This issue was not intended as a special theme one, and yet the papers included display marked similarities. A common thread running through each of the three articles is that of journalistic practice in newspapers. Each of the articles comments on how a number of controversial social issues or events have been represented according to normative practices. The authors then use a variety of existing or novel approaches to critique how these practices distort, conceal, or misconstrue these events for the Canadian readership.

In “An Alternative to the Fighting Frame in News Reporting,” Trudie Richards and Brent King take issue with the normative framework for news construction in the North American press. As is well known, news reporters regularly rely on the so-called conflict (or fighting) frame to impart a sense of high drama for their readers. From a practical point of view, the fighting frame presents a handy solution to the problems of meeting close deadlines and garnishing audience interest. But the problem with this kind of approach, Richards and King argue, is that it does violence to the complexity of the actual issues and events being represented. They contend that most issues and events cannot be understood as a conflict between two clearly oppositional camps: there may be more than two groups of stakeholders involved in any particular issue or event; and there may be more common ground between the contestants than is suggested.

To clarify their position, the authors detail a case study involving conflict over land use which took place in Nova Scotia in the 1990s. The authors contend that the use of the fighting frame convention by newspaper reporters not only simplified the issues at hand, it also exacerbated the conflict between the parties involved. In conclusion, the authors suggest that journalists should consider alternative approaches (e.g., Bloomfield, 1995) to the way they go about gathering evidence from players in conflict laden circumstances, and then fabricating these perspectives into narratives.

In the second article, “Re-Pressing Racism: The Denial of Racism in the Canadian Press,” Bohdan Szuchewycz criticizes the role that the press plays in reproducing a national myth that racism is non-existent in Canadian society. He begins by pointing out that this myth has remained deep-rooted and pervasive despite decades of systematic research to the contrary. He then asks whether and to what extent the media have played roles in reinforcing this assumption in the face of counterfactual evidence. In carrying out this kind of inquiry, Szuchewycz draws on Teun van Dijk’s version of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Over the past two decades, van Dijk has used his methodological approach to demonstrate how the normative patterns of media discourse—in the service of social elites—have reproduced ideological assumptions in the minds of the reading and viewing public. Put otherwise, Critical Discourse Analysis amounts to a grafting of
text-linguistic categories onto Gramsci's ideas about hegemony. While van Dijk's approach is well known in both linguistic and critical media circles, Szuchewycz's article is the first detailed application of CDA I am aware of in our Journal.

Szuchewycz uses van Dijk's CDA methods to analyze the way a mid-1990s federal survey of Canadian attitudes towards immigrants and immigration was represented in *The Globe and Mail*. Despite the fact that a significant number of respondents registered clear resistance to the pattern of continuing immigration from visible minorities, the aspects of discrimination and intolerance were mitigated in *The Globe and Mail*'s presentation. Szuchewycz provides a detailed analysis of how this was managed through a series of *encoding* strategies related to such things as word choice and verb usage. At the end of the day, Szuchewycz marshals a damming critique of the way a mainstream organ such as *The Globe and Mail* reinforces normative assumptions. Whether the Canadian audience, in its diversity, actually interpret these ideological directions in the way they are intended is, of course, quite another question—and one which calls out for a different methodology.

Joshua Greenberg takes a different slant on how the media reproduces normative ideology in his paper, “Opinion Discourse and Canadian Newspapers: The Case of the Chinese Boat People.” In contrast to Szuchewycz's concern with the way the media perpetuate the myth that Canadians are not racist, Greenberg tries to show how the media mirror and reinforce actual patterns of racial discrimination within Canadian society. In developing this argument, Greenberg looks at the role that *opinion discourses* play in shaping social issues. This is a relatively new focus for newspaper scholars. Most research to date has focused on the news stories developed by reporters. In contrast, the analysis of *opinion discourses* entails such things as the editorials and the guest columns either solicited or non-solicited from so-called experts. In contrast to the way that news stories are positioned to *inform* the reading public concerning issues and events, opinion pieces are aimed to *persuade* them in taking a certain position. Opinion pieces manage this task best, Greenberg tells us, not when they are strident in naming outsiders and attributing blame but, rather, when they appeal to broad public sentiment under the guise of common sense.

Greenberg uses a combination of quantitative content analysis and qualitative discourse analysis (e.g., Glasgow University Media Group) to analyze the way the issue of the Chinese boat people was represented within five English language Canadian newspapers in the summer and fall of 1999. Despite the apparent difference in the ideological slants of the newspapers, Greenberg suggests that there was a high degree of resonance in the way the issues were “framed,” that is, as a problem of: government, or race relations, or health and national security, and so forth. More importantly, all of the examples of opinion pieces sampled were strongly critical of the continued presence of the boat people in Canada. This judgment raises an interesting question: if opinion pieces and news stories run on closely parallel paths in reinforcing normative ideological assumptions—in this
case, racial intolerance—how is this reconfigured at some higher level to reinforce a national myth that we are racially tolerant?

**Reports on Research in Brief**

The two reports included in this issue are relevant to the way the Canadian information highway is being rolled out in federal and provincial policies and programs. In the language of the Information Highway Advisory Council reports of the mid-1990s, the public interest will be best served through an integrated approach to the development of connection, content, and community. This makes good sense; however, to date the development of Canada as a high-speed networked nation has mainly focused on the area of connection. The provision of infrastructure has been addressed jointly by the construction of competitive private sector national telecommunications networks, and by the development of the so-called CA-net, the national test-bed network. Currently, this network is in its third generation, deploying 40 Gbs of bandwidth and state of the art optical switches.

In contrast, the progress on delivering on the promises of content and community remain in their infancy. Partly, this is a connection-based problem. At present, CA-net 3 only touches down in a dozen or so main locations (or giga Points of Presence) across the nation. From these points, the provincial network organizations (e.g., BCnet, Netera, etc.) distribute the network at declining levels of bandwidth throughout their respective provinces. Despite claims by federal bureaucrats and politicians that all Canadian researchers have access to the national network, only a handful are technically connected from their place of research to the network itself. Very few are aware of the existence of the national research network, and fewer still have any notion of how it might benefit their work, in helping them share their research as content between wider circles within their research community.

The case of researchers becomes more interesting when it is placed in a wider social context. If most researchers are not connected to the network, nor is anyone else. Admittedly, some private sector firms have access to broadband networks, but the majority of Canadian individuals and groups are limited to narrow band connectivity—running somewhere between telephone (56 Kbs) and cable (2 Mbs) capacity. While this range of bandwidth can be used to carry certain varieties of content and mediate various forms of community interaction, the sophistication of content and the quality of (particularly synchronous) interactivity are fairly limited. In this light, one wonders what it would be like if the national broadband network was more fully distributed, not just to academics, but to everyone across the social spectrum: all educators, workers, small businesses, social services, and so forth. Surely this would be the acid-test for the dream of Canada-as-an-Information Society.

This is the larger context into which the two Research in Brief reports fit. The report by Frank Symons, “Telework and Bandwidth,” considers whether access to wider levels of bandwidth has certain implications for the way teleworkers go about their work. Based on a survey in the national capital region, the report
describes the different circumstances that rural and urban teleworkers have regarding access to bandwidth. But these distinctions merely set up the more important issues concerning how individuals go about their work, the way they process their respective tasks, the manner in which they relate within their respective organizations, and the way they negotiate time and space. This study may be based on connectivity issues at base, but it is really about the way that work is being socially shaped in networked environments.

The report by Mark Wolfe speaks to issues of content in new media environments. Broadband networks make it possible for users to push and pull massive volumes of content types, but increased quantity does not read out as increased quality. In the face of an information tsunami, users will need progressively more sophisticated tools as time goes on to locate and evaluate the materials they are looking for on the Web. This is where metadata schemes fit in. Metadata frameworks are rooted in earlier library and information systems for indexing the contents within relatively focused knowledge domains (e.g., medicine, education, social science, etc.). These originally paper-based systems have been restructured to accommodate computerized databases, Boolean keyword searching, and networked connectivity. The challenge for today’s information resource navigators is to construct frameworks that cross reference and correlate the multitude of these content/discipline-specific domains. This is what metadata conventions entail: architectural frameworks (literally, “data about data”) which enable individuals to search generically through any number of knowledge domains.

As Wolfe argues in his report, taking the complexity of developing metadata schemes seriously should entail taking the larger prospect of knowledge management also to heart. The organization of knowledge-as-content may have started off as a technical problem, but the management of knowledge writ large should rest on the appreciation that ultimately knowledge rests in how people comprehend content and what they do with it in the world. Wolfe suggests that Communications scholars should be well placed to contribute to this kind of a discussion.

Our reviewers in 2000
I would like to take this opportunity to initiate a new tradition in the Canadian Journal of Communication: the naming of those individuals who have acted as article reviewers over the course of the past year. I believe that the quality of our journal is a reflection not simply of the materials we publish, but also the effort, commitment, and expert judgment that is freely given by all of our reviewers.

Charles Acland          Susan Bryant
Valerie Alia            Dan Caspi
Paul Attalah            Richard Collins
Robert Babe             Claude Couture
Maria Bakardjieva       Bernard Dagenais
Martin Bauer            Peter Desbarats
E. L. Donaldson       Janelle Ring
Greg Fouts           G. J. Robinson
Richard Godin        Tamara P. Seiler
Robert Hackett       Ron Sept
David Hogarth        Edward Slopek
Michael Howlett       David Taras
Wendy L. Josephson   Teun A. van Dijk
Monika Kin-Gagnon    Mary Vipond
Donna Logan           Silvio Waisbord
Stuart McFadyen       Mark Wolfe
Vincent Mosco         James Wong
Susan Priest

David B. Mitchell
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