

**The Propaganda Model and the Information Behavior of American and Arabic  
Media in Covering News Related to Middle Eastern Issues**

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## نموذج الدعاية وسلوكيات بث المعلومات في وسائل الإعلام الأمريكية والعربية في تغطية الأخبار المتعلقة بقضايا الشرق الأوسط

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### مستخلص بالعربية

يتناول هذا البحث نموذج الدعاية (البروباجندا) الذي قدمه لأول مرة كل من إدوارد هيرمان، ونعوم تشومسكي في عام 1988 وذلك من خلال استعراض ونقد المرشحات أو الفلاتر الخمسة التي حددت في كتابهما "تصنيع الموافقة: الاقتصاد السياسي لوسائل الإعلام"، مع عرض نماذج لبعض الأمثلة التطبيقية لاستخدام مثل هذه المرشحات من جانب بعض وسائل الإعلام الأمريكية والعربية فيما يخص بعض القضايا المتعلقة بالشرق الأوسط. وتظهر هذه الدراسة تأثير نموذج الدعاية على سلوكيات بث المعلومات لجمهور العامة في المجتمعات المختلفة (ديمقراطية أو غير ديمقراطية) ودوره في تشكيل الرأي العام في تلك المجتمعات بصرف النظر عن وجود نظام رسمي للرقابة من عدمه. وقد تم التركيز في هذه الدراسة على استخدام وسائل الإعلام الأمريكية لنموذج الدعاية في تشكيل الرأي العام في القضية المتعلقة بالبرنامج النووي الإيراني، وتبين من خلال الدراسة تناقض المعلومات التي تم بثها من خلال وسائل الإعلام الأمريكية الموجهة وفقا لما يخدم المصالح الأمريكية، مما يدل على أن مفهوم نموذج الدعاية لم يتغير حتى مع وجود حرية التعبير عن الآراء المختلفة من خلال المصادر الإعلامية الجديدة أو ما يسمى بالإعلام البديل أو الإعلام المستقل المتمثل في شبكات التواصل الإجتماعية على الإنترنت.

### الكلمات المفتاحية

نموذج الدعاية ، تصنيع الموافقة، وسائل الإعلام العربية، وسائل الإعلام الأمريكية ، بث المعلومات، الوعي المعلوماتي، إنتاج المعلومات، سلوكيات المعلومات، قضية البرنامج النووي لإيران، وسائل الإعلام البديل، شبكات التواصل الإجتماعي

## **The Propaganda Model and the Information Behavior of American and Arabic Media in Covering News Related to Middle Eastern Issues**

### **Abstract**

This paper discusses the Propaganda Model which was first introduced in Edward S. Herman, and Noam Chomsky's book *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* in 1988. According to that model, the media acts in the interests of the corporate elite that fund it by applying the filters necessary to encourage citizens to consent to their agenda. This paper compares the use of mass media in two different societies (USA mass media and the mass media of the Arab world). It shows the effect of using the propaganda model on the information behavior of the public in both societies. It explains the impact of mass media on the production of information that would be used to shape public's opinions in both societies through applying the five filters of the propaganda model on the dissemination of information (News) that is related to Middle Eastern issues and also the Iranian nuclear program issue, which indicates that the concept of the propaganda model didn't change even with the freedom of expressing different opinions through new sources of the media like the alternative media or what is called the independent media through the internet.

### **Keywords**

Propaganda Model, Edward S. Herman, Noam Chomsky, Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media , Five filters, Arabic mass media, United States mass media, Information Behavior, Dissemination of information , alternative media, Middle Eastern issues, Iran.

# **The Propaganda Model and the Information Behavior of American and Arabic Media in Covering News Related to Middle Eastern Issues**

## **Introduction**

Propaganda Model was first introduced in Edward S. Herman, and Noam Chomsky's book *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* in 1988. According to that model, the media acts in the interests of the corporate elite that fund it by applying the filters necessary to encourage citizens to consent to their agenda (Herman& Chomsky,2002).

The propaganda model argues that "the raw material of news" passes through five filters that ultimately shape the news audiences receive. These filters determine what events are deemed newsworthy, how they are covered, where they are placed within the media and how much coverage they receive. That propaganda model could have an impact on information seeking behavior in relation to the media. Since 1988 Herman and Chomsky documented with extensive case studies how mass media and public opinion are shaped in a democracy. Thirty years later, can their "propaganda model" still be used to explain modern media distortions? That's what will be discussed in this paper. This paper compares the use of mass media in two different societies (USA mass media and the mass media of the Arab world). It shows that the propaganda model could effect on the information seeking behavior of the public in both societies. It explains the impact of mass media on the production of information that would be used to shape the public's opinions in both societies. This paper indicates how propaganda can exist in different societies (democratic or non-democratic) without an official system of coercion or censorship. It discusses the five filters of the propaganda model, applying that model on the dissemination of information (News) that is related to Middle Eastern issues and also the Iranian nuclear program issue, which indicates that the concept of the propaganda model didn't change even with the freedom of expressing different opinions through new sources of the media like the alternative media or what is called the independent media through the internet.

## **The Propaganda Model and Manufacturing Consent.**

The "propaganda model" that Herman and Chomsky put forward in *Manufacturing Consent* has made the book notable as the most influential book by serious academics to challenge the common dogma of media objectivity in the United States. When it first appeared, it was almost unheard-of to suggest that U.S. media such as the *New York Times*, *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines, and CBS News were propaganda vehicles.

The propaganda model seeks to explain the behavior of news media operators within a capitalist economy. The model suggests that media outlets will consistently produce news content that aligns with the interests of political and economic elites

As Chomsky quoted "Any dictator would admire the uniformity and obedience of the U.S. media" (Chomsky, n.d.), so we could explain how the propaganda model could be used by any of these dictators who control what news can be distributed by the media which serve as a handy tool for any dictator anywhere in the world. So whoever has the power in the United States, or in any small developing country could control media that produce news that serve their political and economic agendas. That propaganda model has been strongly used for years by the U.S. media operators to produce news that affected many decisions made in the Middle East especially when the United States developed its economic and political agenda in the Middle East in the 1990s and it was working effectively during the new millennia after the event of September 11, 2001, when new kind of propaganda vehicles have been used by those in power in the area who have a common interest with U.S.A like Qatar and its powerful news media " Al-Jazeera Network " which launched Al-Jazeera English channel which offers an alternative, non-western-centric world view, and had a wide coverage of the war on Afghanistan (Sabbagh, 2016). And after the Arab Spring Revolutions in 2011, they launched many other news channels that aired live coverage news from many Arab countries during that time. These kinds of news channels have been used to control the public's minds and let them seek information through their media channels that lead them to what their owners wanted them to know.

The propaganda model seeks to explain media behavior by examining the institutional pressures that constrain and influence news content within a profit-driven system. In contrast to liberal theories that argue that journalism is adversarial to established power. The propaganda model predicts that corporate-owned news media will consistently produce a news content that serves the interests of an established power.

## **The Propaganda Filters**

Herman and Chomsky point to five 'filters' through which the facts of the news pass in order to be presented as a final product that supports the interests of government and dominant private interests these filters determine what we read in the newspapers and see on the television, and produce a very narrow view of the world that is in line with government policy and business interests. (Herman & Chomsky,2011).

Herman and Chomsky posit that these filters enable the elite to "fix the premises of discourse and interpretation," as well as determine what the public focuses on in terms of their news consumption (Herman & Chomsky, 2002, p. 2).

The first filter is the size, ownership, and profit orientation of the mass media. At the time the book was written, there was a concentration of ownership among the mass media, and therefore the centralized owners and backers could control the agenda. The propaganda model attempts to show that the owners of mass communication use media, not on behalf of the general population, but also to advance their own interests (Corcoran, n.d. ).

In USA for example there are twenty-four media giants that are large, profit-seeking corporations, owned and controlled by quite wealthy people. These companies including the three television networks (*ABC, NBC, and CBS*) and the leading newspaper empires (*New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times*) they also include the major news and general-interest magazines like (*Time, Newsweek ...*) there are also a major book publisher (*McGraw-Hill*); and other cable-TV systems that control the world news and lead the world see through their eyes (Herman& Chomsky, 2007).

In the Arab world all the Media systems are controlled and owned by the leaders in power. Al-Jazeera as an example of an Arabic media company, which is

profit-based, that was first officially funded and controlled by the Qatar government; a small wealthy Arab country. Al-Jazeera chose its name not only as a name but as an emblem. The Arabic meaning of the name "Al-Jazeera" or "the Island", that name symbolize that Arabic meaning, so the channel will be like an island that is individual and not related to any authority of its the government, but the truth is that the Qatar government is the one who established Al-Jazeera in 1996 with a \$500 million loan, that would be paid back before 2005, when Al-Jazeera turned officially into a private joint stock company (Baghdadi, 2009).

Al Jazeera serves as an international soft power for the country and uses its massive wealth to purchase influence abroad through investments and donations even if they claimed something else. (Toumi,2011). One of the principle beneficiaries of Arab uprisings has been Al-Jazeera television, their comprehensive coverage was watched all over the world (Kessler, 2012)

The second filter is the influence that the advertising industry has on the media. Advertisers subsidize the cost of doing business for most media outlets, and can threaten to pull their support if the media does not cover what the advertisers deem important.

In the Arab community, where 80% of the Arabs are buying decryption of encrypted TV channels devices; but there are some Channels still need different subscription to be available for viewers. Therefore there was a spread of acts of piracy and attacks on broadcast television channels encrypted without a license by a group of non- legitimacy that reached in 2010 to decode the Al-Jazeera Sports Channels, which bought exclusive rights for live broadcast of the World Cup in South Africa. There were some legal disputes in the Egyptian courts on the loss of millions of dollars had been paid to get that right. The Egyptian government didn't do anything to stop Egyptians who wanted to watch that sport channel without paying all that costs. Meanwhile after the Egyptian revolution in 2011: Al-Jazeera owners were trying hard to attract Egyptians to watch Al-Jazeera channels, while the same Egyptian government tried to block all Al-Jazeera channels from being watched by regular Egyptians, and limited the internet coverage in order to let them follow the news through their mouthpiece system.

We can notice from that the role played by those who have the power to own or rule: they could use the media to promote and advertise their policy and control for actual economic benefits or other hidden political purposes. During the 2011 Revolution most Egyptians had no legal subscription to watch Al-Jazeera channels; they had the Egyptian media as the only source of information, they tried to connect to Al-Jazeera Channels legally or illegally as another source of information that seemed to be logical and different because the Egyptian government media were broadcasting false information about what was really happening on the ground. Al-Jazeera took that chance and established more specialized channels that were broadcasting live coverage from the streets. The advertisement for these channels will always cover their costs, also Al-Jazeera channels were the most watched TV in the area.(Yahdhih, 2014)

The third filter is the reliance of the media on expert sources from the government or from business corporations and trade groups. Whole industries are devoted to supplying the media with information, making it convenient for reporters to have information handed to them. It takes time and effort to go out and get independent information, and in the 24/7 news culture, there is often little time to pursue individual reporting. It is easier to rely on wire services, the press conferences, and the press releases and let them dictate what receives coverage. FAIR, or Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting, has studied expert sources used during evening newscasts about the Iraq war and found that 75 percent of the sources were current or former government or military officials (Rampton, 2007).

CNN, was the first channel to provide 24-hour television news coverage (Taipei Times, May 31,2005). Al-Jazeera also was the first Arab channel broadcast from within the Arab World that was in 1996 (Baghdadi,2009). Also Al-Jazeera was the only channel that broadcast live coverage from Afghanistan when the war on Afghanistan started; they have the advantage of hiring more Arab correspondents who needed the job no matter how dangerous it is. That's how Aljazeera corporate who has the money to hire those who went through all the dangerous sites of action in Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Libya all these places that faced the important news. During the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, Fox News was the first news organization to run a news ticker on the bottom of the screen to keep up with the flow of information that day, then CNN and

MSNBC followed with their own tickers shortly after, It was so well received that it became permanent on the channel, and it is now been used by many other news and sports stations. The ticker has remained, informing viewers about additional news which reporters may not mention on-screen and repeating news mentioned during a broadcast; it has proven popular with viewers (Dudak, September 11, 2012)

The fourth filter is the use of flak to mask the effects of the propaganda influences. Flak is defined as "negative responses to a media statement or program" (Chomsky and Herman, 2002, p. 26). This criticism can be manifested as letters, phone calls, petitions, lawsuits, speeches, or other protests against what has been reported. That was happened from the authorities who have the power to threaten or act either in a big democratic country like the USA or in other dictatorship governments. In Arab countries bloggers were arrested and some are alleged to have been killed. The same kind of violence happened from U.S. security authority when the Al-Jazeera Kabul office was destroyed by the United States bombs in Afghanistan in 2001 (BBC News,13 November,2001). All these kinds of warning messages to threaten any distribution of these news that oppose dictators anywhere.

The fifth filter was defined in the book as anti-communism; today, it has morphed into anti-terrorism. Essentially, by linking anything with communism (or terrorism), that thing becomes instantly bad and evil, and no competing opinions can be entertained without having one's loyalty to the United States questioned. That's what had happened after September 11 attack when the U.S. media took advantage of that event to shape the opinion of the Americans towards whatever decisions would be taken, like accepting the invasion of Afghanistan. G.W Bush stated "You're either with us or against us" or with the terrorists (CNN, 2001). That statement had been spread all over the media as a threat to whoever has any objection on the coming actions on what they called "war on terrorism" Then later the invasion of Iraq; when the U.S. media hid the truth about not finding any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and didn't wait for the results of the UN resolution.(CNN, January 27, 2003) the U.S. media prepared the world for another war on terrorism. CNN as defined as "the always-war-hungry CNN" (Greenwald, 2016) was one of the American networks that had a big coverage on that war on terrorism; they prepared the world to accept the changes in the American economic and political

agenda of the Middle East; they used their materials carefully (Special Features, Live correspondents' reports, TV debates, panels, documentaries,) to go with that war propaganda.

## **Criticism of the Propaganda Model**

With the advent of the Internet, many more sources of information are available to the general public. No longer do the big networks have exclusive access to consumer's time and attention(Watson, n.d.)

As Rampton (2007) stated "the emergence of new communications media challenge the propaganda/broadcast model by increasing the number of channels through which information reaches the public, and also by lowering the costs of entry to previously-excluded voices". Indeed, there is an entire industry solely devoted to criticizing the mainstream media and unveiling incidents of media bias. This has also lead to a decrease in news stories coming from sources in government, business, and trade groups. Anyone with an internet connection can create their own blog or video-cast and can report from whichever angle they choose. Alternative media also rely on non-mainstream reporters. Many of these publications have sources that are not affiliated to government, business, or trade groups. That could be a big issue that affected the propaganda model especially with the other benefits gained through the Internet access as a human right (Kravets, 2011).

When it comes to the ownership filter, it is much easier to publish information via the internet than it is to publish through a mainstream news source. Thus," independent citizen reporters" can contribute to alternative news sites or start sites or blogs of their own. But in this case, there is the power of the government who allow this independent media. In developing countries like Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and Libya, or what they called Arab Spring Countries; the internet played a big role in their facebook Revolution. After the Tunisian police violence events had been distributed through the internet all over the world especially to those who were connected with events in Egypt, who used social media as their solution to reach for each others to start the protest against the police violence on January 25<sup>th</sup> 2011, which ended up with a big conflict between the protestors and the armed policemen that lead to that January Revolution and was spread to other Arab countries. They took advantage of expressing their opinions

through facebook, Twitters and YouTube; freedom they would never have gained through other media controlled by their governments. Using the internet at that time was available to anyone who has access to the internet through some communication companies which can be controlled by the authority which later discovered the dangerous of that unexpected act of freedom, they had their commands to stop that: the peoples of Egypt, Libya, and Syria witnessed full internet shutdowns as their respective governments attempted to quell protests. The authority blocked website, Twitter and SMS services, they also shut down Facebook.(Corcoran, nd.) Lack of internet freedom was a tactic employed by authorities to quell protestors across the Arab world; they utilized the law, technology, and violence to control what was being posted on and disseminated through the internet (Woodcock, 2011). But in the United States, it's a different story; Americans are the most over-entertained, uninformed people anywhere despite easy access to online and other ways to understand major issues touching their lives directly, as well as learn how their government at all levels betrays them. They're easy targets for relentless propaganda (Lendman, 2015). In Chomsky *Manufacturing Consent* film documentary (Achbar& Wintonick 1992); they mentioned that there are two major target group for propaganda: 20% of the population: (the Elites), who are basically the political class, or those well educated people who work in management, economy, media, those who control and set the general frame of everything (production, investment). The other groups of the population, (80%) those who follow orders, and they are not thinkers; They would not go online to any alternative media to seeking different information from whatever their favorite media produce. Sputnik is an example of the independent media; it is one of Russians alternative voice outside the Kremlin-controlled media which was supposedly established by independent operators who opened a television channel in Britain and launched a foreign news service called Sputnik as it pulls out all the stops to promote its "alternative" voice abroad, while at home it cracks down on opposition media. "Sputnik tells the untold" is the slogan of the news service at Sputniknews.com (Peron, 2014). This Sputnik uses its own propaganda model to criticize what is published in U.S., but the question is "Is their news distributed to the American publics?"The answer will be no: because most

Americans would only search for any news about their favorite movie stars or players, not the political news that's available on these kinds of alternative media

Advertising on the internet is also not as influential as it is in mainstream media. Ads are seen as a nuisance and are often placed by automated services rather than real human beings, so the pressure to supply supported content is not as great. Rampton (2007) also pointed out that "the ease with which digital media can be reproduced and transmitted (helps) bypass the filter of official sources" .

In terms of flak, many of the alternative media sources online are flak, and are seen as a manifestation of freedom of speech, not as a filter against it. Finally, anti-terrorism is a compelling argument for national security, but it does not seem to stop citizens from expressing their opinions through the alternative media.

### **Iranian Nuclear Program story**

By applying the propaganda model on the Iranian nuclear program news, it will be proven that there is a contrast in information behavior of the media operators, or the propagandists. It will show how they use their media tools to support their elite owners' plans or strategies.

If we follow the news about the Iranian nuclear program through *The New York Times* (2014), and Al-Jazeera timeline of Iran-US relations (June 25, 2009) which reviewed the important events in Tehran's relationship with Washington; this relationship returns back to 1957, when Iran signed an agreement with the United States for cooperation concerning civil uses of atomic energy as part of President Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace Program. The accord allows the United States to lease several kilograms of enriched Uranium to Iran, and it calls for cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In 1975 Ford opened US nuclear technologies to Iran, but when The Shah of Iran was overthrown in what is known as the Islamic Revolution of 1979 Iran canceled nuclear plants under construction. Three days later, R.W. Apple Jr., writing for *The New York Times*, tells of a "river of humanity" flowing down Tehran's Main street to show support for Ayotollah Ruhollah Khomeini, an exiled cleric. President Carter, speaking at a news conference in the days after the revolution, said of the Shah: "*He's now in Egypt, and he will later come to our own country, but we would anticipate,*

*and would certainly hope, that our good relationship with Iran will continue in the future”,* but that didn't happen because of the American hostage crisis in 1979. After that in the 1980s the United States backed Saddam during the Iraq/Iran War. In the late 1980s Iran got nuclear help from Pakistani scientists, and started nuclear transfers. In 1995 Iran and Russia (U.S' old enemy) signed a nuclear contract. In 2001 a report by the CIA was leaked to the media accusing Iran of having one of the most active nuclear weapons programs in the world, and of seeking missile-related technology from countries including China and Russia. As a result of that, George W. Bush, dubbed Iran, Iraq and North Korea an *"axis of evil"* in his 2002 State of the Union address, claiming Iran as an active sponsor of terrorism (Iran-US relations, 2009). Many of these articles published by the *New York Times* portrayed Ahmadenijad - the Iranian leader at that time- as tyrannical, defiant, and generally unstable (Broad & Sanger, 2010; Worth, 2011) another article in which an objective source reports Ahmadenijad's rejections and defiant threats. These were supporting each step had been taken against Iran, and were supporting the U.S. economic and political agenda in the Middle East.

Another example of propaganda appearing in mass media coverage is Fox News. Fox News and FoxNews.com are owned by News Corporation which has a very large amount of international assets, including television and movie companies; publishing enterprises for newspapers, magazines, and books; websites; radio stations; music productions; and professional sports teams. It is one of the four largest corporations in the United States, with over 150 different entities. With such a large investment that reaches all corners of the earth, the company might feel a unique responsibility to present the facts in a fair and balanced manner. That, however, is rarely the case from Fox News / FoxNews.com, which has the Fair and Balanced slogan right next to its logo. But this corporation is highly influenced by its owner Rupert Murdoch (Irving, May 25, 2002) It is also influenced by its assets, Jewish investors and advertisers, playing right into Herman and Chomsky's first two filters of the propaganda model. On April 7, Fox News Channel aired the Strategy Room Show (2010), which was also released as a video on their online news website, and demonstrated sourcing of the government consensus. On that show all the guests beside the host, Monica, were

totally against Iran. The guests were selected perfectly to represent the ideas and opinions of Fox ownership (Pakalert, 2009). The host chose her questions carefully to go in one direction. She used the fullest verbal expressions and gestures to emphasize her reaction when one of the guests was supporting her ideas. On the other hand, this program did not concentrate on the nuclear weapons in India, Pakistan or Israel, or even in North Korea, which are potentially more dangerous (Lendman, 2010); instead, the host said that the nuclear forces in Israel and India are not a threat. Why are these two countries not a threat to the United States while others are? This can be seen as an example of using anti-terrorism to bias a story. No more information was provided for the viewing audience to be able to think about the issue or compare the United States' stance on Iran's nuclear presence versus the stance on the nuclear presence of Israel and India. The video did not mention past violations of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty by the US. Also, the video did not mention the possibility that Iran may only be pushing for nuclear energy. In that one video Fox News used a barrage of propaganda, including the use of certain terms, the delivery of the phrases, and the reactions of the members on the panel, to support the Fox agenda. It seems that the point of the panel is to mislead the viewers and the American population; making them believe that Iran is their enemy, as there was no diversity of views. That's what explains how the impact of the power of the ownership of the media on distributing their agenda (Columbia Journalism Review, 2009; Baghdadi, 2009). Rupert Murdoch the owner of Fox News is obviously strongly pro-Israel, which may mean he bristles at any coverage that doesn't sympathize with Israeli's government and at the same time helping to show more support to the claim that Iran is an active sponsor of terrorism (Kurtz, November 28, 2012).

Worth (2010) wrote of the regime's imprisonment of journalists. This is an emblematic of the filter of anti-terrorism as well. There is the usual propaganda portraying Iran as a nation supporting terrorists. There is news stating that Iran is sending powerful missiles to Hezbollah (Worth, 2010) and Obama's constant reiteration that nuclear development in Iran is a major threat against global security, especially if nuclear weapons fall into the hands of "terrorists."

Such villainization or the bad guy feature of Iran can be seen as a necessary emphasis by mainstream media in order to indoctrinate the public to the current divestment and sanctions occurring in Iran, and the real reasons they are threatening Iran are omitted. It revolves around strategic control of the resources (Chomsky & Pateman, 2006). So, the agenda of the corporate elite in multinational corporations and in Washington has been filtered out to manufacture consent for the economic subjugation that is occurring. The more sanctions and divestment that are applied; the more the nation is destabilized, and the chances for United States intervention increase. The constant propaganda against Iranian nuclear development will support this covert agenda and is evidenced in recent news stories. For example, foreign companies including Big Oil will increasingly be divesting as sanctions continue (Nixon, 2010). However, the rights of Iran to national self-determination are not included in the topics of debate. For example, in the corpus of *NYT* articles, none suggest that Iran would be better off if it took action like Venezuela to nationalize oil corporations. Propaganda against Iran has to be persistent because the United States has interfered with the self-determination of Iran by covert means in order to control the wealth of resources on multiple occasions with particularly devastating consequences such as the taking of United States citizens hostage (Scary Cow Productions, 2008). A lack of foreign investment has caused the country to have to import refined oil. However, articles in the mass media are too concise to debate whether or not the doctrine of imperialism is being applied. Moreover, further filtering is evident in the omission of discussion that the increasing sanctions are a form of economic warfare meant to destabilize the country and increase the ease of foreign intervention, namely direct invasion or installment of a regime that will do the bidding of the elite (Scary Cow Productions, 2008). We are not told that there are no justifications for these sanctions, despite world leaders announcing it in international forums (2008). Iran has every right under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty to develop peaceful nuclear energy (2008). We are not told that the United States is the nation violating this treaty by preventing other nations from supporting Iran's peaceful nuclear development program (2008). In another article the executive for the International Atomic Energy Agency was sourced countering "Iran's claim that international inspectors have no right to ask questions

about research Tehran has conducted into missile technology and warheads." This article discusses claims of missile development" consistent with designing a nuclear explosion" (Broad and Sanger, 2010). However, elaboration beyond this ambiguous language is negated. The article yields no substantial justification for the calls for international boycott of Iran.

The US media had complete coverage for the United States war on Iran over the past several years, but during the period of 2011 until 2013; they were busy with covering the news of the Arab Spring revolutions which changed the American government's agenda in the Middle East. That led the media to change its anti-Iranian propaganda, and direct the attention to another battle, which needs new application of their propaganda model in the Arab world. The anti-Iranian propaganda has to stop; because the leaders need to get a deal with the new Iranian president after a long time of word battle between the media and Iranian former president Ahmadenijad. When Rafsanjani took the lead in Iran; many events in the Middle East had happened since the Arab uprising, which gave the media operators a chance to end that war with Iran. The Iranian and American agendas changed; the Arab Uprising will affect their political and economic agenda in the Middle East, Iran and the United States and allies were worried about what would be happening if the Arabs freed from their dictatorship governments. They have to reach for the agreement that end that war between them. The US media had a new mission which was hard, because they have to prepare the American population to accept that deal with (evil) Iran, as their media propaganda featured it. Their plan started with skimming or ignoring the news about Iran during that time, while some other news needed some hard critical analysis that would help manufacturing the consents of what's on that new agenda which is protecting what they gained politically and economically in the area since invading Iraq (Lendeman,2015).

As Chomsky (1989) wrote, "It is more difficult to see a propaganda system at work where the media actively compete, periodically attack and expose corporate and government malfeasance, and aggressively portray themselves as spokesmen for free speech" (p.1) the anti-Iranian propaganda convinced most Americans to oppose what they should overwhelming support. According to some polls results which show most Americans oppose what they know little about or what's potentially at stake,

the BBC World Service Poll (2013) indicates that 5% of Americans view Iranian influence positively, with 87% expressing a negative view, the most unfavorable perception of Iran in the world. A Quinnipiac University poll showed US voters against the nuclear deal almost two to one – 57 – 28%. A similar percentage said it'll make the world less safe. Another NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll showed 35% support 33% against, another 32% with no opinion. Opposition doubled after that (17% to 32%). And a late CNN/ORC poll found 52% against to 44% in favor. With weeks to go before Congress votes up or down on the deal, continued intense anti-Iranian propaganda may turn greater numbers of Americans against it.(Lendman,2015) So the media had already shaped the American Attitude towards Iran and when their government needed to propose unexpected deal with their enemy, they have to think about keeping them busy with some major issues that touch American lives directly in order to make them forget how their government at all levels betray them. There were more news about lowering Gas prices (The Washington Times. 2013) which made most American happy about that deal with Iran, also the media operators have to start a new propaganda about the war on terrorism, therefore they invented a new threat called Islamic State of Iraq which transformed into a terrorist group (ISIS) and started more violence activities starting from 2013, the same year that USA ended up the media war on the terrorist Iran, after 36 of anti Iranian relentless propaganda. They have to produce another enemy that threatens the whole world, and the media has to cover the news of that new terrorists group and continue manufacturing the consents of the interests of elites.

. On the other hand, the same American media which had a 36 years of war with Iran reacted differently with the news about the involvement of the Iranian militia group who were killing innocent Syrian people and their support to the Syrian president Al-Assad. The reaction from the White House was disseminated through the US media saying that “the White House did not yet regards the Iranian conduct as an act of aggression”. Iran is believed to have been influential in Hezbollah's decision to send fighters to western Syria to assist pro-Assad forces, and also they sent Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps for Assad assistant. US government who didn't do anything to stop that Iranian massacres in Syria.while Western public sympathized with what they

were watching on TV's about those poor Syrian unarmed people. American needed something to show them that their governments were doing something;so Bloomberg reported that Iran allegedly began withdrawing its elite fighters from Syria due to the high casualty rates among its soldiers (Greenwald, 2016). An Iranian correspondent who was working in Syria denied that claims, and that was published through one of the independent news service (Sputnik) which has another agenda (Peron, 2014). These kinds of independent media are not watched in US. There are no fears from these kinds of media on shaping the opinion of regular Americans who will not watch that kind of opposite media; they will not seek more information about that news that's different from what's on their regular TV cable channels or their famous newspapers which already have their ways to support their owners' agendas.

The United States government used the propaganda model through their media tools, controlling both politics and the public view, to position itself for an accepted invasion or even an all-out war with Iran? If that were to happen, the owners of media such as the NYT or Fox News will not lose anything; advertisers will continue to support them financially, but who will really be paying? Will it be the ignorant people who believe the news sources and their skewed presentation of the facts that are used to suit the American stance on anti-terrorism? We have seen it used before with Iraq, and Iran, and now in Syria. It will continue as long as they manufacturing contests of their elite.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the different geographical coverage, all these cases we discussed before show striking similarities. These cases focus on how the United States defines its boundaries with the rest of the world and how it promotes the agenda of the corporate elite. In terms of propaganda, one may observe that a primary control mechanism involved in these cases is flak. The mass media are carefully regulated by private interests, so if there is any discussion contrary to these interests, the massive influence of the elite is enacted to keep these views in check. This phenomenon is made evident by the omission of critical views. In the case of the war in Iran nuclear program, one is hard pressed to find any coverage in the mainstream media in support of Iranian self

determination, which also supports Chomsky's filter of anti-terrorism. Also, criticism of the economic sanctions crippling Iran's infrastructure, fostering dependence and discord, bolstering the hard-line regime, and violating the nuclear non-proliferation agreement is conspicuously absent, and the news about that strange reaction of the US leaders about the involvement of Iran in Syria.

Herman and Chomsky made an astute observation on how news gets covered and published in America. From their research and observations, it is the large corporation with massive investments and ownership in United States companies that get to put out to the public their side of an issue. "Herman and Chomsky's model also explain how dissent from the mainstream is given little, or zero, coverage, while governments and big business gain easy access to the public in order to convey their state-corporate messages - for example, 'free trade is beneficial, 'globalisation is unstoppable' and 'our policies are tackling poverty' (Cromwell, 2002). Even in today's technology-based environment in which anyone anywhere can publish anything they want, there is still a large following of mainstream media by the majority. Although a growing minority of information consumers are publishing and turning to alternate news sources, they are still not the loudest voice in the room.

So how does one take what one knows about mainstream media and the five filters and apply them to information seeking, information consumerism, and information literacy? Librarians need to be well versed in uncovering the biases in a news story, as well as facing one's own perceptions and feelings on various issues so that they will not interfere with the information one gives an information seeker. One must be skilled at helping information seekers determine the source of a news story, which will most likely influence the way in which the story is presented, including which facts are presented and which are omitted, the connotations of the language being used, and even the advertisements on the page. Information seekers need to be able to recognize the use of flak and other methods used by news sources to sway consumers one way or another. Information seekers also need to be able to recognize their own biases on an issue so they can better determine how the media is changing their perception of an issue. Librarians must teach information seekers, be there for patrons in a public library or students in an elementary school classroom, librarians must know how to be

discerning consumers of information, answer questions that seem easy, and finally dig deeper beyond the top level of the story.

In looking at different stories that covered in this paper, one can see two different topics covered in two different ways by the United States news media. The coverage of these stories shows evidence of Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model and the idea of manufacturing consent. It seems that the majority of the mass media news sources in the United States such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *ABC*, *CNN*, and *Fox News* perpetuate the agenda of the corporate elite and the doctrines of United States world domination through imperialism, elitism, and manifest destiny in order to control the world resources and power (Pakalert, 2009). They are the ones who decide what is news. and what isn't, both at the national and the international levels. The alternative media are finding different ways to be available for all people to say their opinions publicly, but they don't yet have the power to control and set the general frame of news that they think is important to them. Only the powerful news media are able to use these filters to determine, select, shape, control, and restrict in order to serve the interest of the dominated elite group of the society.

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