terms of differences, the outlets vary in focus on political debate and ideologies. Some outlets, including CNN and The New York Times, adopt a relatively moderate tone, emphasizing the importance of fostering empathy, understanding, and solidarity while condemning hate speech and violence. In contrast, FOX News and New York Post adopt a more politicized stance, emphasizing the perceived threat of antisemitism and terrorism on college campuses and advocating for decisive action to combat these issues. They exhibit a more assertive and confrontational tone and advocate for stringent measures to combat activities framed as dangerous to national security and American values.

The extent to which donor influence is emphasized within the motivational frame also varies among media outlets. While university newspapers acknowledge the role of donors in their coverage, they do not place as much emphasis on it as national media outlets do.

Moreover, the national outlets differ in their treatment of political figures and their statements regarding the war, reflecting their political biases. CNN and The New York Times, being more liberal-leaning, tend to advocate more for social justice, inclusivity, and academic freedom. They emphasize the importance of upholding democratic values and protecting marginalized communities from discrimination and hate speech. FOX News and New York Post, on the other hand, exhibit their more conservative-leaning perspective, emphasizing the importance of defending Western civilization, American values, and national security. They advocate for decisive action against perceived threats to American interests.

Lastly, the portrayal of campus activism varies across outlets, with the university newspapers highlighting more student-led initiatives and sentiments for dialogue and understanding than for instance FOX News and New York Post.

Table 10: Similarities & Differences in Frames Across Outlets

	SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES
DIAGNOSTIC FRAME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on campus tensions and divisions • safety concerns among students • critique of university responses • concern over free speech and academic freedom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis and framing • tone and editorial stance • depth of coverage • coverage of external factors • representation of stakeholder voices
PROGNOSTIC FRAME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demands for accountability and transparency • importance of safety and security • potential reputational damage • donor pressure, backlash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis on solidarity vs. amplification of voices • representation of stakeholders • policy implications and legislative action • discussion of ideological divides • discussion of academic freedom, free speech • perspective on academia
MOTIVATIONAL FRAME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • call for accountability and responsibility • emphasis on unity and solidarity • advocacy for dialogue, understanding • appeals for institutional integrity and ethical principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • political ideologies and priorities • tone and approach to coverage • focus on donor influence • treatment of political figures • coverage of campus activism

5. Discussion

5.1 Summary and interpretation of results

The Israel-Hamas war has ignited a conflict that has reverberated across the world. On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched a surprise assault on southern Israel, prompting the Israeli government to declare war in response. This has exacerbated an already dire situation in the Gaza Strip. Despite international efforts to negotiate a full humanitarian ceasefire (Efesoy, 2023; Mekelberg, 2024), the escalating violence has led to a mounting death toll (Salem, 2024) and a deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The devastating impact of the war has sparked protests, demonstrations, and vigils worldwide. As protests have proliferated, college campuses have emerged as significant sites of activism, mobilization and discourse, reflecting the heightened engagement and concern among students and academic communities. It is within this context of heightened tension, activism, and public discourse surrounding the Israel-Hamas war that my interest in this topic is situated. The intersection of media coverage, university activism, and broader socio-political dynamics surrounding the war presents a compelling area for investigation.

Through the qualitative method of frame analysis, based in agenda-setting theory and the framing concept, my thesis was dedicated to answering the research question *“How do mainstream American media outlets and university newspapers frame the activities of universities and student groups in response to the Israel-Hamas war?”* Given the recent nature of the war and its profound impact on global discourse, I believe my thesis is a novel addition to existing literature, offering insights into the dynamics of media representation and university activism.

Rooted in Benford and Snow’s concept of framing, the analysis of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames was conducted across five mainstream American media outlets and three university newspapers within the context of university and student responses to the Israel-Hamas war. Main results reveal a nuanced landscape of media representation. Across the media, I have observed a multifaceted portrayal of campus responses to the war – where both similarities and differences emerge, reflecting the diverse perspectives and emphases inherent in media framing. The analysis revealed significant insights into how media frames are constructed and the implications they carry.

In the diagnostic frame, all media outlets shared an emphasis on the increased tensions and divisions within college campuses in response to the conflict. This shared focus highlights the pervasive impact of international conflicts on domestic academic environments and aligns with existing literature on the intersection of geopolitics and campus dynamics. Moreover, there was a universal critique of university responses to the war, particularly regarding perceived inadequacies in addressing

antisemitism and ensuring the safety of all, in particular Jewish students. This critique reflects the challenges universities face in maintaining neutrality and addressing politically sensitive issues. Concerns over *free speech* emerged as another central theme across all outlets. The analysis highlighted a broader discourse on the boundaries of expression and intellectual diversity within academia, with media outlets raising questions about ideological indoctrination, hate speech, and debates surrounding academic freedom.

In the prognostic frame, media outlets uniformly called for accountability from university administrations and emphasized the need for enhanced safety measures on college campuses. This suggests a common expectation for universities to act decisively in protecting their communities. However, there was variation in tone and emphasis across different media outlets, with conservative outlets adopting a more urgent and critical stance, while liberal outlets maintained a relatively neutral tone. This divergence underscores the role of political biases in shaping media narratives and highlights the polarized nature of media coverage on contentious issues.

In the motivational frame, there was a resounding call for unity and dialogue within the academic community as a means of overcoming divisions and bringing about meaningful change, particularly evident in coverage from left-leaning media outlets. This underscores the importance of constructive engagement and ethical principles in navigating conflicts within academic settings. Conversely, analysis from right-leaning outlets tends to prioritize critique and maintain a critical stance, focusing less on unity and dialogue and more on highlighting perceived inadequacies or ideological biases.

Overall, I believe my findings are significant as they shed light on how media outlets with varying political biases frame the same events differently, shaping public perception and discourse.

My analysis supports my initial hypotheses put forth in the Methodology chapter. Firstly, my analysis confirms that mainstream media outlets exhibit certain bias in their coverage pertaining to their political leanings. Secondly, university newspapers emerge as valuable sources for authentic representations of student perspectives and activism. Next, the depiction of academic freedom varies across media sources, reflecting differing interpretations and priorities.

In light of the theoretical framework of agenda-setting theory and the concept of framing, my analysis of media coverage and university responses to the Israel-Hamas war yields insights into the dynamics of public discourse and media representation.

Agenda-setting theory posits that media coverage plays a crucial role in shaping the public agenda by determining which issues receive the most attention and prominence. In the context of the Israel-

Hamas war, the analysis reveals that media outlets vary in their prioritization of different aspects of the conflict and university and student responses to it. In terms of framing, the analysis reveals distinct framing patterns across different media outlets. The framing dynamics generally reflect the ideological biases and priorities of media outlets, influencing the narratives presented to the audience.

All in all, by prioritizing certain aspects of the university and student responses to the Israel-Hamas war, media outlets play a significant role in shaping the public agenda and influencing audience attitudes. By analyzing media coverage through the lens of agenda-setting theory and framing concept, we gain a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which media shapes public discourse and perception of contentious issues like the Israel-Hamas war.

5.2 Limitations of the research

In conducting this thesis, several limitations may impact the findings and their interpretation. Firstly, the study focuses solely on the initial month of the Israel-Hamas war, and media portrayals are likely to have evolved since then, as frames are constantly shifting in response to ongoing developments. Additionally, the study analyzed eight media outlets, which, while providing valuable insights into coverage differences, often boiled down to distinctions between left-leaning, right-leaning, and university-specific media. Although this selection may not capture the full spectrum of media perspectives, analyzing over 200 articles provides a robust foundation, even if some nuanced details are overlooked.

The generalizability of the findings is also constrained, particularly given the ongoing developments and changing intensity of the war. Furthermore, frame analysis is interpretative: what one researcher might overlook, another could notice, leading to potential variations in findings. However, the methodology used here mitigates these variations as much as possible, ensuring a balanced analysis.

Additionally, the broader sociopolitical contexts and cultural considerations are not fully explored within the scope of this study, limiting the depth of understanding regarding certain perspectives. I encourage readers to consider additional literature on the broader Israel-Palestine conflict for a more comprehensive view.

Last but not least, while agenda-setting theory and framing provide valuable insights into media dynamics, they may not fully portray the complexity of individual interpretation and response to media content. Future research could explore the interplay between media framing and audience reception to gain a more nuanced understanding of how media influence public perceptions of contentious issues.

Despite limitations, the strengths of this analysis should not be overlooked. The systematic approach, thorough article review, and theoretical framework all contribute to a valuable exploration of media dynamics during a critical period. The insights gained here provide a foundation for further research and a deeper understanding of how media coverage shapes public discourse on contentious issues like the Israel-Hamas war.

5.3 Recommendations for future research

This thesis marks the beginning of exploring the extensive potential that the topic of media framing and university activism in response to the Israel-Hamas war holds. Given the limitations of this study in terms of timeframe and the specific selection of media, there are numerous avenues for further research to expand and deepen the understanding of this complex issue.

Firstly, future research could benefit from examining media coverage in different contexts and countries outside of the United States. A comparative analysis between regions, such as the EU/Europe vs. America, could provide insights into how cultural, political, and social contexts influence media portrayals.

In addition, investigating a broader array of media outlets, including those with specific political biases, could be valuable. For instance, comparing the coverage within media outlets that share the same political bias might reveal nuanced distinctions and deeper insights into how similar ideological perspectives frame the conflict and university activism.

Given the ongoing nature of the war and its evolving dynamics, future research should also consider different and more recent timeframes. As the war continues and new developments occur, the media narratives and public discourse are likely to change, making it essential to analyze these shifts over time. By using this thesis as a foundation, one can conduct comparative analyses across different timeframes. Updating the analysis with new developments allows for comparisons between earlier and subsequent coverage, providing insights into evolving media narratives. Moreover, tracking the evolution of student responses and activism, alongside changing media portrayals, could offer a longitudinal perspective on the topic.

Exploring the issue through different theoretical lenses could also enrich the analysis. For instance, rather than focusing solely on media portrayals, future research could examine the actual actions of involved actors and states, potentially employing a realist perspective to understand the political implications and strategies at play.

Another recommendation is to conduct more in-depth case studies by focusing on fewer media outlets.

Overall, the contentious and highly political nature of the Israel-Hamas war, along with its significant civilian impact and international repercussions, provides a rich and ongoing field of study for scholars interested in media analysis, political communication, and international relations.

6. Conclusion

This thesis set out to examine how mainstream American media outlets and university newspapers frame the activities of universities and student groups in response to the Israel-Hamas war. The objectives were to analyze the framing of university and student activism, compare the framings between different types of media, and explore the influence of political biases within mainstream media on these framings.

Rooted in agenda-setting theory and framing, a qualitative analysis of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames of various media outlets' coverage revealed several findings in light of the research question – *how do mainstream American media outlets and university newspapers frame the activities of universities and student groups in response to the Israel-Hamas war?*. The analysis revealed both similarities and differences in the media framing.

Within the diagnostic frame, there was a consistent emphasis across all media outlets on the heightened tensions and divisions within college campuses triggered by the Israel-Hamas war. Emotional turmoil among students was widely acknowledged, highlighting the significant impact of the war on campus dynamics. Media coverage commonly featured reports of protests, rallies, and demonstrations by both pro-Israel and pro-Palestine groups, along with safety concerns for students who faced intimidation, harassment, and violence. Additionally, there was a universal critique of university responses to the conflict. Media outlets scrutinized university leadership for perceived failures to adequately address antisemitism, condemn Hamas attacks, and ensure student safety. Concerns over free speech and academic freedom also emerged prominently. Instances of rescinded job offers, accusations of ideological indoctrination, and debates over hate speech were also prevalent, indicating a broader discourse on the boundaries of expression within academia.

While university newspapers focused on specific incidents and responses within their own campuses, national news outlets like CNN, The New York Times, and Newsweek provided broader context, examining trends across multiple universities. Conversely, FOX News and New York Post emphasized ideological divisions and critiqued perceived biases against Israel. The ideological leanings of the outlets shaped their coverage, with university newspapers maintaining a neutral tone, while FOX News and New York Post adopted a more assertive stance.

Within the prognostic frame, a shared theme across all media outlets was the call for accountability from university administrations. There was a consensus on the need to condemn hate speech, address safety concerns, and ensure transparency in dealing with incidents of antisemitism and violence. The

importance of enhanced security measures on campuses was uniformly stressed, reflecting concerns about escalating tensions and potential violence.

However, the tone and emphasis varied significantly among different media outlets. Conservative outlets like FOX News and New York Post were more critical and urgent in their calls for action, while CNN and The New York Times maintained a relatively neutral tone. University newspapers highlighted specific actions and demands from student groups, reflecting their campus-specific focus.

Within the motivational frame, there was a common call across all outlets for unity and dialogue within the academic community to address divisions and promote meaningful change. The importance of accountability in addressing discrimination, hate speech, and violence was emphasized, with an expectation for universities to uphold moral standards and ensure student safety.

Differences emerged in the focus on political debate and ideologies. CNN and The New York Times adopted a mostly moderate tone, emphasizing empathy, understanding, and solidarity while condemning hate speech and violence. In contrast, FOX News and New York Post adopted a more politicized stance, highlighting the threats of antisemitism and terrorism on campuses and advocating for stringent measures to combat these issues.

Overall, the analysis supports the theoretical framework of agenda-setting theory and framing. Media outlets, through their prioritization of different aspects of the war and university and student responses, play a valuable role in shaping public discourse and influencing audience attitudes. The distinct framing patterns reflect the ideological biases of the media outlets, impacting the narratives presented to their respective audiences.

The findings confirm the initial hypotheses: mainstream media outlets exhibit bias in their coverage aligned with their political leanings, university newspapers provide authentic representations of student activism, and the depiction of academic freedom varies across media sources. These results highlight the importance of critical media literacy and the need to consider multiple viewpoints to gain a holistic understanding of media coverage on contentious issues like the Israel-Hamas war.

In conclusion, this thesis sheds light on the complex dynamics of media framing, and offers insights into the intersection of media representation, university activism, and global conflicts.

7. References

Note: references of articles used for analysis can be found in Annex 1

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